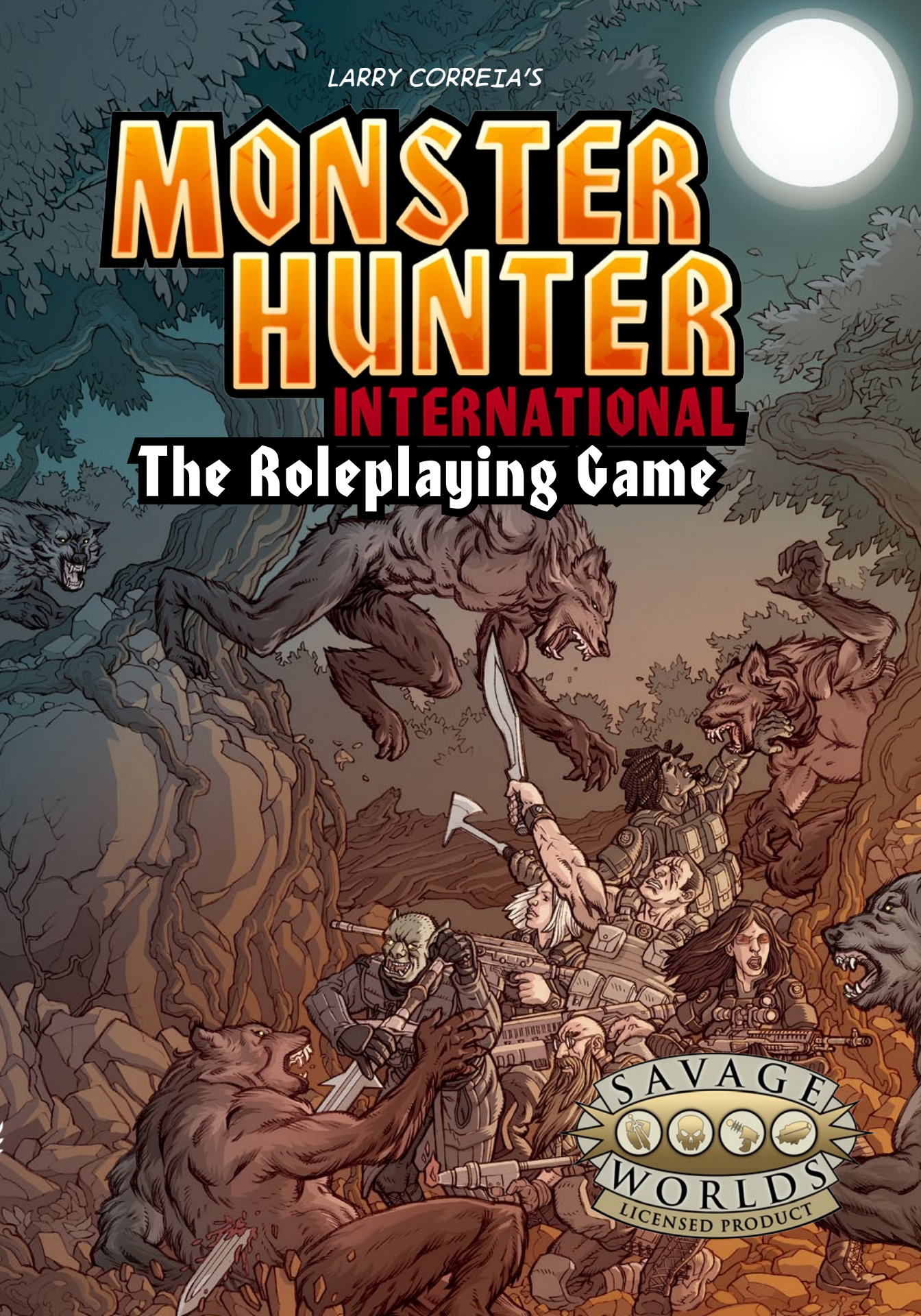


LARRY CORREIA'S

MONSTER HUNTER INTERNATIONAL

The Roleplaying Game



MONSTER HUNTER INTERNATIONAL

Author: Steven S. Long and Larry Correia

Rules Updates: Alan Bahr

Plot Point Campaign: Shawn Carmen

Managing Editor: Alan Bahr

Art Direction: Jeremy Mohler

Graphic Design and Layout: Robert Denton III

Character Sheet Design: Karl Keesler

Interior Art: Alan Gallo, Paul Little

Cover Art: Jeremy Mohler

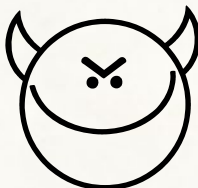
Publishing: Alan Bahr

Published by Gallant Knight Games, 2019

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CHAPTER 1: THE HISTORY OF MHI & MONSTER HUNTING

Since mankind's earliest days, there have been monsters — and brave people who fought against them. Many of the myths and legends you've read, and the fairy tales you've been told, have more than a few grains of truth to them. There are even some people out there who think that the age of the dinosaurs came to an end as a result of a supernatural conflict, not because of some meteor.

But only in the past century has monster hunting become a full-time profession in America.

BUBBA SHACKLEFORD & THE FOUNDING OF MHI

Monster Hunter International, or “MHI” as we usually refer to it, began in the spring of 1895 with a man named Raymond Shackelford, or “Bubba” as most folks called him.

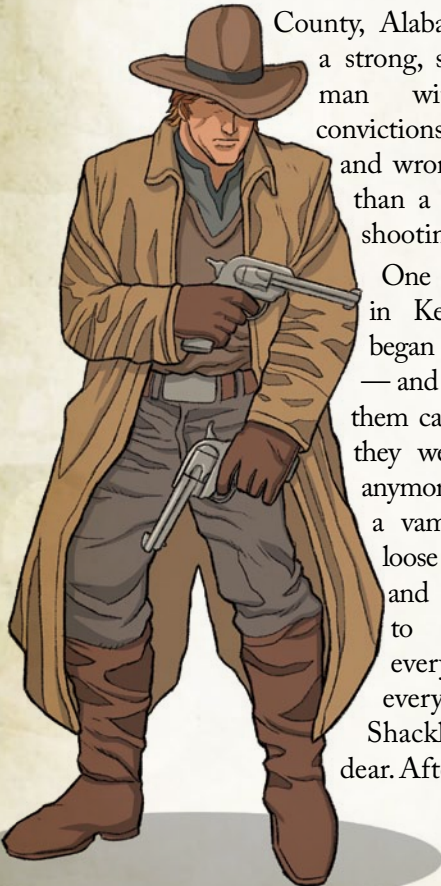
Born and raised in Keene County, Alabama, he was a strong, self-sufficient man with intense convictions about right and wrong and more than a little skill at shooting.

One day people in Keene County began to disappear — and then some of them came back, but they weren't human anymore. There was a vampire on the loose in Alabama, and it threatened to destroy everything and everyone Bubba Shackelford held dear. After putting on

his twin ivory-handled Colt Peacemakers and grabbing his rifle, he formed a group of “concerned citizens,” and they tracked the vampire down. They tried to lynch it twice, and when that didn't kill it they burned it at the stake. After the fire died away and the vampire was nothing but ashes, Bubba and his men tracked down and killed every lesser vampire the first vampire had created with its bite.

That incident opened the eyes of Bubba and his men to a terrible truth: there are monsters in the world, and they prey on humanity. Just as importantly, it taught folks in Alabama and the rest of the South that there was someone who could get rid of monsters. Word of what Bubba had done spread, and soon other towns and communities were asking him for help. It was dangerous work, and they were willing to pay enormous sums of money to have him get rid of their supernatural problems.

In December 1895, he founded Bubba Shackelford's Professional Monster Killers. By that time he and his men had enough experience fighting monsters to overcome their early mistakes and develop some solid tactics for taking down various horrors. Over the next several years they became even more skilled at



Raymond Shackelford

their work and achieved a sort of fame in certain circles (since knowledge of the supernatural, then as now, wasn't exactly widespread). But even with that success, Bubba might not have been able to earn enough money to keep the business going if not for something going on up in Washington, D.C.

THE PERPETUAL UNEARTHLY FORCES FUND

As president of the board of New York City Police Commissioners, and later as a Rough Rider in Cuba during the Spanish-American War, Theodore Roosevelt had encounters with the supernatural. He never talked about them publicly, and referred to them in his private writings only as "strange things." But taken in context, and in light of his later actions, it's clear he ran up against some monsters — and knowing him, probably killed them. Based on what little evidence is available, historians of monster hunting speculate that he most likely fought a vampire that was preying on the residents of New York City's slums and a pack of human-eating chupacabra in Cuba, but there's no way to know for certain.

Whatever his experiences were, they taught Roosevelt that there was more going on in the world than most people knew — and more importantly, that the government needed to do something about it. Since he didn't want to publicly announce what was going on (a policy designed to prevent widespread panic, one followed by the U.S. government to this day), he quietly established the *Perpetual Unearthly Forces Fund* — or PUFF, as we like to call it. Stripped of the fancy names and bureaucratized, PUFF is a fund to pay bounties to people who kill monsters — *large* bounties, since monster hunting isn't exactly the safest of professions.

The PUFF system provided a significant new revenue stream for Bubba Shackleford's Professional Monster Killers. In fact, Bubba Shackleford was the first person ever to receive a PUFF bounty payment (for a zombie outbreak in Vicksburg, Mississippi, as it so happens).

MONSTER HUNTER INTERNATIONAL

With PUFF money streaming in at a steady pace, Bubba Shackleford had the resources to expand his operation, find and hire more qualified Hunters, acquire better guns and equipment, and generally make BSPMK even better. Word of his company's ability to "get the job done" spread, and soon he had contracts coming in from all over the U.S. — and abroad. After killing monsters for Standard Oil in Mexico and United Fruit in Cuba, Bubba changed the company's name to *Monster Hunter International*, which he felt sounded more professional and "modern."

WORLD WAR I AND THE INTER-WAR PERIOD

In 1907, Bubba Shackleford was killed doing the work he was born to do — hunting monsters — when a contract to kill some ogre-like American Indian monsters in rural Kentucky went wrong, resulting in the deaths of nearly all the Hunters involved. His son, Raymond Junior (or Raymond II, as he's usually now called), who was only seven at the time, inherited the company and when he was old enough he carried on the good fight.

Unfortunately, a new threat soon confronted MHI: World War I. It didn't have anything to do with monsters (though there were plenty of them preying on men in the trenches and taking advantage of the chaos of war to spread their evil). But

when America drafted young men to go fight “over there,” it took away most of the potential new Hunters MHI could recruit — and more than a few experienced Hunters as well, including Raymond II (who lied about his age to sign up). Those Hunters sometimes had to use their knowledge and skills to fight enemies other than the Germans, and meanwhile their fellow Hunters back home had to keep on doing the same job with fewer men and resources. It was a difficult time, and several Hunters died because of lack of manpower.

That trend reversed itself when the war ended and the boys came home. Now there were *lots* of young men available with combat experience, some of whom had seen things in France that they couldn’t explain in everyday terms. Soon MHI’s ranks were filled to bursting with top-notch recruits.

And it was a good thing too, because the period between the two World Wars — the Twenties and Thirties, sometimes called “the Pulp era” after the gaudy fiction magazines sold at newsstands (many of which contained stories based on actual monster encounters or similar events, disguised as made-up tales) — was a boom time for monsters. Maybe it was cars making people more mobile, or cities growing, or early Nazi experiments in the occult, or the rise of radio news, but whatever the cause, monster-related incidents seemed to explode almost overnight. It was a golden time for MHI, which was busy non-stop and earned so much money it was able to bank and invest, laying the financial foundation for the company’s future operations.

THE MONSTER CONTROL BUREAU

The Pulp era was also the first time the US government became significantly involved in monster hunting. President Roosevelt had founded the Monster Control Bureau (MCB) in 1902 and offered its directorship to Bubba Shackleford (who declined), but the MCB hadn’t really done much for the next couple of decades. With monster incidents on the rise, MCB began to take a serious role in investigating them and covering up the truth — and its budget and importance increased accordingly. Soon mysterious MCB agents, often masquerading as revenueurs or agents of the FBI, could be found all over the country, hiding the existence of the supernatural from ordinary people.

WORLD WAR II

Government involvement with the supernatural became even greater — and more secret — with the outbreak of World War II. The Allied forces soon learned that Nazi Germany was conducting significant occult experiments, recruiting monsters to work for it, and conducting intensive searches for useful mystic lore and artifacts. For example, Reichsführer-SS Heinrich Himmler spent hundreds of thousands of reichsmarks in a (fortunately fruitless) search for Maximilian’s Iron Army (a group of powerful constructs created by the mad alchemist Augustus Schreiber in the 16th century), and near the end of the war it was discovered that Hitler’s bunker and certain other key Axis sites were protected by ward stones.

The Allied (primarily American) response on the “occult front” was two-fold. First, any reliable “supernatural assets” — in other words, monsters and paranormal entities — it could recruit or coerce into service

were assigned to the Office of Strategic Services (OSS) for use in various top-secret missions. For the most part they were organized under the umbrella designation of “Operation Unicorn.” This was delicate work, since few monsters are as reliable as the military would like, but it paid off handsomely in several crucial situations.

DECISION WEEK

More dangerous still was the work at Los Alamos — the Manhattan Project. Most people today know the project as the group of men who built the atomic bombs we used on Japan, but what the government has carefully kept secret is that the Manhattan Project also had scientists who were working on mystic means to end the war. They experimented with everything you can think of: magic; constructs; the fey; extradimensional intelligences; demons; pocket dimensions; and many things even more horrific. Among the plans that were devised, and in some cases seriously considered, were dropping “zombie virus bombs” on Germany and Japan; creating an army of summoned demons; and casting long-distance curses on enemy commanders and political leaders.

The forces and items the researchers dealt with were so hazardous that more than once they lost control of something, resulting in the deaths of numerous scientists. The Project ranked occult experiments on a scale of 1 to 10 — the higher the number, the more potentially dangerous and destructive. On this scale, werewolves ranked at 2, the zombie virus bomb was a 7, anything involving the Old Ones was a 10, and the Mark Thirteen project (see below) earned that name by ultimately being ranked a terrifying 13. (The atomic bomb, by comparison, ranked 5.) Anything above a 5 was considered unreasonably dangerous and approached with extreme caution (if the government permitted work on it at all).

Eventually matters came to a head and the government had to decide which route to go: the technological or the mystical. After intensive discussion and debate — a process that was later dubbed *Decision Week* — the mystic experiments were tabled once and for all and the Manhattan Project focused solely on developing the atomic bomb and other conventional weapons. The “leftovers” of the occult side were destroyed or stored away in hidden, heavily secured facilities. Many have long since been lost or forgotten, though some are still catalogued in highly secret government records. One such, the Mark Thirteen project, was responsible for the Las Vegas “incident” (see below).

1946-1991: VIETNAM & BEYOND

After the war MHI got back to business as usual, with Raymond Shackleford III now in charge. In time his son Raymond IV served as his right-hand man (with Raymond IV’s wife Susan later also assuming an important role within the organization). The 1950s, 1960s, and 1970s were relatively quiet but still profitable times for MHI. There were enough monster outbreaks to keep the PUFF bounties flowing in and the defense contracts active, but not so many that there was pressure to step up recruiting.

The government, meanwhile, was continuing to dabble in matters monstrous. While the MCB devoted more and more money and resources to keeping the lid on monster-related incidents so that the public wouldn’t suspect what was happening, the Department of Defense remained interested in the military applications of the supernatural. A few minor projects were launched during the Korean War when the Chinese began “dabbling” in the supernatural, allowing DoD eggheads and planners to gather valuable data.

That information and experience proved helpful when the Vietnam War broke out. Convinced (rightly) that the North Vietnamese and their Soviet allies would field supernatural operatives, the United States decided to do the same. It formed Special Task Force Unicorn (STFU), a two-part organization. The main part consisted of several supernatural entities recruited (or forced) into service with promises of PUFF exemption. The second part was a group of top-notch human soldiers who had two jobs: assist the supernaturals as needed; and kill them if they became uncontrollable.

STFU achieved notable success in Vietnam. Ordinary enemy soldiers couldn't stand against it; only its opposite number, a group of Soviet supernatural soldiers, provided any serious challenge. Toward the end of the war the situation resolved itself when the main Soviet agent, a powerful werewolf, infiltrated STFU's encampment and killed all but a few of its personnel. After that the Task Force was supposedly disbanded — though as you'll see later, it never entirely went away.

The STFU wasn't the only Special Task Force the US government had in Vietnam, but the other three don't relate to the history of MHI in any degree so we won't discuss them here. You may be able to look up a few facts about them in the archives if you're interested, but don't expect to find much. The government's good at keeping some things secret.

1991 TO NOW: THE MODERN ERA

The modern era of monster hunting began in 1991, when for reasons that have never been determined undead forces attacked a peaceful suburb of Oakland, California. By the time word got out and Hunters (including MHI's California team) and the MCB were able to respond, dozens of people had been

slaughtered and turned. Eventually we were able to contain the situation and, after a fierce battle that involved setting part of the area on fire, to kill all the monsters involved. In the end nearly 1,200 people (including five Hunters and four MCB agents) were killed. The MCB covered the entire incident up by letting the fire spread way beyond what we started, and the result was the so-called "Oakland Firestorm."

The Oakland Firestorm attack seemed to mark a sort of turning point. Monsters that had once kept to the shadows and lived on the fringes of human society began to become more aggressive and dangerous, resulting in more deaths — and more work (and profits) for MHI. Since returning to business after the "hiatus" (see below), we've often been so busy that we've had trouble keeping enough Hunters in the field. In the past year or two the situations worsened again, with major monster-related incidents on the rise around the globe. But we've taken steps to deal with things, as you'll read below.

THE DECEMBER 15, 1995 TRAGEDY & THE HIATUS

Unfortunately, given the rising tide of monster attacks, MHI spent a significant portion of 1990s crippled by its own mistakes and government overreaction. In the mid-1990s Raymond Shackleford IV, deeply saddened by the death of his wife Susan at the hands of a vampire, began studying the occult intently, seeking a way to bring her back to life. Another employee, Martin Hood, manipulated him into doing this, but none of us knew it — nor were we aware of just how deeply he delved into forbidden lore.

By late 1995, Raymond IV had learned enough, and become insane enough, to attempt his plan. He scheduled the annual MHI Christmas Party for December 15 at an Alabama venue that he'd discovered was



built on a place of power (ancient sacred ground to the local Indian tribe, we later found out). While the party was in full swing he cast his spell, unaware that due to Martin Hood's machinations Susan had become a vampire herself and so wasn't truly dead. That fact, plus the partially incorrect information Hood had provided him with, caused the spell to go awry. It opened a portal to Hell right there in the middle of the supper club.

Reddish-orange demons came streaming out and attacked. Most of us were armed, but only with handguns, so putting up a fight was difficult. Before Director of Operations (DoO) Harbinger valiantly entered the portal and brought Raymond IV back out to shut it down (thus preventing Alabama, and perhaps the world, from being sucked into another dimension), 97 Hunters (including Raymond Shackelford V) and 40 civilians lost their lives. We captured Raymond IV and had him confined to Appleton Asylum — but not before a bomb he'd planted did significant

damage to our archives. Along with nearly a hundred valuable Hunters we lost of lot of useful information that day.

When the Monster Control Bureau learned what had happened, officials in Washington went berserk. Convinced that private monster hunting was nothing but a disaster waiting to happen, and that the MCB and other government agencies could handle the problem on their own, they cancelled the PUFF bounty system and began prosecuting Hunters for any actions they took which were in violation of the law. "The hiatus," as we now call it, lasted for six years and nearly put MHI out of business. If not for the substantial financial resources we'd built up, we couldn't have afforded even the minimal expenditures needed to keep the doors open while we took what private contracts we could get and hoped for better times to arrive soon.

THE MACHADO INCIDENT

During the time MHI and other monster hunting organizations were effectively crippled by the end of the PUFF system, monster attacks on civilians rose by 3,000 percent compared to the prior six years. That strained MCB's resources and ingenuity almost to the limit, and eventually Congress buckled under the pressure and reinstituted the PUFF. MHI was soon back in full swing, busier than ever.

Sometime thereafter, our latest group of recruits included a new Hunter with some unusual abilities, a man named Owen Pitt (you can read more about him below). It turned out that he's some sort of "Chosen One," gifted with some unusual powers and a destiny to match. And it's a good thing we found him when we did, because we soon faced one of the deadliest threats ever to confront MHI: Lord Machado, a powerful, 500-year-old entity whose goal was to bring the Old Ones to Earth, thus enslaving all of humanity. Serving him were seven master vampires, including Jaeger (the most powerful vampire ever known) and Susan Shackleford.

During our fight with Machado he lured us to Natchy Bottom, Mississippi, where he unleashed so many demons on us that all the MHI Hunters and MCB agents there were killed — until Pitt's powers came into effect. I'm sure all of you remember the "five seconds incident," where time worldwide was "rewound" for five minutes. That was Pitt's doing; it's how he saved our lives, and eventually the world.

Then we tracked Machado to his real lair — DeSoya Caverns, Alabama. After a fierce fight that cost the lives of fifteen Hunters and many other people, Pitt was able to stop Machado's scheme and destroy him forever (or at least as "forever" as it gets in this business).

THE MARTIN HOOD AFFAIR

Events at the end of the Machado incident led MHI into its next major crisis less than a year later. Unbeknownst to us at the time, Interim Director Myers of the MCB had decided that the threat posed by Machado was too great to take any risks, so he ordered a limited nuclear strike on DeSoya Caverns. As luck would have it, the bomb passed through the portal that Machado had opened and entered the realm of the Old Ones, where it exploded and scratched an Old One that humans refer to as the "Dread Overlord." Angered by this insult, the Dread Overlord sent word to its minions on Earth: find and destroy Owen Pitt.

Unfortunately for us, the Dread Overlord's chief servant was a man named Martin Hood — a former MHI Hunter who'd embroiled himself too deeply in the study of magic, faked his own death, and become the leader of a strange cult called the Sanctified Church of the Temporary Mortal Condition (or simply "the Condition"). Now possessed of immense necromantic and dark magic powers, Hood decided he'd deliver Pitt to the Dread Overlord personally. Even worse, he'd planted one of his followers as a spy within the MCB and that man, Anthony Torres, got assigned as part of a detail to "protect" Owen Pitt.

What followed was a series of attacks that could have destroyed MHI and the world. Hood lured Pitt out of our protected compound by attacking Pitt's family — including sending two oni, the infamous Cratos and Bia, to try to kidnap his brother, rock star David "Mosh" Pitt — and nearly killed him. Then he attacked our compound with an army of the undead he'd been building for years. His final play was to raise a gargantuan, demonic, tree-like creature, the arbmunep, in New Zealand and to throw Pitt through a portal to the Dread Overlord. But

Pitt and Agent Franks of the MCB turned the tables on him. Armed with the ward stone that used to protect our compound, they went through the portal and killed the Dread Overlord (earning Pitt the nickname “God Slayer”; be sure to use it whenever you talk to him, he loves it). Pitt then killed Hood himself — but unfortunately his daughter Lucinda, a powerful sorceress in her own right, escaped us.

THE COPPER LAKE INCIDENT

The next year saw the worst monster-related attack in the United States since the Oakland Firestorm incident — one that MHI was only tangentially involved in because no one knew it was happening at the time. MHI’s Director of Operations, Earl Harbinger, was visiting a friend in the small town of Copper Lake, Michigan. As luck would have it, while he was there a man named Adam Conover, the world’s most powerful werewolf, better known as “the Alpha,” launched a scheme

with the help of Lucinda Hood. They used magic to raise a fierce snowstorm and seal off the town, then unleashed Conover’s werewolf followers to ravage the town. If not for the timely actions of DoO Harbinger and some brave locals, Conover’s lycanthropic and undead minions would have become so powerful that even the U.S. government probably wouldn’t have been able to stop them. But fortunately that didn’t happen and Conover was killed.

THE LAS VEGAS INCIDENT

About a year and a half after Copper Lake, an unprecedented event in the history of monster hunting occurred. For the first time Hunters from around the world — representing various government agencies and 14 different companies from 15 nations — assembled at the Last Dragon Hotel in Las Vegas for the International Conference of Monster Hunting Professionals or “ICMHP.” As the largest monster hunting company in the





world, MHI was well-represented, of course, and that turned out to be a good thing. One of the Decision Week “leftovers” — an advanced form of a creature called an alp that can make your memories come to life and attack you — assaulted the conference, eventually moving the entire hotel into a parallel dimension where it could attack all of us with every monster we’d ever fought. If not for the bravery and sacrifice of hundreds of Hunters, including many of MHI’s best and brightest, the creature would have killed us all and then gone on to turn the world into its own personal plaything.

PROJECT NEMESIS

Special Agent Franks’ actions during the Las Vegas incident gave Stricken, the head of STFU, the political capital he needed to persuade the President to permit him to proceed with a scheme he’d long prepared and planned for: *Project Nemesis*, an effort to create more beings like Franks but which were under Stricken’s absolute control. The first and most powerful of these new

creations was inhabited by the mighty demon Kurst (“Cursed”), an ancient enemy of Special Agent Franks.

Initially events went in Stricken’s favor. Franks threatened the President’s life over the breaking of the Contract (the agreement between Franks and the U.S. government that it would never create any more beings like him), and Franks soon found himself a hunted man with a \$250 million PUFF bounty on his head. But Stricken was a fool to think he could control powerful demons, even ones encased in flesh bodies he’d manufactured, and soon things went very, very wrong. Aided by several STFU monsters, the Nemesis creations snuck into MCB headquarters to frame Franks (who was already there for his own reasons, and thus able to fight them). During the ensuing chaos, MCB Director Stark (and many other agents) were slaughtered or badly injured. Not long after that, the Nemesis creatures slipped Stricken’s leash completely, and a major occult catastrophe seemed imminent. If not for the efforts of Franks, Heather Kerkonen, and certain other individuals, the demons might have ended up ruling — or destroying — the world. But Franks found a way to defeat Kurst and his followers, and the tables turned. Dwayne Myers briefly resumed control of the MCB (only to be killed shortly thereafter by an STFU agent), Greg Cueto became MCB’s acting director, and Stricken had to flee into hiding. Perhaps most importantly of all, new, saner leadership came to STFU in the form of Beth Flierl. Her attitude toward the monsters under her command is considerably more civilized and productive than Stricken’s.

THE SIEGE

After the conclusion of the Las Vegas incident, MHI learned that two of its hunters, and five more from other hunting organizations, were not dead as previously thought — they were

alive but trapped in the Nightmare Realm. Simultaneously with this, they began to realize that a powerful, ancient evil entity — later identified as the demonic being Asag — was preparing to mount some sort of assault on Earth. As luck would have it, the most reliable “portal” that could grant entry to the Nightmare Realm was on Severny Island north of Russia, a place long associated with Asag and his minions. (In fact, monsters from all over the world, not just Russia, lived there.) The portal stood in the middle of an ancient city on Severny that the Russians called *Gorod Chudovish*, the City of Monsters.

In the hopes both of rescuing the missing personnel and destroying Asag, Owen Pitt began traveling the world, contacting other monster hunting organizations and recruiting them for a veritable army to assault Severny. Months of effort and training paid off when a force of over a thousand Hunters, armed with military weapons and vehicles, landed on the island and began killing the monsters there.

After some fierce fighting, the Hunters cleared a way for Pitt and a small squad of picked Hunters to get to the portal to the Nightmare Realm. But the magic of the portal didn't work as they expected — only Pitt made it through. He undertook a desperate, miserable trek to find the lost Hunters. After what seemed like weeks of travel, he found six survivors, brought them back to the portal, and they all returned to Earth. Asag was defeated — for now — but not destroyed, and no doubt the Hunters of the world will feel his power and influence again all too soon.

CONCLUSION: THE PRESENT DAY

The best outcome of ICMHP and the Siege wasn't the PUFF bounties we earned — it was the contacts we made. For the first time MHI was able to network with

other Hunters from around the world in a formal environment. That sharing of literally hundreds of years' worth of hard-core monster hunting experience was invaluable — and then fighting together for months during the Siege put that knowledge to the test and cemented many of those relationships.

Not only did all of us learn a lot, but by comparing notes we realized that something significant is happening behind the scenes. Major supernatural incidents — powerful monsters burrowing up from the depths of the earth, entire towns going missing (or their populations vanishing without a trace), an ancient, a ruined city appearing on the deep seabed overnight, and more — have occurred at a rapid pace in the past year or two. Even by post-1991 standards this is a lot of monster activity. It's almost as if some strange, evil power is testing us, probing our defenses, evaluating our skills and resolve. Currently we suspect that the demon lord Asag was behind a lot of this, but we can't be 100 percent certain that there isn't more to it.

So we've formed a loose network of strategic partnerships with other Hunters around the world. We hope that by exchanging information on a regular basis and developing a broader perspective on global supernatural activity we can see whatever's coming and stop it before it's too big for any of us to deal with. The Siege on Severny Island was the first test of this plan, and we think it worked extremely well.

Today MHI is the largest, most successful monster hunting organization in the world — and business is great. We've got so much going on we can barely fill our need for qualified Hunters to serve in the field, much less staff all our office administrative positions. So, study hard, train hard, and use everything you learn — we need you, and the world needs you.

CHAPTER 2:

HOW MHI DOES BUSINESS

“Our business is monsters, and business is booming.”

—Raymond Shackelford III addresses the latest group of trainees in *Monster Hunter International*

From some of the stories you’ve heard, you probably think that monster hunting is all about flying around in helicopters, shooting things, and blowing stuff up. We can’t deny there’s a lot of that — think of it as a job perk — but there’s more to the job than just the controlled use of violence.

THE LEGAL FRAMEWORK FOR MONSTER HUNTING

You might think it’s a little strange that an organization like MHI — not to mention our many competitors — can make a living hunting monsters. And you’re right, it is strange. What makes it possible is the government’s response to the existence of the supernatural. Unless you end up working as one of MHI’s lawyers or negotiators you don’t need to know all the details, but you should have at least a basic understanding of what makes your job possible — if for no other reason than to ensure you do things properly so we get our money.

Laws About the Supernatural

Ever since it became aware of the existence of monsters and magic, the United States government has established a series of laws, presidential orders, and agencies to cope with the problems they present. The government’s policy, first and foremost, is to prevent information about the supernatural

from becoming public knowledge. Therefore, any laws or regulations pertaining to it are passed in secret, by select committees of Congressman who are made aware of the situation, and the mechanisms for enforcing them are likewise kept secret. All of this arguably involves extensive violations of the Constitution, but the government believes that containing the threat posed by widespread knowledge of the supernatural is worth cutting a few corners — or sometimes more than a few.

THE UNEARTHLY FORCES DISCLOSURE ACT

The government’s primary legal weapon in its effort to combat public awareness of the supernatural is a law most of you have already become familiar with: The Unearthly Forces Disclosure Act, or UFDA. The UFDA mandates that anyone who learns anything about the supernatural is obligated to keep it secret under penalty of law. He can’t tell anyone — not his wife, his kids, his priest, or anyone else — unless that person is an authorized government agent or has already been “cleared” under the law. (For example, anyone issued

a PUFF charter, as described below, is considered “cleared.” So is anyone working for such an organization, like you.)

As an MCB agent explained to you after your own first encounter with monsters, violation of the UFDA is punishable by severe penalties, ranging from a steep monetary fine to summary execution. The latter punishment is the one most commonly imposed, by a significant margin. So, if you want to stay out of the graveyard, keep your mouth shut about the work we do. Make up a cover story for your family and friends if you must. Lying to them isn’t pleasant, but it beats the alternative — having MCB agents arrange a fatal “accident” for you and anyone you spoke to. MHI has a lot of pull in certain Washington circles, but if you violate the UFDA even we can’t save you.

ANTI-MONSTER LAWS

The government has also passed a number of laws targeting specific monsters. Basically, their very existence is a violation of US law. The main ones include:

- the Monster Control Act of 1902 (which has been expanded and revised several times over the past century, particularly by 1972’s Monster Suppression Act). This law authorizes and funds the MCB and gives it broad scope to take actions that would otherwise be well outside the normal framework of federal criminal law.
- the Sentient Undead Control Act of 1994, which makes it a capital offense to be a self-willed undead, or to turn (or attempt to turn) another person into one. Primarily this law is aimed at vampires, but it certainly covers other type of undead that can think for themselves, like revenants and liches. As with lycanthropes, immediate execution is the standard punishment.

- the Anti-Lycanthropy Act of 1995, which makes it a capital offense to be a werewolf, or to spread (or attempt to spread) lycanthropy to another person by any means. Terminations of confirmed lycanthropes are conducted immediately, without trial.

These laws were subjected to a broad challenge in the Supreme Court case of *Kortowski v. United States*. The Court, ruling unanimously, held that sentient undead, lycanthropes, and other intelligent monsters are not “humans” under federal law (whether they once were or not), and therefore are entitled to no constitutional rights or protections of any sort. This shields MCB agents and other government operatives from any legal consequences for killing monsters under the laws described above. It basically gives them a free hand to do whatever they think necessary to keep the “supernatural problem” under control and out of the public eye.

LAWS AGAINST MAGIC

Federal law also makes it illegal to study or practice magic, or to possess “paraphernalia of sorcery” (such as grimoires, unusual substances intended for spellcasting, and similar things). This applies to “white” as well as “black” magic, regardless of the student’s/spellcaster’s intentions.

The penalties for practicing magic range from a hefty fine (including, of course, confiscation of all ritual objects and spell books) to the government’s favorite solution, summary execution. The more dangerous, destructive, or “evil” the type of magic studied or used, the harsher the penalty. For example, animating the dead, or in any way working with or using undead beings, is a serious felony under federal law and almost always warrants death by sudden lead injection.



Certain persons — such as some scientists and monster hunting organizations like MHI — can obtain a waiver from some of these laws, much in the same way that someone can obtain a permit to own and sell a machine gun. That's why we're allowed to maintain our own archive of reports, confiscated books, and other materials: we legitimately need them for "research purposes," since you never know where someone might have written down crucial information about a particular type of monster.

GOVERNMENT USE OF MONSTROUS AND MAGICAL RESOURCES

Of course, just because we private citizens can't cast spells or traffic with monsters doesn't mean the government can't. As so often happens, it's created loopholes in its own laws, so it can do as it pleases. Operation Unicorn in World War II and Special Task Force Unicorn in Vietnam are two examples of this. Similarly, key government installations, like the White House and Cheyenne Mountain, are protected by ward stones and defensive spells. So, if you get

into a situation where the government's also involved, don't think they're not using magic just because you can't.

The Perpetual Unearthly Forces Fund (PUFF)

The most important law for our line of work is the Perpetual Unearthly Forces Fund Act of 1901, passed secretly during the Theodore Roosevelt administration to establish the PUFF. Aside from the post-1995 hiatus, the PUFF has remained in existence ever since, providing a steady source of income for MHI and other Hunters. The MCB administers the PUFF.

Simply put, the PUFF establishes a system of bounties for killing monsters. The more dangerous the monster or the harder it is to kill, the higher the bounty. The established bounties are reviewed at least once per decade and adjusted for inflation and other circumstances, but changes may come more quickly in light of new knowledge. For example, if someone discovers a new monster it goes on the PUFF list as soon as the MCB learns of it and evaluates it. If a Hunter discovers a

new vulnerability for an existing monster that makes them easy to kill, the bounty for that monster usually goes down.

Periodically during the past forty years, certain people in Congress and the monster rights community have attempted to have the PUFF eliminated, or at least drastically changed. Fortunately for us, aside from the hiatus these efforts have never succeeded; there are enough responsible Congressmen and MCB agents who understand the vital role the PUFF plays in keeping America safe from monsters.

Currently the PUFF enjoys significant — though not universal — political support. There are one or two Congressman who are outspoken opponents of the PUFF system and want to see it eliminated so the money can be “better spent on other things.” So far, these people don’t have enough backing to accomplish anything, but we keep a careful eye on the situation because our livelihoods depend on it. One way we keep our allies in Washington on our side is by not engaging in “cowboy” antics or causing any more trouble and societal disruption than we have to — so keep your wits about you and stay calm if you want to get paid. Unrestrained havoc and unnecessary casualties just make all our jobs harder.

THE PUFF CHARTER

Anyone can earn a PUFF bounty as a one-time thing — many of you did just that during the incidents that brought you to MHI’s attention. But if you want to apply for PUFF payments on a regular basis, you must have a PUFF charter. You can think of this as similar to obtaining a license to sell firearms.

The government doesn’t advertise the availability of PUFF charters, of course; only people who are already aware of the supernatural can get one. Even that requires

a lot of discrete asking around to find the right MCB office to apply to, or to locate the MCB’s PUFF website (which does not appear on standard search engines). To qualify for one a person has to pass a test demonstrating basic knowledge of various common monsters, attend a four-hour class on PUFF rules and procedures, and prove to the MCB that he has the proper licenses and permits for any weapons he intends to use.

Most PUFF charters (including MHI’s) entitle the owner and his employees to hunt monsters anywhere in United States territory during the duration of the charter (typically two years, after which it can be renewed). They also allow the owner to possess weapons that would otherwise be illegal under BATFE regulations and federal law. However, sometimes the government issues a charter only good for certain areas and/or restricted periods of time (in response to a major monster outbreak, for example).

Any violation of the terms of a PUFF charter or the UFDA is enough to get a charter revoked — and usually to get the charter’s owner and his employees thrown in jail (or at least very carefully scrutinized by every federal agency you can think of). So, watch it! We like our charter. In fact, we love our charter. If you make us lose it, we will be very upset with you — and you don’t want to see Director Harbinger when he’s upset.

PUFF RULES AND REGULATIONS

Naturally, there are plenty of rules and regulations surrounding the PUFF. Here are the main ones you need to know about. What’s said here only applies to the PUFF; some other nations have equivalent programs that MHI can claim bounties under, but each one has its own specifics.

Eligible Targets; MHI Policy on What We Hunt

Any monster on United States territory, or which can be proven to originate in United States territory or as the result of the action of a United States citizen, is considered to have a PUFF bounty on its head. (For these purposes the MCB usually considers monsters encountered by US military expeditions abroad as valid for PUFF bounties.) The only exceptions are monsters who have somehow earned an exemption from the PUFF system. Typically, this involves serving the United States in some capacity (like working for Operation Unicorn during World War II) in exchange for being made exempt from PUFF. (Sometimes such exemptions are extended to the monster's family, tribe, or the like as well.) A list of persons or beings currently exempt from PUFF can be obtained from the MCB's PUFF website at any time — though we always have copies printed up in the library in case you need to take one along on a mission.

Of course, if a PUFF-exempt creature begins committing crimes, making its existence known to the public, or engages in other activity the government doesn't approve of, its exemption ends immediately. The government can also threaten to remove a monster's exemption as a way of getting it to do something the government wants.

But beyond the letter of the law, you need to be aware of MHI policy on who's an eligible target. We have no problem hunting monsters who pose a threat to humans — in fact, we downright enjoy it — but we're not going to hunt monsters who are trying to co-exist peacefully with us. For example, all our orc allies (see below) are PUFF eligible, but if you were to try to turn one in for the bounty Director Harbinger would make you regret it for a long, long time.

Eligible Claimants; Application for A Bounty

Anyone with a PUFF charter (like MHI) or working as a designated employee or agent of a charter holder (like you) who kills a PUFF-eligible monster, or assists in a kill, can claim a PUFF bounty. Government employees, such as MCB agents, are not eligible to claim PUFF bounties.

Predictably, getting the government to actually give us our PUFF money after we've earned it requires jumping through a bunch of bureaucratic hoops — though by now we've learned how the system works well enough that things usually go smoothly. The main requirement is that we have to file a Form 940X for each monster killed. This lengthy document asks you to describe the monster in as much detail as possible, provide a basic report of the encounter and how you resolved it, and list all witnesses with as much information as you can (so the MCB can find them and intimidate them into not talking). So, if you blow up several dozen zombies, be prepared to spend a lot of time in the office filing paperwork. You also have to submit a Treasury Form P-3506. Fortunately for you, we've automated things with some special software, so it takes a lot less time than it used to back in the good ol' days.

Modus operandi in Washington is that anything involving paying someone (as opposed to taking money from them) takes forever. So, don't expect to get your PUFF bounty overnight unless you have a friendly bureaucrat on your side (and we all know how common those are).

Physical Remains Required

As a general rule, you can only claim a PUFF bounty when you have some physical remains of the monster to prove you killed it. In some cases, it can be as little as an ear or a blood sample, but usually something more substantial like a head or

hand is best. In the case of monsters that disincorporate after death, like vampires and demons, collect up as much of the dust or goo as you can. Consult your MHI Field Manual for recommended procedures.

For this reason, MHI generally doesn't hunt ghosts, alps, or other incorporeal creatures. Since they don't have bodies, there's no way to prove the kill and thus claim the bounty. But the government does make exceptions to this rule in some cases. For example, if you have one or more disinterested witnesses willing to sign an affidavit testifying that you destroyed some incorporeal monster, or if you can provide some other sort of acceptable evidence about what happened, usually we can shake a PUFF bounty out of the Fund after we wrangle with the bureaucrats a bit.

All physical remains of monsters recovered by a PUFF charter holder (including MHI) must be turned over to the MCB unless permission is given in writing to keep them. We have been told that the MCB has special facilities for destroying (or, if necessary, storing) such things where they remain secure and can be studied by government experts. Presumably routine or potentially dangerous remains are destroyed, while unusual or noteworthy ones are kept for study, but with the government sometimes "dangerous" and "noteworthy" are the same thing, so there's no way you can know for sure unless you join the MCB.

The PUFF Table

The accompanying table lists the standard PUFF bounty for all known monsters. In many cases there's a range of bounties, since the price on a monster's head varies based on the monster's age, size, or other factors (and of course, the bounty for an assist is less — usually around one-third of the amount for a full kill). In particular, the more people a monster kills, and/or the longer its "career," the higher the bounty for killing it.



"NPB" means "No PUFF Bounty," typically because the creature is incorporeal, or the species currently has a PUFF exemption.

"Special" means a creature is so rare, or so dangerous, that the MCB decides the bounty on a case-by-case basis — but it's usually astronomical. That's where Hunters like Julie Shackleford, who know how to negotiate and debate with bureaucrats, really earn their money. But the MCB bean-counters retain the right to "adjust" any bounty "in light of the circumstances" (which usually translates as "take money out of brave Hunters' pockets").

As you can see, the rewards are usually pretty high — assuming you survive, you can make really good money as a Hunter. Director Harbinger likes to joke that we have a problem with experienced Hunters retiring so they can buy small countries.

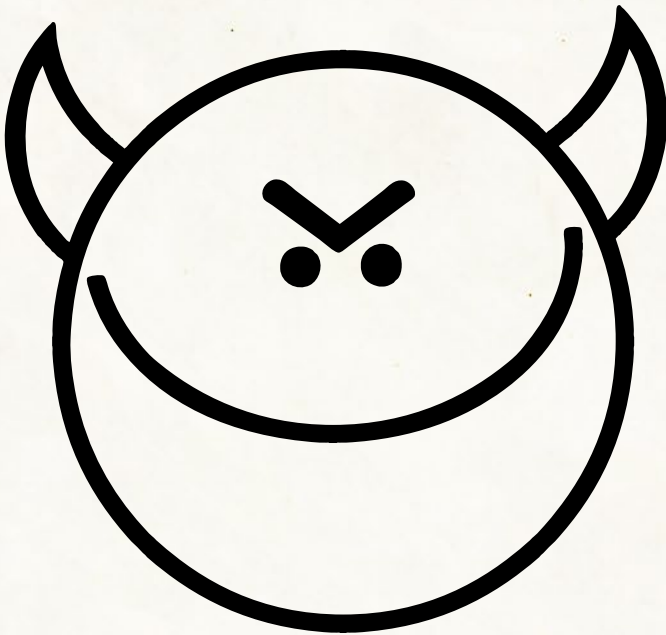
PERPETUAL UNEARTHLY FORCES FUND TABLE

Monster	Low	Bounty Average	High	Notes
Agaran	\$100,000	\$200,000	\$500,000	
Akkadian Sand Demon		\$250,000		
Akkadian Sand beast		\$500,000		
AI	\$25,000	\$50,000	\$75,000	
Alp		NPB		
Arbmunep		Special		
Aswang		\$75,000		
Baba Yaga		Special		
Banshee		\$250,000		
Blood Fiend	\$25,000	\$50,000	\$100,000	
Boogieman		Special		
Burrower		\$250,000		
Cerberus	\$5,000	\$10,000	\$50,000	
Chupacabra		\$25,000		
Deep One/Saughagin		\$20,000		
Demon (most types)		Special		
Bies	\$20,000	\$50,000	\$80,000	
Succubus		\$1,000,000	Special	
Devil Monkey		\$7,500		
Doppelganger		\$500,000		
Dragon		Special		
Elf		NPB		Elves are currently PUFF exempt
Fey (various types)	\$1,000	\$10,000	\$250,000	The top end bounties for Fey can be very impressive, and some of the rulers of the Fey fall into the Special category
Gargoyle	\$10,000	\$50,000	\$250,000	Due to the wide range of sizes and "varieties" of gargoyle, their PUFF bounty varies widely
Ghost		NPB		
Ghoul				
Standard	\$10,000	\$20,000	\$50,000	
Ice	\$20,000	\$50,000	\$100,000	
Giant Mutant Monsters (Kaiju)		Special		
Gnome		\$20,000		Gnomes have the same bounty as orcs, which offends both groups to no end.
Golem	\$10,000	\$50,000	Special	Due to the wide range of sizes and "varieties" of golem, their PUFF bounty varies widely
Grinder		\$100,000		
Hell Hound	\$5,000	\$25,000	Special	
Hobgoblin		\$10,000		
Humboldt Folk		\$75,000		
Kappa	\$50,000	\$200,000	\$500,000	Kappa shamans are worth the most PUFF

Monster	Bounty			Notes
	Low	Average	High	
Kelpie	\$30,000	\$80,000	\$120,000	
Kitsune	\$120,000	\$300,000	\$1,000,000	
Kraken	\$250,000	\$500,000	\$1,000,000	
Lich		Special		
Lindwurm		\$100,000		
Luska	\$250,000	\$500,000	\$1,000,000	
Lycanthrope, Werewolf	\$50,000	\$100,000	Special	
Man of the Forest	\$30,000	\$60,000	\$90,000	
Manticore		\$50,000		
Mind Colossus (Blarg)		\$250,000		
Minotaur		\$150,000		
Mirelurk	\$25,000	\$40,000	\$60,000	
Mummy		Special		
Mutant or Monstrous Animals				
Catfish, Giant Mutated		\$10,000		
Dinosaur		Special		
Frogs, Screaming Killer		\$10,000		
Lizard, Mutant Shrieker		\$5,000		
Mollusk, Giant Killer		\$5,000		
Squid, Giant	\$25,000	\$50,000	\$100,000	
Naga	\$30,000	\$50,000	\$100,000	
Night-Shade	\$18,000	\$45,000	\$80,000	
Nixy	\$40,000	\$150,000	\$350,000	
Ogre	\$20,000	\$35,000	\$50,000	Triple these numbers for an ogre mage
Oni		Special		
Orc		\$20,000		Orcs have the same bounty as gnomes, which offends both groups to no end.
Piru		NPB		
Pixie		NPB		Pixies are currently PUFF exempt
Reptoid		\$50,000		
Revenant		Special		
Sandman	\$10,000	\$20,000	\$40,000	
Sasquatch		NPB		Sasquatches are currently PUFF exempt
Satyr	\$5,000	\$10,000	\$20,000	
Sea Monster	\$10,000	\$50,000	\$250,000	
Serpent, Giant	\$5,000	\$20,000	Special	
Shade		NPB		
Shoggoth	\$100,000	\$500,000	\$1,250,000	The variation primarily depends on size
Siren		\$1,000,000		

Continued next page.

Monster	Bounty			Notes
	Low	Average	High	
Skinwalker		\$500,000		
Spider, Giant	\$10,000	\$20,000	\$50,000	
Spider, Helicopter		\$5,000		
Thistleman	\$25,000	\$50,000	\$75,000	
Troll	\$20,000	\$35,000	\$50,000	
Tsuchigumo	\$40,000	\$50,000	\$60,000	
Vampire				
Standard	\$20,000	\$50,000	\$100,000	
Higher	\$40,000	\$80,000	\$120,000	
Major	\$60,000	\$150,000	\$200,000	
Greater	\$80,000	\$200,000	\$350,000	
Master		Special		
Vulkodlak		\$250,000		
Warg		\$20,000		Orcs find this bounty hilarious
Wendigo		Special		
Wight	\$50,000	\$100,000	\$250,000	
Wraith	\$60,000	\$120,000	\$300,000	
Zombie				
Human, slow		\$5,000		
Human, fast		\$20,000		
Construct	\$20,000	\$50,000	\$100,000	
Large animal		\$20,000	Special	



Contract Work

The PUFF isn't the only source of MHI's income, though. We make a considerable portion of our annual revenue from short-term and long-term "security contracts" with the government, corporations, and individuals.

While knowledge of the supernatural is kept from the general public, many important people and others who need to be "in the know" are at least tangentially aware that "there's something out there," and what to do if it gets too close. Usually "what to do" is hire MHI (or, if the potential client's not as smart as he should be, one of our competitors). Our Business Manager, Julie Shackleford, usually negotiates such contracts.

Many of these situations are short-term or one-time arrangements to deal with a specific monster encounter or manifestation of the supernatural. We come in, kill whatever it is, clean up any leftover mess, and go home with a big, fat check in our pocket. The more crucial the situation, the more we get paid — "rush jobs" always earn us more money. Even better, most short-term clients aren't aware of the PUFF system, so we also get to claim the bounty on whatever we killed.

We also fulfill some longer-term security contracts, primarily with a few corporations and some government agencies. The longest-standing of these is our arrangement to protect Los Alamos and related Department of Energy facilities in New Mexico, a deal we've had going since the Forties. Benjamin Cody, leader of our New Mexico team, is in charge of that contract, which brings us millions every year.

At the ICMHP meeting in Las Vegas, high-ranking officials indicated that some major, very lucrative, monster defense

contracts would soon be forthcoming from the government. We haven't heard anything further yet but are paying close attention to these developments. It's possible that in the next decade or two, monster security work will provide a much larger percentage of our earnings, perhaps even eclipsing PUFF bounties.

THE MHI CHAIN OF COMMAND

Compared to the MCB or the military, Monster Hunter International has a pretty relaxed command structure — most of our employees are highly individualistic and strong-willed (though we consider those qualities assets rather than liabilities). But we need to have some chain of command to maximize our efficiency in dangerous situations and keep as many Hunters as possible alive to kill monsters another day. So, here's how things work.

RAYMOND SHACKLEFORD III, PRESIDENT & CEO

The head honcho of MHI is Raymond Shackleford III, the grandson of Bubba Shackleford. Now hampered by permanent injuries sustained during a lifetime of monster hunting (including the loss of his right hand and left eye, a wound to his left leg that makes him limp, and a serious burn to the left side of his face), he's still as tough and irascible as ever. He's the majority owner of MHI and serves as our president and chief executive officer — in other words, what he says, goes (though he's smart enough to take advice from other people before making most decisions). He's forgotten more about monsters than most of you will ever know, so if you can find a way to get him talking about his experiences as a monster hunter, be sure to listen.

EARL HARBINGER, DIRECTOR OF OPERATIONS

President Shackleford isn't directly involved in MHI's day to day operations anymore due to his age. Instead those responsibilities fall on the shoulders of the highly capable Earl Harbinger, the toughest Hunter you're ever likely to meet. He makes the daily decisions necessary to keep the business running smoothly, and more importantly serves as MHI's field commander when large numbers of Hunters assemble to deal with major supernatural threats. He's gruff, doesn't tolerate nonsense, and expects the highest degree of skill and professionalism from his Hunters. Pay attention to him and you might learn a thing or two.



Earl Harbinger

JULIE SHACKLEFORD, BUSINESS MANAGER

Julie Shackleford, Raymond III's granddaughter, is MHI's business manager. Director Harbinger has many fine qualities, but a tolerance for paperwork and the niceties of business dealings isn't one of them. Fortunately, Julie is skilled at such matters. When new clients want to hire MHI to get rid of some monsters, she's the one who talks to them and negotiates the contract. When we have a dispute with the MCB over the amount of a PUFF bounty, she's the one making the arguments for our side (and she usually wins). If you have a question or concern about your share of a bounty, she's the one to talk to. Just make sure you catch her in a good mood.

Julie has several people helping her with all the office work:

Owen Pitt, Finance Manager

The first is her husband, Owen Pitt. He's MHI's "finance manager," which is a fancy term for "accountant and chief number cruncher." He's the one who balances the books and makes sure all the money coming in gets paid to the people it's supposed to, so the lights stay on and the IRS doesn't hassle us (at least no more than usual). If you want to stay on Owen's good side — and you'd better, since he's one of the biggest, meanest Hunters ever — save your receipts! He needs them to keep the books straight. And if you don't turn them in, you can't get reimbursed for out-of-pocket business expenses.

Dorcas Peabody, Office Manager

Dorcas Peabody, a former Hunter who retired after losing her right leg below the knee, keeps everything running as smoothly as possible in the MHI home office at Cazador. She answers the phones, creates the work schedules, handles all sorts of paperwork, and generally keeps all us rough and tumble

Julie Shackelford

Hunters in line. Don't mistake her sweet little old lady nature for softness; despite her age she's tougher than most of you (and she still holds the MHI record for lifetime werewolf kills). Do not, under any circumstances, touch her food in the company refrigerator, or you'll regret it.

Albert Lee, Archivist

Albert Lee was a librarian before he joined MHI. After a very brief time in the field, he had to retire from active duty due to a crippling leg wound. Rather than leave the company he put his old skills to work organizing and maintaining our archives, which have been in dire need of the attention of someone like him for decades. He's still got a lot of work cut out for him, but he's already made some major strides toward improving the archive's usefulness.

Lee's also the man to go to if you need to know something about monsters. The time he's spent reading through books in the archive has made him just as knowledgeable (if not more so) than most experienced Hunters, and what he doesn't know he can help you look up

TEAM LEADERS

Below the "head office" leaders are the individual team leaders who run MHI's field offices in major cities (see below). Each team leader commands his people as he sees fit and runs his office in his own style — some aren't far different from your usual small business, while others look and operate like well-armed frat houses.

REGIONAL TEAMS

Because monster attacks can occur just about any time and any place in the United States, MHI maintains a series of field offices in cities around the country. We refer to these as "regional teams," since each of them tends to cover not just the

city it's based in but the surrounding suburbs and rural areas as well. The odds are that most of you will be assigned to one of these teams after you complete our training program, so here's a quick rundown on our current roster.

To help us tell the teams apart and to build morale, each team designs its own special patch. These range from serious to humorous, but each bears the unique touch of the team that created it. Some of these patches are described below. Many Hunters enjoy collecting all the team patches (including historical ones, which are much harder to come by).

Ideally, we try to ensure that every team has a wide variety of skills and interests among its members — monster hunting's about more than being a gun nut. In particular, we want each regional team to have (a) one person of strong religious faith, and (b) one person trained as a paramedic, doctor, or the like. Other things we look for include skill with electronics (particularly security systems), tracking, demolitions, and criminalistics. It also never hurts to have someone on a team who's a scholar — who likes doing research and reading through old books.



The Cazador Team

First off, we have our main team — the one led by Earl Harbinger himself — based out of the compound in Cazador, able to respond to monster attacks or emergencies anywhere in the country given enough notice. This team also does the bulk of our international work. We call it “first team,” and it’s the most prestigious assignment in MHI — and arguably also the most dangerous. There’s little chance you’re going to make it onto first team early in your career; it takes a lot of field experience to get good enough to join Harbinger’s elite squad.

Besides Earl, first team currently includes Julie Shackelford, Owen Pitt, Trip Jones, Holly Newcastle, and Milo Anderson, all of whom you can read more about below. First team’s patch is MHI’s corporate logo as well: a wickedly grinning ‘lil devil happy face on an olive-green background.



The Other Teams

Some of MHI’s primary regional teams are:

ATLANTA, GEORGIA

Although Atlanta’s relatively close to Cazador, it’s populous enough and has enough monster activity to merit a team of its own. Team Atlanta’s led by Jay Boone, an Army Special Forces veteran; he’s an experienced, intelligent Hunter who favors the Krinkov as his main weapon. Members of his team include Desmond Gregorius (a huge fellow who’s also a Special Forces vet) and Terri Sharpe (a former TV reporter who became a Hunter after

zombies ate her camera crew). The team’s patch features a lop-eared rabbit wielding a knife on an olive-green background.

CHICAGO, ILLINOIS

Between its industry, slaughterhouses, proximity to Lake Michigan, and history of organized crime violence, Chicago has at times been a mecca for monsters. On the front lines ready to send them to an early grave (or back to an old one) is Team Chicago, whose patch displays the head of a werewolf wearing a fedora, on an olive-green background. Its leader is Robert “Bob” Mitchell, who used to be a CPD detective before he learned (the hard way) about the supernatural. His contacts with local law enforcement are often extremely helpful to MHI.

DENVER, COLORADO

The Denver, Colorado team covers the intermountain west, which has seen increasing monster activity over the past six years. It’s known as Team Haven from its first leader, Sam Haven, who was tragically slain during the fight against Martin Hood in New Zealand. Its patch features a walrus playing the banjo, on a white and green background.

Since Sam’s death, Team Haven has been commanded by Peter “Priest” Gant, an immigrant from South Africa who used to be a Roman Catholic priest. He’s a soft-spoken guy who’s much more reasonable than many of his colleagues, but don’t let that fool you — he’s tough as nails and has killed more than his share of monsters. He also knows lots of

people in the international monster hunting community, particularly those from Africa. His team members include the twin Haight brothers, Shawn and Justin, who are as boisterous and prone to practical jokes as Priest is quiet.



LAS VEGAS, NEVADA

Being assigned to Team Vegas might sound like a great job, but it's not all sunshine and roses. As the city's grown over the past twenty or thirty years there's been a corresponding expansion in monster activity, particularly in Vegas's sewers and other underground areas. Based on what we've seen and what little we've learned from MCB, it seems there might even be some sort of "underground war" going on between groups of "native" monsters (mainly from American Indian folklore) and "immigrant" monsters from Mexico and Europe. But we can't say for certain.

The man trying to keep up with all of this is Daniel Eddings, leader of Team Vegas. He's been with MHI since 1989 and has just about seen it all in his time. The team's office, including a well-stocked armory, is located beneath a pizza parlor that MHI has controlling ownership of.

LOS ANGELES, CALIFORNIA

MHI has three regional teams on the West Coast at present. The one responsible for the southern third of the Pacific territory (including Los Angeles, southern California in general, and some parts of Arizona and Nevada) is Team VanZant, which is based out of a facility hidden behind an MHI-owned movie theater in L.A.

The team is named after John VanZant, who was known company-wide as "the Hobbit" because of his stocky 5'4" build. An Army veteran and mortar expert, he led the team for over twenty years until he went missing



in action during the Las Vegas incident.

He was one of the Hunters rescued by Owen Pitt during the Siege. He knows the territory, the law enforcement personnel, and the most dangerous parts of his territory intimately. Tim Green, who lost a foot and suffered other serious injuries during the Las Vegas incident, still serves the team as its office administrator, archivist, and scrounger — jobs he's proven surprisingly good at.

Team VZ's patch features a vampire skull with a knife through it on an olive-green background.

MIAMI, FLORIDA

Team Miami takes point in our monster hunting efforts in the southern half of Florida, Miami proper, and the nearby parts of the Caribbean and Gulf of Mexico. Chris Hurley is the team commander. The team's based out of an innocent-looking warehouse in an industrial area

on the outskirts of the city, and its patch features four stylized horse's heads (one white, one red, one black, one tan) overlapping one another on black.

In addition to his human Hunters, Hurley has the help of a small contingent of orcs who live in a village hidden deep in the Everglades. He doesn't call on them often, but on occasion they've proven extremely helpful. One of them, whom they've nicknamed Fish, has swimming as his life gift. He can cut through the water faster than any Olympic swimmer and hold his breath for almost ten minutes — abilities that have proven crucial in fights against aquatic monsters.



MINNEAPOLIS-SAINT PAUL, MINNESOTA

Team Minnesota (or Team Viking, as some of them prefer) is responsible for much of the north central part of the country, including not only the North Star State but the Dakotas and parts of Wyoming and Montana. The team leader, Donald Phillips, a wealthy former financial executive, is a pilot who often flies his team to distant jobs in his personal plane. The team's patch is a point-down Penrose triangle in shades of gold on a black background.



NEW ENGLAND

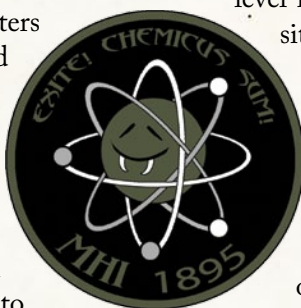
Given that it's fed the imagination of H.P. Lovecraft, it comes as no surprise that New England has its share of monsters and other supernatural menaces. Fortunately, it's a small enough region that we can cover it all with one team based in Boston (its headquarters is behind a long-abandoned video arcade). Led by Hart Townsend, a boisterous military veteran, Team New England has racked up an impressive record against the sorts of extradimensional horrors that seem attracted to the region. The team's patch shows a tricorn hat-wearing Minuteman wielding an M60 machine gun.

NEW MEXICO

The New Mexico team takes care of one of our most important jobs: our longstanding contract with the Department of Energy to protect the Los Alamos National Laboratory. Team Science (as they call themselves) deals with any supernatural fallout from its experiments, "leftovers" from Decision Week that resurface, and

other such problems. At the same time, they have to interact with often-prickly government scientists and bureaucrats much more than most teams, so only Hunters with a certain diplomatic touch can earn a spot on this team.

As the team's name suggests, most members also have some sort of background in the sciences, which makes it easier to talk to researchers and understand some of the threats they face. The leader, Benjamin Cody, is one of our oldest, most experienced, and cagiest Hunters. He looks like an old lumberjack with his bushy beard, but he actually has Ph.Ds. in physics and biochemistry (from Duke and Stanford, respectively). He's smart enough to talk rings around most of the eggheads he has to deal with. He's known for his cautious approach to monster hunting and ability to keep a level head no matter how crazy the situation gets.



Team Science's patch is a favorite among Hunters: a molecule with face and fangs underneath the arced Latin words EXITE! CHEMICUS SUM! ("Back off, man, I'm a scientist") on a black background.

NEW ORLEANS, LOUISIANA

As the heart of the voodoo religion in the United States, New Orleans has had more than its fair share of necromancy, zombies, and evil sorcerers over the years. Team Voodoo, based out of a rundown late nineteenth century plantation-style house north of the city, has its hands full most of the time, particularly around Halloween and Walpurgisnacht. Its patch depicts a stylized version of the Hanged Man from the tarot deck on a tan background. (This

replaced the former patch, which depicted a shrunken head sticking its tongue out.)

Because New Orleans attracts far more monsters than most cities, and has a history of voodoo, a significantly higher percentage of the population than normal knows about the existence of the supernatural. They like and “cheer for” Team Voodoo, which they refer to as “the Hoodoo Squad.” They often treat the Hunters like beloved heroes — they get out of their way when they’re speeding down the street in pursuit of some monster, let them park wherever they want, watch after their cars and possessions (the street gangs are especially good at this; no one steals from a Hunter); and even give them free food and drink sometimes. The city has established two special units, the Special Investigations Unit (SIU) of the NOPD, and the Orleans Parish Special Incident Coroner’s Squad (SICS) to deal with the aftermath of Hunter activity, and pretty much everyone in the local law enforcement agencies has been “read in” on the existence of supernatural threats. Despite the heavy workload and horrific humidity, working in New Orleans definitely has its good points.

Team Voodoo’s leader, Paul DuChamp, is something of a rarity in MHI in that he’s a voodoo houngan himself (he practices rada voodoo, the good kind, not the evil petro kind, obviously). Most of us Hunters look suspiciously on magic and don’t really take to it, even when used for good purposes, but DuChamp’s the exception to that rule. And it’s a good thing, too, because once or twice his spells have brought down undead that bullets couldn’t do much against.



NEW YORK CITY, NEW YORK

As the biggest city in America and one of the greatest metropolises in the world, you can bet that the Big Apple has plenty of monsters lurking in its extensive shadows, supernatural occurrences, and other “incidents” that ordinary cops aren’t equipped to handle. As a result, Team New York is the biggest regional team in MHI. In fact, it’s usually split into three: Team Manhattan; Team Brooklyn; and Team Bronx (those are just code names, though; they’re not a restriction on where each team does its work).

The overall leader of Team NY is Maria “May” Mayorga, a short, tough, practical, no-nonsense US Navy veteran perfectly suited to keeping nearly two dozen Hunters in line. She commands Team Manhattan in the field, leaving Brooklyn and Bronx to her two “lieutenants,” Isaac Jefferson and Rudy “Stone” Steinmann. Other notable members of Team NY include Richenda Murdock (one of the best gunsmiths in MHI) and Tyler Nelson (the grandson of the Doctors Nelson who run Appleton Asylum, and a trained psychiatrist in his own right).

Team New York’s patch is a highly-stylized dragon on an olive-green background.





SAN FRANCISCO, CALIFORNIA

The Bay Area in northern California has had a certain “mystic resonance” ever since human beings began living there, and as a result monster activity and the practice of black magic are more common than in many parts of the United States. MHI’s San Francisco branch — usually known as “Team Frisco” — stays plenty busy coping with these menaces. Compared to many teams it does an unusual amount of contract work; more than a few major businesses and government entities in the Bay Area are willing to pay well to have a team of Hunters on call.

Given the geography of the region, Team Frisco has not only two of MHI’s standard SUVs but a several motorboats that allow it to cross the water quickly (a real asset during rush hour in particular). The team’s leader, former Navy SEAL Jeremy “Jem” Whittaker, insists that all his personnel be strong swimmers and certified at SCUBA diving — a tactic that’s paid off many times. He’s currently saving up a portion of the team’s bounties to establish a series of “hidden motor pools” throughout the Bay Area so that wherever his team comes ashore, it has some vehicles nearby.

Team Frisco’s patch features crossed AK-47 Kalashnikov assault rifles on an olive drab background.

SEATTLE, WASHINGTON

As Seattle and the surrounding region have become more prominent in American civic and cultural life over the past several decades, it’s attracted more than its share of monsters, unbalanced people who practice magic, and other supernatural weirdness. As a result, Team Seattle has become one of the most

active, experienced teams in the country. Among many Hunters it’s a coveted posting, since it offers plenty of action (and thus money) combined with good coffee.

Led by Esmeralda Paxton — a forty-something, 5’2”, assault rifle-wielding, auburn-haired spitfire of a woman who despite her maternal appearance has killed more monsters than many of you will ever even see — Team Seattle has been so efficient in recent years that some of us in upper management have begun speculating when (not if) it will break the record for regional team annual earnings. Other members of the team include Nate Shackleford (Julie’s younger brother, destined to be one of MHI’s leaders in the future) and Michael Cooper (a big, stocky fellow who’s one of MHI’s best explosive experts in addition to being a skilled shot with his FN FAL assault rifle).

Team Seattle’s patch is a cute werecat on black.

UTAH

No one city in Utah has enough monster activity to merit a team, but the state as a whole (and the surrounding regions) experiences enough supernatural events to justify the creation of a regional team there several years ago. Known as Team Utah (or, less formally, “the Utah County Crew”), it’s led by Paul Southunder, a former Air Force officer. It’s notable for including an orc from Skippy’s village on its roster: Richard (better known as “Ricky”), whose life gift is a phenomenal skill with electronics (including radios and security systems) — though he can’t use a computer to save his life.

Team Utah’s patch is a werewolf carrying an assault rifle on an olive drab background.



Temporary, New, And Retired Teams

The problem of monsters and other supernatural menaces is a flexible one, so MHI has to be equally flexible in response. That means we can't rely on a rigid roster of Cazador and regional teams and nothing else. If the "monster problem" becomes pronounced for a long period in a city or area that doesn't have a permanent team, DoO Harbinger usually creates what we call a temporary team. A "temp team" consists of personnel drawn from several other teams (particularly the Cazador teams) and assigned to the problem area until we eradicate the threat.

For example, a couple of years ago Kansas City was the home of a particularly vicious couple, a male necromancer and his female vampire lover. We were initially called in to deal with a zombie outbreak, but that was just the necromancer "testing the

waters." When his attacks continued, DoO Harbinger created a "Kansas City team" that stayed in KC for nearly six months before it finally got him and his bloodsucker partner. Temporary teams may or may not have their own patches — it all depends on what the group wants to do.

But sometimes a temporary spike in monster activity in an area becomes permanent, or monsters "migrate" to an area in sufficient numbers that they're going to be a problem for some time to come. In other cases, MHI begins to get more requests for contract work from governments and corporations in a specific region. In these situations, DoO Harbinger may create a new, permanent regional team. This doesn't happen often — MHI has enough trouble just finding qualified Hunters to keep its existing teams properly manned — but it occurs from time to time.



More rarely, sometimes monster activity in a city or area diminishes significantly, or MHI loses one or more profitable contracts for some reason. In those cases, it's possible that MHI will retire a regional team and re-assign its Hunters to other teams. This hasn't happened for years, but it is possible. Similarly, if most or all of a team's members are killed in action, MHI may "retire" that team, move any survivors to other teams, and create a new team to handle that region.

The MHI Affiliate Program

MHI isn't the only company in the monster hunting business, as you'll read below — but we're the best. And that means there are plenty of smart Hunters out there who want to learn from us or take advantage of our experience, resources, and contacts. A few years ago, when

monster activity began to increase to the point where it strained MHI's ability to keep up, President Shackelford established the *MHI Affiliate Program*. The MHIAP is open to any independent monster hunting company that meets our standards for professionalism and competence. It allows them access to much of our database and some of our suppliers, in exchange for helping us out when we need it. (Bounties are split according to a complicated formula in the Affiliate Program contract.)

OMAHA STAKES

Based in Omaha, Nebraska and run by former MHI member Sam "the Eagle" Urquhart (so called because some people think he looks like the Muppet of the same name), Omaha Stakes helps us cover the center of the United States.

Omaha Stakes maintains its "offices" in what looks like an abandoned trailer park just outside the city. Once you get inside one of the trailers, though, it's a well-built, well-maintained, high tech sort of facility, with a maze of tunnels linking the various trailers. How they built the place we don't know, but it's designed for easy defense against attacking monsters and looks like it would do that job well.

STICKS OF FIRE

Monster hunting in south Florida that we don't handle is dominated by a company called Sticks of Fire, based in Tampa. They compete intensively with our Miami regional team — though since they're affiliates and thus friends, it's more like a rivalry between two college sports teams than the sort of animosity we have with PT Consulting.



The leader of SoF is a gravelly-voiced man named Robb Allen who's got enough scars to prove his qualifications to talk about monster hunting. He got his start years ago when a mutant alligator-thing in the Everglades tried to eat him and his boat. He fought it tooth and nail for over an hour as it stalked him. Then help arrived from an unexpected quarter: a weremanatee named Uulreshwrrlu (no, I won't pronounce it for you). The two of them killed the monster and formed a partnership. Being unemployed at the time, he decided the PUFF bounty system was a great thing to try out. Being skilled (and lucky, and having the help of a lycanthrope), he survived long enough to build a profitable company. Uulreshwrrlu is mostly retired now, but sometimes joins his human friends when they really need his help.

SoF's logo is the skull of a weremanatee (yes, it's just as weird-looking as you'd think).

TEAM TALON

Team TALON hunts monsters in Texas, Alabama, Louisiana, Oklahoma, and New Mexico — that's where the name comes from. The group began completely by accident when a necromancer unleashed a large group of zombies on a Renaissance Festival in Texas. Most of the people there either fled or were killed, but a small handful of friends put down the zombies using medieval weapons and whatever guns they had concealed on their persons. In the aftermath, this small group concluded that if monsters existed they needed to do everything they could to wipe as many of them out as possible. Taking their cue from the MCB's customary post-action threats they operated completely in secret for many years, working day jobs to support

their crusade; not only did they not have a PUFF charter, they didn't even know what one was. After their previous leader was killed by a luska near Corpus Christi they declared private investigator Jack Wylder the new leader (while he was away on a side mission).

During a mission in Alabama, Wylder met and worked with Julie Shackleford. Impressed with what she saw, she explained the facts of monster hunting life to them. When he found out about PUFF, Wylder said, "Wait. Wait just a second. You mean you get paid to do this?!?!" Wylder signed his group up for the MHIAP to learn the ropes better, and ever since then Team TALON has been one of our best (and best-earning) allies. The company's logo is a jackaloape.

Besides Wylder himself, (a remarkably average guy with incredible luck, who against all odds regularly keeps up with the best MHI Hunters), Team TALON consists of a core group of nine hunters with a large network of people called in for various jobs as needed. TALON is notable for having an East Texas bullman on the team. His name is Austin Bowie Gonzalez Houston, but his teammates mostly call him "Cowboy." (Here's some free advice: this is the equivalent of calling someone "Monkey Man" and only getting away with it because of friendship. If you meet him, call him Mr. Houston.) Due to the need to keep him concealed he mostly stays in their lookout van — he's a master of surveillance, computer hacking, and electronics so it works out well. They use him regularly but will do anything they can to keep him out of physical combat due to his berserker nature.

MAXIM-UM FUN

I looked around the bowels of the workshop in stunned disbelief. Every inch of this place was packed with equipment. "Seriously, Milo, when was the last time you cleaned this place?"

"It hasn't been that long, Z." MHI's resident equipment specialist, mad scientist, and all-around evil genius looked up from the crate he'd been sorting through. "I had to clean up all the blood and guts from that zombie elephant. That sucked. I think I went through two hundred gallons of bleach."

I kicked at the pile of dusty mystery equipment at my feet. "Let me rephrase the question then. When was the last time you organized your workshop?"

"I don't really remember.... Oh, there's my box of caltrops!"

"Who was president when you last inventoried this stuff?"

"I don't know."

My clipboard bumped a shelf and a cloud of dust rained down into my hair. "Did he wear a top hat?"

Milo tilted his head to the side and scratched his beard. At some point said beard had picked up a bunch of cobwebs so he looked even more disheveled than usual. "You accountants and your organization.... It hasn't been that long—Oooh, hey, I forgot I had an extra Jaws of Life!" He grunted as he lifted the piece of machinery. "Sweet. Anyways, I prefer to work with a more abstract freeform sort of organization."

"Well too bad, because I can't abstract freeform my way through an equipment inventory. Our capital assets list and depreciation schedules are a mess. You guys think this is all fun and games, blow stuff up, kill the monsters, play with cool stuff, save the world, but you forget we've got a business to run too. I'm supposed to be the Finance Manager here."

"And you have to fit that in between all the world saving and monster killing?"

"Exactly. I've got limited free time. So, I need to be the responsible one around here." Using the toe of my boot because I didn't want to get bit by any spiders, I flipped over the end of a tarp. "So, keep focus — Holy crap... Is that what I think that is?"

"Sure is." Milo strolled over to see better. "That there's a genuine 1895 Maxim machinegun, given as a gift to Bubba Shackleford by Sir Hiram Maxim himself."

"It's beautiful," I said wistfully. I think I may have shed a single, manly tear.

"Yep. Mint condition too. This old girl probably belongs in a museum."

"More like it probably belongs in my living room." I put one hand on solid steel of the receiver. They built these babies by hand. "It's a work of art, a totally badass antique belt fed machinegun work of art."

Milo chuckled. "Well, we better keep working if you expect to get this inventory of yours done today, Mr. Responsible Finance Manager guy."

Next to the Maxim was an ammo can full of linked .303 ammo. It was dusty, but it didn't look corroded. "Screw the inventory, man! Help me carry this thing down to the range!"

MHI HEADQUARTERS

MHI's headquarters is a large compound located in a heavily forested area near the small town of Cazador, Alabama (population 682, give or take). Cazador's about an hour south of Montgomery. Be sure to tour the catfish plant sometime; it's fascinating.

For a variety of reasons MHI values its privacy, so getting to the compound isn't easy. The road in through the woods barely qualifies as paved and doesn't have a sign; typically, the only people who come here are ones we give directions to. And the road off of it to the compound proper is just covered in gravel. If that's not enough to keep most folks away, the "No Trespassing" and "Trespassers Will Be Shot" signs usually do the trick.

The main part of the compound is surrounded by a twelve-foot-high chain link fence topped by razor wire; we patrol the fence at least once a week to make sure there are no breaks. Usually that duty's assigned to newbies, so trust me, you'll get familiar with the borders of the property.

We usually leave the gate open, so we can come and go easily, but there's always at least one armed person on guard. For that matter, most Hunters usually have at least a handgun on them when they're at the compound, and more than a few will be carrying heavy weapons to and from the gun range and so forth. We're never unprepared.

THE MAIN BUILDING

The main building in the center of the compound is a large, two-story structure whose exterior walls are made of reinforced concrete — they can withstand some serious damage. From above the building looks a little like a wide, squat bullfrog according to some Hunters.

Inside you'll find a small reception area where Dorcas Peabody keeps watch, the offices for our small administrative staff, meeting rooms, workrooms, a dining hall, and so on. There are also private residence rooms for Hunters assigned to teams based out of headquarters. It's not the most comfortable home in the world, but it's better than a Holiday Inn (or the barracks).



The Basement Level

Lastly, there's a large, reinforced underground level that's off-limits to trainees. That's where we keep the archives (see below), storage rooms for a bunch of stuff that's not dangerous but we want to hold on to, and other storerooms for things we don't want in public view.

The underground level also has a tactical purpose. It includes tunnels connecting every major building in the compound, and more than a few secret passages as well. In

the event of an attack on the compound (such as Martin Hood's assault with his undead army) or other situations where we don't want someone to see us moving around, we can use the tunnels. But they usually remain unused for months or years at a time. Any Hunter caught in the tunnels without permission or a *really* good reason will be severely disciplined.

The Ward Stone

Until the Martin Hood incident, the compound was protected by a powerful magical artifact: a ward stone. A ward stone looks like a granite sphere covered with rows of strange symbols and glyphs; the rows can be rotated. When properly set, it shields an area against undead, demons, and similar creatures: any who enter the protected area are almost immediately destroyed. Unfortunately, Owen Pitt and Agent Franks had to use it as a weapon to slay the Dread Overlord, one of the Old Ones. We're hoping to find another one to replace it sometime (since the secret of making them has apparently been lost); in the meantime, the compound's much more vulnerable than it once was.

Other Security Systems

We've never relied on just the ward stone to protect the compound. In addition to the fence (which admittedly won't keep out most determined attackers), the compound is covered by a state-of-the-art closed-circuit TV monitoring system. The cameras also view the public interior areas of the compound's buildings. The system feeds to three banks of monitors: one at Dorcas Peabody's desk; one in the basement; and one in DoO Harbinger's office.

We updated our security systems after Martin Hood's attack and continue to evaluate them month by month and make any improvements we can based on advances in technology, improvements to our budget, and so forth. Ideally, we'd

JUSTINIAN MALLEUS & HIS LEGION

MHI headquarters has been fortunate enough to acquire the services of an unusual ally: a colony of intelligent rats that lives in the compound. The subjects of an experiment by an unknown government agency, the rats used their newfound sentience to escape the facility. Having read about Earl Harbinger in a file at the facility, they made their way to Cazador, hoping he'd help them. After they assisted in finding and destroying a monster that a disgruntled janitor had summoned, they were allowed to stay. They continue to patrol the compound for other threats too small for humans to notice at first.

A large, white rat named Justinian Malleus leads the colony, which has patterned its own civilization on the Roman Empire. They fight with weapons and armor they make from scrounged materials. For example, an X-acto knife blade makes a fine spearhead.



like to reach the point where we have automated security weapons systems in addition to just monitoring, but that sort of tech isn't reliable enough for us yet.

THE ARCHIVES

The archives are the most important thing on the basement level, and the only part of that level most of you are ever likely to visit. This is where we keep all the written records of MHI's activities dating back to 1895, a copy of every report ever filed by any of our Hunters, compilations of everything we've ever learned about various monsters, books about supernatural threats, and other things like that.

Just as important are all the books and papers we've seized from wizards and cultists over the decades. Some of that stuff is extremely dangerous and definitely shouldn't be allowed to fall into the hands of ordinary people — even we don't mess around with it any more than we have to. Following the incidents involving Raymond Shackleford IV and Martin Hood, access to the “occult” section of the archives is strictly

regulated. Those materials are kept under lock and key by our archivist Albert Lee (see above), and you have to get permission from both him and DoO Harbinger to read any of those books.

The archives suffered significant damage on December 15, 1995, when Raymond IV set fire to them before casting the spell he thought would bring his wife Susan back to life. Many books and records from before that time were destroyed or badly damaged. Some of what was lost was unique and can never be recovered; we're still doing what we can to replace other items or preserve what data still exists.

THE ARMORY

If you're like most of us, one part of the compound where you'll spend a lot of time is the armory. It contains thousands of guns in a variety that exceeds most gun shows, ammunition, and many other implements of destruction.

The armory is a reinforced concrete bunker sunk into the ground. The only way in is a bomb-proof metal door that's kept locked at all times. DoO Harbinger, various other



officers and administrators, and Dorcas Peabody all have keys if you need to get inside to pick up a new or extra weapon. The cost of any weapons or ammo you get from the armory are deducted from your next paycheck.

While the armory has a weapon for just about any preference or purpose, most of what you'll find in there is chambered for MHI's preferred calibers: .45 ACP for handguns; .308 (7.62x51mm) for rifles; 12 gauge for shotguns. Those are the calibers we buy our special silver ammunition for. If you want to use some other type of firearm we won't stop you, but don't come crying to us if logistics problems make life difficult for you.

THE BARRACKS

MHI has two barracks for trainees: one for men; one for women. When there are no trainee classes we also use these as accommodations for certain visitors (such as Hunters from Affiliate Program companies who've come to Cazador for some training).

Each barracks is a prefabricated building shaped like an H. The two "wings" are lined with spartan, one-person sleeping quarters and have a bathroom and showers on each end. The walls are covered with posters, pictures, and graffiti from decades of new Hunters living there. The central "bar" is the common area. In addition to a small kitchen and eating area, it includes a rec room with a pool table, big-screen TV, video games, some books, and so on. On a typical evening you'll find most of the Cazador-based Hunters, along with any trainees currently on site, relaxing in one of these two rooms. There are doors in and out in each wing opposite the bar.

THE BODY SHACK

In one corner of the compound, far away from the other buildings due to the smell (which gets through despite lots of air conditioning) is the body shack. That's where we keep the corpses of monsters



we kill that we need for training or study purposes, and the bodies of any Hunters slain in battle until we can give them a Hunter's Funeral (see below). It's not a particularly pleasant place by any stretch of the imagination, but it's a necessary one.

THE GUN RANGE

We do a lot of firearms training here at MHI, and even those of us who don't necessarily need lots of practice still enjoy cranking off a few thousand rounds just for fun. So, it should come as no surprise that MHI has an excellent gun range. We used bulldozers to create a large berm of Alabama red clay soil to absorb the rounds and put a separate chain link fence around it so that no one (person or animal) accidentally wanders out onto the field of fire.

Typically, we set up the gun range for close-range or distance accuracy shooting. But if necessary for training purposes we can erect an entire fake "town" for Hunters to maneuver through, obstacle courses to test Hunters' ability to fire on the move in difficult circumstances, and other special "sets." Our most difficult training set is the Zombie Maze; the current record holder is Owen Pitt, who made it through in 2:46 with a 96% kill rating on zombies and no innocents shot. DoO Harbinger has a standing offer to buy a beer for anyone who can top that.

MILO'S WORKSHOP

Located near the gun range — far enough from anything else that an accidental explosion or weapon misfire probably won't damage the other buildings or hurt anyone — is Milo Anderson's workshop. It's a large, prefabricated building made primarily of corrugated steel and metal girders.

Milo's our resident mad genius, inventor, and ace gunsmith; his workshop is where he spends most of his time. Other Hunters

go there when they need his help repairing a weapon, making a new weapon, or fixing something broken. The workshop's filled with all sorts of tools: drill presses; welders; lathes; hand tools; you name it. Usually you can hear the sound of grinding, banging, or cutting long before you walk through the door. More dangerous still are the various half-completed weapons design projects Milo leaves lying around. A word of advice: don't touch *anything* in the workshop unless Milo says it's okay. You'll be happier that way and keep more of your fingers.



Milo Anderson

THE MOTOR POOL & HANGAR

Located on the far end of the property, next to the airstrip we cut out of the Alabama forest and paved back in the Seventies, is our motor pool and hangar. It's the domain of our chief pilot and mechanic Skippy (see [Page 71](#)).

Our Cars

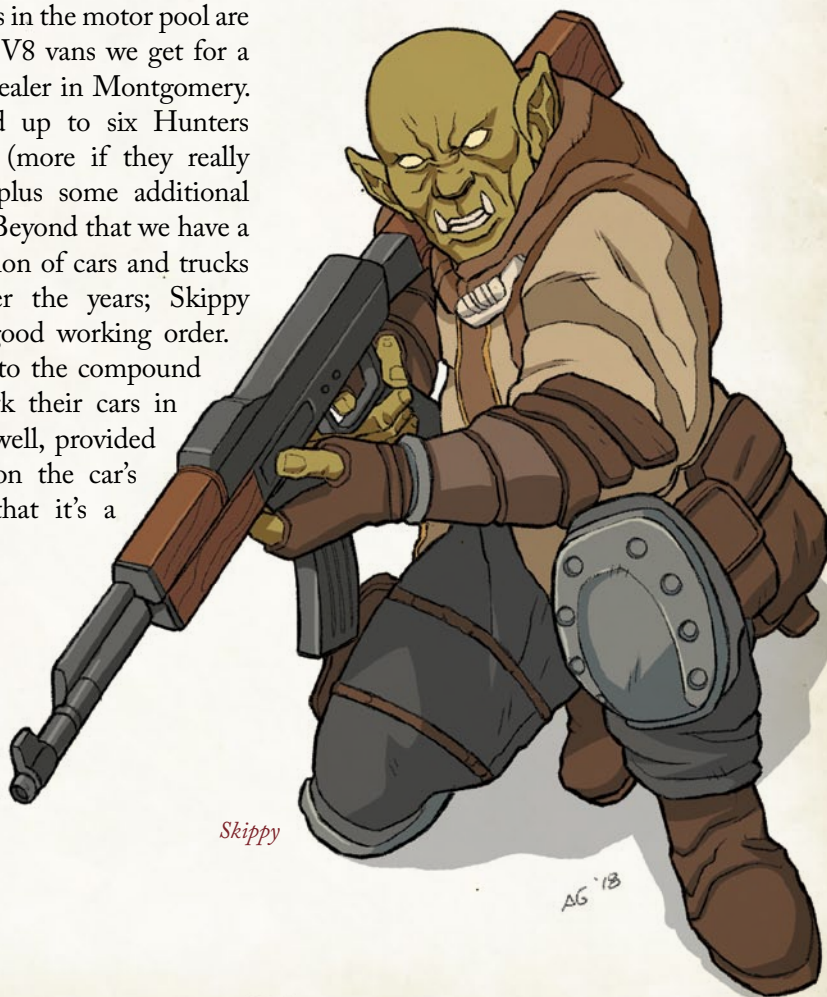
The motor pool isn't much more than a simple corrugated steel carport to keep the sun and rain off our vehicles. If you need to check one out for some reason, see Dorcas in the main building; she has all the keys and the sign-up list. Skippy also has keys to all the vehicles; he leaves them hanging on a hook in the hangar if he's away from the compound.

Most of the vehicles in the motor pool are black, supercharged V8 vans we get for a good price from a dealer in Montgomery. Each one can hold up to six Hunters with all their gear (more if they really like one another), plus some additional equipment in back. Beyond that we have a miscellaneous selection of cars and trucks we've obtained over the years; Skippy keeps them all in good working order. Hunters who drive to the compound are welcome to park their cars in the motor pool as well, provided they put a notice on the car's dashboard stating that it's a private vehicle.

Our Plane and Helicopter

MHI also has two aircraft. The first, but least used, is a cargo plane we bought surplus from the US Postal Service years ago. When we need to get a group of Hunters to an incident site as quickly as possible, that's how we do it — after all, on MHI Airlines you don't have to pass through a metal detector before getting on the plane with all your guns and grenades.

The other vehicle, which we get a lot more use out of in the average year, is our helicopter. It's a surplus MI-24 Hind we bought from a "dealer" in Russia after the Soviet Union collapsed. We've painted it white and red, partly to keep people from thinking the "black helicopters" are coming after them, and partly to make it look



Skippy

something like a medevac chopper so that it doesn't raise anyone's suspicions. (In keeping with the MHI spirit, though, it also has a pair of sharp-toothed jaws painted around the cockpit.) It doesn't have any mounted weapons (we replaced them with extra fuel tanks and gear compartments), but we can re-mount them if absolutely necessary (such as during the final confrontation with Martin Hood and his arbmunep in New Zealand). It can carry up to eight fully-gearied Hunters, or more if some of them don't mind standing on the runners or hanging off the wing pylons (which has been necessary during a couple of emergency evacuations from danger zones).

The helicopter in particular is Skippy's "baby." He keeps it in tip-top shape (though if you look closely you may see where Tanya, our resident elf, has drawn some elven magic runes on it). Don't say anything bad about it in his hearing — and *definitely* don't scratch or damage it in any way!

THE WALL OF HONOR AND THE CEMETERY

Hunting is a dangerous profession — and unfortunately fate does not always favor those who fight the good fight. The blunt truth is that some of you will die in the line of duty, as hundreds of other MHI Hunters have before you. We advise you to write a will and make any other preparations for your possible demise.

To pay our respects to our fallen brothers and sisters, we long ago created the *Wall of Honor* in the main building. Every Hunter who gets killed fighting monsters is commemorated with a small, silver plaque. It's not much, but sometimes the little things are what counts — and it's best that none of us forget those who came before us.

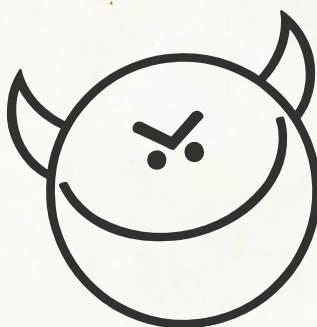
Since many Hunters have little or no family outside of MHI itself, the compound also has a small cemetery located outside the fence. Any Hunter who wants to be buried there simply has to let Dorcas know so she can make a note in her personnel records.

Hunter's Funeral

Before we bury anyone in our cemetery we make sure he gets what we call a *Hunter's funeral*. This is our way of ensuring that the deceased doesn't come back as a zombie or some other type of undead. It's mandatory for any Hunter who's ever been bitten by an undead or a lycanthrope, but virtually all Hunters volunteer for it just in case. It involves cutting the head off the body as soon as possible after death, and then cremating the remains until they're nothing but ash. No one's ever come back to life after that.

The Orc Village

Also, outside the compound, and a good distance further away than the cemetery, down a road so narrow and choked with vegetation most people don't even see it, live some of our allies: a tribe of friendly orcs. We have to keep them hidden from the world because they're PUFF-eligible, but we're willing to go that extra mile not only out of loyalty and respect but because they've been darn helpful to us many times. You can read more about them on [page 70](#).



CHAPTER 3: RECRUITMENT, TRAINING, & THE JOB

So now you've got a basic idea of what MHI's about and how we do business. How do you fit into the picture?

RECRUITMENT

Lots of people encounter monsters every year — but only a few make it to MHI. Most of them end up as monster chow, or are traumatized by the experience, or simply don't ever want to think about what happened to them. And that's fine; it's the normal human reaction to the supernatural.

We recruited you to come to MHI training because you *didn't* have that normal human reaction. First and foremost, you didn't freeze up when the monster came at you — you reacted, did something about it, fought back. Most people, even most people with combat or law enforcement training, can't do that when faced with the supernatural. But you're different, and that difference makes you a potential monster hunter.

Some people think of it as willpower. Some talk about "survival instinct." Others prefer to attribute it to dumb luck. But here at MHI, our term for it, and our informal motto, is this: *flexible minds*. You, and the other people here at MHI, have minds that are flexible enough to handle the existence of the supernatural and not panic. You know how to keep your head in a situation where everyone else's gut reaction is "Run!". That means you can hunt monsters without becoming useless every time you see some horror that looks like it belongs in a Hollywood movie rather than real life.

Here at MHI we monitor the news for reports of things we recognize as cover-ups for monster attacks — once you're in this business long enough, you'll learn to spot a phony news story cooked up by the Monster Control Bureau. We also have plenty of friends, allies, and contacts around the country who alert us to strange goings-on. And when we learn about a supernatural incident, we look into it ourselves in the hope of finding some potential recruits. And as all of you have already know, when we find someone who fits our profile, we show up and give him the pitch. You listened — and now you're here, about to embark on an exciting new stage of your life. Pay attention, do what your instructors tell you, and above all don't get killed. We need all the good help we can find.

TRAINING

The MHI training program isn't quite like anything you've been through, not even if you're a former Navy SEAL. Monster hunting is a unique profession, and that means our training program has to be unique as well. Here's some of what you're going to learn during our two-month training program. Everyone goes through the same routine, regardless of whether we expect you'll end up in one of our administrative or research positions or plan to put you out on the sharp end of the spear killing monsters.

PHYSICAL FITNESS

Monster hunting is a physically demanding occupation, so first and foremost we're going to make sure you're up to the task. A lot of Hunters come to us in great shape — either their former jobs required them to stay in shape (soldiers, cops, firefighters...), or they're just the sort of people that like to work out and keep fit. For them, this part of the training program is easy; they might even think it's fun.

For the rest of you, it's anything but. Maybe you spent your days working in a cubicle where the only exercise you ever got was walking to the coffee machine, or maybe your idea of relaxing was to veg out in front of the TV with a bag of potato chips. You're not going to enjoy this part of training *at all*. In fact, you may decide that your PT instructors are the most malicious torturers on Earth. But by the time the training program's done you'll be a lean, mean,

monster hunting machine — and you'll thank your instructors for all the work they put in. You'll have more self-confidence, too, and will probably even look better.

FIREARMS AND WEAPONS TRAINING

You can't kill monsters with harsh words and nasty looks. You need weapons — and you need to know how to use them efficiently and effectively. Forget everything you've seen on TV or in the movies; most of it's crap. MHI's going to teach you how firearms really work in combat.

Again, for many of you this won't really be anything new. A large percentage of our recruits are either gun nuts by personal preference, or once belonged to professions where they used guns on a daily basis. But a lot of you have never had your hands on a firearm, or at the very least not on automatic weaponry like submachine guns and assault



rifles. You're going to learn how to use every sort of gun, and plenty of other weapons besides: grenades; knives; RPGs; sharp wooden stakes; and anything else we can think of. By the time we're done you'll be able to shoot accurately, fight effectively, and blow the crap out of any monster you meet.

TACTICS

Of course, there's more to hunting monsters than just knowing which end of the gun to point in their direction. A lot of the creatures we hunt are more than a match for any one Hunter, no matter how well he's armed or how skilled he is. So, we're also going to teach you tactics for fighting monsters in small units. You'll learn how to work effectively with other Hunters, how to cover each other so no one's vulnerable, how to trap your targets in interlocking fields of fire, how to make the most effective use of all the assets you have on your team, and lots more.

MONSTERS

Going along with that, we're going to teach you plenty about the different types of monsters you're likely to encounter during your career as a Hunter, beginning with the *Introduction to Common Monsters* class. We can't possibly cover everything, particularly since we seem to encounter new monsters and learn new things about existing types every year. But we're going to make sure you're thoroughly versed in the fundamentals before you take the field. For example, you'll learn the differences between a zombie, a ghoul, and a wight — and the special powers and weaknesses of each one. See the *Our Targets* section of this handbook, below, for a preview of the basics you'll go over in the classroom. As always, if you want detailed information about any type of monster, consult your *MHI Field Manual* or visit the archives.

THE DISGUSTING STUFF

Monster hunting ain't pretty. It wouldn't do you or your teammates any good if you wiggled out at your first encounter with some disgusting or distasteful aspect of the job. We make sure to expose you to that sort of thing during training so that you get used to it and don't hesitate in the field.

For example, you're going to learn how to chop the head off a body. We have to do that with a lot of monsters (like zombies), but it's also an important part of the "Hunter's Funeral" that was mentioned above. You need to be able to separate a creature's head from its shoulders quickly and cleanly, without balking because of the blood.

The worst part of this aspect of training as far as most newbies are concerned is the *Gut Crawl*. Every newbie class two or three trainees quit rather than do it. It involves crawling through a narrow pipe that's filled with cow entrails — and probably some vomit from the trainees who went before you. It's the least pleasant thing you'll do in training, hands down, but if you can't handle it, better that you (and we) find out now rather than when lives are on the line.

GRADUATION & TEAM ASSIGNMENT

Not everyone who begins MHI training completes it. In fact, we lose a rather large percentage of each recruiting class — not to accidents or monster attacks, but because they can't live up to our standards or simply decide this sort of work's not for them. That's fine with us. Our job is difficult, and we don't want anyone out in the field with us who isn't 100% committed to the task and confident in his abilities. If at any time you decide you want to quit training, all you have to do is tell DoO Harbinger or one of the other instructors.

If you quit, or we let you go, you'll be sent home with a fat severance check. Just keep in mind that talking about MHI, or monsters, or any other such thing is likely to earn you something else entirely: an unpleasant (and possibly fatal) visit from Monster Control Bureau agents.

On the other hand, if you work hard, learn what you're taught, and show the right amount of intestinal fortitude, you'll graduate from the MHI training program and be ready for field duty as a full-fledged Hunter. DoO Harbinger will assign you to a specific regional team based on his evaluation of your skills and the needs of the various teams. For example, if Team Vegas just lost a Hunter who was a skilled sniper, and you did really well on your distance marksmanship tests, there's a good chance you'll find yourself working as Vegas's new sniper.

It's MHI's policy to try to have at least one person with strong religious faith on each team. Faith can be a powerful weapon against vampires and some other monsters, and we never deprive ourselves of a weapon if we can avoid it. Sure, a lot of us are cynical bastards, but plenty of Hunters have legitimate religious convictions, so we try to make sure each team gets its fair share of them.

Earning Your Pay: PUFF Bounties

As an employee of MHI, your pay consists of a cut of the PUFF bounties we earn, together with a share of money received from contract work. You don't get to keep all the PUFF bounty you earn from monsters you kill on the job. The PUFF is one of our primary sources of funding, so some of that money goes to the company to defray our considerable expenses and to compensate Hunters who may not

have seen any action recently. (Don't complain — sometimes you'll be the one who gets the short end of the stick and you'll be glad the company rules make sure you still get a paycheck.) Some of it also gets spread around the rest of your team, since most monster kills are team efforts to some degree. (On the bright side, this means you get a piece of the pie when one of your teammates plugs some zombie right in the brainpan.)

Here's the usual breakdown for missions involving a single team:

- 40% of a PUFF bounty is retained by the company
- 30% of a PUFF bounty goes to the individual Hunter considered to have "primary responsibility" for the kill (usually it's obvious who this is; in the event of a dispute the team's leader or DoO Harbinger makes a decision, and that's final)
- 30% of the PUFF bounty is distributed equally among all other teammates (or if no one can fairly be designated as the primary killer, all 60% is divided equally among the team)

On the other hand, if a mission involves multiple teams, that final 30% earned on each kill by either team is put into a pool, and the entire pool divided equally among all teams' members. In the case of what are deemed "company-wide" efforts, the 30% (or sometimes the entire 60%) is pooled and divided equally among all MHI personnel (including administrative employees back at the compound who probably weren't anywhere near the fighting).

MHI EQUIPMENT

Compared to a military or government agency, MHI is pretty relaxed about its equipment policies. We know that a lot of our Hunters have their own opinions about which weapon's best (or at least which ones they prefer), so if they want to use something "unusual," we don't mind. However, that being said, we do have certain company preferences about firearms and other gear — in part because we can't afford to order our special anti-monster ammunition for twenty different calibers. So, it's probably in your best interest to stick to our preferred gear for at least some of your weapons.

FIREARMS

Aside perhaps from your body armor (see below), the single most important pieces of gear in your kit are your weapons — which primarily means firearms. After all, our job is killing monsters, so you need the right tools to get that job done.

For rifles, MHI's preference is for .308 caliber (7.62x51mm NATO), though some Hunters favor .223 (5.56x45mm NATO) and we may soon be able to get our special ammunition in that caliber. We recently added silver .300 Blackout for use in suppressed weapons. If you don't have a rifle of your own that you'd rather use, MHI will issue you an AR-10 variant.

For handguns, MHI strongly prefers .45 ACP caliber — in our experience, due to the amount of silver delivered smaller handgun rounds have less effect on many of the monsters we fight. In fact, unless you get special permission from your team leader to carry something else, you'll be required to carry a .45 handgun, so we know you have at least one firearm with silver bullets. We have handguns from many reputable manufacturers for you to choose from during training.

For shotguns, MHI uses 12 gauge, in the most common type of military and law enforcement form of such weapons.

For submachine guns, MHI favors .45 ACP, thus allowing handgun and SMG ammo to be interchanged if necessary.

MHI's Anti-Monster Ammunition

The reason we favor the specific calibers listed above is that we need special ammunition to fight many of the monsters we face. A lot of them laugh at ordinary lead slugs — but they feel very differently about silver. So, we have a special type of round that we order in .30 and .45 caliber. It's got a silver ball in the front hollow of an otherwise lead bullet. This allows the bullet to engage the rifling properly (thus ensuring accuracy), and the silver causes serious problems for monsters like werewolves. As it impacts the target the silver ball's pushed back, expanding the lead for a larger wound cavity, and then usually fragments off to create a separate wound cavity of its own.

Similarly, our special shotgun shells are filled with silver pellets.

Other Weapons

Of course, we don't rely on guns alone. There are plenty of other ways to wreak destruction and havoc on monsters, and some of them are downright necessary against tougher monsters. Other types of weapons we can provide include:

- knives, hatchets, and other bladed weapons: the perfect thing for relieving some zombie or vampire of its head.
- grenades: we have to be careful about using these, particularly in inhabited areas, but sometimes a little extra bang for the buck is what's needed to bring a monster down. We also have white phosphorus and smoke grenades for other tactical uses.

- rocket-propelled grenades (RPGs): even more bang for the buck. These are expensive, though, so we save them for particularly dangerous monsters and missions.

MHI BODY ARMOR

MHI will also issue you special body armor. It consists primarily of a thick layer of stab-proof Kevlar, since we run into monsters with claws and fangs far more frequently than we do opponents armed with guns. The same sorts of fibers are sewn into the arms and legs, and into a turtleneck-like throat guard you can raise to protect your neck against bites. The torso armor's also rated as equivalent to an IIIA bulletproof vest, and there are pockets where you can put ceramic or metal inserts for even more protection.

Each suit comes with two pairs of gloves. One provides light protection while still allowing a high degree of dexterity; the other are heavy armored gauntlets perfect for brawling. You can attach the heavy gloves to the end of the armor's sleeves in case you need to put them on mid-fight.

We'll also provide you with two helmets. The first is a simple, lightweight one made from a modified hockey helmet. The other looks like a motorcycle helmet on steroids. It's got a full visor and face shield and attaches to the neck guard, giving a fully-armored Hunter full body protection against bites.

MHI body armor also includes a load-bearing harness with pouches and attachments for extra magazines, tools, a medical kit, more weapons, or whatever else you want to carry. Built into the shoulder of the harness is a CO2 cartridge you can activate if you fall into deep water; it inflates the harness, so you don't drown. Lastly, each set of armor has a GPS tracker for navigation, and so that we can find you if you're unconscious or dead.

OTHER GEAR

Over the years we've discovered that all sorts of other gear is useful in monster hunting, and we're ready and able to issue it to you.

One thing we absolutely insist on are our electronic earplugs. They serve two functions: first, they block out loud noises, so all the gunfire and explosions you'll hear on the job don't deafen you; second, they provide a radio link between you and the rest of your team. We advise that you keep them with you at all times.

You'll also find that a flashlight is crucial on many missions. Most Hunters attach one to their rifle, but you might want to carry a separate one with you, just in case.

Other gear you should consider: zip-ties; plastic bags or vials for collecting samples (necessary for research, or sometimes to claim a PUFF bounty); a field medical kit (every team in the field should have at least two, if not more); a folding knife; a multitool; a digital camera; a micro recorder; matches/cigarette lighter.

MHI POLICIES & PROCEDURES

We've discussed some of MHI's policies and practices in passing above. Here are a few more you need to be aware of.

FRATERNIZATION

Given how many of us have met our spouses or significant others on the job, it would be pretty hypocritical of us to establish a "no fraternization" policy — so we haven't. However, MHI definitely discourages fraternization among Hunters, for the simple reason that it can interfere with your judgment in combat situations. When you and your team are fighting a vampire or a pack of werewolves, you need to be 100% focused on the task

at hand if you're going to come out the other side victorious and in one piece. If you're devoting some of your attention to worrying about whether your girlfriend or boyfriend is OK, that just makes it all the more likely that you'll both end up needing a Hunter's Funeral. So, our advice is to keep things professional.

SECURITY AND SECRECY

MHI isn't exactly the CIA, but we still have a need for organizational security and secrecy. First, there's the simple fact that we have a lot of competition for the monster hunting dollar (see *Other Monster Hunting Organizations*, below). Anything they learn about how we do things, what contracts we have, or the like gives them an edge. Second, even if that weren't enough, we've got the MCB breathing down our backs every day. If we were to inadvertently reveal the existence of the supernatural to the world at large, the Bureau would shut us down so fast your head wouldn't even have time to spin.

What all that boils down to is this: *keep your mouth shut*. We talk about our job all the time at the compound or when we're in our team headquarters, and that's fine. But don't let that level of comfort creep into the rest of your life. If you go out to eat with other Hunters, don't discuss work in public places where other people might overhear. If you have a blog, don't mention anything about your job on it. (The same goes for any other sort of "talk" on the Internet.) If you keep a journal, don't openly discuss monster hunting in it.

Similarly, we suggest that you have a cover story ready in case you slip up and accidentally talk about something you shouldn't. Some of the tried and true favorites we've used over the years include:

- "We were talking about a roleplaying game. My character's an 8th level paladin; want me to tell you about him?"
- "We were discussing this great book we read in our book club."
- "We're writers; we're collaborating on a novel together."
- "We were just talking about this awesome session of *Monster Destroyer Alpha-XII* that we were playing on the Xbox the other day."

If all else fails, acting like a crazy person usually scares away the curious. Just be careful not to carry it so far that someone thinks you're dangerous and calls the cops to haul you in.

LAWS & GOVERNMENTAL REGULATIONS

The government is a constant pain in our ass. There are some folks in the MCB who are just itching for any opportunity to shut MHI down again so the Bureau controls monster hunting in the US. The IRS keeps an eagle eye on our taxes. The EPA has questions about how we dispose of monsters. OSHA questions the safety of our workplace. BATF wants even more paperwork about our weapons. And on and on and on, an endless stream of bureaucratic demands and oversight.

We don't like any of it, but the blunt truth is that we have to live with it. And most of it, as annoying as it is, is well-intentioned. So, it's the responsibility of you and every other MHI employee to do his best to operate within the strict confines of the law. The last thing we want to do is give any of these paper-pushers enough rope to hang us — our existence is precarious enough at the best of times.

Here's what that means:

- Whenever you have to deal with an MCB agent, EPA inspector, or any other government official, *be as polite and diplomatic as possible*. No matter how much these people might annoy us with their petty power trips, they hold our ability to operate as a company in their hands, so getting them riled up is absolutely pointless. Don't be snide, sarcastic, insulting, or rude to them. Respond in your calmest, most professional tone. If they ask you something you don't know or aren't comfortable answering, refer them to a higher-up, such as your team leader, Julie Shackelford, or DoO Harbinger. Do not, under any circumstances, refer them to Milo Anderson.
- If you use any personal firearms or other weapons on the job, make sure the licenses, permits, and other

paperwork for them is *100% correct and up to date*. The least little slip-up in this department and you could find yourself arrested, your guns confiscated, and the company you work for in a whole mess of bureaucratic hurt. So, do us all a favor and make sure it never becomes a problem. If for some reason your little brain can't handle this, talk to Dorcas Peabody; she's thoroughly familiar with what has to be done and can assist you.

- Similarly, *make sure you have a valid concealed carry permit for any jurisdiction you routinely operate in*. In fact, you might want to go ahead and get one for the surrounding states as well, just in case. We know you're going to carry concealed weapons; all of us do, too. But we don't want you to cause us (or yourself) any unnecessary hassle, so do the damn paperwork.



CHAPTER 4:

MEET YOUR COMMANDERS & TEAMMATES

EARL HARBINGER

Background/History: Earl Harbinger was born Raymond Shackleford II, the son of Bubba Shackleford, the founder of MHI, in 1900. As a kid he frequently tagged along on monster hunting missions without his father's permission. When he at last joined the family business formally, he proved to be just as tough and talented at it as his father was. When Bubba Shackleford died, Raymond II became owner of MHI, though he wasn't yet old enough to lead Hunters in the field.

Aside from taking a leave of absence to lie about his age and go fight in World War I (where his knowledge of monsters came in very handy several times), Raymond II ran the company from 1915 until 1925. Late in that year he had the misfortune to be badly mauled by a werewolf. At his request the company created the cover story that he'd been killed in action, and Raymond II went off in search of a cure — or a way to end his life.

After spending a few months tracking the werewolf who'd made him into one to Havana and killing her (in the futile hope that this would reverse his curse), Raymond II found himself bereft of hope. Determined not to inflict his curse on the world, he decided to kill himself, but he was saved from suicide by an old priest, Santiago, who knew something of monsters. Santiago first recruited him to kill a luska (thus proving to him he still had worth in this life) and then arranged to take him to an isolated, uninhabited island where he could somehow come to grips with his curse.

Three years passed, with Santiago the only human contact Raymond II had. By 1929 he'd learned to master the beast within such as no werewolf before him ever had (and few, if any, have since). He returned to MHI, though only his son Raymond III and a few others knew who he really was.

But nothing good lasts forever. With World War II looming on the horizon, the government learned about Raymond II's existence and affliction and insisted he come to work for them to earn a PUFF exemption. He was assigned to a branch of the newly-formed Office of Strategic Services known as "Operation Unicorn." He became one of the US's most valued and accomplished supernatural assets. He spent most of his time in the European theater of operations, where he fought and destroyed numerous monsters, sorcerers, and other mystical horrors fielded by Nazi Germany. He was part of the task force that invaded Hitler's bunker, where he obtained a ward stone that MHI used to protect its compound for decades.

After WWII ended, Raymond II returned home, his PUFF exemption secure — until the Korean War, when the government again forced him into service. After that he had over a decade of civilian monster hunting until the US decided it needed his help in Vietnam. Giving him the code name "Mr. Wolf," it assigned him to Special Task Force Unicorn. (Other members of STFU included the half-siren Sharon Mangum, the minotaur Travis Alamo Sam Houston, and Auhangamea "the Destroyer" Pitt, future father of Owen Z. Pitt.)

STFU wreaked havoc on enemy forces throughout Southeast Asia, encountering only one serious form of opposition: A Communist team of supernaturals led by the Russian werewolf Nikolai Petrov, who became a particular nemesis of Raymond II's. After Petrov destroyed most of STFU, the unit was disbanded, and Raymond II sent home, his PUFF exemption once again earned. Based on an idea given him by his translator, he adopted the alias "Earl Harbinger" once he returned to monster hunting work.

Since then Harbinger has served as MHI's Director of Operations, overseeing not only an unprecedented expansion of the company and the arrival of Owen Pitt but such tragedies as the 1995 Christmas massacre. Adam Conover and Lucinda Hood briefly stripped him of his lycanthropy during the Copper Lake incident, but he allowed Nikolai Petrov to transform him back into a werewolf, so he could defeat Conover. He's the most experienced monster hunter in the world, and without him MHI would have a lot more trouble fighting evil and earning bounties.

Personality/Motivation:

Earl Harbinger is a serious, mission-minded, no-nonsense sort. It's not that he's humorless — he appreciates a good joke as much as the next guy — so much as it is that he has priorities in life. Getting the job done and keeping the world safe from monsters takes

precedence over just about everything else. Similarly, he tends to see the world in black and white, morally absolute terms: there's right and there's wrong, and nothing in between.

Harbinger's very protective of his family, and of MHI in general. He's smart enough not to rile up the MCB or the rest of the government unnecessarily, but he'll step right up to that line in an effort to ensure that his company can do its job the way he wants to do it, not the way the MCB wants him to. And heaven help anyone who hurts one of his kin, or a Hunter under his command.

The same goes for the current object of his affections, Heather Kerkonen — the only woman he's been romantically involved with for literally decades. He can't keep her out of STFU's

clutches as long as she has to earn her PUFF exemption, but there's no doubt that if she gets hurt because the Task Force risks her life unnecessarily he'll find out who's to blame and see that they get what they deserve.

Quote: "See, I bear a curse. You learn to deal with it, or it deals with you."

Powers/Tactics: Earl Harbinger is a werewolf. In fact, he's *the* werewolf, the King of the Werewolves as some would put it, and as such has established certain rules for the werewolf community to follow. (Though far more of them disobey his rules than obey them.) Only the most foolish of werewolves fails to cower and offer respect in his presence.



Even compared to most of his lupine brethren, Harbinger is terrifyingly powerful. He's twice as fast and strong as a regular werewolf, with greater intelligence and more acute senses to boot. Decades of experience have given him far greater control over his transformations as well. Except for the three nights of the full moon (when he has MHI restrain him either in a concrete room with a steel door in the basement of the compound, or in a small building near the slave quarters at the old Shackelford estate) he almost never transforms into his werewolf form against his will.

On top of all that, Harbinger's the most experienced monster hunter in the world. He's been on the job for almost a century and has killed more monsters than most Hunters will ever see in their lives. He's killed them on every continent and two alternate realities. If you need to know something about a strange or obscure monster, ask Harbinger; the odds are he'll have some useful information for you. Similarly, he knows just about everyone who's anyone in the Hunting World; his contacts among other Hunters around the globe, US government officials, and savvy corporate execs are second to none.

In combat Harbinger prefers to stick to his human form (if for no other reason to keep his secret as much as possible) and rely on his combat skills and conventional weaponry. He favors the good old-fashioned Thompson .45 submachine gun but is capable with just about any gun ever created. His MHI

body armor has special release buckles so he can get out of it quickly if he needs to change into wolf-man form (or if he feels an involuntary transformation taking over). It's also a little less bulky and protective than the standard suit, since speed and stealth are more important to a werewolf than protection. Even better than his MHI armor is his minotaur-hide jacket, made from the skin of his old friend Travis Alamo Sam Houston. When wearing the jacket (which unfortunately doesn't fit under his MHI body armor), Harbinger's practically invulnerable to attacks against his torso or arms. During his lifetime he's been shot more than 150 times, clawed or bitten



more times than he can remember, hit by a train, and subjected to just about every other form of abuse you can imagine — and he's still around and ready for a fight.

Harbinger is utterly fearless. Even Adam Conover, the Alpha, couldn't smell the stink of fear upon him during their confrontation. Anyone who hopes to intimidate or scare Harbinger in any way is doomed to disappointment.

Until Heather Kerkenon earns her PUFF exemption, Harbinger is the only lycanthrope in the world not subject to PUFF. But even at that he's sorts of "on probation" — the MCB keeps an eye on him and would be quick to kill him if it felt he had gone out of control. And it's always possible someone in the government (such as Agent Stricken of STFU) will decide its time for Harbinger to "re-earn" his exemption by coming back to work for the USA.

During the Martin Hood incident, Harbinger was subjected to the unwelcome "attentions" of a powerful feeder demon named Rok'hasna'wrath. It was eventually driven away, but not before it had consumed some of Harbinger's memories. When appropriate, the GM can have Harbinger make an Knowledge (Common) Test to see if he still possesses an important or useful memory. If he succeeds, he does; if he fails, he's lost some or all of it (the more he fails the roll by, the more of the memory "Rocky" consumed).

Earl has invested his money well over the decades and is a much wealthier man than his appearance and habits indicate. Among other things, he owns plots of land all over the world, including several thousand acres of pristine Alaska wilderness (or at least it was pristine until a thousand or so Hunters used it as a training camp for the Severny Island assault).

Appearance: Earl Harbinger is a white man who looks like he's in his mid-forties. He's 6'1" tall, with a lean build and no visible scars. He has short-cropped, sandy blond

CODE SILVER

Not everyone in MHI knows that Harbinger's a werewolf. For the most part that information's limited to old-timers, team leaders, company officials, and other important folks. Sometimes a situation arises where they fear that Earl may lose control of himself, and that they thus might be forced to shoot him (as much as they'd hate to do that). They refer to this as a "Code Silver" situation so that they can communicate about it without revealing Harbinger's secret to the rank and file.



hair and piercing, icy blue eyes. His face is plain and cleanshaven. He has no pinky on his left hand, it having been bitten off by Nikolai Petrov during the Copper Lake incident. In the field he wears his MHI body armor (with smiling devil face patch), but most of the time he wears boots, jeans, a shirt, and his leather bomber jacket made out of minotaur hide (the jacket looks old and worn, but it's actually incredibly durable). He frequently smokes cigarettes and has an air of "old-school toughness" about him. He speaks with a more or less neutral accent, but when he gets angry his Southern twang becomes more pronounced.

Earl Harbinger (Human Form - Legendary)

Stats: Agility D12, Smarts D8, Spirit D10, Strength D12, Vigor D12

Skills: Athletics D6, Driving D6, Fighting D12+2, Intimidation D10, Research D8, Occult D12, Knowledge (bureaucracy) D6, Notice D12, Persuasion D4, Piloting D4, Shooting D10, Stealth D10, Streetwise D8, Survival D12, Swimming D6, Taunt D6, Tracking D12

Parry: 10

Toughness: 8

Hindrances

- Code of Honor
- Habit (smoking)
- Outsider (werewolf)

Werewolf Hinderances (Apply to Human Form)

- Bloodthirsty
- Vengeful (Major)
- Phobia (Silver – Major)
- -2 to all Persuasion rolls

Edges

- Brave
- Fleet-Footed
- Brawler
- Bruiser
- Improved Counterattack
- Improved Dodge
- Improved First Strike
- Improved Frenzy
- Command
- Hold The Line
- Inspire
- Professional (Fighting, Expert)
- Monster Hunter International (Team Edge)

Other Rules:

If Werewolf ever goes Berserk (by failing the Smarts roll) they automatically shift into Werewolf form.

- If they're ever touched by Silver or Wolfsbane, they automatically berserk (no roll.)
- They automatically go into werewolf form on any night with a full moon.
- Silver weapons deal +4 damage against Werewolves and no Soak rolls can be made by Werewolves against silver damage.

Earl Harbinger (Werewolf Form - Legendary)

Stats: Agility D12+4, Smarts D6, Spirit D8, Strength D12+4, Vigor D12+4

Skills: Athletics D6, Driving D6, Fighting D12+2, Intimidation D10, Research D8, Occult D12, Knowledge (bureaucracy) D6, Notice D12, Persuasion D4, Piloting D4, Shooting D10, Stealth D10, Streetwise D8, Survival D12, Swimming D6, Taunt D6, Tracking D12

Parry: 14

Toughness: 12

Hindrances

- Code of Honor
- Habit (smoking)
- Outsider (werewolf)

Werewolf Hinderances (Apply to Human Form)

- Bloodthirsty
- Vengeful (Major)
- Phobia (Silver – Major)

Edges

- Brave
- Fleet-Footed
- Brawler
- Bruiser

- Improved Counterattack
- Improved Dodge
- Improved First Strike
- Improved Frenzy
- Command
- Hold The Line
- Inspire
- Professional (Fighting, Expert)
- Monster Hunter International (Team Edge)
- Berserk

Werewolf Benefits & Drawbacks:

- Teeth & Claws (STR+D6, AP 2)
- Reach (2)
- +2 Notice (Scent)
- Low Light Vision
- Pace 10'
- +2 to resist all Environmental Effects.
- Unshake automatically at the start of their turn.
- Cannot end rage voluntarily.
- -2 to Persuasion rolls
- -2 Electronics

If Werewolf ever goes Berserk (by failing the Smarts roll) they automatically shift into Werewolf form.

- If they're ever touched by Silver or Wolfsbane, they automatically berserk (no roll.)
- They automatically go into werewolf form on any night with a full moon.
- Silver weapons deal +4 damage against Werewolves and no Soak rolls can be made by Werewolves against silver damage.

JULIE SHACKLEFORD

Background/History: Julie Shackleford, daughter of Raymond Shackleford IV and his wife Susan, is MHI's business manager and the *de facto* second in command of the company after Earl Harbinger. She's been a part of the family business from an early age — in fact her “imaginary friend” when she was four years old, Mr. Trash Bags, was a shoggoth that had been sent to attack the compound and for some inexplicable reason decided to become her friend instead. She joined her Uncle Earl on monster hunting expeditions when she was a teen, and even killed a succubus at her prom.

Julie's life took an unexpected turn when Owen Pitt joined MHI. At the time she was dating another Hunter, Grant Jefferson, but the attraction between herself and Pitt was impossible to deny. Before long she and Jefferson broke up, and she and Pitt became an item. In fact, they fell so deeply in love that during the Martin Hood incident, when it seemed likely that Owen would die from zombieism, they quickly got married. They've been enjoying a happy if Hunting-filled marital existence ever since.

During the DeSoya Caverns incident, Julie underwent another major life change. Before dying, the Guardian of the *Kumaresh Yar*, the mysterious artifact that can allow the Old Ones access to Earth, passed his powers on to her. The only sign of this so far are tattoo-like markings on her neck and stomach, but as time goes on the visual signs of her powers are likely to multiply.

During the Siege, while Owen was in the Nightmare Realm, Julie gave birth to their first child, a boy named Raymond Auhangamea Pitt. What effect his psychic powers, her Guardian powers, and general exposure to supernatural events during pregnancy will have on the child remains unknown — and of great concern to Julie and her husband.

Personality/Motivation: Julie is a strong-willed woman who's been toughened by all the things she's seen and done in her life. While she certainly has her "soft side," she rarely shows it to anyone other than her husband and her family; she feels she has to maintain a front of professionalism and strength so that her clients will respect her, and her employees do what she needs them to do. Unfortunately for her stress levels, she's something of a control freak (as her MCB dossier puts it, she likes to "fix things") and isn't as good about delegating responsibilities to her underlings as she ought to be.

Quote: "Listen, girls. I know you like that whole "bad-boy-but-I-can-change-him" thing, but real-life vampires aren't sensitive, they aren't sparkly, and they don't want to be your boyfriend. They want to *eat* you. Sucking your blood is not a euphemism, they literally want to suck your blood... out of your body. You kind of need that to, oh, not die. With vampires, when somebody says don't forget to wear protection, we're talking about body armor."

Powers/Tactics: Julie is a skilled tactician and shooter who's been fighting monsters almost her entire life. She's particularly adept at sniping; she can hit a lindwyrm in the eyestalk from a moving helicopter. Her most common weapon of choice is an accursed M14 rifle with a heavily modified Troy chassis. On her right hip

is holstered her custom-made, Commander-sized M1911A .45 semiautomatic pistol. It has a Baer slide and frame with a bobtail conversion, Heinie night sights, thin Alumagrips, and other modifications to make it a fast, accurate shooting piece. She usually carries other bits and pieces of equipment as well, and definitely a grenade or two and some extra box magazines for her M14.

In addition to her combat skills, Julie's studied ancient history, archaeology, and art, since all of those disciplines sometimes provide useful information for monster hunting. She's also a gifted negotiator and businesswoman with a knack for keeping her head when Earl or Owen might lose their tempers.

During the DeSoya Caverns incident, the last "Guardian" of the Old Ones' artifact, the barbarian Thrall, passed his powers on to Julie. Since she doesn't know exactly what they entail she's not happy about this, but there seems to be no way to get rid of them. So far, her Guardian powers have manifested in two ways. First, when she's seriously or fatally injured, she regenerates from those wounds to a state of full health in a matter of seconds or minutes. (This doesn't work against minor injuries.) Every time the powers save her life this way, they leave indelible black marks on her skin at the site of the injury (and the more



marks she has, the larger and darker they all become). Second, the marks “tingle” and “speak to” her, warning her of great danger (even if she’s asleep). They won’t necessarily alert her that there’s an ambush waiting around the next corner, but they’ll definitely let her know when a major threat to mankind, or anything involving the Old Ones or their minions, is developing.

Additionally, the Guardian’s powers make Julie’s blood dangerous to vampires (as her mother Susan found out). In game terms, the GM should consider Julie’s blood as being “holy,” so that it triggers a vampire’s vulnerability to holy water. What other effects the Guardian powers might have, the true beliefs and purposes of the Guardian faction, and how they interact with the Old Ones and their magic, remains unknown; Julie is frankly terrified of them.

Julie’s childhood imaginary friend, Mr. Trash Bags, has occasionally come back into her life in various ways. It can, if necessary, psychically warn her of extreme danger, though it rarely does so now that she’s quite capable of handling herself in a crisis.

Appearance: Julie Shackleford is a breathtakingly beautiful, fair-skinned white woman in her mid-twenties. She 5’11” tall and has the athletic build of someone who gets plenty of regular exercise. She has wavy, dark black hair that falls slightly below her shoulder. Her eyes are brown, and she wears glasses. While doing routine work for MHI Julie wears conservative business suits, but in the field she wears her MHI body armor with the “smiling lil devil face” patch.

Julie’s left neck and stomach bear the black, tattoo-like markings of the power of the Guardian. She keeps these concealed as best she can, but the more life-threatening injuries she suffers the more markings will appear.

Julie Shackleford

Stats: Agility D12, Smarts D10, Spirit D10, Strength D6, Vigor D8

Skills: Academics D10, Driving D6, Fighting D6, Gambling D6, Healing D4, Research D10, Occult D12, Notice D6, Persuasion D12, Shooting D12, Swimming D6

Parry: 5

Toughness: 6

Hindrances

- Bad Eyes (minor)

Edges

- Attractive
- Marksman
- Levelheaded
- Charismatic
- Monster Hunter International (Team Edge)

OWEN Z. PITT

Background/History: Owen Zastava Pitt is the son of Auhangamea Pitt, a decorated military veteran (who, unbeknownst to his son for many years, worked with Special Task Force Unicorn in Vietnam) and his wife Ilyana. His father, plagued by visions of a coming apocalypse of some sort, was emotionally distant to Owen (and his younger brother David) but trained them to be survivors. They learned how to shoot, how to survive in the wild, and other useful skills. Owen particularly took to firearms training, becoming so good a shot that he was nationally ranked in various shooting events.

As an adult, Owen put his great size and strength to use working as a bouncer at biker bars, and also participated in some underground pit fighting. But after he seriously hurt another fighter he “rebelled” against his unusual upbringing and what it had led him to by choosing the most

mundane profession he could think of: accountant. While pushing numbers at Hansen Industries he was attacked by his boss, Mr. Huffman, who'd become a werewolf. By keeping his head and making good use of his strength, Owen avoided Huffman's attacks and killed him by pushing him out a skyscraper window. That led to him being recruited by MHI.

During his newbie training it became apparent that Owen was... unusual. He could occasionally view the memories of others and perceive things ordinary people could not and was apparently in contact with the spirit of a dead Polish hunter named Mordechai Byreika. During the course of what's come to be called the DeSoya Caverns incident, Owen learned he was the "Chosen One," a human born every 500 years who has the power to use the *Kumaresh Yar*, a powerful artifact, to bring the terrifying Old Ones to Earth. Owen rejected any such role and fulfilled his destiny by destroying the evil Lord Machado and his followers, and thus saving the world.

Unfortunately, an MCB attempt to kill Machado with a low-yield nuclear bomb ended up enraging the Dread Overlord, one of the Old Ones. It directed its chief minion on Earth — the necromancer Martin Hood, leader of the Sanctified Church of the Temporary Mortal Condition — to deliver Pitt to it for eternal torture. Hood attacked MHI and in the process threatened the entire world. But Pitt and Agent Franks of the MCB jumped through Hood's portal to the domain of the Old Ones and used MHI's ward stone as a weapon to kill the Dread Overlord. This earned Pitt the nickname "the God Slayer" among certain Hunters.

Pitt also participated in the Las Vegas incident, where an immensely powerful alp nearly killed him and many of the other most skilled Hunters in the world. Without his involvement, and his interaction with the

dragon Management, the entire incident might have gone much, much worse.

But that wasn't the end of the situation for Pitt. When MHI learned from a friendly cyclops that several Hunters remained trapped in the Nightmare Realm that they'd all been sent to during the Vegas incident, Pitt spearheaded the effort to get them back — and in the process to tackle the arch-demon Asag. To do this he had to plan an assault on Severny Island, north of Russia, by an army of Hunters recruited from around the world. The island, a hotbed of supernatural activity for decades (if not longer) was the only known site of a gateway to the Nightmare Realm. At considerable effort and cost, Pitt and his team forced their way to and through the gate — only for Pitt to discover himself alone, since Asag controlled the portal. What followed was an arduous, dangerous trek across the Realm to rescue the surviving Hunters from captivity by a force of Fey. Against all odds, Pitt succeeded, bringing all the Hunters and himself back out again.

Today Pitt serves MHI as its Finance Manager and a member of Earl Harbinger's team (along with his wife, Julie Shackelford, whom he married during the Hood incident when he was at risk of dying from zombieism). He's ready — if not eager — to put aside his spreadsheets and calculators to strap on his armor and go fight monsters at any time.

Personality/Motivation: Owen Pitt is at heart a perfect example of the heroic individual. Despite the potential cost to himself, he's willing to fight evil in whatever way he can. And when he gets going, he doesn't quit — several powerful individuals have observed that Pitt has the strongest willpower of any human being they've ever encountered. In fact, he's something of a driven overachiever in general, a result of a childhood of (a) trying to live up to his father's demands and standards and (b)

being picked on for being a fat kid.

That said, Owen isn't perfect. He has a strong anti-authoritarian streak that sometimes makes it difficult for him to work with others, even when he knows better. He just instinctively rankles at being told what to do by anyone he doesn't know and respect, regardless of common sense or the rules of society. He also tends to be resentful toward people he thinks have had it better than he did and can be something of a bully — at least in his thoughts.

By his own admission, Owen has a tendency to lose control in combat. It doesn't happen often, but when it does, the enemy had better watch out! He forgets all thoughts of safety and doesn't really feel pain; all he thinks about is destroying whoever he's fighting. The GM may want to increase his chances of losing control if Julie or one of his close friends are hurt or in danger, or if Owen himself has been pushed to the wall and insulted by some powerful enemy.

Owen's faced many terrifying monsters and situations, but the creatures that still scare him the most are werewolves (perhaps because that's the first monster he ever saw). He'd never back down from fighting one, but he's just as happy to let some other team of Hunters take on a pack of them if necessary.

Owen is deeply in love with his wife Julie and has been practically since the day he met her. There's nothing he wouldn't do, short of betraying his own principles, to help her if she needed help.

Quote: "This <<holds up paper>> is a Treasury Form P-3506. You need to submit one of these within sixty days of killing a monster. As you can see, you need to put in your PUFF table numbers, which you can get by cross referencing column J from page 56 of table P. I built a spreadsheet for this, but you can use the cross reference from ES-1920-B paragraph fourteen...."

Skills/Weapons: Owen is a big, tough, intimidating guy who knows how to use



his size in a fight (and who has black belts in American Karate and Shorinji Kempo to boot). But where he really excels is the use of firearms. He's a highly skilled shooter — good enough to be nationally ranked in a number of competitive events — who knows more about different types of guns than just about anyone else at MHI.

Owen's gifts also extend into the intellectual. He breezed through school quickly, qualified for MENSA, speaks five languages (and can get by in several more), and is smart enough to know when to shut up and let his wife do the talking.

Owen's weapon of choice, created for him by Milo Anderson, is Abomination, the "mutant shotgun from Hell." It's a modified Saiga automatic shotgun with a nine-round box magazine (or 20-round drum magazine) and an underslung, single-shot M203 40mm grenade launcher. (Originally the grenade launcher was a Tula 6G15, but Milo replaced it because it's easier to get American grenades.) For close-up work it also has an 8" long silvered bayonet mounted on the left side that springs into position at the touch of a button. It has an adjustable ACE stock with recoil pad, an FAL pistol grip, an Aimpoint sight, and a full rail system on which he can mount lights or similar accessories. It's painted brown and has a STR Min of d10 for firing and d8 for using the bayonet.

While it's a superb weapon, Abomination isn't made for distance work. Milo Anderson built Pitt another firearm for long shots. Starting with a JP Enterprises LRP-07, a US Optics scope, and a SilencerCo Omega suppressor,

he upgraded and tweaked things until the rifle performs better than Pitt can shoot at a distance — as Anderson put it, "If you can see it, you can put a bullet through it." It's called the Cazador ("Hunter").

But those two guns aren't the only weapons Owen carries. As a sidearm he usually has a .45 semiautomatic of some kind, such as the STI Tactical 5.0, holstered on his right hip. On his left hip is scabbarded his 19" long Himalayan chitlangi kukri. Often out of sight in an ankle holster is a Smith & Wesson Airweight .357 snub-nosed five-shot revolver. Strapped, tied, pocketed, or otherwise attached to his armor are various other bits of gear: extra ammo magazines for Abomination and his .45; grenades; a monocular; and so forth.

Psychic Powers: Owen's gifts do not lie entirely in the field of combat, however. He is the "Chosen One" — or, as Martin Hood put it, "You're a very special man. Preordained before your birth to wield the key to the planes, the Avatar of Chaos himself, blessed with powers beyond that of any mortal man."

Owen doesn't really know what that means (for that matter, he has no idea who did the "choosing"). What he does know is that as the Chosen One he possesses strange, mystic powers he doesn't entirely understand. The first and most prominent of these is his ability to read the memories of others after establishing skin-to-skin contact (or through other appropriate stimuli, such as being exposed to the Kumaresh Yar or aided by the spirit



of Mordechai Byreika). This ability isn't limited to humans; he's read the memories of gnomes and shoggoths, for example. Initially he had no control over this ability whatsoever — flashes of other peoples' memories just came to him at times, usually to warn him of danger or provide him with crucial information about his current mission. As time has gone by he's learned to control this power a little and can sometimes invoke it when he wants to.

Owen's most likely to see someone's memories when the other person's thinking about a particularly vivid or important memory, and Owen himself is (knowingly or unknowingly) also interested in the subject of that memory. The length of his contact with the other person doesn't relate to the period of time he "views" with his retrocognitive vision. The merest brush of fingertip on fingertip could lead to him viewing an hour's worth of memories (though only a second or two would actually pass in the real world) or grasping and holding someone's hand for several minutes might only yield the briefest flash of a memory. Nor does he have to initiate the contact; he may see memories when someone else accidentally or deliberately touches him.

In one known instance — when Martin Hood attacked Earl Harbinger with a powerful feeder demon — Owen was able to use his memory reading power to "enter" another person's mind (and, in this case, help him fight off the feeder). Whether he could do this again, and under what circumstances, is unknown.

Similarly, if Owen's already established a particularly strong "connection" with another person through Memory Reading, he may be able to sense that person from a distance, and/or to "spy" on them clairvoyantly. He did this during the DeSoya Cavern incident to overhear some of the planning done by Lord Machado's master vampires. (There's no power

on his character sheet for this; it's something the GM can allow on rare occasions when it helps to move the plot along.)

Second, Owen has precognitive dreams. Again, this isn't something he can control — it just happens, typically when something particularly dangerous or important is directly on the horizon. The information he gains from these dreams often directly affects how he and MHI respond to the situation. He has to get at least four hours' sleep to have any chance of having a precognitive dream. (Whether he actually has one is entirely up to the GM; this power largely serves as a conduit for the GM to provide Owen with information he otherwise wouldn't have or plot hooks to get him involved in an adventure.)

Third, Owen is more "attuned" to monsters and supernatural happenings than the average person (or even average Hunter). For example, he was able to "perceive" the invisible oni who attacked his brother during a concert. However, it's not a "radar" and doesn't necessarily prevent him from being surprised or snuck up on by a monster — it simply lets him "see" some monsters that other people cannot.

Fourth, it's relatively easy for ghosts, spirits, other psychics, and "things from the other side" to contact and even speak to Owen (often in his dreams). He is, to paraphrase how he once put it, "a guy with a connection between worlds." Friendly spirits (such as Mordechai Byreika, Bubba Shackleford, and Sam Haven) may provide advice or information; hostile ones usually threaten him or may even try to attack him. In some cases, certain spirits have even been able to "cross the boundary" to the physical world and help him in minor ways (such as activating the CO2 cannister on his armor, so he wouldn't drown). This isn't represented with any particular power on Owen's character sheet; it's simply a way for

the GM to give him some information and guide his actions on occasion.

Fifth, Owen's powers make it possible for him to use enchanted items and mystical artifacts that other humans cannot, or to use items that would be dangerous to them with a greater degree of safety. Again, this isn't represented on his character sheet in any particular way; it's just a plot device that involves him.

Sixth, at least as of the siege on Severny Island, Pitt's mind cannot be read, even by powerful beings such as Asag.

Last — but certainly not least — as the Chosen One Owen is gifted with a certain special "survivability." As Mordechai Byreika once said, "But you are Chosen. Harder to kill Chosen unless he is being big baby. Certain things only you can do." This ability functions at Game Master Discretion. This ability functions primarily to make sure Owen doesn't get killed in situations where other people would — the fates are looking after him. This doesn't mean he can deliberately expose himself to harm and survive (for example, he can't let his friends shoot bullets at him and laugh as they automatically miss), but it does mean that the odds of an enemy killing him are much lower than killing any other Hunter.

As long as Owen's willpower holds out, the bites of zombies, lycanthropes, and even vampires can't turn him into a monster. He may begin to suffer some of the symptoms (as he did when bitten by a zombie during the Martin Hood incident), but eventually his willpower and luck will find a way to "purge" the "infection" from his body somehow. Functionally, Owen can spend a Bennie to negate such infections.

If directly exposed to the Kumaresh Yar (for example, if he's touched with it or holding it), Owen experiences great pain, but can also manifest other powers. He may become psychically much more powerful or have enormous strength. This is up to the GM;

it's not listed on his character sheet since he actively avoids the artifact whenever possible.

To a large extent Owen's ability remains mysterious and unexplored, even to Owen. He's scared to mess around with them any more than he has to.

Appearance: Owen Pitt is an intimidatingly large man: 6'5" tall, 62" chest, size 15 boots, heavily muscled, and with a few scars here and there from the hard life he's led. His ancestry is quite mixed, so he doesn't look precisely like any racial group. He cuts his dark brown hair short and is usually clean-shaven.

In the field Owen wears his MHI body armor with the "smiling lil devil face" patch. He carries plenty of weapons — Abomination, his .45 sidearms, his large kukri, grenades, spare magazines of ammo, and anything else he thinks he needs.

Owen Pitt

Stats: Agility D8, Smarts D8, Spirit D10, Strength D10, Vigor D12

Skills: Driving D4, Fighting D12, Intimidation D6, Research D4, Occult D6, Knowledge (bureaucracy) D4, Notice D6, Shooting D12, Survival D8, Taunt D6

Parry: 8

Toughness: 8

Hindrances

- Enemy (Major, numerous)
- Overconfident
- Ugly

Edges

- Chosen One
- Brawny
- Rock and Roll
- Trademark Weapon (Abomination, Cazador)
- Strong Willed
- Monster Hunter International (Team Edge)

THE PITT FAMILY

Owen's father, Auhangamea Pitt, sometimes known as "the Destroyer," has been described by MHI team leader Benjamin Cody as "one of the baddest Green Berets to ever walk the face of the earth" (they served together in Vietnam; "Augie" was later assigned to work with Special Task Force Unicorn). Through his sixties he remained rough, tough, and utterly uncompromising; he killed several Condition cultists when they tried to kidnap him and his wife Ilyana to use as leverage against Owen. He died in the hospital while Owen was away during the Siege.

Owen's brother David Uhersky Pitt, better known to the world as Mosh, was once the world-famous lead guitarist of Cabbage Point Killing Machine, an immensely popular heavy metal band. He had it all: money; fame; supermodels and actresses as girlfriends; the talent to be thought of as one of the best guitarists in the world. Then the Condition sent two oni to try to kidnap him from a concert in Montgomery, Alabama to use as leverage against Owen. Lucinda Hood mutilated his right hand, and the MCB blamed the whole Montgomery incident on him. The result was the loss of his career to the injury, and the loss of his fortune to dozens of lawsuits. He wound up in Las Vegas with his own lounge act, playing with a fraction of his old skill and vigor — though the events of the Las Vegas incident seem to have broken him out of his depression and may result in better things to come for him in the near future.

Like Owen, Mosh can be contacted by spirits, ghosts, and the like, though so far this has only happened once (when Mordechai Byreika began speaking to him during the Las Vegas incident). Whether he'll manifest other psychic powers remains to be seen.

TRIP JONES

Background/History: John Jermain Jones, better known to his MHI friends as Trip (short for "Triple J"), was born in Florida, the third son of a large, Baptist, immigrant Jamaican family. His father died while he was still an infant, leaving his mother to raise her brood alone. As a kid he developed a love of Fantasy stories, and to this day is a voracious reader of Fantasy novels and well-versed in the trivia of the genre.

Trip studied chemistry in college (and also played football). He spent a few years using his degree in the private sector but found that he didn't enjoy it, so he became a high school chemistry professor in Leonard, Florida. (He also subbed band and was an assistant football coach.) He'd



probably have spent the rest of his life teaching the periodic table to teenagers had an evil voodoo houngan not decided to raise a zombie army in his town. Trip's school was soon under siege from zombies. Grabbing a pickax, he defended himself and anyone else he could protect, though this required him to destroy a lot of students and colleagues who'd become zombies. He survived the incident and the subsequent MCB investigation and was soon recruited by MHI. He and Owen Pitt roomed together during training and became fast friends; Trip's served on teams with Owen ever since.

Personality/Motivation: Most of the time Trip is an easy-going, happy fellow who sees the brighter side of things. Compared to the often-cynical Hunters he associates with, this makes him something of a breath of fresh air. On the other hand, he's not as gregarious as most of his fellow monster killers; he's as likely to spend time by himself reading as to go to a party. He's also slightly prudish.

Trip is, as Owen Pitt likes to put it, MHI's "moral compass" — a man who's genuinely heroic, honest, noble, gentlemanly, and true. He has a strongly developed sense of right and wrong, and always strives to do what he thinks is right — no matter the risk to himself or what it might cost him. He's very much a modern good Samaritan, willing to stop what he's doing to help someone out.

Trip is something of a germaphobe — an unfortunate trait for someone in a profession that exposes him to monster goo, decaying zombie flesh, and other such enjoyable things. He carries a small plastic vial of hand cleanser with him everywhere and uses it whenever he thinks necessary. Given the choice he'll avoid any job that might expose him to germs in favor of some less dirty chore.

Quote: "After Florida, once I found out there was such a thing as Hunters, for the very first time I knew what God wanted me to do with my life. I'd found my purpose. There was real evil in the world, but it was okay, because there were good guys that could fight it."

Powers/Tactics: In combat situations Trip usually isn't a front-line fighter or the guy who's first through the door. He takes on more of a "support" role, covering his teammates and making sure that anything that tries to surprise or ambush them gets its head blown off before it can hurt them. He particularly hates zombies and other undead.

Trip's firearm of choice is a KRISS submachine gun (usually with a sound suppressor attached). He also carries a tomahawk-like hatchet for cleaving the skulls of zombies and other horrors.

Appearance: Trip Jones is a dark-skinned black man who's 5'10" tall; he has dreadlocks and is cleanshaven. He's got a muscular, athletic look but isn't overly "bulked up." In the field he wears his MHI body armor with the "smiling lil devil face" patch.

Trip Jones

Stats: Agility D10, Smarts D8, Spirit D12, Strength D8, Vigor D10

Skills: Academics d4, Athletics D6, Fighting D8, Healing D4, Electronics D6, Notice D8, Occult D6, Persuasion D8, Research D6, Shooting D6

Parry: 6

Toughness: 7

Hindrances

- Heroic
- Loyal

Edges

- Brave
- Quick
- Combat Reflexes
- Monster Hunter International (Team Edge)

HOLLY NEWCASTLE

Background/History: Holly Newcastle was working as a stripper in Las Vegas to put herself through nursing school when a group of vampires kidnapped her and imprisoned in their “feeding pit” along with several other people. She spent several weeks in that hell, enduring not only being fed upon by bloodsuckers but experiencing some of her fellow captives going insane. She was strong enough to resist that, and in fact had to kill several of the others before they became vampires themselves. Eventually the vampires were slain by Team Vegas and Holly and a few of the others were rescued. Impressed by her strength of will, MHI recruited her.

Personality/Motivation: Holly comes across as a wisecracking, cynical, hard-bitten woman who’s not impressed or fazed by anything — and this isn’t an act. She knows how harsh the world can be, especially the supernatural parts of it, and is determined that she’ll never be weak, exploited, or frightened again, no matter the cost. But beneath the tough exterior she shows to the world beats a kind and sympathetic heart. For example, she spends a lot of time working with monster attack survivors at the Appleton Asylum, though almost no one at MHI knows about this. And she’s fiercely loyal to her friends.

Holly also likes to pretend that she doesn’t need anyone else in this world, but the truth is she’s lonely (though she won’t admit it even to herself). Deep down she’d like to find a boyfriend, someone to share her life and cares with, but so far, she hasn’t had any luck locating “Mr. Right.”

Quote: “Is that vest bulletproof? It looks bulletproof. Let’s find out.” <BLAM!>

Powers/Tactics: Holly’s weapon of choice is a .308 Vepr rifle with a specially-designed magazine. But she’s also fond of using heavier weapons, such as RPGs, and eagerly takes any opportunity to fire one.

Despite looking like a stereotypical dumb blonde, Holly’s anything but. She really impressed her instructors during training with her ability to pick up and retain information about monsters, and she’s continued to learn, and to use her intelligence, while on active duty as a Hunter. She’s been particularly careful to learn as much as she can about vampires; she loathes them and enjoys destroying them immensely.

Appearance: Holly Newcastle is a stunningly gorgeous, well-built white woman. She’s 5’9” tall and has short blonde hair and blue eyes. She’s often compared (favorably) to swimsuit models and Bond girls. In the field Holly wears her MHI body armor with the “smiling lil devil face” patch; on social occasions she wears fashionable clothes chosen to show off her face and figure to best effect.



Holly Newcastle

Stats: Agility D6, Smarts D10, Spirit D10, Strength D6, Vigor D8

Skills: Fighting D6, Healing D10, Intimidate D10, Research D8, Occult D8, Knowledge (bureaucracy) D6, Notice D10, Shooting D6, Streetwise D10, Stealth D8, Swimming D4, Taunt D8

Parry: 5

Toughness: 6

Hindrances

- Vengeful (minor)
- Stubborn

Edges

- Alertness
- Attractive
- Very Attractive
- No Mercy
- Monster Hunter International (Team Edge)

MILO ANDERSON

Background/History: Milo Ivan Anderson was only fifteen, the youngest child in an Idaho family with fourteen kids, when an MHI team saved him from a group of serpent-men creatures. Unfortunately, the attack killed almost everyone else in his family, leaving Milo effectively an orphan. He joined MHI, which became his new “family.” It’s one he’s proud to be a part of ever since.

Milo’s wife Shawna is a cryptozoologist he met while on a mission in Guatemala. They have one child.

Personality/Motivation: Milo’s often described as a “mad genius,” and while the “mad” part is a humorous exaggeration there’s no denying that he’s a genius. He’s highly skilled at a number of technical endeavors (particularly weapons design), and brings to them an eccentric, creative outlook that tends to make his creations even more useful.

Milo is a devout Mormon who possesses a strong personal faith — one strong enough, in fact, to hold off master vampire Susan Shackleford on one occasion. When vampires or the like are involved his value to an MHI team becomes even greater.

Quote: “Milo Ivan Anderson. Jack of all trades, master of a couple. Call me Milo. If you live long enough I’m the guy that gets to teach you how all of the cool stuff works.”

Powers/Tactics: In addition to being a skilled, experienced Hunter, Milo is MHI’s resident mad genius — “the Edison of Monster Hunting, the Da Vinci of creative destruction,” as Klaus Lindemann once put it. As such, he often carries weapons that he’s designed himself or heavily modified from their original appearance and function — such as his flamethrower, one of his favorites. It’s a powerful weapon, particularly against the undead, but it’s not without its drawbacks. For one thing, the tanks only contain enough fuel for ten shots, and despite being of Milo’s design, and thus relatively lightweight, the whole unit’s big and bulky enough that wearing it weighs him down, making him slower (and thus more vulnerable) in combat. For another, if he fires the flamethrower at a target that’s closer than 6m (or if he fires into the wind), there’s a chance that fuel will splash back, burning him.

Milo’s always dreaming up new ways to inflict destruction on monsters or make Hunters’ lives easier. He’s built a giant harpoon for killing luska, designed MHI’s special body armor, and made crucial improvements to many Hunters’ weapons. (He’s also on the contact list of many arms manufacturers, since they know he’ll give their latest inventions a thorough and professional testing.) He’s even offered to build MHI some killer robots if Julie will pay for them.

Milo is MHI’s best scrounger. Give him some money and the chance to look around, and the

odds are he can find whatever his team needs and get it for a reasonable price. A Streetwise Test would allow him to find odds and ends.

Milo's hobby is climbing, a skill that has occasionally come in handy during monster hunting missions.

Appearance: Milo Anderson is a huskily-built white male, 5'7" tall. He has long red hair (though he sometimes gives it a buzz cut) and a red beard that reaches halfway to his belt. (His beard is always long.) Sometimes he weaves the beard into one or two braids. He wears thick, round glasses.

In everyday situations Milo tends to have an "unusual" fashion sense, often wearing clothes in vivid colors or that don't match (for example, he has a purple men's suit). In the field he wears his MHI body armor with the "smiling lil devil face" patch. He tends to carry "unusual" weapons of his own design or modification, such as his flamethrower.

Milo Anderson

Stats: Agility D6, Smarts D12, Spirit D12, Strength D6, Vigor D8

Skills: Athletics D12, Driving D6, Fighting D6, Healing D6, Notice D8, Occult D8, Research D8, Repair D12, Shooting D8, Stealth D8, Survival D8, Technology D8, Thievery D8, Tracking D8

Parry: 5

Toughness: 6

Hindrances

- Quirk
- Curious

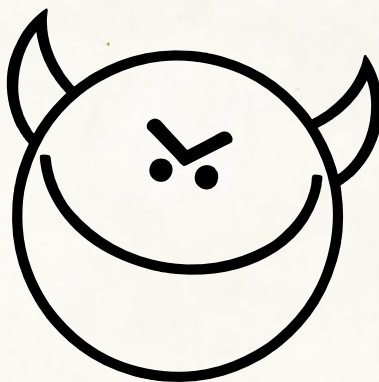
Edges

- MacGyver
- Scavenger
- Luck
- Monster Hunter International (Team Edge)

Milo is known for creating, modifying and enhancing gear. While Milo's creations are best represented by the standard equipment in the Savage Worlds rulebook, a GM can allow a player to use the Repair skill to enhance existing gear. Each previous modification applies a -1 to the Repair skill roll. Here is a list of potential modifications:

- +1 to Damage (enhanced caliber, etc.)
- Increase each range band by +10 (scope, improved sights, etc.)
- Reduce the Strength requirement by one step (Pistol grip, sling, brace, etc.)
- Add a melee attack to a firearm (bayonet, heavier weighting for clubbing, etc.)
- Monster specific enhancements (UV bullets, a silver inlaid butt for clubbing, etc.)

The inventor and the Game Master should work together to ensure the modifications are reasonable and realistic, and are not limited to the four sample options presented. Each modification takes at least 6 hours of uninterrupted time in a workshop (more at GM discretion), and a successful Repair roll. Failure just results in wasted time and potentially wasted material.



RECKONING DAY

It was good to be chief.

The noble orc, Skull Crushing Battle Hand of Fury, or Skippy as his human friends called him, was pleased, and for the record, he did not mind being called Skippy. The human's ways were abrupt and strange, but their oddly short names did save time.

The Tribe was at peace. The scars of their last battle against the evil dead of the foolish human necromancer, Hood, had healed. Word of their righteous revenge had spread across the world and orcs from other tribes had journeyed far to join with their number. The Tribe's warriors were volunteering to go forth into the human world in ever increasing numbers to join the war bands of MHI. The Harb Anger was very pleased by the Tribe's warriors and much honor and respect was given, Harb Anger paid them moneys too, though Skippy didn't really know what to use that for, so they mostly kept it in a big pile which his wives then used to occasionally purchase important items, like new heavy metal albums from iTunes or flea shampoo for their mighty Wargs.

However, Skippy was far too busy to concern himself with such things as human moneys or Warg care, for today was a young warrior's Reckoning Day. Because the gods loved the orcs more than they loved all of their other children, each orc was born blessed with a special talent. These talents varied wildly, but all of them were somehow valuable to ensure a great future for the Tribe. Some orc talent's usefulness were obvious to understand, such as his younger brother's supreme skill in bladed combat, or his own mastery of the human flying machines and his unmatched knowledge of the Air Spirits. Other talent's uses were not so easy to discern, such as his cousin Rufschertzl's amazing ability to solve any of the human's "crossword puzzles", but who was Skippy to question the gods' choice for Rufus? Perhaps someday Rufus' ability to make letters fit into small squares would bring great honor to the tribe... Naw, who was he kidding? Rufus was a moron.

But regardless, today was another orc's Reckoning Day, which meant that the elders and teachers had finally been able to discern the path chosen by their gods. The young orc would be brought before the chieftain, and his talents displayed. The Old Ways required the chieftain to execute the young orc should his talents be insufficient, but Skippy considered himself a very reasonable and modern orc, maybe it was because he lived in America and the Hunter's strange sense of mercy had influenced him, so he'd never executed anyone on their Reckoning Day. He'd even spared Rufus, though he'd been so very tempted... Like most orc holidays, Reckoning Day was mostly a chance to throw an awesome party, and since Gretchen had already baked a cake, Skippy certainly hoped that today wouldn't be his first Reckoning Day summary execution.

Skippy stood in the center of the village, attended by his wives and his advisors, while the young orc was brought forward. It turned out to be a female, recently arrived with her family, refugees from another tribe. She was squat and dumpy, with misshapen tusks, and one crazy eyeball which kept looking in different directions, and despite the ceremonial fur robes, colorful feathers, and small animal bones which they had decorated her with, she certainly would never get a husband on looks alone, so for her sake, Skippy

hoped she'd been blessed with a good talent. Somebody who could cook would be nice. The village could use another cook, because no offense to Gretchen, her cake tasted like ashes in his mouth, not that he would ever tell her that, because even the chieftain couldn't talk bad about his first wife's cooking.

The girl was introduced by his brother Exszrsd. That was intriguing. Normally Edward, as their strongest combatant, wouldn't involve himself in a Reckoning Day unless the child had displayed a particularly strong warrior's gift... or it was a really crappy talent, since he was their default executioner. Either way, this should be interesting.

Edward addressed the gathering, extremely excited crowd. The girl's parents looked very nervous. The girl seemed ambivalent, which was a proper orc war face. "This is Slschschlee."

Skippy snorted. Foreign orc tribes had such silly names. "For our human masters, she will be known to them as Shelly." Everybody bowed at his wisdom. Shelly shrugged. "Let the Reckoning begin."

Edward, being an orc of few words even in Orcish, looked at Shelly and grunted. She nodded, her googly eye squinting in determination. "Her talent did not show for a long time. The gods did not speak to her until she watched the Hunters through the Great Chain Link Fence of Separation and witnessed their preparations for glorious war."

Interesting. So that meant it probably wasn't cooking. Disappointing that, but Skippy nodded for them to continue their demonstration.

His brother snapped his fingers and several of the younger orcs ran forward holding empty beer bottles in their hands. There were six of them, with two bottles each. They cocked their arms back as if ready to throw them into the forest. Curious, Skippy wondered why Edward had just stuck his fingers into his ears.

The orcs hurled their bottles into the air, and a split second later, threw their second. Shelly flung open her fur robe, revealing a leather gun belt with a holster on each side. Two big revolvers appeared in her hands as if by magic. Skippy knew enough about guns to know that these were .44 magnum Redhawks. There was a continuous roar as she fired them both from the hip, and every single one of the flying bottles exploded before reaching the trees.

Skippy's mouth fell open. The Tribe began to cheer. "By the violent tusks of Gnrlwz! That was so metal!" And Skippy threw the horns.

Shelly had both smoking revolvers reloaded from speed loaders and put back into their holsters before Skippy had finished his pronouncement. She looked right at him with her good eye, then her googly eye, and then she bowed. Skippy returned the bow, extra low.

"The gods must be pleased with this orc. Now it is time for cake!" Such dry, ashy cake... And another Reckoning Day was complete.



CHAPTER 5:

MHI'S ALLIES & COMPETITORS

MHI may be the best monster hunting outfit in the world — but we're not the only one, and we can't always get done what we need to get done without a little help. Here are some of the other members of the "Hunting World" that you'll get to know during the course of your career.

MHI'S MONSTROUS ALLIES

Not everyone who works with us is human, and not every non-human out there is evil or a predator. In fact, some of them are downright nice and helpful — staunch allies of MHI.

The Orcs

Located not too far from the MHI compound, so deep in the woods that stumbling on it by accident is virtually impossible, is a village of about fifty orcs — roughly twenty adults, the rest children. DoO Harbinger encountered them on a mission in central Asia, where they helped him even though they were in danger of being eradicated by a more powerful tribe. To thank them he "adopted" them into his own "tribe" and brought them to live in the United States. Neither side has regretted this: the orcs have a much, much better life than they used to, and they've proven extraordinarily helpful to MHI on many occasions. Formerly they were the clan Spear of Doom, now they consider themselves to belong to the clan MHI, the clan of "Harb Anger." Since they're not PUFF-exempt, we help them keep their existence secret.

The leader of our orcs is Skippy (don't even try to pronounce his real name), who's also our pilot — he's just about the best pilot in the world, in fact, since that's his "life gift." All orcs have a life gift, something they're supernaturally talented at. For example, Skippy's brother Edward is so skilled at hand-to-hand combat that he makes Bruce Lee look like a clumsy weakling, and his first wife Gretchen is, like many orcish women, a highly talented healer. One of their most promising young tribesmen is Slschschlee, or "Shelly," who's preternaturally skilled with firearms and shooting — a gift that will no doubt make her a mighty Hunter in the near future. We usually have at least two or three of Skippy's orcs assigned to various regional teams at any given times, and of course he, Edward, and other orcs often help out the Cazador teams.

One thing you need to know about orcs is that they hate elves, and vice-versa. Skippy's orcs have, through us, negotiated a simple agreement with the elves of the Enchanted Forest Trailer Park: no orcs on elven land, no elves on orcish land — not even to fly over it. How the relationship between Edward and Tanya (see below) will affect this remains to be seen.

Another useful fact is that our orcs love heavy metal music. In fact, they think Owen Pitt is some sort of royalty because his brother Mosh used to be lead guitarist for the band Cabbage Point Killing Machine — they call Owen “Brother of Great War Chief,” and are even more deferential to Mosh.

SKIPPY

Background/History: Skippy — or “Skull Crushing Battle Hand of Fury,” to give his proper orcish name — is the chief of the MHI Clan orcs. More importantly to most Hunters, he’s MHI’s chief pilot and mechanic.

Skippy has five wives, of whom Gretchen (see below) is the first and best-loved. He killed a seventy-foot-long lindwurm to win her hand.

Personality/Motivation: In many ways, Skippy is a typical orc — tough but honorable, driven simultaneously by a primitive joy in life and a sense of responsibility to his people. In his case, though, that feeling of responsibility is even stronger than usual, since he’s the chieftain, and thus ultimately the one who’s duty it is to make sure the tribe and all its members prosper. It was he who chose to bring the tribe to America to “join” MHI, and so far, that’s worked out really well. If things begin to go sour, though, he could face some serious challenges from within his tribe.

Quote: (In Orcish) “By the violent tusks of *Gnrlwz!* That was so metal!”

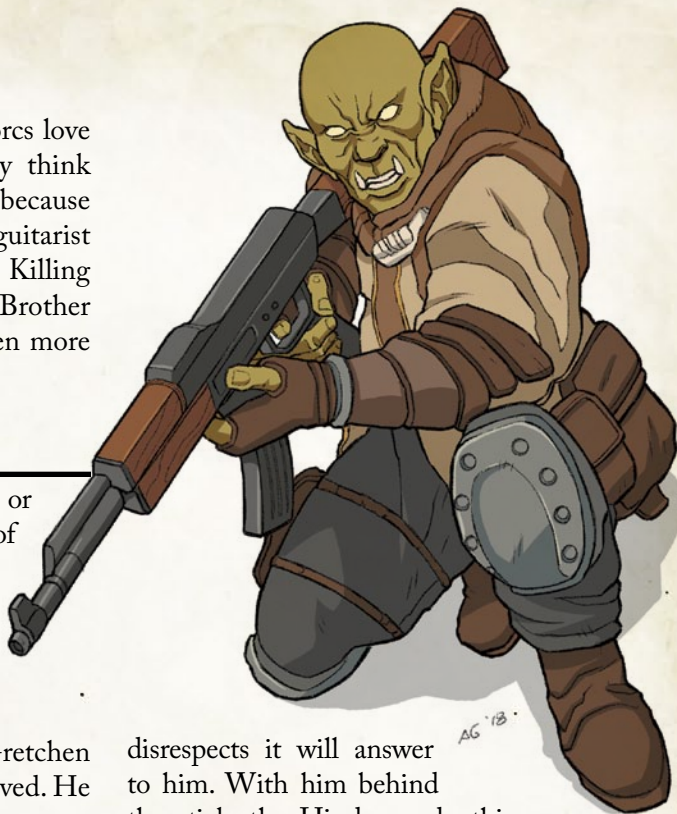
Powers/Tactics: Skippy’s life gift is piloting. He’s awesome with planes but really, really awesome with helicopters, which he prefers. MHI’s Hind is definitely his baby, and anyone who damages it or

disrespects it will answer to him. With him behind the stick, the Hind can do things its designers never would have dreamed possible. As he thinks of it, he has a special relationship with aircraft spirits, and with air spirits.

Skippy’s gift allows him to make an aircraft faster, more maneuverable, or tougher than it could otherwise ever be.

Unfortunately, Skippy’s skill at piloting doesn’t extend to driving. Get him behind the wheel of a car and he’s sure to collide with every possible obstacle, run into every ditch, and make his passengers miserable.

Appearance: Skippy is a 5’3” tall orc with yellow eyes. When there’s a chance he might be seen by the public he wears fatigues that cover his whole body, a black balaclava, goggles, and black boots. When he can relax, he takes off the balaclava and lets the goggles hang around his neck. If he needs a weapon, he usually carries his AK-47 assault rifle, which he’s adorned with feathers and small animal bones.



EDWARD

Background/History: *Exszrsd Hgth Frhnzld Wrst* — “Stab-Fighting Warrior of Righteous Vindication,” or “Edward” as his human friends call him — is Skippy’s brother and one of the most important orcs in his tribe. His life gift of bladed combat makes him an incredibly valuable asset, not only for tribal defense but for helping out MHI.

Edward’s hobby is hunting foxes barehanded. He also enjoys listening to talk radio.

Personality/Motivation: Edward is

a taciturn orc who never speaks when a gesture or motion will do.

It’s not that he’s shy or self-absorbed, merely that he tends to be very focused on whatever’s currently attracting his attention. (And, to be honest, his English isn’t very good; he’s more talkative around his own people.) In general he’s a serious-minded, duty-oriented individual. Only in battle does he truly come alive and express himself.

Edward has recently begun a sort of relationship with Tanya, the princess of the elves of the Enchanted Forest Trailer Park.

Quote: None. Edward rarely speaks, and when he does he says no more than he absolutely must. He prefers to communicate with looks, gestures, and his actions.

Powers/Tactics: Edward is an unmatched master of hand-to-hand combat with weapons. His favorite blades are a pair of matched orcish short swords (“short” being a relative term here), but he tends to carry plenty of others. His speed, accuracy, and grace in battle are phenomenal; the greatest human martial artists, acrobats, and swordsmen couldn’t hope to keep up with him.

Appearance: Edward is a 5’3” tall orc with yellow eyes. When there’s a chance he might be seen by the public he wears clothing that cover his whole body (either normal clothes or an outfit like a ninja’s, depending on the situation and his mood), a black balaclava, goggles, and black boots. When ready for battle he carries an assortment of bladed weapons; examples include two orcish short swords strapped to his back, curved daggers in sheaths on his belt, throwing knives and other small blades carried in various places, and the like. (He usually has at least a dozen more knives stashed out of sight on his person as well.) If expecting serious trouble he may have a heavy greatsword or his two-handed, double-bitted war ax. He never carries a gun.



GRETCHEN

Background/History: Gretchen — *Grtxschnns*, in her native tongue — is Skippy's first (and most important wife) and the lead shaman of the MHI Clan. She's renowned for her healing powers and the quality of her shamanism.

Personality/Motivation: Although she's often overshadowed by her husband and the (usually boisterous) male orcs of the MHI Clan, Gretchen is one of the most powerful people in the tribe. When she speaks, people listen, and they usually obey without hesitation. She's demonstrated her skill, wisdom, and compassion more times than anyone can count, so they know they can rely on her.

Quote: "*Krzbrwelhuj grrhelrth*" (undecipherable).

Powers/Tactics: Gretchen is the MHI Clan's main shaman, which means she possesses a variety of magical powers. Her faith is strong, and she uses it not only to ward off the undead but to communicate with (and sometimes compel help from) the spirits that exist all around her.

Beyond her shamanic spells, Gretchen has several special abilities. First, she can heal injuries with great speed. She prepares a special salve, which she applies to the wounded person as part of a lengthy ritual. The subject wakes up to discover that weeks' worth of healing have taken place overnight.

Gretchen can also cure sickness by preparing a different type of magical salve and applying it to the victim with a special ritual. In game terms, Gretchen can use the Heal power without spending power points or making an arcane skill roll. She can use Heal three times per day this way.

Lastly, Gretchen can cure some other types of physical affliction, such as deafness or blindness. (For example, she used one of her salves to undo years' worth of shooting and heavy metal music damage to Owen Pitt's hearing.) She can't replace lost fingers, limbs, or organs, but she could, for example, prepare a salve to remove cataracts from someone's eyes, diminish or remove a person's heart condition, or cure baldness.



Gretchen's three healing powers only work properly when prepared for a specific individual, using some of that individual's blood, hair, and other bodily substances. Preparing a salve or potion that anyone can use isn't very helpful — such salves have, at best, 10% of the effectiveness of her normal cures. She has to prepare her treatment for one designated person, more or less at the time of its use. However, if she knows that a person's about to go into battle, she can prepare a salve for him in advance. Such salves have a “shelf life” of 24 hours (at the most), but sometimes having them at the ready means the difference between life and death for a valiant warrior.

Besides her healing abilities, Gretchen's also a prophetess. Visions of future events usually come to her after she spends at least one hour in a trance, though they may also occur in dreams or as sudden flashes of insight if the GM prefers. They tend to be somewhat vague and unclear, and often can properly be understood only in hindsight, but at times they provide clear, strong advice about what she or someone in the tribe should do.

Appearance: Gretchen is a female orc, 5'0” tall with blue eyes. In public she typically wears handmade leather robes (similar to a burkha) whose hood covers her head and shades her face, and large, mirrored sunglasses. As the tribal shaman she typically carries a variety of pouches, fetishes, talismans, and vials containing various potions. She also carries her totem stick, a rod covered with leather braids, hung with feathers and small animal skulls, and topped with a shrunk orcish head.

WARG

Description: A warg is a wolf the size of a horse. It has a heavy, fang-filled jaw capable of biting a deer in half. Orcs keep them as pets and use them as battle-mounts.

The Elves

Down near Corinth, Mississippi, off a little-used state road, you'll find a place called the Enchanted Forest Trailer Park. It looks just like thousands of other trailer parks across the country (if anything, it's even more run-down than most of them), but it's actually pretty special. The folks who live there are elves. That's right, elves, just like you've seen in those fantasy movies, except that these elves are a bit more “countryfied” than you'd expect. A less charitable person might use the term “redneck-y.” But regardless of what you might think of their speech, their manners, or the way they live, there's no denying that they're mystically powerful — and some of them are even better archers than those movie elves.

The MCB knows of the elves' existence. It lets them live there, exempt from PUFF and on a government stipend, provided they don't attract any attention to themselves or go anywhere besides Wal-Mart. Despite this promise, sometimes they're willing to hire themselves out to MHI for help on difficult cases — elves need a little extra spending money just like the next guy. And even if they don't want to go that far, sometimes they can provide us with information and advice about difficult cases. Compared to an experienced elf, even DoO Harbinger doesn't know much about monsters and magic.

Interacting with the elves can sometimes be tricky, so watch your step. Treat them with respect and deference (particularly Queen Irondelia). They consider themselves an older, wiser species than humanity (and in many ways they're right), so they expect politeness and civility. Bringing a small (or sometimes a large) gift is a good way to show your respect; check with your team leader about what sort of gifts are appropriate.

Don't stare at them, no matter how strange, wondrous, or weird they might seem. Don't ask impertinent questions — in fact, it's often better just to keep your mouth shut until you're spoken to. They're a secretive people and resent it when they think humans are prying into their lives. If they ask you a question, answer it as truthfully as possible. Don't lie, don't try to evade the issue, don't tell only part of the truth. They'll know what you're doing and take offense.

QUEEN IRONDELIA

The ruler of the elves is Irondelia, who's over 150 years old and has ruled her people for most of that time. However, if you ever meet her, I'm afraid she may not live up to your idea of regal grace and beauty. She's a rather overweight (some would say "morbidly obese") middle-aged elf who typically wears muumuus and bunny slippers. She eats frequently (Ho-Hos dipped in ranch dressing is one of her favorite snacks) and spends most of her time watching television. But don't let appearances deceive you — she rules the elves with an iron hand and possesses enormous mystic power. She's a walking encyclopedia of information about many types of monsters, particularly the Fey. For the right "gifts" she's usually willing to pass some of that information along.

TANYA, PRINCESS OF THE ELVES

MHI has often hired an elf or three for specific jobs, but not until recently did we have an elf as a full-time Hunter. And that elf happens to be Queen Irondelia's daughter, the elven princess Tanyalthus Enderminon — or Tanya, as she's better known. Eager to escape the boredom of the Enchanted Forest, she snuck onto an MHI team a while back and proved to be so useful that we agreed to her request to become a full-time Hunter (but of course

we have to pay the Queen extra for "hiring royal blood"). Her magical senses and ability to deal with matters mystical makes her particularly valuable to us, though she's still young in elf terms and doesn't know nearly as much about magic as she sometimes likes to pretend. She worships the divine spirit of Elvis Presley, so watch what you say about the King around her.



Melvin The Troll

"Melvin not like eating people anyway. Like snacky cakes better." —Melvin promises not to eat people as part of the terms of his job for MHI in *Monster Hunter Vendetta*

MHI doesn't ordinarily work with trolls — in fact we've collected a lot of PUFF bounty money on them over the years, and expect to collect a lot more in the future.

APPLETON ASYLUM

Located near the city of Camden, Alabama in a scenic location on the banks of the Alabama River is a huge, four-story gothic structure called Appleton Asylum. It treats patients with a wide variety of serious mental disorders. What makes Appleton important to MHI is that it specializes in the treatment of people traumatized by their exposure to monsters. Most people don't have the flexible mind necessary to cope with supernatural and paranormal encounters, and while some of them can come to terms with it on their own, others snap under the strain. Appleton helps those people find their way back to sanity, or at least as close as they can get. When necessary, it also treats Hunters who've suffered some sort of mental or emotional injury from a monster's attack.

Doctors Lucius and Joan Nelson, both former MHI Hunters and leaders of our Seattle team back in the Eighties, run Appleton (their grandson Tyler is on our New York regional team). Despite being in their seventies they're both still full of fire, ready to fight monsters that invade the asylum. They have a particularly strong dislike of the MCB. They believe that the Bureau's policy of not letting the public know the truth contributes to the mental problems many of their patients suffer. Furthermore, they know for a fact that the MCB's practice of concocting cover stories that blame people for "accidents" that were caused by monsters has directly contributed to several of their patients' conditions.



But during the Martin Hood incident, a team of Hunters hired to deal with a troll infestation found that there was just one troll. He'd survived what Hood did to his tribe when it refused to work with him, and now had nowhere to go. We needed an IT guy, and trolls are great with computers, so we ended up hiring him. His name is Melvin, and for the most part he's a pretty good guy. He's got kind of a sick sense of humor, but you get used to that. Stay on his good side, though — we made him quit sending out spam years ago, but if you tick him off he'll ruin your credit rating and fill your inbox with ads for male enhancement products and financial aid requests from bogus Nigerian princes.

THE MONSTER CONTROL BUREAU

It shouldn't come as any surprise to you that the United States has its own skin in the monster hunting game. The Monster Control Bureau, formerly a secret branch of the Department of Justice and now a secret branch of the Department of Homeland Security, handles the government's response to monster- and magic-related incidents of all sorts.

Including the MCB in this section of your *Employee's Handbook* is a bit misleading. The MCB isn't exactly MHI's ally. They watch us like hawks, making sure we don't violate any of the countless government regulations we possibly could. They bar us from the scenes of monster attacks, "encourage" us not to get involved in incidents they're "investigating," threaten us with arrest (or worse), and generally make it much, much harder for us to do our job. But despite all that, they're not our adversaries either. On more than one occasion they've worked with us to handle some menace neither of us could cope with on our own, or cleared various obstacles out of our way so MHI could



complete a task they weren't authorized to handle. When it comes right down to it, we both want the same thing: to protect the US and her people from monsters. We just have different perspectives on the best way to do that.

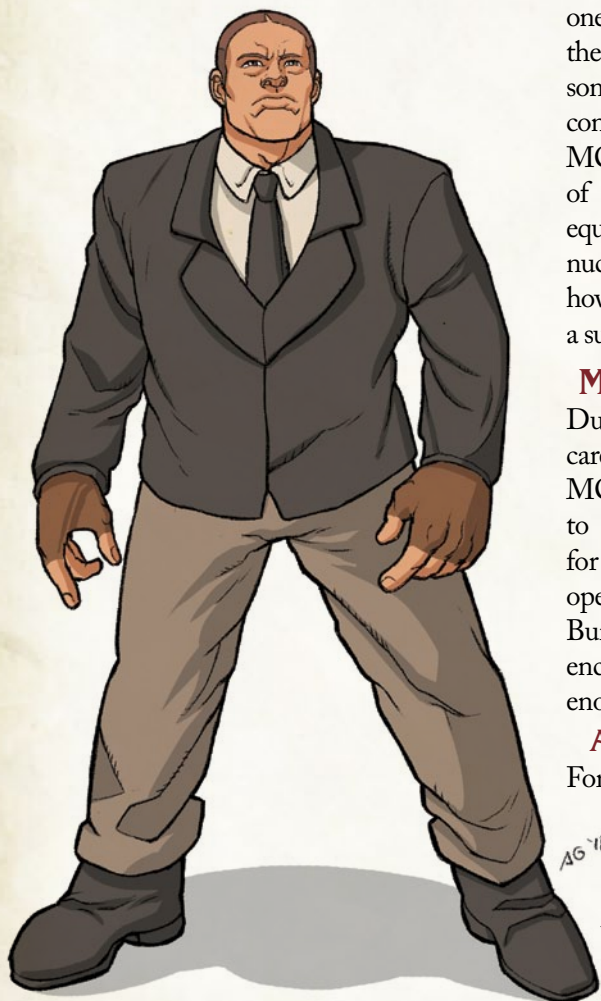
MCB POLICY & PROCEDURE

The difference lies in this: we think that monsters need to be destroyed, and that ideally the public should be made aware of their existence so we can better monitor for them, respond to their attacks more quickly, and provide proper care and treatment for monster victims. The MCB takes what it likes to call a "broader view." The US government's official policy is to keep all evidence of the existence of monsters and the supernatural as tightly and thoroughly concealed as possible. The government believes that widespread public knowledge about monsters would only make the overall monster problem

worse, and that letting a few individuals suffer is a necessary sacrifice for the greater good. The MCB has never fully explained why it believes this, but that philosophy guides everything the Bureau does.

In pursuit of this goal, the MCB can marshal considerable resources to cover up the truth, hide or destroy evidence of the supernatural, plant cover stories in the media, and shift the blame for monster attacks to realistic causes. Many of the stories you hear about spectacular disasters and strange tragedies are really the MCB at work, concealing the truth of some werewolf attack or zombie outbreak. Similarly, they visit all survivors of monster attacks to make sure they understand how the world works: if they talk about what they experienced to anyone, the MCB is empowered to imprison them and anyone they spoke to indefinitely, or to simply kill them if that seems to be the best way to handle the situation.

MCB personnel don't care who or what they have to ruin to keep their precious secrets. For example, during the Martin Hood incident, he sent two oni to attack Owen Pitt's brother Mosh as he was performing a concert in Montgomery, Alabama. The resulting devastation affected the stadium, its parking facility, and several nearby roads and highways, and also led to the deaths of multiple individuals and injuries to dozens more. Rather than admit the truth — that two ancient, evil mystical beings were the cause of the problem — the MCB pulled a bunch of strings and blamed it all on Mosh Pitt. All the lawsuits he had to deal with as the result of the MCB's blame-shifting destroyed his career.



If a situation's serious enough — a “condition red” incident in bureaucratic parlance — the MCB's powers become even broader. It can basically suspend anyone's constitutional rights at will for the duration of the incident, and sometimes even beyond. The Bureau's also directly empowered by law to summarily execute any type of monster, and that sometimes includes people who only may have become infected with monster-related viri. Some agents are a little more “zealous” about using these powers than others, so the best thing you can do around all of them is watch your step.

MCB RESOURCES

The government considers MCB's mission one of its top priorities and therefore denies the Bureau very little if it says it needs something now to keep a situation under control. With just a few phone calls the MCB director can mobilize huge numbers of armed men, get just about any sort of equipment he needs (up to and including nuclear weapons), or put his hands on however much cash he needs to ensure that a supernatural incident remains under wraps.

MCB PERSONNEL

During the course of your monster hunting career you're likely to run into many different MCB agents, particularly those assigned to whatever Bureau office is responsible for the territory where your regional team operates. But there are a few prominent Bureau officials that you're almost certain to encounter if you stay in this business long enough.

Acting Director Greg Cueto

Formerly second in command to Dwayne Myers during Myers's stint as head of the MCB Special Rescue Team (SRT), Greg Cueto was named Acting Director of the MCB after Doug Stark retired due to the Nemesis

incident. He's been on the job a couple years now, and after a bit of a rocky start he's made the job his own (though he worries that eventually Congress will replace him, since it's never removed the "Acting" from his title). Extremely popular with Bureau personnel thanks to his personality and experience, he's repaired headquarters after the destruction wrought during the Nemesis incident, eliminated several bureaucratic inefficiencies, and generally made the MCB a more pleasant place to work. Which isn't to say he's eased up any on procedures or doctrine: he, and those beneath him, enforce the First Rule with all the zeal one expects from the MCB.

Agent Franks

Agent Franks (we don't know his first name) is the MCB's chief field agent. If there's a particularly difficult problem or dangerous monster to handle, Franks is the one they send in to take care of it.

Franks is huge, immensely strong, and incredibly fast — he makes Owen Pitt look like a weakling. He's completely humorless, totally dedicated to his work, utterly without fear of anything, and willing to do whatever it takes to get the job done. He can punch hard enough to kill an ordinary man, suffer injuries that would leave anyone else hospitalized and keep going at full force, and shoot with deadly accuracy. To be honest, we're not entirely sure he's human.

Franks usually prefers straightforward approaches like "shoot everyone involved, just to be sure." Fortunately for us his superiors are usually more cognizant of the law and of the possible repercussions of his actions and keep him in check. We'd advise you not to get on his bad side, but the truth is that just by working for MHI you're already there.

Special Task Force Unicorn

The MCB isn't the only government agency involved with the supernatural. There's at least one other one we're aware of that's called Special Task Force Unicorn. If the MCB is a "shield" designed to protect US citizens from monsters and magic, STFU is a sort of "sword" that tries to make use of "supernatural assets" for military and espionage purposes. The whole operation is so secret (and illegal) that we don't know much more than that.

The former leader of STFU, as far as we can tell, is a tall, thin, albino known only as "Agent Stricken." We don't know anything about his background, but whoever he is he had a lot of pull in government circles — whatever he wanted, he got. We suspect that he's the one behind demoting Dwayne Myers and elevating Doug Stark into his place as MCB's director, for example.

The new leader of STFU is Beth Flierl, who we know little about. Stricken is now a wanted fugitive. If you encounter Stricken or anyone else who seems to be (or even claims to be) with STFU, report it to your team leader or other MHI officer *immediately*.



Other Agents

MCB has many other agents (though it's not nearly as large as its leaders would like it to be; it can't grow too big without exposing itself to public awareness). Most of them are military veterans; in fact, many come from Delta, SEALs, or other elite units. They tend to be well-armed and to think in military terms, so watch how you act around them. Compared to us they're much better equipped and more efficient, but they don't all have the truly flexible mind necessary to be a good Hunter.

LAWYER FIGHT

Shane Durant had just entered the lobby when the cellphone buzzed in his pocket. He tapped the Bluetouth earpiece. "PT Consulting. Go."

"Shane, are you at the address I sent you?" his boss asked.

"Yeah, Armstrong. I got your text. I was about to go to the gym." He risked a drink from his Starbucks, but it was still too hot. "Barely even had time to get my venti, non-fat, soy chai latte with a half shot of espresso and no foam. So what's the deal?"

"There's a law office on the sixtieth floor, Hastings and Shapiro. Know them?"

Just because he was an attorney, Armstrong automatically assumed he knew every lawyer in the city? "No." He passed a security guard and asked, "Elevator?" The old man pointed to the side and Durant kept on walking.

"They're high powered, big money types. I just heard through the grapevine that they're looking to hire MHI for a protection gig. That new guy that replaced VanZant is either already there or on his way over to negotiate, but I want to steal this contract from those Alabama bastards. It's a body guarding job, how hard could it be?"

"Depends on what body it is and what we're guarding it from."

"I don't have all the details. Apparently one of the partners at the firm dabbled in necromancy or something..."

"Necromancy? You're kidding, right?" He reached the bank of elevators, pushed the up button, and waited. "What is it with lawyers and necromancy, anyway?"

"Well, apparently everybody thought Mr. Shapiro was dead, so they wrote him off, turns out he's actually undead, and now he's back and making threats. I don't know. He was having an affair with his secretary, wants to drag her to hell or something like that. You'll figure it out. Look, this is a rush, but you speak their language. Paranormal Tactical is counting on you, Shane."

Durant sighed and looked down at his normal street clothing. He was wearing cross trainers, jeans, and a polo shirt. The only reason he'd thrown on a sport coat was to conceal Mindy on his belt. "You should've warned me. I would have worn my suit." The elevator chimed as the doors slid open. "I'll call you when I get done." He hung up, stepped inside, and pushed the number 60. "Damn it, Armstrong. I'm missing Krav Maga for this."

A man stopped the doors right before they closed. "Sorry," he rasped as he shuffled inside to stand politely on the far side of the elevator. The man was wearing a long, dark grey wool coat with the collar turned up, a wide brimmed black hat pulled down low on his head, dark glasses, and leather gloves. The doors slid closed behind him.

Durant took a sip of his latte. Still too hot.

There were buttons on both sides of the doors. The man went to select his floor, but he paused, gloved finger hovering right over the already illuminated 60. He slowly lowered his hand.

They started upwards.

They were in a very enclosed space.

The man turned, just the slightest bit, revealing that the skin of his face a bit too stretched.

"Looks like I might be getting my workout in today after all."

He looked Durant over. The man's cracked lips opened just a bit, revealing black, broken teeth, and by then Durant could smell the decay.

"This is going to tick those MHI guys off," Durant said bemusedly.

"Eh?" The thing that used to be Mr. Shapiro asked.

"Lawyer fight." Durant threw his Starbucks into the monster's eyes as it lunged for him. His other hand was already drawing his Browning, Mindy, from her holster. This was about to become extremely loud.

OTHER MONSTER HUNTING ORGANIZATIONS (UNITED STATES)

While MHI's the biggest and best monster hunting company in the business, we're not the only one. Monster hunting's profitable enough to attract some players to the game. For most of our existence the competition really hasn't been that severe, but the increase in monster activity over the past few years has brought more people into the monster hunting field — and some of them are trying to give us a serious run for our money.

Cascades Crushers

Headquartered in Spokane, Washington and primarily active in that state, Oregon, Idaho, Montana, and northern California, the Crushers were founded a few years ago by David "Char" Charleston, a former SWAT officer and detective who got into the business after investigating a serial killer who turned out to be a vampire. He almost got killed a couple times early on, but he's a fast learner and now he and his men have enough experience to avoid making stupid mistakes. They recently collected a major bounty for tracking down and killing an old, powerful skinwalker.

The Crushers' logo is a stylized "CC" with a war hammer. In the field they usually wear matching drab green body armor and usually carry H&K MP7 submachine guns, H&K handguns, and various types of 12 gauge shotguns.

PT Consulting

Our strongest competitor these days is a relatively new firm based in California called PT Consulting. PT (which stands for "Paranormal Tactical," despite what you might have heard from other Hunters) is a tight-knit, professionally-run organization led by a man named Rick Armstrong. Like most of his men, Armstrong is a veteran of the Special Forces.

PTC has already made a major name for itself in the West by taking down several major monsters, including a lindwyrn and a pack of werewolves. Their reputation for professionalism and success, combined with their clean-cut image, make them an attractive hire to many potential employers, particularly corporations. They've already snagged a few contracts away from MHI for just that reason; our California teams are encountering PT teams more and more frequently.

One of the things that makes PTC so appealing to many employers is that it takes everything seriously. There's no lightheartedness, no joking around, just duty and getting the job done. Armstrong and his team commanders try to foster a company culture of "modern bushido," of devotion to duty and victory, and that helps give PTC an edge in the competition for some types of contracts (and recruiting).

For an organization that's not very old, PTC seems to be slick and well-funded. Their headquarters is in one of the most expensive office buildings in L.A., and when they go into the field they've got all the latest equipment: the best modern body armor; the latest firearms with the latest attachments; high-tech surveillance and communications gear; advanced security systems; you name it. They've brought in some big bounties, but not enough to afford so much so soon. We're not sure where their money comes from. Some of our more paranoid Hunters think PTC is secretly associated with the MCB or STFU, with the ultimate goal being to put other private hunting organizations out of business, but there's absolutely no evidence supporting this theory.

RICK ARMSTRONG

Background/History: The third of five children born to an abusive father and a depressed, alcoholic mother, Rick Armstrong rebelled by becoming as unlike his parents as possible: he studied hard, worked hard, saved his money, planned for the future, and learned to treat other people with respect. Eager to escape his circumstances and build a better life for himself, he lied about his age when he was 16 and joined the US Army. His natural gift for combat combined with his intelligence and drive earned him a place in the Army Special Forces.

Armstrong spent over a decade as one of America's elite soldiers, traveling all over the world dealing with threats to the US and her citizens that never made the news (often because of the way he and his team handled them). He retired from the Army with the rank of colonel and created a "private security firm," Private Tactical Consulting. With the help of his contacts in the military he snapped up several lucrative contracts in Iraq and Afghanistan and was soon a wealthy man.

During his time in Special Forces, and later as a contractor in the Middle East, Armstrong had a few encounters with things he couldn't explain, and being naturally curious he started looking in to them. He finally learned about the existence of monsters — and more importantly, of the PUFF bounty system — from an old friend in Iraq.

Realizing monster hunting was where the real money was, and that the monster problem wasn't going to go away like his military contracts eventually would, Armstrong switched gears. He renamed his company Paranormal Tactical Consulting and lured some MCB agents away from government service with fat paychecks and other benefits. Now he's going to take the world of monster hunting by storm — and earn a fortune in the process.

Personality/Motivation: Rick Armstrong is fundamentally a good guy, though he comes across as a self-absorbed, self-righteous jackass. Having grown up in poverty he's filled with the drive and ambition to never, ever find himself in that state again. He wants money, power, prestige, authority, whatever he can get — and he's not above cutting a few corners to get them. Some of his mercenary dealings in the Middle East were on the shady side, and the odds are he'll use the same old tricks when monster hunting.

Quote: “Well, if it isn’t Monster Hunter International. What an unexpected pleasure to run into you gentlemen here.”

Powers/Tactics: Rick Armstrong’s combat motto has always been, “Do it to them before they do it to you.” So he tends to favor an aggressive, offense-oriented approach in most situations — though some of what he’s experienced as a monster hunter has taught him a little caution.

Since age has slowed him down a little (not that he’d admit it), Armstrong doesn’t go into the field as much as he used to. When he does he usually takes a position in the back of the team, since he knows his younger employees can react to danger more quickly than he can.

Appearance: Rick Armstrong is a white male in his early fifties. He’s 6’0” tall with the athletic build of a marathoner. He has blond hair in a buzz cut, icy blue eyes, and tanned skin (around his eyes it’s paler where he wears sunglasses). He typically wears nice shoes, tan cargo pants, and a tight black polo shirt with the PT Consulting logo embroidered on the left breast. He often smiles and has perfectly even, very white teeth.

SHANE DURANT

Background/History: As a kid, Shane Durant was smart as a whip — but also kind of scrawny and sickly, making him a natural target for bullies. Partly for the exercise and partly to help protect himself from getting his butt kicked so much, he started studying an Israeli martial art called Krav Maga. It turned out he had a talent for it. Before long the bullies left him alone, and he’d developed a life-long interest in the fighting arts.

Durant had planned to attend the University of Chicago like his father, but some severe losses in the stock market

left his family unable to afford the tuition. Eager not to let his dream slip away, Durant obtained an ROTC scholarship. After graduation he was sent to Iraq as an officer. He found that he liked the military life so much he re-enlisted for a second tour after his scholarship obligation was over.



At last Durant returned home, attended law school as he'd always planned, and became an attorney. He practiced for several years and enjoyed it — but something was missing in his life. He tried focusing on his martial arts, but that didn't do it. Finally he realized he missed the action and excitement he'd found in military life.

Then one night while he was out jogging he was attacked by a wererat. Unfortunately for the wererat, this time it chose to pick on someone who could protect itself, and after a tough, bloody fight, Durant beat it to death (and fortunately for him, without ever getting bitten). That brought the MCB into his life. One of the agents who gave Durant “the talk” passed his name on to a friend who'd joined PT Consulting, and Rick Armstrong made a recruiting trip to Chicago. Intrigued by the idea of hunting monsters for a living, Durant signed up — and he's never regretted it.

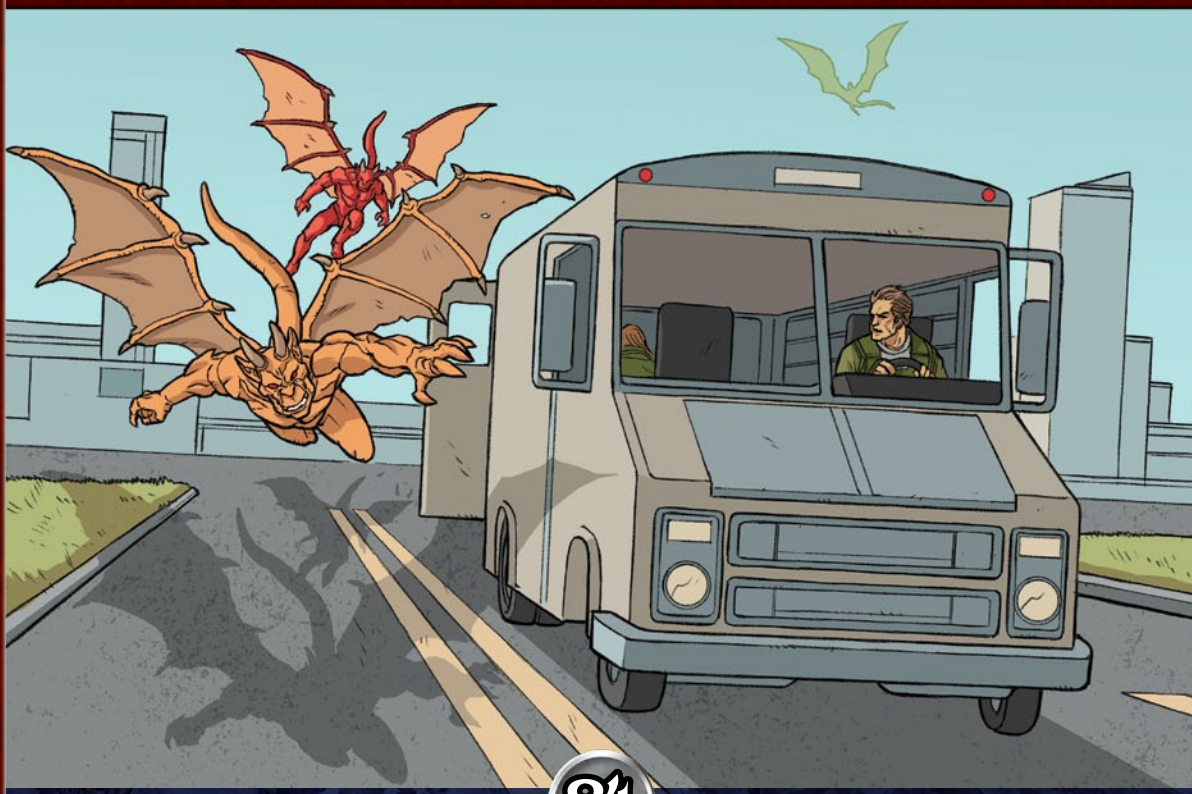
Personality/Motivation: As a martial artist, military vet, and lawyer, Durant is an “in your face” kind of guy who won't

quit until he wins or proves he's the best. He's used to playing offense, whether that's in the courtroom, on the battlefield, or on the basketball court, and that goes for social relationships as well. He tries to establish dominance through his presence or intellect and keep the situation going the way he wants it to. He's a pleasant guy once you get to know him, and is intensely loyal to his friends, but at first he comes off like a grade-A jerk.

Quote: “Kung fu? Please. I do Krav Maga, Muay Thai, and Brazilian jujitsu.”

Powers/Tactics: Unlike most Hunters, Durant is more used to fighting with his fists than his firearms. He's not stupid enough to take on most monsters that way unless he has no other choice, but unlike most of his colleagues he won't panic if deprived of a weapon. Instead he'll crack his knuckles and get ready for one hell of a fight.

Appearance: Shane Durant is a white male in his early thirties. He's 5'11” tall and has the simultaneously athletic and



muscular build of an intensely dedicated martial artist. For routine work he wears the PT Consulting uniform: tan cargo pants and a black polo shirt with the company logo in gold over his left chest. In the field he wears camouflage fatigues and a tactical vest (or, if he has time to put it all on, full body armor) and carries an M4 Carbine and a Browning Hi-Power handgun he calls “Mindy.”

Uwharrie Special Security Services

Uwharrie Special Security Services, or “USSS” as their logo has it, is based in central North Carolina and hunts monsters in the Carolinas, Virginia, northern Georgia, and eastern Tennessee and Kentucky. We don’t have a regional team in that area and have established a good working relationship with USSS when we’ve had a job there. Julie’s been talking with them about joining the MHI Affiliate Program, but they’re not quite ready to pull the trigger yet.

The guy who calls the shots at USSS is Stewart Longdale, who was working on a good career as a used and rare book dealer until a demon came alive out of an old book he’d bought and tried to steal his soul. Rather than panicking he killed it by stabbing it through the eye with a silver letter opener. An old family friend of his, a retired MHI Hunter, clued him in to the PUFF system. Something awakened in Longdale and he abandoned his bookshop for monster hunting. He’s been successful enough to build a small company, though he still has a lot to learn. On the other hand, we sometimes have something to learn from him; he’s an expert on Native American monsters of the southeastern US and on monsters from Appalachian folklore, and like our own Albert Lee is something of a sponge when it comes to learning about monster-related matters.

The Vermont Stump Jumpers

Up in New England, we’ve been seeing some fierce competition from a company called the Vermont Stump Jumpers. It’s run by Veronica Naismith, a woman who survived a zombie outbreak in her small New Hampshire town (and in fact killed a lot of the zombies by crushing them underneath an SUV). We recruited her for MHI, but she washed out of training; she’s not really the sort of person who’s interested in taking orders or working as part of a team she doesn’t control. After she left us she returned home and started her own monster hunting company with the help of a veteran MCB agent named Walter Tisdale.

After bringing in a couple of big bounties, VSJ has recently upgraded a lot of its equipment, purchasing better rifles and other arms, and better body armor as well. Rumor in the Hunting World has it that Naismith wants to expand her operation significantly and get to the point where she operates nationwide, just like MHI. If that’s true, she’s got a long way to go, but we’re keeping an eye on her nevertheless.

Other Hunting Companies

The hunting organizations listed above aren’t the only ones — merely the best, the ones that have survived the dangers of hunting to become legitimate, well-established businesses. New hunting companies spring up all the time, but few of them make it past their first anniversary. Hunting’s dangerous work, not something for people who aren’t properly prepared or who don’t have the right attitude. Organizations like Briarwood Eradication Services, which was involved in the Copper Lake incident and wiped out nearly to a man, often tend to make monster incidents worse and increase the casualties involved. If you hear about one, let us know — if it’s worth saving we may be able to make it an Affiliate.

AUSTRALIA: NEW SOUTH WALES EXPEDITIONS

Of all the other hunting companies out there, New South Wales Expeditions, based in Australia, is probably the most like MHI. Its Hunters are rough and tumble, highly dedicated men and women who fight hard and party hard. As a result, we get along with them really well; in fact, we've been discussing some sort of "hunter exchange program" or mutual training exercises ever since the Las Vegas incident.

Founded in 1977, NSWEX got started as the ordinary sort of hunting company — the type that guides people who want to shoot game animals to the places where they can. Then one of their hunting groups ran into some insectoid things that slaughtered everyone but NSWEX's owner, Mitch "Hog" Augsburg, and one of his employees. Most people would've gotten scared and gotten out of that line of work, but not Hog — he got mad. He and his employees hunted monsters on their own for about a month, then learned about Australia's equivalent of the PUFF system and began monster hunting full-time.

In addition to hunting "typical" monsters like weredingos and vampires, the NSWEX Hunters are experts at dealing with the many types of hostile creatures that occasionally emerge into the world from the Dreamtime of Aborigine mythology. Many of these creatures are so bizarre it can turn your mind sideways just to look at them, and what's worse a lot of them don't leave bodies behind for bounty purposes, but the NSWEX Hunters fight them tooth and nail regardless.

Since suffering a bad leg wound a couple years ago, Hog has devoted himself more and more to the administrative end of his business (including moving the company's headquarters to Melbourne). His son Jerry, better known as "Piglet,"

leads most of the field missions. Like many of his Hunters he favors the L1A1 rifle. Because they often engage monsters across long distances, the Aussies also use a lot of heavy, bolt action sniper rifles in various brands and calibers.

BRAZIL

Brazil positively teems with monsters. Between the vast stretches of Amazon jungle and river where some types can live nearly undisturbed, and the overpopulated favelas of Rio de Janeiro where human prey is plentiful for others, South America's largest country is practically a monster's paradise...

...or it would be if not for some dedicated Hunters, both public and private. Given the extent of its monster problem, the Brazilian government is particularly welcoming to private hunting companies in addition to fielding its own official anti-monster agency, a top-secret branch of the Federal Police known as the Supernatural Control Delegation (or DCS, from Delegação de Controle Supernatural). The DCS agents are a hard-core bunch who don't mind a helping hand from private Hunters, so if you're ever on a mission down there be sure to contact them — they know the territory and the monsters better than anyone.

The biggest hunting company in Brazil is Monster Exterminators, run by an experienced ex-DCS agent named Erico de Avila. He's got several dozen employees, including some natives from Amazon tribes who are amazingly skilled at tracking monsters through the jungle. His main competitor is Brazil Elite Security Services. BESS does some standard security work but has moved heavily into the monster hunting arena over the past two decades ever since Vitor Teixeira, an archaeologist and son of the company's founder, unleashed and killed a monster at an archaeological dig.

CHINA: PLA PARANORMAL COMBAT UNIT

In China, private monster hunting is strictly illegal — we wouldn't take a contract there regardless of the amount of money involved, because any Hunters caught there face the death penalty. Instead, the People's Republic handles all its monster hunting needs itself with a top secret branch of the PLA Ground Forces known as the PLA Paranormal Combat Unit. Armed with the best weapons and vehicles Chinese factories can produce, the PCU fights a wide variety of monsters, many of them incredibly weird (to Western eyes) creatures out of Chinese myth and folklore.

Organized into over a dozen regional units (most focused on the more heavily populated coastal areas, where monsters can do more damage and are far more likely to become public knowledge), the PCU is commanded by Colonel Yin Jingquan, about whom little is known in the West. He's said to be an experienced military veteran who once killed a *chiang-shih* (a Chinese vampire) with his bare hands. Under his leadership the PCU has sought, and received, a significant increase to its budget, allowing it to purchase more and better equipment.

EGYPT: CAIRO PARANORMAL INVESTIGATIONS

In the past Egypt's military has handled its monster problem — much of which involves terrors from the time of the pharaohs coming to life and wreaking havoc — with its military. But the turmoil there in recent years has given the military other things to worry about, so it's "farmed out" monster hunting work to a few private contractors. The largest and most successful of these by far calls itself Cairo Paranormal Investigations (since "Investigations" is a

lot more palatable to the Egyptian military than "Mercenaries"). We haven't had much contact with them and don't know much about them, but we networked a little during the Las Vegas incident and would definitely contact them if we had to do any work in North Africa or encountered any sort of Egyptian monster here in the US.

FRANCE

Like Egypt, France prefers to pay private hunting companies for monster eradication services rather than maintain an entire military or police unit to do the work. Of the half dozen or so companies currently active, the best-known is Carolingian Security Associates, founded in 1982 by Jean Darné, and currently run by his son Pierre (who commands most field missions) and daughter Gisele (who handles the administrative side of things, though she has spent some time in the field and is said to be a pretty skilled sniper). Jean was one of the best, most experienced Hunters we've ever known, but unfortunately he was turned into a vampire during the DeSoya Caverns incident and we had to kill him. His son Pierre has run the company since that time, and shows every sign of becoming as skilled, knowledgeable, and upstanding a Hunter as his father was. We're happy to work with him and his men anytime.

CSA typically organizes its personnel into field teams of five to eight, each armed with a FAMAS assault rifle, a Glock 19 sidearm, and various grenades, heavy weapons, and other implements of destruction. They have a special contract with the French weapons manufacturer Nexter to provide them with silver bullets more or less the same as the ones we use as well as other specialized anti-monster gear. They maintain joint headquarters in Paris and Arles.

GERMANY

As a sort of crossroads of Europe, Germany not only has plenty of its own monsters, but “immigrants” as well — the occasional *baba yaga* come west from Russia, Turkish lycanthropes who’ve come to a new home with their families, French vampires who relocated to the east, and plenty more. And an active monster community means there’s a strong need for Hunters brave and skilled enough to destroy them.

The SJK

Germany’s official monster hunting organization are the *Sonderjagdkommandos* (roughly “Special Hunting Commandos”), or SJK, currently a secret division of GSG-9. (It’s also known as *Sonderjagdeinheit*, the Special Hunting Unit.) Founded in the early 1950s after some Nazi “special projects” escaped and committed atrocities in the city of Munich, the SJK is a tough outfit of dedicated Hunters, most recruited from the German military. Much like the MCB they take a somewhat dim view of private monster hunting, but tolerate it as a necessity. Foreign Hunters pursuing a contract in Germany are required to register with the SJK to get the necessary permits; hunting without them is a serious criminal offense.

The current commander of the SJK is Steffen Froschammer, a battle-scarred veteran of many a monster fight who’s renowned in the Hunting World for his prowess at killing vampires. Despite the harsh nature of his work, Froschammer is an eternal optimist who always seems to have a smile on his face and a joke on his lips. But even though he kids around a lot, he takes his job very seriously.

SJK agents use Heckler & Koch firearms — typically HK 416 assault rifles. H&K has a standing arrangement with SJK to test some of their experimental designs and latest improvements to existing models.

Grimm Berlin

Of the several private hunting companies operating in Germany at the present time, by far the largest and most successful is Grimm Berlin. According to company folklore it was “founded” by the Brothers Grimm, who fought monsters as they traveled across Germany gathering fairy tales for their now-famous collection. That would make Grimm Berlin the oldest monster hunting organization in the world aside from the Vatican’s hunters, but there’s no proof of this claim so MHI retains that title.

Grimm Berlin has a well-deserved reputation for efficiency and professionalism — a client who hires them knows he’s getting his money’s worth. Most of its employees are recruited from the SJK or the military, but like MHI it also takes in promising individuals who’ve been exposed to the supernatural somehow. It trains new recruits extensively, teaching them not only firearms use and monster lore but parachuting, climbing, and other useful disciplines. Like the SJK, Grimm Berlin favors H&K weapons, though it doesn’t use them exclusively.

The owner of Grimm Berlin is a shadowy partnership of several individuals who seem to be motivated partly by profit and partly by the desire to perform a necessary public service. The company’s field commander and public face is Klaus Lindemann, one of the most highly regarded Hunters in the world.

KLAUS LINDEMANN

Background/History: Born near Berlin, Klaus Lindemann was an active, athletic young man. Although quite intelligent, he didn't have much of a head for schoolwork and barely made it through his secondary education. Rather than trying to acquire a university degree he didn't really want, he joined the Bundeswehr (the German military). After a short career there, he returned to civilian life and joined the Bundespolizei (the German Federal Police), where his skills and drive earned him a place on GSG-9, Germany's special anti-terrorism elite force.

While serving with GSG-9, Lindemann had an encounter that would change his life. He and his squad were moving in on what they thought was a terrorist cell in a house in a remote part of Germany. Without warning he and his men found themselves under attack by a nachtdämon ("nightdemon"), a type of Fey, that had been playing at being human to spread havoc and destruction. When the shooting stopped, Lindemann was the only survivor.

Per standard procedure he filed a detailed report about the incident — but a highly-placed government official sympathetic to the cause arranged to pull it from the files and alert Grimm Berlin about Lindemann. The company soon made him a job offer. Seeing this opportunity as an even better way to help protect his homeland (and make even better

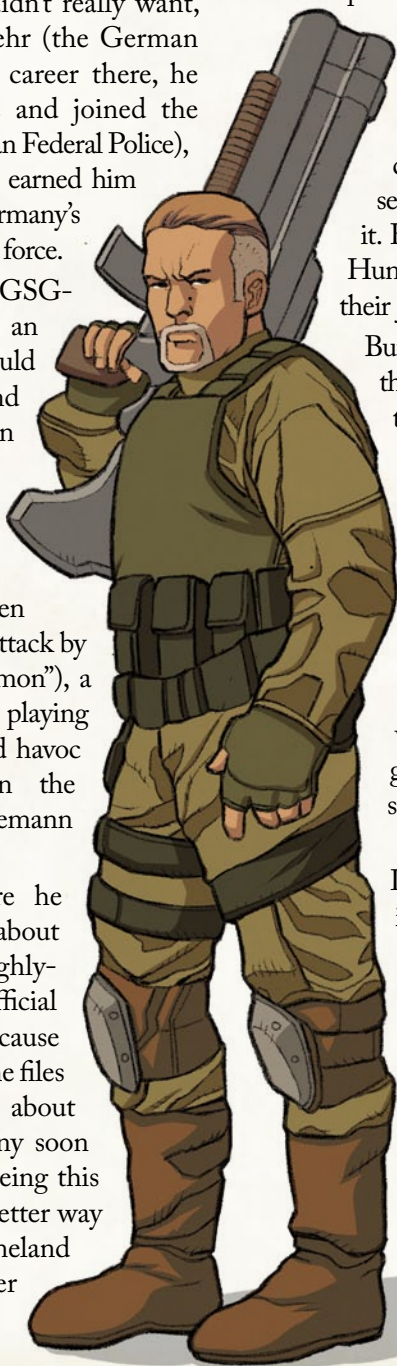
money in the process), Lindemann signed up. He moved steadily up the ranks, and has commanded Grimm Berlin's field operations for the last decade.

Personality/Motivation: In public, and when on the job, Lindemann is the very embodiment of the stereotypical German: precise; controlled; disciplined; efficient; duty-oriented. He knows what his job is, and that if he doesn't do it people will die. He's seen enough death and doesn't want to see any more if he can prevent it. He doesn't like it when other Hunters don't seem to be taking their jobs seriously.

But there's more to Lindemann than his public face. When off the job socializing with his men, he's friendly, even jovial, full of conversation and joie de vivre. Life can end quickly, so he thinks it should be enjoyed while one can. With his wife and two young children he's even more playful, to the extent that many of his men would barely recognize their grim-faced commander if they saw him at such times.

Lindemann is a devout Lutheran. Though his faith isn't something he normally relies on when fighting monsters, it might be a weapon of last resort in a desperate situation.

Quote: "You speak about creatures of unbelievable horror so flippantly, I wonder perhaps if you have ever actually seen one."



Powers/Tactics: Lindemann is very much a “lead from the front” kind of commander. He won’t ask his men to do anything he’s not willing to do himself. The truth is he enjoys the action and excitement of combat, though he’d never admit that even to himself.

Although he’s well informed about a wide variety of monsters, Lindemann is particularly known for his knowledge of the Fey. He’s fought and killed more of them than just about any other Hunter. He’s more than willing to pass what he’s learned on to other Hunters (for example, he lectured about the topic during the Las Vegas conference).

Appearance: Klaus Lindemann is a white male of German descent in his forties. He’s 6’0” tall with the build of someone who engages in intensive, regular exercise and frequently finds himself involved in combat. He has short black hair, a stylish black moustache, a neatly trimmed beard, and brown eyes. When hunting monsters he wears heavy body armor that features the Grimm Berlin logo (a black profile of Jacob Grimm on white) and carries an H&K G3K carbine, an H&K P30 semiautomatic handgun, and various other weapons and pieces of equipment.

GREAT BRITAIN

Great Britain’s monster problem includes the usual variety of “standard” monsters found around the world (such as lycanthropes and the undead), various “foreign” monsters who’ve somehow accompanied immigrants, and many different types of monsters (mostly Fey) that derive from British Isles folklore. Of particular note in the latter category are black dogs, demonic hounds similar to hell hounds who typically haunt lonely rural roads but in recent years have sometimes been found in major cities.

Like Germany, Britain has both a governmental and a private approach to monster hunting. It strongly favors the

former, which falls under the jurisdiction of the MI4 division of the military intelligence service. (MI4 has also been known as MANTICORE — the Metahuman, Abnormal, or NonTerrestrial Invasive Cryptozoological Organism Research and Extermination agency — but few people use that name in the modern day.) Publicly MI4 is responsible for aerial reconnaissance, but in secret its brief has been expanded to include other sorts of unconventional surveillance and information gathering on a variety of topics, including monsters and the supernatural. Most of the duties in the latter area are assigned to a subdivision known as the British Supernatural Service, or BSS. In most respects the BSS is like the MCB. Its primary focus is to keep the public from learning about the paranormal, and if it has to manipulate the media or concoct elaborate cover stories to do that, so be it.

When the BSS has to go into the field and actually kill some monsters, it sends its Select Group, an elite squad of warriors primarily staffed by SAS veterans. Rough, tough, and ready to fight any sort of supernatural creature that rears its ugly head, the Select Group typically carries M4 variants, plus the GPMG when it needs some major firepower.

MI4 and BSS receive any special ordnance they need, such as silver or holy water-filled bullets, from MI18, the Special Weapons section.

The Van Helsing Institute

MHI’s British equivalent is the Van Helsing Institute, founded by the Van Helsing family in 1912 following the events chronicled in Bram Stoker’s “novel” *Dracula*. It’s a small company, preferring to recruit only the best Hunters rather than expand its ranks at the expense of quality. VHI gets along with the BSS and works with it more closely than we do with the MCB.

Like us, the VHI Hunters tend to carry a variety of weapons (we suspect they have some major firepower stockpiled, but keep it secret from the British government, which would quickly confiscate it), but because of restrictive laws, VHI mostly refrains from direct action, and instead calls in the BSS. Their director of operations, Howard Isherwood, is highly respected in the Hunting World for his knowledge and skill. So are the various members of the Rigby family, who helped Van Helsing in the early days and can be thought of as the British equivalent of the Shacklefords.

British Hunters also have access to Oxford University's extensive archives of information about monsters and magic. This includes all the papers of the Royal Society for the Study of the Supernatural, which is secretly based at the University.

GREECE: THE HERACLES FOUNDATION

The Greek government has a small division of operatives who attempt to conceal evidence of the supernatural much like the MCB, but otherwise it leaves monster hunting to private organizations who receive bounties via a PUFF-like system. The most prominent hunting company by far is the Heracles Foundation, named for the mythological hero who killed so many monsters. It maintains a front as an archaeological and folklore research institute, but its real purpose is to maintain a small, skilled, well-armed group of Hunters. Their most common targets include lycanthropes, vrykolaki (a type of Greek vampire), and creatures descended from the monsters of Greek myth.

INDIA: JAI JIWAN SECURITY

Monster hunting in India is a private affair; the government would rather pay bounties and hire Hunters on short-term contracts than maintain its own monster hunting branch. Given India's population and poverty-stricken areas it's a great hunting ground for monsters, so monster hunting's profitable enough for many companies to exist. The one best known to us is Jai Jiwan Security, based in New Delhi. Founded by a consortium of military veterans (some of whom do field work for the company), it's earned a reputation as a hard-charging organization. Among other things it's taken down two rakshasa, a sort of powerful Indian tiger-demon.

Indian Hunters have one advantage we envy: government in India is so chaotic and corrupt that they



can get away with just about anything, weapons-wise. The right amount of cash paid to the right people and no one will look twice if a Hunter has to use military-grade weapons to take down some extradimensional horror.

ISRAEL

Israel has both governmental and private hunting organizations, all primarily staffed by former members of the Israeli Defense Forces, the Mossad, and other military and intelligence organizations. The government's response to the supernatural is the Balak Brigade, a secret part of the Ground Arm of the IDF. Equipped with Galil MAR and Tavor TAR-21 assault rifles loaded with special silver ammunition and protected by the latest body armor, Balak squads are a force to be feared by even the toughest monsters.

In the private sector, the company we've had the most contact with is Maccabeus Security & Investigations out of Tel Aviv. It primarily does regular security work, with monster hunting as a major sideline. The head of its hunting operations is Aiya Trebitsch, who looks like a short, kindly homemaker but has been known to beat men twice her size in barroom brawls. Last year she and her team earned a fat bounty for cleaning out a major nest of ghouls in a Jerusalem suburb. Rumor in the Hunting World has it that, like us, Maccabeus employs some supernatural assets, but there's no proof of this.

JAPAN:

STRIKE TEAM KIRATOWA

Japan has one monster hunting organization, a quasi-governmental team known as Strike Team Kiratowa after its founder, famed scientist-adventurer Isao Kiratowa. With secret sponsorship from most major Japanese corporations as well as the government, they use the latest high-tech weapons, gadgets, and vehicles. They're best known for fighting

the giant monsters that sometimes ravage Japan's cities: enormous fire-breathing lizards; gargantuan shrieking moths; monstrous turtles; and more. Since these attacks aren't events that can be hidden from the public, STK usually concocts a cover story that involves the filming of a movie. (And to support that ploy, the company actually has a movie production arm that produces films based on STK's exploits.)

MEXICO: DURANGO SUPERNATURAL EXTERMINATORS

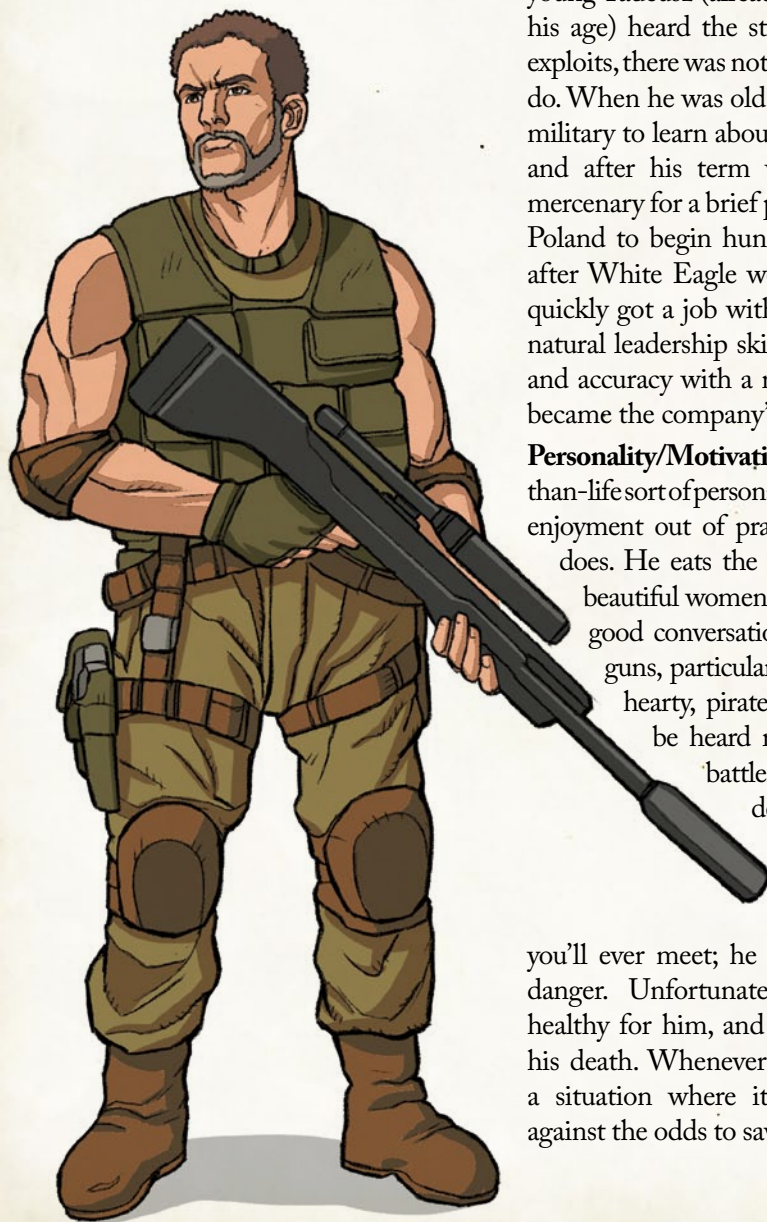
Mexico doesn't have its own version of the MCB (much less STFU); it contracts out its monster hunting needs. We've handled more than a few contracts south of the border. Our chief competition down there, the only really significant, professional monster hunting company in Mexico, is Durango Supernatural Exterminators (Exterminadores de los Sobrenaturales de Durango, or ESD, in Spanish). Run by Luis Alvarón, a former farmer and drug smuggler who learned about the existence of monsters the hard way when chupacabras ate his family, ESD takes contracts throughout Mexico and south into Central America. The company recently opened up a major satellite office in Puerto Escondido to handle its southern operations.

POLAND: WHITE EAGLE MILITARY CONTRACTING

The societal upheavals brought about by the collapse of Communism in Eastern Europe have created an ideal situation for some monsters — and thus for Hunters as well. Fortunately for the residents of Poland, they have a top-notch group of monster-slayers looking out for them: *Orzel Biały Wojskowy Zarwierajacy Kontrakt*, White Eagle Military Contracting. Based out of Warsaw and owned by some corporation or partnership we can't identify, White Eagle

takes advantage of the fast and loose laws and corrupt political culture in that part of the world to bring some major firepower to bear against monsters. And it's a good thing, too; that's where all sorts of vampires and related creatures come from.

White Eagle's field commander is Tadeusz Byreika, the grandson of the Hunter who sometimes speaks to Owen Pitt from beyond the grave. He's a big, boisterous bear of a man, ready to fight any monster at a moment's notice no matter the danger.



TADEUSZ BYREIKA

Background/History: Tadeusz Byreika comes from a long line of Hunters. His great-grandfather got started in the business just prior to World War II when he had to put down a vampire-like thing preying on the people of his village. His grandfather, Mordechai, was one of the greatest Hunters of the twentieth century, though the arch-vampire Jaeger ended his life. His father chose to become a lawyer instead, but when young Tadeusz (already large and strong for his age) heard the stories of his ancestors' exploits, there was nothing else he wanted to do. When he was old enough he joined the military to learn about tactics and weapons, and after his term was up worked as a mercenary for a brief period. He returned to Poland to begin hunting monsters shortly after White Eagle went into business and quickly got a job with them. Thanks to his natural leadership skills, general toughness, and accuracy with a machine gun, he soon became the company's field commander.

Personality/Motivation: Byreika is a larger-than-life sort of personality who gets immense enjoyment out of practically everything he does. He eats the best food, sleeps with beautiful women, savors fine liquor and good conversation, and loves to shoot guns, particularly machine guns. His hearty, pirate-like laugh can often be heard ringing out across the battlefield regardless of how desperate the situation is.

Byreika is one of the bravest people you'll ever meet; he laughs in the face of danger. Unfortunately this isn't always healthy for him, and will probably lead to his death. Whenever he's confronted with a situation where it's necessary to fight against the odds to save someone's life, stop

a horrible monster, or achieve some other worthy goal, even when retreating makes more tactical sense, he struggles to make a decision, and more often than not, he stays and fights regardless of how foolish that is.

Quote: “My name is Byreika my small friend. Tadeusz Byreika! Let us go and scare all the people.”

Powers/Tactics: Although Byreika is actually a fairly gifted tactician when the situation calls for it, his usual “tactic” for fighting monsters is “shoot them as much as necessary until they die.” Compared to many Hunters, he (and his White Eagle colleagues) have a sort of “cowboy” approach to monster hunting. Sometimes it costs them dearly, but at other times it’s just what’s needed to get the job done while maintaining their sanity.

Appearance: Tadeusz Byreika is a white male from Poland in his late twenties. He’s 6’4” tall, broad-shouldered, and very muscular. He has spiky black hair, dark eyes, and a short black beard and matching moustache. Around his right bicep is a tattoo of linked ammunition (like an ammo belt). During missions he carries a Russian-made PKM machine gun as his main weapon and a Russian Bizon submachine gun as his backup. His body armor displays his company’s logo, a white eagle on red, on both shoulders.

RUSSIA

Trying to keep track of the hunting organizations in Russia is an impossible task. During the Soviet era the government handled all monster hunting work, but that came to an end when the USSR collapsed. As far as we can tell there’s no official government hunting organization; instead the Russians hire any one of dozens of companies to shoot

supernatural creatures. A few of these companies have been in business for years, but most seem to form for a brief period, break apart due to some interpersonal difficulty, and then re-form in some different configuration later. Competition between teams is often so cutthroat that they have more to worry about from each other than they do from monsters.

The most prominent and successful of these companies is KMCG (“Krasnov’s Multinational Corporation of Greatness”), headed by Ivan Krasnov, a huge man of great passions and great appetites — and who’s much smarter and cagier than his larger-than-life public persona makes people think. Thanks to his contacts in the Russian government, he basically controls any large-scale hunting operation in Russian territory. If you want to get something done, you have to get his approval so the government will grant you a permit. While Krasnov genuinely understands the threat that the supernatural poses, and frequently puts his life at risk to end it, he’s not above trying to earn money and influence for himself by exploiting monster situations. For example, he might take a dangerous relic from a long-lost evil temple and sell it to someone, despite the danger this could ultimately cause.

Russian Hunters tend to be all over the map weapons-wise, though they primarily rely on the stockpile of the former Soviet Union: the AK-47 and AK-74 in all their many variants; Dragunov sniper rifles; various RPGs; and anything else they can get their hands on. Russia is still a pretty wild and woolly place when it comes to guns, so you might run into Hunters carrying just about anything short of a nuke.

SCANDINAVIA: ASGARD RESPONS HOLD.

You could say (with a bit of tongue-in-cheek), that the Nordic and Northern European Countries have a giant problem with monsters. Frost and Fire Giants, massive wolves and sea serpents, rogue dark elves and dwarves from other realms, the Nordic countries have plenty of terrifying monsters to go around. Luckily, they also have Asgard Respons Hold.

Officially, Asgard Respons Hold (ARH) is a private organization, but it has a strong unique understanding with the northern European countries that provides it quick and fast access to problems throughout Denmark, Iceland, Norway, and other countries in that area. Able to flit in and out of countries and with two mobile bases of operations (a land convey called *Slepnir* and a former *Knud Rasmussen*-class patrol vessel called *Hringhorni*) and a small office and base in Iceland, ARH focuses on quick and mobile responses to problems all over Scandinavia.

A relatively new organization, much of ARH was trained by the SJK, and frequently reups their training with Grimm Berlin. In a pinch, ARH can request aid from their neighbors in England, France or Germany, but ARH prides themselves on their fierceness and their ability to deal with oversized threats using only a small team. This attitude has led to a derogatory term of “going Viking”, frequently used among other hunters, as ARH can be likely to overestimate their abilities to respond.

ARH day to day operations are run by three individuals, who oversee the three teams of hunters, a strong research division, and a small team of bureaucrats who work to smooth out the cross-country nature of the team's work.

Chief Tactical Officer Brandr Ullrson, a decorated military veteran who first encountered the supernatural in a fight with a frost giant, and oversees ARHs operations, teams, and logistics.

Chief Research Officer Marja Rehnäbäck, a brilliant scholar of Nordic myth and legends, who remains concerned about the potential legitimacy of the Ragnarök prophecies and their impact on the world.

The Valkyrie, CEO and president, a leader who prefers to remain private and in the shadows, very few of ARH can claim to have met her in person, instead delivering briefings and instructions via video conference from her mobile command office.

SOUTH AFRICA: SOUTH AFRICAN DEVIL HUNTERS, INC.

South Africa has a relatively light monster problem, and thus only one monster hunting company of any note: the South African Devil Hunters, Inc. (or *Suid-Afrikaanse Duiwel Jagters, Ingelyf*, if you prefer the Afrikaans). The company started in 1967 when several witch doctors tried to use zombies in an ill-conceived scheme to bring down apartheid. Several men — both white and black — kept their heads and joined forces to fight the undead horrors. After the government richly rewarded them for their efforts and asked them to keep fighting monsters in secret, they agreed.

Most of the current Hunters on the SADH teams are “second generation,” the sons or nephews of the founders, but a few of the old guard remain (mostly in administrative positions). The company now operates throughout southern Africa, with occasional forays as far north as Kenya, though they're better equipped for savannah and mountain work than jungle monster tracking. They use a variety of mostly South Africa-manufactured weapons.

SOUTH KOREA: TYONGSO CORPORATION

South Korea's monster problem has (so far) been relatively mild, so it lacks any government monster hunting arm and has only one large monster hunting company, which calls itself the Tyongso Corporation. We haven't worked with them and don't know too much about them. Tyongso's leader, or at least its public face, is Kim Mun-hee, who usually goes by "Mina" when dealing with Westerners. A short woman of average build, she comes across as intensely serious and fiercely determined to protect her countrymen from supernatural threats. We're not sure if she's actually a Hunter herself, but one of our Australian colleagues has described her to us as a "secret agent ninja," so there's a good chance she's killed a werewolf or two.

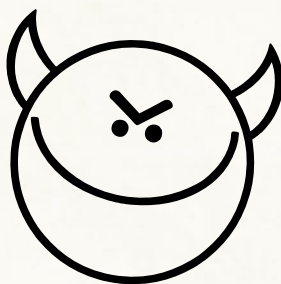
TAIWAN

We know of some Taiwanese Hunters, but they're a secretive bunch that doesn't mingle much with the rest of the Hunting World. We're not even sure if they're a super-secret government agency or a private company. Whoever ultimately pulls their strings, they're good at what they do — especially since they always carry the latest and best weapons and gear, often with high-tech accessories. Rumor has it they've been field-testing some new equipment for the US Army.

THE VATICAN: THE SECRET GUARD

Although MHI is the oldest private monster hunting organization in the world, it's not the oldest of all. That honor belongs to the Roman Catholic Church's group of Hunters, the Blessed Order of St. Hubert the Protector (Hubert being the patron saint of hunters and knights). Founded in 682 AD when their patron, Hubert, killed some werewolves plaguing the Merovingian realm, it's better known in the Hunting World as the Secret Guard, since most of its members these days are recruited from (or trained by) the Swiss Guard, which protects the Pope.

For the most part the Secret Guard keeps to itself — the scuttlebutt around the Hunting World is that they prefer to be self-reliant because that way they can guarantee they act within Catholic doctrine and their orders from the Pope without any risk of compromising themselves. That could just be gossip, though — they do sometimes work with other Hunters during particularly dangerous supernatural events. They typically carry SIG SG 550 and 552 assault rifles, H&K MP7 submachine guns, and SIG P220 .45 handguns. A few prefer the SIG AMT assault rifle instead. All of them are devout Catholics, making it difficult for vampires and demons to fight them. Each of them wears a gold medallion the Order has specially ordained him to wear; if anyone not so ordained wears it, it burns his skin.



MICHAEL GUTTERRES

Background/History: Michael Gutterres's background is shrouded in mystery, though it may be that his superiors in the Order know of it. Based on his few comments about himself, he was apparently raised by devout Catholic parents and for some reason learned to handle firearms at an early age. Other than that, he's mentioned "an unpleasant incident in Macao," the burning of a narcotraficante/necromancer's ranch in northern Mexico, a drinking contest with some sort of shapechanger, and studying at the Sorbonne as incidents in his early life.

Personality/Motivation: A devout Catholic and sincere man of God, Gutterres is driven by his faith (which often protects him from vampires and the like) to make the world a better place by hunting and killing monsters. He has sacrificed much — the chance for a family and a normal life, not to mention most opportunities for ordinary social interaction — but does not regret it, for his crusade fills him with grim satisfaction.

As a Knight of the Secret Guard of the Blessed Order of St. Hubert the Protector, Gutterres has to answer to the higher-ups in the Vatican. Usually he has no problem with this, but more than once his pragmatic approach to resolving supernatural threats has conflicted with that of his more "sheltered" commanders. In such situations he's prone to following the dictates of his own conscience and then doing penance for his disobedience after he's eliminated the problem. This has not endeared him to some of the Order's leaders.

Quote: "And I will cast the guilty out like Christ did with the moneylenders in the temple... only with more violence and guns."

Powers/Tactics: Gutterres is a highly trained, highly experienced combatant with many a gunfight, brawl, and monster hunt under his belt. He typically relies on a Sig 556 rifle (standard issue for the Secret Guard), but can handle pretty much any firearm expertly.

Due to his excellent record, the Vatican allows Gutterres to sign out holy relics and enchanted items from its vaults when necessary for a mission — a privilege he respects by never abusing it. For example, during the recent hunt for Special Agent Franks, he was allowed to use the St. Hubert Key — the very first one, forged by Hubertus himself, and driven through the eye of the demon prince Baal by Bartolomeu Cabral at the Battle of Cordoba. He used the Key's power of monster-finding to track Franks down.

Gutterres's other main weapon, one he carries with him everywhere, is his profound, abiding faith in the power, wisdom, and justice of God. The last thing that more than a few vampires, demons, and other monsters have ever seen is the simple wooden cross he keeps in his pocket.

Gutterres is stealthy enough to be able to sneak up on Special Agent Franks at times, and he can see well enough in darkness to eschew night vision goggles.

Gutterres often rides his Ducati 1199 Panigale motorcycle while in the field.

Appearance: Michael Gutterres is a man of Portuguese and Chinese ancestry in his early thirties. His appearance is unremarkable, innocuous — most people forget what he looks like as soon as they stop staring at him, and he blends into crowds easily. He dresses appropriately for his current mission, but almost always has a simple wooden cross in one pocket and his golden St. Hubert medallion around his neck.

CHAPTER 6:

MHI'S TARGETS

Now that you've learned how we do things, it's time to learn who we do them to. This section briefly summarizes the available information on some of the monsters we most commonly encounter and kill. Consult your instructors, your MHI Field Manual, or the MHI archives for more information on any of these monsters — and many, many more.

THE UNDEAD

The undead — ranging from petty ghosts who can barely interact with the physical world to the most powerful vampires — are in many ways our bread and butter. Aside perhaps from lycanthropes, there's no type of monster we're more likely to hunt. Rarely does a month go by when we don't get at least one job involving the undead. And that's great, because they all come with high PUFF bounties — but the reason for that is that they're extraordinarily dangerous. So learn everything you can about them!

GHOST

The restless, incorporeal spirits of the dead.

- **Attacks:** Chilling touch, fear, psychokinesis
- **Defenses:** Incorporeality
- **Other Abilities:** Flight
- **PUFF Bounty:** None (no body)

Ghosts are the spirits of dead people who linger in the world for some reason. Some ghosts exist only to cause fear in the living and consume their life-force. Others are tied to the place and circumstances of their death by the need to complete an important task they were working on when they died — delivering a message to a loved one, finishing a book or construction project, or something else of deep emotional significance. They try to show the living what it is they want

done, and when someone performs the task, the ghost passes away to true death.

You can't touch a ghost, but they can touch you. A ghost's touch can weaken and sicken you, or fill you with fear. Since there's rarely any chance at a PUFF bounty for them, our policy is to try to find a way to drive them off or dispel them as quickly and cheaply as possible.

GHOUL

A corporeal undead resembling a fanged, emaciated human.

- **Attacks:** Teeth, claws
- **Defenses:** Undead body
- **Other Abilities:** Fast burrowing
- **PUFF Bounty:** \$10,000-\$50,000

Ghouls are corporeal undead who feed on human flesh (fresh or decayed). They're like zombies, but faster, smarter, and tougher. The easiest way to stop them is to hit them with so much firepower that it breaks down their skeletal structure, then burn them.

LICH

An undead sorcerer wielding great necromantic power.

- **Attacks:** Magic
- **Defenses:** Undead body, defensive spells
- **Other Abilities:** Sense the life-force of living creatures
- **PUFF Bounty:** Special, but in the multiple hundreds of thousands of dollars at a minimum

With the possible exception of a master vampire, a lich is the most dangerous undead being known to exist. In life they were powerful sorcerers and black magicians who found a way to use blasphemous spells to remain unlive after death and continue their evil works. Getting to one usually involves fighting your way through a virtual army of lesser undead, then hitting him with so much force that he can't maintain his physical form. Once he's shattered into pieces, gather them up and burn them.

MUMMY

A corporeal undead preserved through special ceremonies and ritual treatments.

- **Attacks:** Immense strength
- **Defenses:** Undead body
- **Other Abilities:** Sense those who robbed their tombs
- **PUFF Bounty:** Special, but usually at least \$100,000

Certain cultures — primarily the ancient Egyptians — preserved their dead by removing most of the organs from the body, replacing them with herbs, flowers, and precious substances, anointing the body with preservative oils and salts, and then wrapping it in linen bandages before placing it in a crypt or tomb (and usually in a sarcophagus as well). If that person returns to life as one of the undead, it becomes a mummy. Usually a mummy's job is to guard its tomb from intruders (and to destroy any who violate the tomb and escape, particularly if the thief carries stolen treasure). Therefore they're much less of a threat than most other undead — but if one is unleashed, stopping him is very, very difficult. Fortunately they're vulnerable to fire; that's the best way to destroy them.

VAMPIRE

Powerful corporeal undead who drink the blood of the living.

- **Attacks:** Superhuman strength, superhuman speed, claws, fangs, hypnotic gaze
- **Defenses:** Superhuman durability, regeneration
- **Other Abilities:** Transform their victims into vampires, create undead

PUFF Bounty: \$20,000-\$100,000 for standard vampires; typically at least \$1 million or more for a master vampire

For most Hunters a vampire is the deadliest, most powerful, most terrifying undead they'll ever face. An ordinary vampire is bad enough — three times as fast as an ordinary human (or twice as fast as a trained Hunter), immensely strong, and extremely difficult to harm (much less kill). But such a creature pales before a master vampire, who's five times as fast as a human and virtually impossible to hurt. Even worse, if either type of vampire bites you, you're destined to return to life as a bloodsucker yourself after you die (hence the reason for our Hunter's Funerals).

Fortunately vampires also have a number of known weaknesses. A wooden stake through the heart paralyzes a normal vampire and slows down a master, making it possible to hurt them. Decapitating a vampire kills it instantly. Exposure to direct sunlight and to holy objects harms vampires. They cannot enter dwellings without an invitation, and someone who's strong in his religious faith can hold vampires off.

If you're fighting a vampire and don't have access to holy objects or other special weapons, the odds are you're going to lose. Your only hope is to overwhelm the creature with so much damage that it can't heal fast enough, then get close and chop off its head.

WIGHT

Corporeal undead with a paralytic touch

- **Attacks:** Paralyzing touch, teeth, claws, immense strength
- **Defenses:** Undead form
- **Other Abilities:** Clinging to walls
- **PUFF Bounty:** \$50,000–\$250,000

The most powerful members of the “zombie family,” wights are corporeal undead who are even faster, tougher, and stronger than ghouls. What makes them particularly dangerous to fight is their paralyzing touch, which works at the slightest contact even through body armor. The immobility wears off after about a minute, but once a wight freezes you, the odds are it will kill you before you can recover. They're fought like other corporeal undead: with as much firepower as you can muster. If possible, use the environment or large objects to keep them from getting close enough to touch you.

WRAITH

Powerful corporeal undead that can become incorporeal for brief periods.

- **Attacks:** Life-draining touch, claws, fangs, immense strength
- **Defenses:** Undead form
- **Other Abilities:** Become incorporeal
- **PUFF Bounty:** \$60,000–\$300,000

Wraiths are a powerful form of corporeal undead. They often wear dark-colored

robes, but the red- or green-glowing eyes within the robe's hood clearly indicate the being's true nature and evil disposition. Without the robe a wraith looks something like a zombie, but not nearly so corrupt or slow-moving and the eyes still glow evilly. They're even tougher to hurt than wights, and have the power to drain a living person's life-force with their touch. They can also become incorporeal for short periods, allowing them to walk through walls or avoid the effects of non-magical attacks entirely.

ZOMBIE

Shambling, animated corpses of the dead.

- **Attacks:** Teeth, immense strength
- **Defenses:** Undead form
- **Other Abilities:** Transform their victims into zombies
- **PUFF Bounty:** \$5,000 for a typical “slow” zombie; \$20,000 for a “fast” zombie; more for constructs and zombie animals

The most common type of undead we encounter is the zombie. The typical zombie is a slow, shambling corpse animated by necromantic magic, only able to do what its creator orders it to do. But other varieties exist: zombies that are faster; zombies that are smarter; zombies built from multiple bodies so that they have three or more arms.



Zombies are hard to kill. They don't feel pain, though a wound that removes a limb (or renders it nonfunctional) hampers them. The surest way to kill them is to cut off the head or destroy most of the brain — a shot to the head usually does the trick, but it's got to destroy enough of the brain to matter. Some devious necromancers bolt armor plating onto their zombies, making the undead horrors even harder to kill (even just bolting on a metal helmet of some sort makes a zombie much more dangerous).

LYCANTHROPES & SHAPECHANGERS

After the undead, the type of monster we encounter most frequently is lycanthropes — specifically werewolves, though there are many other types (including werejaguars, weredolphins, and werebears, among others). We've also fought other types of shapechangers.

DOPPELGANGER

Shape-changing Fey with the ability to imitate human forms.

- **Attacks:** Grabbing with immense strength
- **Defenses:** None
- **Other Abilities:** Shapechanging, telepathy
- **PUFF Bounty:** \$500,000

In its natural form a doppelganger is a light ochre-colored, damp-skinned, doughy, asexual humanoid blob with few distinguishing features. What makes it dangerous is its ability to change shape to look like a human — in fact, it can flawlessly imitate specific people, right down to accents and body odors. Even worse, it's telepathic, allowing it to read your mind so that it knows how to act or can exploit your emotional vulnerabilities. Fortunately they have no special defensive or healing powers; once uncovered they're easy to kill.

WEREWOLF

A ferocious wolf-man who can assume human form.

- **Attacks:** Superhuman strength, superhuman speed, claws, fangs
- **Defenses:** Regeneration
- **Other Abilities:** Transform bitten victims into werewolves
- **PUFF Bounty:** \$50,000 for a new/inexperienced werewolf, up into the high hundreds of thousands for an experienced or particularly dangerous one

A werewolf is a “wolf-man” humanoid who can transform into a form that looks like an ordinary human. Their bite is infectious, causing the victim to become a werewolf himself. Experienced werewolves have more control over their ability to change shape, while inexperienced ones are more likely to “lose control” and revert to wolf-man form under stress, but either type automatically becomes a wolf-man during the three nights of the full moon each month.

Werewolves are significantly stronger and faster than ordinary humans (or even trained Hunters), and have such acute senses they're difficult to surprise. They're also hard to hurt; they regenerate injuries done to them quickly (though they cannot regrow lost limbs). But they have one significant vulnerability: silver. Silver bullets or weapons create wounds they cannot regenerate from. Significant amounts of physical trauma (such as from a vehicle impact or setting one on fire) may also overwhelm their ability to heal, allowing you to kill them by chopping their head off or inflicting some other fatal wound.

MISCELLANEOUS OTHER MONSTERS

Besides the undead and shapechangers, here's a look at just some of the wide variety of monsters you may encounter during your career as a Hunter.

BLOOD FIEND

Small humanoid that likes to drink human blood.

- **Attacks:** Claws, teeth, blood draining
- **Defenses:** None
- **Other Abilities:** None
- **PUFF Bounty:** \$25,000-\$100,000

Blood fiends are wretched, twisted, demonic-looking beings about 5'0" tall. They use their claws and teeth to inflict wounds, then clamp their hands on the wound and drain the victim's body of blood. Their skin is usually tinged red, and after they've gorged on blood it becomes noticeably redder. They have no special defensive abilities and are easy to kill once you get them in your sights.

CHUPACABRA

Small, bloodsucking demonic-looking humanoids.

- **Attacks:** Fangs, blood-sucking proboscis
- **Defenses:** None
- **Other Abilities:** None
- **PUFF Bounty:** \$25,000

A chupacabra is a semi-intelligent, roughly humanoid creature standing three to four feet tall. Its features and form are partly demonic, partly reptilian, and partly insectile, giving it an appearance guaranteed to horrify most people. From its large mouth projects a mosquito-like proboscis strong and sharp enough to pierce a human skull; after the proboscis penetrates flesh the chupacabra uses it to suck blood. It moves mostly by hopping.

Chupacabras are primarily found in Mexico, though they also range into the southern parts of the United States and south into Central America. Occasionally one or more somehow sneaks onto a truck or ship and gets taken even further afield.

DEEP ONE (Saughagin)

Vicious fish-men who inhabit the world's oceans.

Attacks: Claws

Defenses: None

Other Abilities: Ability to breathe and live underwater

PUFF Bounty: \$20,000

Deep Ones, also known as Saughagin, are fish-men (though some of their features have a slightly reptilian look to them as well). They're about five feet tall with ichthyoid heads, sickly green scaly skin covered with slime, and webbing between their clawed fingers and toes. They attack ships, oceanside communities, and swimmers, though usually only at night so they can surprise their prey. They often drag humans underwater; it's unknown whether these victims are eaten, transformed into more Deep Ones, or sacrificed to the Deep Ones' gods.

GARGOYLE

Winged, demonic-looking stone golems.

- **Attacks:** Claws, fangs, immense strength
- **Defenses:** Stony body
- **Other Abilities:** Ability to fly
- **PUFF Bounty:** \$10,000-\$250,000

A gargoyle is a type of stone golem — its body is animated grey rock, its "blood" akin to lava. It will usually have a humanoid form with a horned, reptilian head, unnaturally long arms, clawed hands and feet, a stubby tail, and large, bat-like wings sprouting from its shoulderblades. They can vary greatly in size. Since they're made of stone they're extremely difficult to kill; you have to use high-caliber bullets, armor piercing ammo, explosives, or



overwhelming physical force. Targeting their joints, which are weaker, also helps.

HOBGOBLIN

Short, brutish humanoids akin to orcs.

- **Attacks:** Claws, weapons
- **Defenses:** None
- **Other Abilities:** Nightvision
- **PUFF Bounty:** \$10,000

A hobgoblin is a 5'0" to 5'6" tall humanoid, broad-shouldered and hirsute (though usually lacking facial hair). His facial features are brutish and sometimes slightly porcine. His skin tends to be green-black, but sometimes takes on a more reddish or purplish sheen. They use whatever weapons they can get their hands on.

HUMBOLDT FOLK

Glowing, cannibalistic mutants.

- **Attacks:** Weapons (typically blades and clubs)
- **Defenses:** Natural toughness

- **Other Abilities:** None
- **PUFF Bounty:** \$75,000

Humboldt Folk are eerie, cannibalistic mutants whose formerly human bodies have been warped by curses and other dark magic. They emit a green glow. They're significantly faster and tougher than ordinary humans, so fight them with caution. They favor bladed weapons but can use firearms if necessary.

LUSKA

An aquatic monster that resembles a cross between a large shark and a monstrous octopus.

- **Attacks:** Jaws, barbed tentacles
- **Defenses:** Natural toughness
- **Other Abilities:** Can breathe air
- **PUFF Bounty:** \$250,000-\$1,000,000

A luska looks like a thirty foot long, red-eyed, particularly vicious black or grey shark with a ring of heavy, squid-like tentacles fringed all around its head. The two longest

tentacles end in jagged barbs that look something like hands with long fingers similar to a crab's legs. It can use these to grasp prey even more firmly than its regular tentacles can. It has a smell of ocean rot when out of the water. They're tough, fast, and can breathe air (thus allowing them to clamber onto shore and attack targets that aren't in the water). The best way to kill them is simply with overwhelming force, but they know what guns are and are smart enough not to attack armed people, so you have to arrange an ambush.

OGRE

Ten foot tall, immensely strong humanoids.

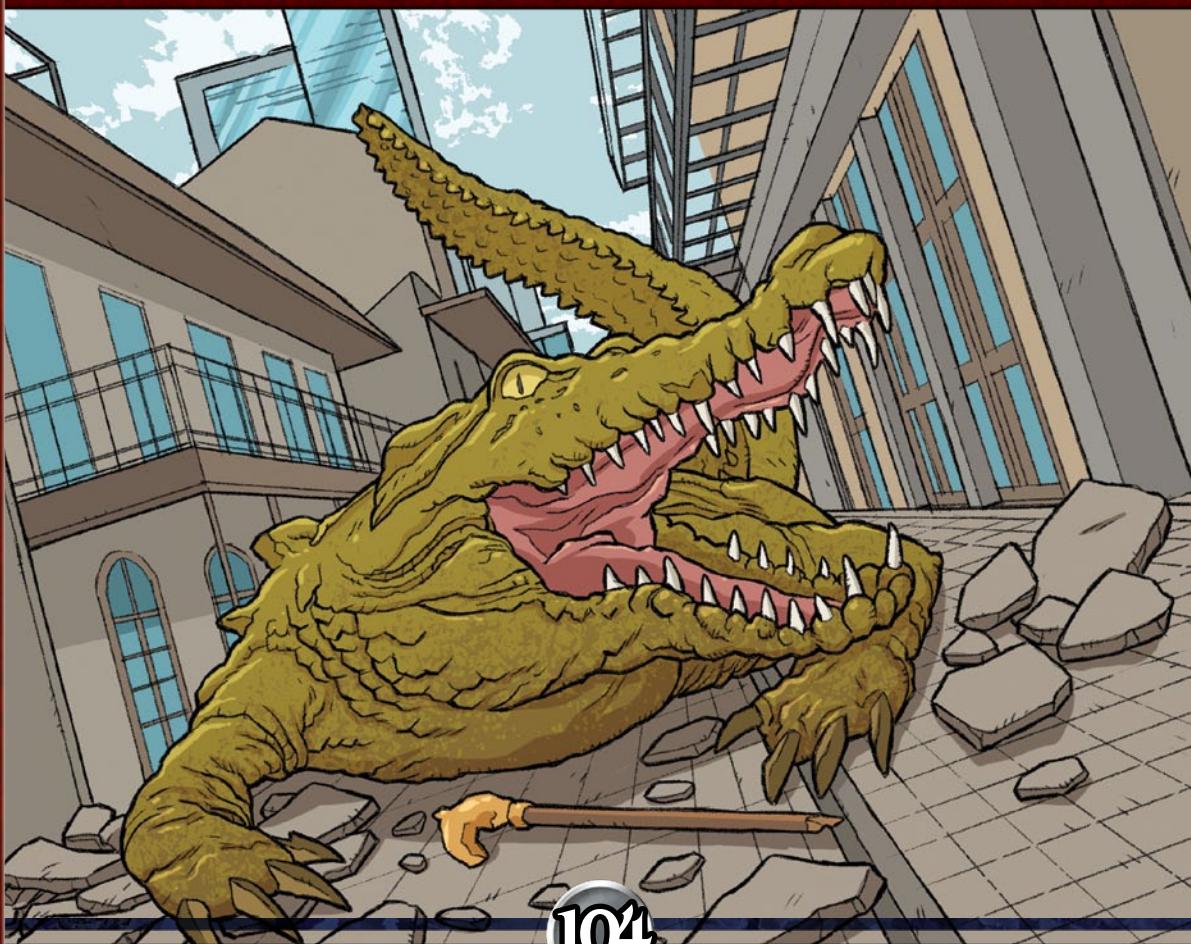
- **Attacks:** Immense strength (and often, large weapons), tusks
- **Defenses:** Tough skin
- **Other Abilities:** None
- **PUFF Bounty:** \$20,000–\$50,000

Ogres are eight to ten foot tall humanoids with dun, ochre, grey, or dark skin (sometimes mottled). They have thick, squat, prognathous heads featuring large, heavy browridges, upward-pointing tusks, and pointed ears. They carry weapons appropriate to their size and enormous strength (and can even use large, everyday items, like stop signs or pieces of furniture, as weapons when necessary). They have no special defenses (other than particularly tough skin), so enough firepower will bring them down.

ONI

Enormous, brutish humanoids who have the ability to drain the souls of the living.

- **Attacks:** Soul leeching, claws, tusks, immense strength
- **Defenses:** Tough body, regeneration
- **Other Abilities:** Become invisible
- **PUFF Bounty:** Special



An oni is a large, well-muscled humanoid ten to thirteen feet tall with unusually-colored skin — typically some shade of purple or red. Its head and face are longer and pointier than a human's, and its eyes may be a burning red or an evilly-gleaming pure black. Tusks, sometimes extremely large ones, jut up from its lower jaw. It has six fingers on each hand, each one tipped with a razor-sharp black claw as long as a steak knife.

An oni is a physical being, but its physical form is a “vessel” for the souls of those it has slain (or with which sorcerers “pay” them for services). It has the power to leech the soul from living beings, thus adding that soul to its own “life substance.” If an oni's injured, you can see souls leaking out of it like a white, wispy vapor — that's how it “bleeds.” But you won't see that often because oni are extremely hard to hurt (and can regenerate); only overwhelming physical force can get the job done. Even worse, they can become invisible, and sometimes have other powers as well.

REPTOID

Reptilian humanoids living beneath us.

- **Attacks:** Fangs, claws, weapons
- **Defenses:** Tough, scaly skin
- **Other Abilities:** Adapted to fighting in water
- **PUFF Bounty:** \$50,000

A reptoid is a 5'5" to 6'5" tall reptilian humanoid with green, scaly skin, a fang-filled mouth, short claws on its fingers and toes, and a tail. Some are saurian in appearance, others more ophidian. We most commonly find them living in sewer systems beneath major cities, where they prey on the homeless and other humans who aren't likely to be missed. They sometimes wield primitive weapons like clubs and knives, but we've never known them to use firearms. They prefer to strike from surprise and are good at setting up

ambushes and traps — never follow them into the sewers alone!

SHOGGOTH

Extradimensional, blob-like horror with multiple eyes, mouths, and limbs.

- **Attacks:** Fangs, claws, immense strength
- **Defenses:** Semisolid body, regeneration
- **Other Abilities:** Can fit through small openings
- **PUFF Bounty:** \$100,000-\$1,250,000

A shoggoth is an extradimensional horror, a servant of the Old Ones. It's a black, blob-like creature about fifteen feet across and weighing approximately two tons. It's bulbous, lumpy, and asymmetrical, with white eyes and sharp-toothed mouths at many different points all over its body. It can grow tentacles and pseudopods at will. Hurting them is extremely difficult; they seem to absorb bullets and most other forms of physical force. Fire, however, is very effective against them.

TROLL

Green-skinned humanoids who regenerate from injuries and are skilled at computer use.

- **Attacks:** Claws
- **Defenses:** Regeneration, tough skin
- **Other Abilities:** Computer skills
- **PUFF Bounty:** \$20,000-\$50,000

A troll is an eight foot tall humanoid with green, rubbery skin; its body looks almost like a mass of greasy water hoses rolled up and stacked into a human shape. Its nose is long and pointed, its mouth full of large, dirty, blunt teeth. Its arms and legs are unnaturally long; its hands and feet are large and sport claws a half-inch long. It has round, yellow eyes and stringy black hair. They're hard to hurt because of their ability to regenerate, but are highly vulnerable to flame. It's best to engage them from a distance, and once they're hurt badly enough that you can approach, burn them.

HUMAN OPPONENTS

Not every enemy we fight is a monster — some are humans who work with monsters, or control them for their own purposes. Technically there's no PUFF bounty for humans, and in fact killing them qualifies as murder. However, trafficking with the undead and extradimensional entities is a capital offense under federal law. If we have to kill some sorcerer or evil priest while we're blowing up their monstrous servants, the government usually looks the

other way, and in fact tends to increase our bounty payment a little.

LUCINDA HOOD

Martin Hood's daughter Lucinda survived his attempt to unleash the Dread Overlord on the world, though she lost her right hand in the process. (She's since replaced it with a metal one she's made as flexible as flesh with her spells.) She's a powerful sorcerer in her own right, though not as skilled or knowledgeable as her father — yet. We're not entirely clear on the extent of her resources or what grimoires and magical artifacts she may possess.

Lucinda Hood was also involved in the Copper Lake incident; she assisted Adam Conover with his attempt to take over the world with werewolves and vulkodlak. She escaped the collapse of the scheme and has not been seen or heard from since — though we have no doubt she's out there, somewhere, hatching schemes of her own.

Lucinda Hood is an attractive white woman of British ancestry in her early twenties. She's 5'6" tall and has shoulder-length blonde hair. Her green eyes gleam with intelligence and malice. She usually wears stylish normal clothes, but when she expects to use her ritual magic often puts on intricately-decorated black robes, a golden pendant with a likeness of her unholy god, and sometimes a matching golden crown as well.

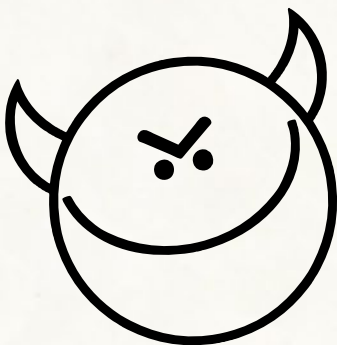


If you see her, alert your team leader and/or DoO Harbinger immediately.

THE SANCTIFIED CHURCH OF THE TEMPORARY MORTAL CONDITION

The Sanctified Church of the Temporary Mortal Condition, usually just called “the Condition,” was Martin Hood’s cult that worshipped the Old One he called the Dread Overlord. After his defeat and death, which also resulted in the death or arrest of numerous cult members and the destruction or banishment of many of their monstrous allies/servants, the Condition seems to have fallen apart and largely ceased to become a threat. After all, its leader and its god were both slain. However, there’s some indication that fragments of the Condition survived and have adopted a new god. It’s possible that Lucinda Hood now leads them, or controls them in some way. Of particular concern are members of the Exalted Order of the Shadows, the Condition’s paramilitary arm of fanatic cultist-soldiers; even one of them could cause a lot of harm in the right place at the right time.

Condition members used to wear a golden pendant with a likeness of the Dread Overlord (a sort of squid monster-looking Elder Thing). Whether they still do, or have adopted some other symbol of a new god, is unknown.



Old Ones & Elder Things

The most terrifying opponents you’ll ever face as a Hunter are a group of malevolent, extradimensional, ancient beings/gods collectively referred to as “the Old Ones” (or, less formally, as “Elder Things”). We know very little about them, since studying them involves delving into black magic and can degrade your sanity. They’ve apparently existed for tens if not hundreds of millions of years (possibly longer), and there seem to be multiple “types” or “factions” of Elder Things. According to Martin Hood, 65 million years ago one or more Old Ones fought against a species or being called the Yith. Given that this timeframe corresponds to the scientifically established mass extinction of the dinosaurs, this “war” was apparently destructive on a planetary scale.

Fortunately for humanity the Old Ones can’t enter Earth’s reality (or at least not on their own — it may be possible for them to do so with the help of evil wizards). However, they can sometimes send servants (such as shoggoths) to our world, either on their own or with the help of evil wizards who cast summoning spells. Some of them have deranged human cultists working on their behalf. The Condition (see elsewhere in this Handbook) is one such group, but sadly not the only one.

Despite the fact that Owen Pitt and Agent Franks killed an Old One (known to humans as the Dread Overlord) using a ward stone, don’t expect to hunt Old Ones. Not only can you not reach them, but they’re effectively gods — beings who barely suffer a scratch from nuclear weapons. (And it’s not like we have more ward stones lying around.) The only way to oppose them is to kill their servants on Earth and thus thwart their schemes.



CHAPTER 7:

MAGIC

The world of MHI isn't just one of guns and action — it's also a world of magic, where spells, sorcerers, and strange powers exist. This section of the MHI RPG describes how magic works in the MHI setting, and how your character can learn and cast spells.

Caveat: just because Player Characters *can* learn to cast spells doesn't necessarily mean they *should*. Hunters in general, and MHI Hunters in particular, tend to be extremely suspicious of *any* use of magic, even for supposedly good ends. They've seen too much evil magic, and too many instances of "good" magic gone horribly wrong, for them to ever trust it. After all, the December 15, 1995 tragedy and the Martin Hood incident were both the result of Hunters thinking they could learn magic and put it to good use — and you can see how that turned out. An MHI Hunter who learns magic could easily find himself having a Negative Reputation within the company; at the very least, Earl Harbinger and other officers are going to keep an extremely close eye on him.

A person who can cast spells is usually known as a "wizard," regardless of gender. (Some people also use the generic term "spellcaster.") The term "sorcerer" usually implies a wizard who practices black magic or uses magic for evil (or selfish) purposes. Terms like "necromancer" and "shaman" refer to wizards who focus on specific types of spells and spellcasting.

THE BASICS OF MHI MAGIC

Here's the basic explanation of how magic works in the world of MHI. Naturally it's a lot more complicated than this when you get down to the details, but this explanation is sufficient for MHI RPG purposes.

The Source & Nature Of Magic

Magic is not inherent to Earth. It flows into Earth from other dimensions or is sent to Earth by the various Outsider Factions (see [page 139](#), if you have your GM's permission). It manifests in one of two ways: either as innate Gifts a person possesses; or as ambient "magical energy" a wizard can manipulate to cast Spells. (See below for more about Gifts and Spells.) The source of magic has several important implications for how magic works, and how characters can use/manipulate it.

PLACES OF POWER & PERIL

First, because of the way it enters Earth's reality, magic is essentially an "environmental" phenomenon. This means that it can "collect" in certain places (either always or at certain times), or may "seep away" from them (temporarily or permanently). A location where magic is more prevalent is usually known as a "place of power," and may be inherently dangerous either due to the effects of the magic, because it attracts monsters, or

both. For example, Natchy Bottom and DeSoya Caverns, which both factored into the events of the Machado incident, are dangerous places of power (Natchy Bottom in particular); so is the events venue where Raymond Shackelford initiated the December 15, 1995 disaster. In other cases, an area is so “devoid” of magic that monsters can’t exist there and Spells can’t be cast there; wizards refer to these as “deserts” or “null zones.”

CUTTING OFF ACCESS

Because magic isn’t an inherent power of a spellcaster or Gifted person, it’s possible for one wizard to “cut off” another’s access to magic (similar to the way Koriniha stripped Thrall of his powers during the Machado incident). This isn’t easy — it typically requires a lot of power and/or preparation — but it is possible. In fact, it’s a thought that keeps more than a few wizards up at night.

EVIL SOURCE, EVIL RESULTS

The unpleasant truth is that more of the Outsider Factions and their members qualify as “evil” than as “good” in human terms — they revel in destruction and chaos, or they have goals which are inimical to human life (or at least peaceful human existence). Since there are more evil beings than good beings able and willing to dispense Gifts and magic power to humans who worship/follow them (or have goals aligned with theirs), magic is far more likely to be used for evil purposes than for good. To put it another way, necromancers and sorcerers both outnumber beneficent wizards by a considerable margin.

Furthermore, many (if not most) Outsider Factions and their members are too evil, or too “alien,” for the human mind to comprehend safely. That means Gifts and magic power from them are inherently dangerous and corruptive. Sooner or later

they’ll drive the user insane, or even physical warp him.

Learning Magic

The source and nature of magic also has implications for how characters learn to use it.

GIFTS

Gifts are innate magical abilities granted to a human by an Outsider Faction. Typically, the Faction has chosen the Gifted person to perform some mission or fulfill some destiny (whether he likes or wants this, or not). For example, Owen Pitt’s ability to read memories, his precognitive dreams, and his general luckiness are all Gifts given to him by whichever Faction he’s the Chosen One for.

Unlike Spells, Gifts aren’t “learned” abilities and typically don’t require any sort of talent or training to use. But that doesn’t mean they’re 100% reliable or always work when the Gifted wants them to. Particularly when they first manifest, they’re often unreliable or restricted in some way. As he becomes more accustomed to them, the Gifted typically gains a greater degree of reliability and control.

For example, when Owen Pitt’s ability to read peoples’ memories first manifested, he couldn’t activate it on demand or control what he saw. As he gained more experience using the power, he learned to make the ability more reliable (though his control over it remains far from absolute).

The most common Gift in the world of MHI is “I can learn to cast Spells more easily than ordinary humans.” Many wizards have this Gift. However, even someone who has another Gift is usually able to learn to cast Spells more easily than an un-Gifted person (who has to study long and hard to learn magic, as discussed below).

Selling One's Soul

"If you put something up for sale at the right price, there will always be a buyer. Souls ain't no different."

—Earl Harbinger

Not every un-Gifted person accepts that state of existence. Sometimes a deeply disturbed individual finds a way to "contact" a Faction and sell his soul. He may do this through intense negative emotions that attract a Faction's attention, learning a little basic magic, visiting or living in a place of power, or some other method, but the end result is the same: he exchanges his soul for magical power. The best example of this in MHI's records is the Ragman, a San Diego serial killer turned inhuman monstrosity whom Tim Green killed before joining the company — but sadly it's not the only one.

Typically, a person who sells his soul to an Outsider Faction receives one or more Gifts. But unlike regular Gifts, "bought Gifts" tend to be much more powerful than ordinary gifts, and much easier to use as well. In fact, they're often 100% reliable. They often include monster-like abilities such as resilience to injury, regeneration, enhanced senses, claws (or other natural weapons), and the like. The downside, of course, is that the Gifted is now soulless and irredeemably evil, and in thrall to one of the Outsider Factions as well (though he may not fully understand that).

SPELLS

Spells (or *Wizardry*, to use the most common formal term for magic practiced by humans) are magical powers that a wizard wields ("casts") by making the proper preparations, speaking special words, gesturing in the proper mystical ways, and using his willpower to "shape" the magic being channelled to him (or that "exists" in his environment) to his purposes.

"Harnessing magic is no different than harnessing electricity," as Martin Hood put it, and while in a certain sense that's true, there's more to it. In theory anyone can learn to cast Spells *if he has what it takes*. And the attributes for becoming a wizard aren't exactly common. They include:

- a sufficiently flexible mind. Just like it takes a certain mindset to fight monsters without panicking, only people with the right "attitude" can truly comprehend, and thus use, magic.
- willpower. Mastering magic and using it to alter/reshape reality in contravention of the laws of physics isn't a job for the weak-willed.
- discipline and a studious/scholarly nature. Learning to cast spells involves literally thousands of hours' worth of time spent reading books (many of them old or written in ancient languages), practicing arcane skills, and the like. It's like earning a Ph.D., without the benefit of interacting with other students and professors. A would-be wizard has to enjoy this sort of thing or he'll never succeed. It's not something most Hunters, who tend to be men and women of action, have much tolerance for.
- access to study materials. This is actually the most important thing a wizard in training needs. Without genuine magical books, scrolls, and chronicles to study, a character who wants to learn magic can never succeed, no matter how flexible his mind, how great his willpower, and how strong his discipline. And the truth is that genuine grimoires are extremely rare. MHI has a few in its archives (which it keeps under lock and key and carefully controls access to), but usually any that it finds it destroys, and most other Hunting organizations do the same. (The MCB is more

likely to save and study such things, but it approaches such pursuits very, very carefully.) The odds of a character stumbling across a genuine magical tome in a used bookstore or some out of the way location are about the same as his odds of winning the lottery.

The truth is that most people simply have no talent for learning/using magic. Earl Harbinger candidly admits this about himself, and he's been around magical things all his life!

Furthermore, some forms of magic are harder to learn than others. For example, a grimoire written in medieval English by some ancient sorcerer would be comparatively easy for a character to read. One in Latin, ancient Greek, or Babylonian would require him to learn to read those languages (and perhaps all about those cultures as well) before he could even begin to study and comprehend the magic in it. And scrolls or tablets written by the Fey or by the strange, prehistoric cultures and races that once existed upon the Earth are even harder to work with (particularly since a character can't go down to the local bookstore and pick up a textbook on how to read pre-human languages). The older a source of magic is, the more useful information it's likely to contain and the more powerful the magics a character can learn from it — but the harder it is to learn from.

On the other hand, not every character is human. Inherently magical humanoids — elves, gnomes, orcs, minotaurs, and so on — can more easily learn and use magic than humans can. This is particularly true of elves, who have stronger innate magic than most humanoid species and often learn the fundamentals of magic (or divination, as they call it) in their youth the way human adolescents study history and math. Orcs all have “life gifts,” which are how Gifts manifest among them.

Using Magic In The Game

Here's how characters learn Gifts and Spells in *Savage Worlds* terms and use them during the campaign.

GIFTS

As discussed above, Gifts are innate magical abilities a character might possess. To have a Gift, a character first has to get the GM's permission; not all GMs will want Gifted characters in their MHI RPG campaigns, and even if your GM allows a character to be Gifted he may not approve the specific Gift you have in mind.

RULES FOR GIFTS

Gifts are represented by the Arcane Background (Gifted).

- Characters who have Arcane Background (Gifted) can also have Arcane Background (Magic).
- Power Points granted by Arcane Background (Gifted) can be used on Powers that a character has by having Arcane Background (Magic).
- If a character has a Power granted by Arcane Background (Gifted) and they have the same power granted by Arcane Background (Magic), if their Focus Skill is higher than their Spellcasting Skill, they may use the higher of the two dice when using that specific power.

A character could make a deal to sell their soul for a gift, in which case the Gift becomes linked to the character's highest Attribute and starts at a d8. However, the character immediately gains the Enemy (Everything Good) Hindrance at the Major Level, Vow (Outsider Factions) Hindrance at the Major Level, and the Wanted (Major) Hindrance.

CASTING SPELLS IN PLACES OF POWER

Casting Spells in a place of power (see [page 110](#)) may have several unusual effects.

First, depending on the nature of the place of power and the type of Spell, casting it may be easier than normal, or the Spell may be more powerful than normal. The GM may represent this by granting a free Raise on the Spellcasting Test (or bonus Power Points if they so desire.)

On the other hand, again depending on the nature of the place of power and the type of Spell, casting it may be more difficult than normal, or the Spell may be weaker. The GM may do this by adding penalties to the Spellcasting Test, or limiting how effective the magic can be. In magic "deserts," casting Spells may be even harder, or simply impossible.

Third, a place of power may not make a Spell stronger or weaker but may instead warp or change it in some way. The usual outcome may differ, the Spell may hit a different target than the one intended, the Spell's Backlash may automatically occur (perhaps at greater than usual effect), and so on. The only limit is the GM's fiendish imagination.



If a character has more than 3 gifts from bargaining with an Outsider Faction, they immediately must retire as a character and become a non-player character, having turned so fully to evil, they're a major villain.

SPELLS

Learning Wizardry and casting Spells is a little more complicated. To be able to cast a Spell, a character needs several things:

- Arcane Background (Magic)
- Knowledge of the Spell
- A Successful Test to cast the spell as per the Savage Worlds rules.

Knowledge Of The Spell

First, he has to have learned the Spell from some source (it's extraordinarily rare, if not impossible, in this day and age for someone to have the power and talent to create a new Spell on his own). In game terms that means the character has to select one of the Spells listed under Example Spells, below. (In some cases, the GM may allow a character to create his own Spells and buy them.)

The Spellcasting Skill

Second, the character to have Arcane Background (Magic) to learn the Powers and must pass a Test to cast the spell. This follows all the normal rules for Arcane Background (Magic).

Endurance

Although magic ultimately comes from an external source, "channeling" it through one's self by casting Spells is tiring. This is represented by the Backlash rule under Arcane Background (Magic).

Magical Incantations & Gestures

Most Spells require a character to incant special mystic words and phrases, and to make specific arcane gestures, or they automatically fail. In game terms, this is simply a trapping to make the magic work.

Enchanted Items

While many Spells require ritual items and paraphernalia, those aren't "magic items" — they're simply items necessary for a particular form of magic to function. But true enchanted items — items with their own inherent magical powers, which anyone can use — do exist in the world of MHI. Most of them date from earlier (even ancient or pre-human) times, when magic was either more plentiful or easier to use. Creating a new enchanted item today, particularly a powerful one, would be *extremely* difficult, but it's not impossible. For example, when Martin Hood controlled the Condition, he created special magical amulets for its members to wear.

See *Example Enchanted Items*, below.

TYPES OF MAGIC

While the discussion above focuses on magic in the abstract, not all magic is the same. There are different types or categories of magic practiced by different people and/or species. In fact, there are four primary types of magic in the world of MHI: Wizardry; Alchemy; Divination; and Shamanism.

Wizardry

The most common type of magic, and the type practiced by humans, is Wizardry. All Wizardry is the same, regardless of the cultural filter or mystical methodology applied to it. For example, the Hermetic Theurgy of medieval and Renaissance Europe, Hebrew kabbalah and gematria, Norse rune-magic, and Chinese sorcery are all forms of Wizardry and all allow their users to learn the same types of Spells, even though those Spells may be cast a little differently or look a little different from one part of the world to the next. Unless a character is an elf, minotaur, or orc, the Spells he's casting are Wizardry Spells.

The following types of Wizardry spells are simply Trappings that all work under Arcane Background (Magic).

NECROMANCY

Necromancy is a "subset" of Wizardry whose Spells deal with death, undeath (and the creation of the undead), summoning and controlling demons, fear, other negative emotions, and darkness. It comes from the Old Ones and other evil Outsider Factions, and is very much evil (even if used with good intentions). A wizard who focuses on Necromancy is known as a necromancer, and because of the transformative side effects of many of his Spells, he's often insane or has noticeable physical changes (severe palsy, demonic horns growing from his head, warped flesh, twisted limbs, black eyes, and the like).

Any Necromancy trappings automatically draw from the Old Ones and will mark the wizard as evil. Upon casting a Necromancy spell, the wizard automatically gains the Outsider Hindrance.

Repeat uses of Powers that have the Necromantic Trapping will give the caster multiple instances of the Outsider Hindrance, which continually cause the wizard's form to warp and change as described above. (And yes, the Persuasion penalty does stack in this case.) After the first, the GM should assign the Outsider Hindrance at a rate they feel is appropriate (generally every two to three spells.)

Voodoo

Voodoo is sort of an offshoot of Necromancy. It's a legitimate religion in Haiti and some other places, but certain disturbed persons have taken those religious teachings, crossed them with magic, and come up with a style of spellcasting all their own. Voodoo focuses on creating undead (particularly zombies) and on inflicting and removing curses. Characters based in the United States are most likely to encounter Voodoo in New Orleans and the surrounding region.

Alchemy

Alchemy is a sort of "scientific magic" studied/used by "natural historians" such as Sir Isaac Newton and Benjamin Franklin. Practicing it, and casting its Spells, requires a laboratory, lots of materials, extremely detailed procedures/rituals, and the like. The end results are usually physical in nature — rather than evoking some sort of energy or force, Alchemy creates potions, ointments, golems, animate objects, and similar things. Despite having some similarities with Wizardry, it is very much a separate discipline.

Alchemy has been out of favor with most students of magic for well over a century; its theories and methods are not compatible with modern science. Almost no one studies it today. MHI has no facilities set up for alchemical workings, and even the MCB's alchemical resources are limited.

If you really want to include Alchemy, simply use Arcane Background (Weird Science) and just flavor it like Alchemy.

Divination

Divination is the formal term for elven magic, which only elves can learn and practice. For the most part it's similar to Wizardry, though elves find it much easier to use and learn than humans do Wizardry. Elven diviners and human wizards can work together relatively easily, though differences in terminology, perspectives on magic, and ease of use may cause problems.

Some forms of Divination involve drawing elf-runes on objects; this can protect that object or grant it special qualities. Some scholars speculate that the various systems of runic magic found in European cultures derived from Divination rune-workings.

Shamanism

Shamanism is the magic of orcs, minotaurs, and possibly some other humanoid species. It involves speaking to/communing with/controlling the spirits that exist in the natural world and which are inherent in most objects (both natural and manufactured). This makes it extremely flexible and powerful when practiced by an experienced or talented shaman, and even a low-ranking shaman can be highly effective in the right situations.

Shamans are particularly known for their healing powers. By speaking to the right spirits and preparing remedies from various herbs, minerals, and other natural substances, they can cause even life-threatening injuries to heal much more quickly than normal. Unfortunately, these Spells are most effective when prepared for a specific person; "generic" healing magic has at best a small fraction of the power of a person-specific Spell.

Learning Different Types Of Magic

Except as noted above, it's possible for a character to learn multiple types of magic. A human wizard could learn some Shamanism from an orc (and vice-versa), or could study Alchemy procedures from a medieval philosopher's notes, for example.

EXAMPLE GIFTS

Here are some example Gifts appropriate for MHI RPG characters (though not necessarily for Player Characters — some of them are dark and evil). If you don't find one here that fits what you have in mind for your character, you can use them as guidelines for creating your own Gifts using the Savage Worlds rules.

DARKEST DAY

Sometimes you can gaze deep into a person's mind and soul and discover their worst memory or greatest fear about themselves — and then, of course, use that information against them as you see fit. This ability doesn't always work, but you can at least control when you try to use it.

This is best represented by the Mind Reading Power.

FAST HEALING

You heal from injuries approximately seven times as fast as an ordinary person.

This is best represented by the Healing Power, with the Greater Healing Modifier.

MIGRAINE MANIPULATION

Occasionally, by concentrating hard, you can cause another person to briefly experience the intense pain of a migraine headache.

This is best represented by the Confusion Power.

SIMPLE TELEKINESIS

When you properly focus your willpower you can slowly, carefully lift objects weighing up to 25 kilograms without touching them.

This is best represented by the Telekinesis Power.

SOUL FEASTING

Whenever someone dies near you (whether by your own hand or someone else's), you can "feed" on the soul as it escapes the body, thus temporarily making yourself stronger, faster, tougher, and so on.

This is best represented by the Boost/Lower Trait Power, with a modifier that it can only be triggered when something dies near you.

UNUSUAL INSIGHT

You have a Gift for noticing things. Your observational skills are so well-developed that it's almost uncanny; your senses of sight, smell, and hearing are more acute than normal humans'. You even subconsciously sense danger to yourself.

This is best represented by the Farsight Power.

VISIONS OF DISTANT PLACES

Sometimes you get flashes that allow you to see what's going on in other areas up to about six kilometers away from you. (You can't hear anything at that location, only see what's there.) You have no control over when it happens or how long it lasts. While it's going on you can't move; all you can do is stand there. If you move, you instantly lose the vision.

This is best represented by the Divination Power.

EXAMPLE SPELLS

Here are some Spells for the MHI RPG, organized into three sections: Wizardry/Divination; Alchemy; and Shamanism. Necromancy spells are designated with (N) after their names.

Wizardry/Divination Spells

These Spells are usable by human wizards and elven diviners (though each may go about casting them a little differently than the other).

Some of these spells are Divination-specific; they can only be learned and cast by elves. They're designated as such in their descriptions, and with (D) after their names.

BANISHMENT

Description: This Spell allows a wizard to send a summoned demon or extradimensional creature back from whence it came. It may be cast either on the summoned creature itself, or on the sorcerer who conjured him.

This is best represented by the Banish Power.

BLOCK CLAIRVOYANCE

Description: If a wizard is concerned about being spied on via clairvoyance or similar scrying spells, he can cast this Spell. It establishes a "shield" against all forms of "remote viewing" as long as he expends the energy to maintain it. Anyone trying to "view" him simply perceives a "blank," grey area (and thus knows the target is shielding himself with this Spell).

At the GM's option, this Spell also interferes with the Tracking Spell, either blocking it from working entirely or imposing significant penalties on anyone's attempts to track the caster.

This is best reflected by the Conceal Arcana Power.

BLOCKING THE FLOW

Description: This Spell cuts off another spellcaster's "access" to the environmental "magic force" he taps to cast Spells. It has a relatively minor effect at first, but as the caster continues to expend energy to keep it functioning, it can build to the point where the target can't use magic at all.

Using this Spell is also dangerous for the caster. If he fails his he suffers the "blockage" effect himself!

This is best represented by the Drain Power Points or Dispel Powers.

BOIL THE SEA

Description: This powerful Spell allows a wizard to boil a large quantity of water instantly. He can't use it to attack living beings, but it's very effective against creatures in the water.

This is best represented by the Elemental Manipulation Power.

BREAK THE TETHER

Description: When a wizard creates a pocket dimension (see below), he has to "tether" it to Earth's dimension, so he can move back and forth between them easily. This Spell breaks the tether, thus preventing passage between the two realms and causing the pocket dimension to disintegrate over several minutes. Anyone and anything in the pocket dimension when it's untethered is trapped there (unless they have some way to travel between dimensions on their own) and will be killed/destroyed when the pocket dimension unravels.

To cast this Spell, the wizard must be within 1m of the "anchor" — the point at which the pocket dimension's tether attaches to Earth's dimension. The anchor's located within the pocket dimension itself, so the wizard has to be sure he has a way to get out of the pocket dimension and back to Earth before the dimension unravels or else he'll be hoist in his own petard.

This is best represented by the Banish or Dispel Powers.

BULLET BARRIER

Description: This rare, powerful Spell protects the caster (and those near him) from bullets, grenades, arrows, and other physical projectiles. Once cast it's stationary. It only works against physical projectiles; the caster (and other people) can move in and out of it freely.

This is best represented by the Deflection Power.

CAUSE ILLNESS (N)

Description: A necromancer uses this Spell to make someone sick. The illness is so virulent that it can kill the victim, and even if he survives it may take him days to recover his full health. The victim falls sick an hour after the Spell is cast, so he may be able to counter the evil magics before they take effect — if he's aware of what's happening.

You should also consider this a Shamanism Spell, though of course only evil shamans use it.

This is best represented by the Lower Trait Power.

CLAIRVOYANCE

Description: With this Spell, a wizard can see things happening up to 6 km away from him. Some versions of the Spell allow him to expend more energy to add the ability to hear things, or to view things anywhere on Earth. In some magical traditions, casting this spell requires a crystal ball, scrying mirror, or other object to view things in.

This is best represented by the Farsight Power, but instead directly seeing through their own senses, the wizard is simply scrying on a location.

CLAIRVOYANT ASSAULT (N)

Description: This Necromancy Spell gives the caster the power to attack someone who's viewing him clairvoyantly. First, of course, he has to be aware that someone's scrying him (either through the Detect Arcana Power or a Gift that provides a similar power). This Spell affects the scryer regardless of where he is in the world.

This is best represented by Detect Arcana Power. If successful, the Necromancer then gains the ability to have a Bolt target the individual scrying on him.

COMMUNICATIONS BLACKOUT

Description: This Spell allows a wizard to block all electronic communications throughout an area roughly 50 kilometers in radius around where he is when he casts the spell. Radio, television, telephone, and cell phone signals can't be transmitted from or received in the affected area. The effect lasts for 1 Day.

This is best reflected as an Elemental Manipulation Power that only targets communications but has a roughly 50-kilometer area. It can only be used to shut down communications.

CONTROL UNDEAD (N)

Description: This Spell gives a necromancer the power to command the undead. It's not necessary for undead beings the necromancer creates himself (since they're automatically obedient), but comes in handy when he encounters free-willed or masterless undead beings.

This is best reflected by the Zombie or Puppet Powers.

CREATE FLESH GOLEM (N)

Description: With this Spell a necromancer can stitch together (or otherwise attach) parts from various corpses and then infuse them with dark magical energies to create a flesh golem. The golem is loyal to its creator and obeys his commands without hesitation.

See the Alchemy section, below, for a similar Spell.

This is best reflected by the Summon Ally Power.

CREATE UNDEAD (N)

Description: This Spell, the very heart of Necromancy, allows a sorcerer to raise a corpse or skeleton from death to unlife, creating an undead being to serve him. Typically it's used to create zombies or skeletons, but more powerful necromancers learn versions that can create other types of corporeal undead, such as constructs or wights. The undead created is loyal to its creator and obeys his commands without hesitation.

This is best reflected by the Zombie Power.

DEMON SUMMONING (N)

Description: One of the most powerful Spells in a necromancer's arsenal is this one, which allows him to summon forth demons from Hell. It's dangerous to cast, since infernal beings are extremely hard to control — but they offer the promise of great power to he who can master them. A smart necromancer protects himself with a Summoning Circle (see below) before casting this Spell.

More dedicated or evil necromancers can learn to Summon more powerful demons, though this of course increases the Spell's cost.

This is best reflected by the Summon Ally Power.

DETECT CLAIRVOYANCE

Description: When cast, this Spell informs the caster if he's being scryed with the Clairvoyance Spell (or any similar Gift or power). It doesn't tell him who's scrying him or where they are, it only lets him know whether he's under remote mystical observation or not. He can maintain the Sense as long as he expends energy.

This is best reflected by the Detect Arcana Power.

DIMENSIONAL CALL (N)

Description: Although similar to Demon Summoning, this Spell is potentially even more dangerous, for it allows a sorcerer to call forth the terrifyingly, bizarre extradimensional entities that are minor servants of the Old Ones and similar Outsider Factions: shoggoths; burrowers; and creatures even less pleasant. Again, the use of a Summoning Circle is recommended, though even that's not enough to protect the caster from some of these beings.

This is best reflected by the Summon Ally Power.

DOMINATION (N)

Description: This Spell gives a necromancer the power to take over another person's mind and force the victim to do his bidding.

This is best reflected by the Puppet Power.

DOUSE THE LIGHT

Description: Since some monsters and magic powers are more effective in darkness, evil wizards often use this Spell. It destroys bulbs, candles, flashlights, and other sources of light in a 4m radius.

This is best reflected by the Darkness Power.

DREAMSPEECH

Description: A wizard uses this Spell to communicate with another person by altering his dreams. Depending on the wizard's intentions, he can "speak" directly (by having himself appear in the sleeper's dream and convey information) or indirectly (by altering a dream to have symbolic meaning). He doesn't have to tell the truth; he could, for example, use this Spell to convince someone that something terrible's about to happen in Atlanta — when in fact the wizard's evil scheme is about to unfold in Houston and he just wants to lure the sleeper away.

To use this Spell, the wizard either has to have Line Of Sight to the sleeper, or must use Mind Seeking (see below) to locate his mind. At the GM's option, a wizard can use it without Mind Seeking if he knows the sleeper well or has previously been inside his mind.

You should also consider this a Shamanism Spell, though a shaman needs a small fetish made of several different types of feathers to cast it.

This is best represented with the Mind Link power.

FIRE BOLT

Description: This Spell allows a wizard to shoot a bolt of fire at one of his enemies. It's difficult and tiring to cast, but few foes can withstand a Fire Bolt to the face.

This is best reflected by the Burst Power with a Fire Trapping.

FIRESHAPING

Description: This spell allows the caster to "pick up" masses of flame, move them, and even create crude shapes with them (such as a fiery eagle or a tower of flame).

If the caster touches a person with the flame, that person takes the flame's damage; this extinguishes the flame (otherwise it does not "burn out" as long as the caster holds on to it). If the caster touches the flame to something flammable, such as a curtain, he loses control of it and it keeps burning until it uses up all the available fuel.

This is best reflected by the Elemental Manipulation Power.

FORESEE THE FUTURE

Description: This Spell gives a wizard glimpses of the future to come. He can try to see the future at a specific time ("I want to find out what's going to happen this coming weekend"), but in fact has little, if any, control over what he sees. (If appropriate, the GM might allow the caster to make a Spellcasting to see what he wants; otherwise, or if the roll fails, he should provide the caster with information about a random future point in time.) Casting the spell requires a special talisman.

Unfortunately, even if the Spell shows the caster the desired time and place, it doesn't necessarily provide a clear, easily understood vision of future events. The vision may be vague, difficult to understand, or symbolic rather than direct. It's up to the GM to decide what information to provide, and how.

You should also consider this a Shamanism Spell, though a shaman casts it using various herbs burned in a small fire made with special wood rather than a special talisman.

This is best reflected by the Divination Power.

HAMMER OF THE UNDEAD

Description: Spellcasters both good and evil often confront hostile undead, and this Spell helps them destroy those vile beings.

This is best reflected by the Banish Power or Dispel Power, targeted on Undead.

HEX (N)

Description: Most commonly used by voodoo practitioners and witches, a Hex typically allows the caster to impose some minor inconvenience or problem on the target (generally as a punishment for some transgression, real or perceived). Examples include baldness, temporary impotence, a bad cold, or a week-long run of minor bad luck. However, if the caster is powerful enough (and crazy enough), the effects of a Hex can be made stronger, more severe, and/or longer lasting — up to and including killing the target.

Using Hex on someone is referred to as “hexing” them.

This is best reflected by the Lower Trait Power, the Blind Power, or the Confusion Power.

LEVITATION

Description: This Spell uses mystic force to levitate the caster in the air. He can move straight up or straight down, and can hover in place, but cannot move forwards, backwards, or to the side.

This is best reflected by the Telekinesis Power, with the modifications above.

LIFE DRAINING (N)

Description: This foul Spell of Necromancy gives the caster the power to leech the very soul from another being. Unfortunately for the necromancer, it only works if the target’s within 10m and he has to concentrate intently to cast it, so it exposes him to counterattack if he uses it in combat.

This is best reflected as a Smite Power, that if successfully used in an attack, allows the caster to immediately and automatically gain the benefits of the Healing Power (as though it had been cast successfully at it’s base level.)

This version of Smite is the only action a caster can take that turn, and if it’s used, all attacks against the caster gain +2 to their Tests.

LIVING SHADOWS (N)

Description: With this Spell a necromancer can bring the shadows near him to life and command them to serve him (typically to attack his enemies). However, they take damage if exposed to sunlight, so it’s best only to create them at night or in well-shaded places.

Best reflected by the Zombie Power, with changes to the Zombie Profile, and the “Darkness” Trapping.

MIND SEEKING

Description: This Spell allows the caster to seek and locate another person’s mind. The better he knows the person, or the more mental contact he’s had with him, the easier he is to find.

This is best reflected by the Mind Reading Power.

MIND SHIFTING (N)

Description: This terrifying Spell allows a necromancer to switch minds with the target: his mind goes into the target’s body, while the target’s mind gets shifted into the necromancer’s. The necromancer retains his own memories, mental skills, ability to cast Spells, and so forth. Typically he immediately uses Domination to take control of the victim’s mind, so the victim doesn’t do anything to harm his own body before he’s ready. The caster can switch minds back at any time.

This is best reflected by the Puppet Power, but the target and caster switch all their Mental Edges, Mental Hindrances, Arcane Backgrounds, Smarts and Spirit Attributes.

If the caster wants to insure the Puppet can not harm the caster's body, the Caster must have already cast Puppet on the target of Mind Shifting.

PERCEIVE MAGIC

Description: With this Spell, a wizard can perceive arcane energies in the area around him. This includes detecting whether someone is a spellcaster of some sort. If the caster's unable to see for some reason, he cannot perceive magic either.

You should also consider this a Shamanism Spell.

This is best reflected by Detect/Conceal Arcana.

POCKET DIMENSION

Description: This Spell allows the caster to create a pocket dimension (or in Alfar, an eskarthi-dor) for his own uses. (Some wizards claim the caster isn't creating a pocket dimension, but merely gaining access to one that already exists; regardless of the metaphysical truth, the spell works the same.)

The caster defines what the pocket dimension is like (within reason): the landscape; the flora and fauna; and other factors.

Generally the pocket dimension cannot be inhabited by sentient beings or monsters. The caster must also define an access point (which anyone can use, not just him) and the anchor point where the tether attaches the pocket dimension to Earth's reality (see Break The Tether, above). Once created, the access point and pocket dimension are permanent, but they can be destroyed.

This spell is exceptionally powerful, and should be reflected by the GM working with the wizard to accomplish this.

PORTAL ROPE

Description: This Spell, a favorite of villainous wizards and necromancers, allows the caster to instantly travel to a pre-selected location anywhere in the world. To do this the caster prepares a short length of rope in advance. He must choose the location the rope gives access to when preparing it, and cannot change it thereafter; furthermore, it must be a location he's either in when he prepares the rope, or one he's intimately familiar with.

Once the rope's prepared, the caster can carry it with him, give it to another person, or the like. When he wants to use it, he takes an action to put it on the ground in a circle. The rope immediately opens a portal to the pre-defined location. The portal remains open as long as the user of the rope concentrates on it (this makes him easier to hit in combat). During this time, anyone can use it, even his enemies. Once he stops concentrating, or goes through the portal himself, the portal closes and the rope disintegrates in a flash of flame.

Some forms of Portal Rope provide access to alternate dimensions, rather than other locations on Earth. They're built and used the same way.

This is best reflected by the Teleport Power, modified as above.

QUENCH FLAME

Description: This Spell makes a wizard the envy of firefighters everywhere by allowing him to instantly snuff flames (whether mundane or magical).

Extinguishing a fire doesn't get rid of the smoke it generated, or reverse any effects it may already have caused (like heating an area or weakening the structure of a building).

You should also consider this a Shamanism Spell.

This is best reflected as an Environmental Manipulation Power.

RAIN OF FIRE

Description: This powerful Spell literally causes fire to rain down, inflicting severe (and possibly deadly) burns on everyone and everything within a 12m radius area. The caster's not immune to this effect, so he has to place the area away from himself unless he's suicidally desperate. Even worse, if he fails his Spellcasting, the Spell's power feeds into him, causing him to burst into flame!

This power is best reflected by the GM working with the wizard, as it's exceptionally powerful and out of the scope of normal Powers.

REMOVE CURSE

Description: This Spell unravels and abjures any curse placed upon the subject (typically via black magic Spells like Voodoo Curse).

You should also consider this a Shamanism Spell, though a shaman's casting involves a lot of drum music, dancing, the shaking of fetishes, and censuring the victim with strange incenses.

This is best reflected by the Dispel Power.

RUNES OF IMPROVEMENT (D)

Description: This Divination Spell allows an elf to improve the qualities or performance of some object or being. The caster draws or paints mystic elven runes on the object or person, gains the benefits of the Boost Trait Power. For example, a vehicle might receive a boost to its handling or speed; a person could become stronger, tougher, smarter, more accurate, or the like. (For inanimate objects that don't have most Characteristics, this Spell improves their durability or toughness.) The Spell remains in effect, without losing any power, as long as the runes remain, but it ends instantly if the runes are marred, smeared, covered up, or the like. An object or person can only have one set of Runes Of Improvement on it/him at a time.

You should also consider this a Shamanism Spell.

This is best reflected by the Boost Trait power.

RUNES OF PROTECTION (D)

Description: This Divination Spell allows an elf to protect a person dear to him. A person who has Runes Of Protection drawn on him is unusually lucky, and thus armored against many of the disasters, tragedies, and misfortunes that might otherwise befall him. The runes look something like unusual tattoos and must be placed on the body where they can easily be seen (usually the back of the hand or the neck).

The Transform remains in effect as long as the runes remain, but it stops working immediately if the runes are marred, cut through, covered up for more than 30 minutes, or the like. A person can only have one set of Runes Of Protection on him at a time.

You should also consider this a Shamanism Spell.

This is best reflected by the Protection Power.

SHADOW FORM (N)

Description: When he casts this Spell, a necromancer transforms his body into shadow. This makes it extremely difficult to hurt him and also allows him to hide in dark or shadowy areas with ease. The Spell remains in effect as long as the caster expends energy to keep it going.

This is best reflected by the Intangibility Power.

SPELL SHATTERING

Description: This Spell unravels and scatters arcane energies, making it difficult for the targeted Spell or enchanted item to maintain its magic.

This is best reflected by the Dispel Power.

SUMMONING CIRCLE

Description: Long ago, wizards seeking a way to protect themselves from the dangers posed by summoned beings devised the Summoning Circle. It's a mystic ward that a summoned entity, by the laws of magic, cannot exit or enter, and through which its attacks and inimical powers cannot extend. Despite the name, Summoning Circles take many forms, not just circular.

The Circle itself is drawn on the ground or a floor by the caster in a half-hour long ritual. If it's improperly created, it has no effect; if anything breaks, mars, obscures, or covers it, it instantly ceases to have any effect (though it can be repaired by the wizard).

This is best reflected by the Summon Ally Power.

TELEKINESIS

Description: This Spell allows a wizard to affect and move objects at a distance, without having to physically touch them. It tires him just as much as using his STR.

TELEPATHIC COMMUNICATION

Description: A wizard uses this Spell to communicate with another person mentally. He can't use it to uncover the target's memories, emotions, or desires, only to "speak" to him mind to mind.

To use this Spell, the wizard either has to have line of sight to the target, or must use Mind Seeking (see above) to locate his mind. At the GM's option, a wizard can use it without Mind Seeking if he knows the target well or has previously been inside his mind.

This is best reflected by the Mind Reading Power but limited to a conversation instead of reading thoughts.



TRACKING SPELL (D)

Description: Elven trackers use this Divination Spell to find their quarry with ease. When a wizard casts it, he defines the target of the spell (typically a person, but it could be an object). The Spell works best if the caster has something of the target's (clothing, a bit of hair, a treasured possession), but that's not necessary.

This is best reflected by the Boost Trait Power, applied to the Track Skill.

TRUE NECROMANCY (N)

Description: This spell, the foundation of all Necromancy, allows the caster to call forth the spirit of a dead person and speak with him. However, there's no guarantee that the spirit will be well inclined toward the caster, and in fact it may be angry at "being awakened," or simply hate the living in general. In this case, getting useful information out of the spirit may be difficult or impossible. Furthermore, the spirit can only speak the languages it spoke in life, so unless the caster can speak one of them communication becomes limited regardless of the spirit's inclinations.

To cast the spell, the caster must have something that links the deceased to the world of the living — an object he treasured, one of his bones, or the like. For this reason the spell is often cast at the deceased's burial site, but this poses a risk: the spirit may animate its bones (or corpse) and use them to attack the caster (if so inclined) or undertake other physical actions. (If necessary, use the Skeleton or Zombie character sheet to represent the animated remains.)

This is best reflected by the Zombie Power.

VOODOO CURSE (N)

Description: This Spell allows a necromancer to inflict bad luck on someone. If all goes well (as the necromancer sees it), the victim will end up dead or miserable as a result of his misfortune.

You should also consider this a Shamanism Spell, though of course only evil shamans use it.

This is best reflected by the Blind, Confusion or Boost/Lower Trait Powers (using the Lower Trait version.)

VOODOO DOLL (N)

Description: This Spell, made infamous through many lurid stories and movies, allows a necromancer to harm (or even kill) a victim by stabbing or otherwise damaging a small doll made in the victim's likeness. For best results, the doll should include bits of the victim (his hair, blood, flesh, spittle, or the like) and/or bits of cloth from clothing he's worn. (If the doll lacks this sympathetic connection to the victim, the GM should halve the damage it does.) Unless the GM rules otherwise, this Spell can affect a target anywhere in the world, but not in a different dimension from the one the caster occupies.

You should also consider this a Shamanism Spell, though of course only evil shamans use it.

This is best reflected by the Blind, Confusion or Boost/Lower Trait Powers, modified to be Heroic Level and allowed to function worldwide as long as the Necromancer has the Voodoo Doll of the target.

WARDING

Description: This Spell creates an effect similar to, but much weaker than, that of a Ward Stone (see below). It invokes an area of mystic energy that's deadly to the undead and to summoned beings such as demons and shoggoths.

This is best reflected as a Blast Power that only harms Undead or Otherworldly creatures.

WEATHER CONTROL

Description: This Spell gives a wizard the power to alter the weather over a four kilometer radius around him. The effects, being artificial, disperse fairly quickly once the caster stops paying expending energy to keep the spell functioning.

You should also consider this a Shamanism Spell, though a shaman casts it differently.

This is best reflected by Elemental Manipulation, made Veteran and with the Range greatly expanded.

Alchemy Spells

Alchemy Spells tend to require large amounts of time and effort to “prepare” or “create,” but once all the work’s done in the lab, the items that result are easy to use. Unfortunately, most of the secrets of Alchemy have been lost over the centuries; few wizards practice this form of magic today.

All Alchemy Spells are to be used as Arcane Background (Weird Science).

CREATE GOLEM

Description: Alchemists can create golems from nearly any substance. Flesh and clay are the most common types (though creating a flesh golem borders on Necromancy), but they can also make them from stone, wood, or even metal. The golem is loyal to its creator and obeys his commands without hesitation.

This is best reflected as the Summon Ally Spell.

ELIXIR OF LIFE

Description: This potion is considered the most wondrous accomplishment of Alchemy and is also one of the discipline’s rarest formulae; even during Alchemy’s

heyday very few alchemists knew enough to create it. It has one of two effects. First, if the person who drinks it (or to whom it’s applied) is injured, it instantly heals all his injuries, bringing him back to full health. Furthermore, if the subject is dead, the Elixir restores him to life! Second, if the person who drinks it is alive and healthy, it magically invigorates him, making him stronger and tougher for a short time. Third, the Elixir cures any disease the subject has, including lycanthropy and other supernatural diseases/conditions which are otherwise incurable.

Unfortunately, most living mortal bodies can’t handle the Elixir’s strengthening effects, and sometimes not even its healing powers — it burns through the body, killing them in agony after seconds or minutes. If a person has enough durability and willpower to withstand the Elixir, he usually still experiences intense pain or spasms for a short period, but eventually his body adjusts to the effect. (The more one drinks, the worse the pain and seizures, but except for Special Agent Franks and his like, this doesn’t matter, since even a single dose kills the subject.)

Like all potions the Elixir Of Life spoils easily, and may be spilled by accident or if an enemy’s attack breaks the container holding it.

See the section on Franksborn for details on the Elixir in play.

POTION OF INVISIBILITY

Description: This potion, whose ingredients include many different types of clear or transparent substances, causes the imbiber to become invisible for 20 minutes. A single brewing creates enough potion for four people (or for one person to use four times). Like all potions it spoils easily, and may be spilled by accident or if an enemy’s attack breaks the container holding it.

This is best reflected by the Invisibility Power.

Shamanism Spells

Besides the Wizardry/Divination Spells which also belong to this type of magic, here are some additional Shamanism Spells.

APPEAL TO THE SPIRITS

Description: This Spell is similar to Runes Of Improvement (see above), but it doesn't require the drawing/painting of runes on the object or person the Spell helps. Instead the shaman performs a small prayer ritual involving special fetishes and other materials. For best results a small animal, such as a chicken, should be sacrificed. (At the GM's option, if the shaman performs a sacrifice, he gets a +2 to the Spellcasting Test.)

A single object or character can only be the recipient of one Appeal To The Spirits Spell at a time, nor can Runes Of Improvement and Appeal To The Spirits be in effect on the same object/person at the same time.

COMMUNE WITH THE SPIRITS

Description: This Spell awakens the local spirits so that they will speak to the shaman and tell him about the surrounding area, and/or what has transpired in that area in the past. Most spirits are well-disposed toward a shaman, but because they're beings not entirely of this world they don't always pay much attention to the doings of men and other physical beings. They may have trouble remembering things accurately the further back in time the shaman asks them to remember, and sometimes have difficulty with human concepts (such as large numbers, or precisely identifying vehicles). Nevertheless, they usually provide valuable information.

This is best reflected by the Divination Spell.

CURATIVE SALVE

Description: This Spell allows a shaman to prepare a special salve that can cure many types of physical ailments and handicaps. It can't regrow limbs, but it can cure blindness, deafness, palsy, a permanent or temporary limp, and many other conditions.

A Curative Salve works best when prepared for a specific individual; it's not nearly as effective if it's made in "generic" form for use by anyone. This write-up assumes the Salve is, in fact, prepared for and used on a designated person. Once prepared, a Curative Salve retains its efficacy for about one day; after that it becomes useless.

This is best reflected by the Healing Power, but after being cast, it can be stored for one day and used at any point during those 24 hours.

CURE DISEASE

Description: What a necromancer (or simply an infection) can cause, a shaman can cure. A shaman who casts this Spell drives the disease-spirits out of a sick person, making him well again. The more intense the effects of the disease, the longer it may take to cure.

This is best represented by the Healing Power, with the Greater Healing Modifier.

HEALING SALVE

Description: Similar to Curative Salve, this Spell allows a shaman to prepare a special salve that heals most injuries.

A Healing Salve works best when prepared for a specific individual; it can't be made in "generic" form for use by anyone. This write-up assumes the Salve is, in fact, prepared for and used on a designated person. Once prepared, a Healing Salve retains its efficacy for about one day; after that it becomes useless.

This is best reflected by the Healing Power, but after being cast, it can be stored for one day and used at any point during those 24 hours.

TOTEM POWER

Description: Every shaman has a special totem animal or being that he particularly identifies with, and on whom he can call for special power. Once per day a shaman can invest himself with the power of his totem. He must define which totem he can call on when he buys this Spell (i.e., which Trait he can improve) and cannot change it thereafter. A shaman cannot buy two or more different versions of this Spell without the GM's permission.

This is best reflected by the Boost/Lower Trait Power, limited to Boosting one particular Trait.

EXAMPLE ENCHANTED ITEMS

Here are a few examples of enchanted items that exist in the world of MHI. Enchanted items are extremely rare; most Hunters go their entire careers without ever encountering one (much less actually getting to use one). Most were made millennia or eons ago, when magic was stronger in the world; creating them seems to be a mostly lost art. Many of them are the products of Necromancy or other evil magics; using them is dangerous for anyone whose soul isn't already dedicated to the powers of darkness.

The largest collection of enchanted items in the United States is held in a highly secure location by the MCB (which means, in effect, that the STFU can gain access to them if necessary). Whenever any government agent recovers an enchanted item, it's turned over to the MCB for analysis and safekeeping. A few

(such as Ward Stones) are eventually put to government use, but for the most part the MCB doesn't want to fool around with things it can't control and leaves its enchanted items under wraps.

THE BLACK HEART OF SUFFERING

This ancient, evil weapon has a short blade (about the size of a steak knife) and a bone handle. Those who underestimate it because it's not the size of a true fighting dagger do so at their peril, though, because the Black Heart of Suffering's dark power makes it deadlier than a greatsword. It can cut through body armor and flesh with ease. A character using it almost seems to revel in bloodshed and violence; he has to succeed at a Spirit Test or gain the Bloodthirsty Hindrance and the Berserk Edge until he's knocked out or loses his grip on the Black Heart. Over the long term, repeated use of the Black Heart corrupts the wielder's soul, eventually leaving him nothing but a servant to the unholy blade.

The Black Heart of Suffering is currently in the possession of the MCB.

- The Black Heart deals Str+2d6 damage and has AP 4.

THE EYE OF SOULS

This malignant enchanted item is a greenish-yellow oval gemstone that occasionally shows flashes of a disturbing purple color as well. It has the power to corrode a target's soul, causing him intense pain and even death. To use it, a character must either (a) pluck out one of his eyes and put the Eye in the socket in its place, or (b) drill an Eye-sized hole through his skull on his forehead between his eyes (the Eye will meld with the bone, preventing any infection of the brain). After that, surgery (or the like) is required to remove it.

Due to the nature of the Eye's power, body armor has no effect against it, though a character's natural defenses against energy attacks still apply unless the GM rules otherwise.

- The Eye of Souls, once implanted, gives the target the Bolt Power, as though they had Arcane Background (Gifts). The Eye of Souls needs no Power Points to use its Bolt Power, and ignores all Armor increases to Toughness.

LORD MACHADO'S AX

Lord Machado, who nearly destroyed the world during the "Machado incident," wielded a battle ax that had been in his family for centuries. Over its existence the ax has taken the lives of thousands and been used in some of the darkest magical rituals imaginable. As a result, it's become imbued with evil arcane energies. It can cut through just about anything and inflicts vicious wounds that take much longer than normal to heal. Wielding it properly requires about twice as much strength as a normal person possesses, so most people (even most trained monster hunters) can't use it effectively in combat.

Lord Machado's Ax is currently in the possession of the MCB.

- Lord Machado's Ax deals Str+2d10 damage and has AP 3. It requires Str d12 to be wielded effectively.

THE RING OF AUGMENTATION

This item was created in pre-humanity times by the Fey to make their servants mightier when they battled for their masters' amusement. It's a large, heavy gold ring set with a single opal-like stone. It enhances the wearer's physical attributes, making him stronger, faster, and tougher.

- When wearing the Ring of Augmentation, the bearer increases their Strength, Vigor, and Agility dice by one size.

THE SKIA THANATOU

The Skia Thanatou is one of the most comprehensive grimoires of magic known to exist. With it, a would-be wizard of sufficient intelligence and talent can teach himself just about any Spell of Wizardry (particularly the darker ones, such as Necromancy). Unfortunately, reading it isn't easy, even if one can somehow obtain a copy. It's written in a language that resembles none ever spoken by humanity (though it bears some faint similarities to Sumerian, Ancient Egyptian, and early Greek). In game terms, a character who wants to study the Skia Thanatou has to spend an Increase to a special language, Thanatan. A character with less than complete fluency in Thanatan can still read the book, but won't fully understand it (giving him a -4 penalty on all Spells he learned from the book.)

The precise number of copies of the Skia Thanatou in existence is not known. MHI has a complete copy in its archives (which it keeps carefully secured); the MCB has one as well. Rumors claim that MI4, the Vatican, a mysterious collector in Russia, a French expatriate living in the Congo, and several other institutions or persons have a copy (not necessarily a complete

one), but the truth of these rumors remains unverifiable.

THE VANQUISHING GLADIUS

This short sword dates from the Roman Empire. Some scholars claim it gets its magical power because it's made from the spearhead used to stab Christ in his side as he hung upon the cross; others that it was used in a massacre so pointless, violent, and ruthless that necromantic magics infused the blade. Whatever the cause, the result is the same: the Vanquishing Gladius almost never misses its target, and it kills at a touch by draining the soul. (If necessary the wielder can also use it as a conventional short sword to cut through physical objects.)

The Vanquishing Gladius is currently in the possession of the MCB.

- The Vanquishing Gladius is a normal shortsword, but attacks with it gain +4 to their Fighting Tests, and instead of dealing damage, any living target must make a Vigor Test with a -6 Penalty or simply die.

WARD STONE

A Ward Stone is a powerful defensive magic item that's used to keep the undead, extradimensional beings (like demons and shoggoths), and similar creatures away from the area surrounding the Stone. In effect it's a focal point for Earth's reality, amplifying its effects so that unnatural things can't withstand them. When it's activated, all such creatures begin to suffer intense, deadly pain (against which they get no defense). The GM should assume that weaker creatures (such as zombies and other lower-powered undead) die immediately, while more powerful creatures must either leave the affected area at once or suffer an agonizing death in just a few seconds.

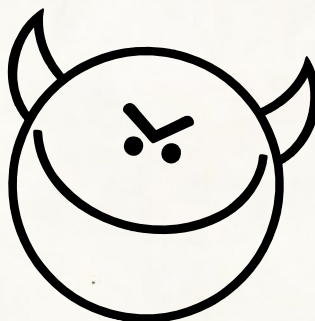
A Ward Stone can also be used as a weapon against the sorts of creatures its defensive power affects, and this includes the Old Ones and other powerful extradimensional entities belonging to the various Outsider Factions. When properly activated in such a being's presence, that being immediately dies. Doing this destroys the Stone.

The US government possesses several Ward Stones that it uses to guard key locations (the White House, Congress, Cheyenne Mountain...), and it's always on the lookout for more. Several other governments worldwide also have one or more Ward Stones that they use similarly. MHI used to have one that Earl Harbinger took from Adolf Hitler's bunker, but Owen Pitt and Agent Franks used it to kill the Dread Overlord (the Old One whom Martin Hood served).

Ward Stones are a primarily narrative device, but if you require rules for one start by looking at the Barrier Power (to reflect keeping out enemies) and go from there.

THE RING OF BASSUS

A ring created for the Roman monster hunter Sextus Bassus for a rescue mission into the nightmare realm. When worn the bearer will always unerringly know which path to take to get back to whatever it is he loves the most. This effect works even in other planes of existence. The ring is currently in the possession of MHI.



CHAPTER 8:

MHI IN

SAVAGE WORLDS

This chapter contains the rules for playing Monster Hunter International with *Savage Worlds*. These are guidelines to help you emulate the feel of MHI! However, each campaign is the product of a unique table and experience, so don't feel bound by these rules, instead using them as a jumping point for the experience of MHI!



CHARACTER CREATION

Character creation in the Monster Hunter International: Savage has some variations on standard Savage Worlds character creation. There are several new races and a new type of Edge: Teamwork Edges.

Race

Humans are the most common characters by far in the MHI Universe, but they are not all. Humans follow the standard rules for Savage Worlds, found in Savage Worlds Adventure Edition.

NEW RACES

Orc

Orcs are exceptional beings, born with an innate talent to any one skill, while suffering a severe deficiency to another. However, they are monsters, and have a PUFF bounty on their head.

Orcs begin with the following:

- **A D6 in Vigor and Strength.** Orcs are tough and hardy, naturally, being stronger than the average human.
- **A D12 in any single skill of their choice.** However, they must select another skill and cross it off. They may never make a test with that skill, and

automatically fail any Tests with that skill that would be made.

- **Ugly.** All orcs start with the Ugly (Minor) Hindrance, as orcs are not the most attractive creatures.
- All Orcs automatically start with the **Wanted (Major) Hindrance**. There is a standing PUFF Bounty on Orcs. Some Orcs can earn a PUFF exemption. To do so, they must dedicate a single Advance to buying off this Hindrance and must have performed some serious service.
- **Racial Enemy: Elves.** Orcs suffer a -2 to Persuasion rolls when dealing with Elves.

Franksborn

Descended from Franks, the famous monster, Franksborn are part human, and part... something else. Although not as powerful as their famous progenitor, Franksborn are still a force to be reckoned with, especially with access to the Elixir that powers them.

Franksborn begin with the following:

- **D6 Attribute Dice in Strength and Vigor.** Like their progenitor, Franksborn are very strong and very durable.
- **Hardy (1)**
- **Habit:** All Franksborn require infusions of the Elixir to maintain themselves. All Franksborn know how to produce this Elixir [see sidebar]. This manifests itself as a Major Habit. However, it must be administered every 72 hours instead of every 24.
- **Bad Luck:** All Franksborn are plagued with bad luck. Constantly. Whether this is a mystical curse by the demon that helped to birth their progenitor, or something else is unknown. They have the Bad Luck Hindrance.
- **-2 Persuasion:** Franksborn are notoriously bad with social interactions.

The Elixir

The Elixir is a magical substance that allows Franksborn (and Franks) to repair themselves, incorporating new body parts where old ones are damaged. The Elixir takes twelve hours to make a single dose and the Franksborn must spend one Benny but crafting the Elixir requires no test. A Dose will last for thirty days before it loses its mystical potency. While the Elixir remains bottled and unused, the Franksborn can not recover that Benny.

When a Franksborn imbibes the Elixir, they are automatically healed of all wounds and conditions, but lose their next three turns as the pain of their body rearranging and repairing itself is excruciating. They also immediately gain 1 Benny.

A Franksborn who loses a limb or body part can replace the lost limb with a dose of Elixir and a suitable replacement from a corpse. This process takes about twelve hours, during which the Franksborn is useless. After the process is complete, they recover 1 Benny, and their limb is restored to full functioning capacity.

The Elixir is lethal to any non Franksborn who imbibes it. Automatically.



Werewolves

Werewolves are a complicated thing. They're much more powerful than the average human.

- Werewolves automatically start as **Seasoned Characters**. They don't gain any benefit for this, as all the benefits of that 20 XP are tied up in simply being a werewolf. They also don't gain the first 20 XP they'd gain, instead having to wait while the rest of the group catches up.
- When making a character, you'll need a second character sheet to represent the werewolf form.
- Spend your Traits and Skill points like normal (basically, finish your character except for their Race.)
- Now, we apply Werewolf template to the character.
 - Take an extra character sheet. Copy your character over but write Werewolf Form behind their name.
 - Then raise their Strength, Vigor, and Agility by two dice sizes.
 - Lower their Spirit and Smarts by one dice step.
 - Give them the Berserk Edge. If they're in Werewolf form, they are always Berserking.
 - Werewolves have TOUGHNESS (4) and PARRY (4)

Werewolves are complicated, powerful beasts. A Game Master should allow them sparingly and carefully. It's a lot of power in a player's hands. It is very hard to balance Werewolves, and while we've done our best...there's no way to do it easily. Tread carefully.



- They also gain Teeth & Claws as special weapons, allowing them to deal d6+STR damage with unarmed attacks. These attacks are AP2.
- They also gain Reach (3)
- +2 Notice when smelling
- Low Light Vision
- A dice step increases to climbing.
- Their Base Pace is 10 in werewolf form, and their running dice is a d10.
- They gain a +2 to resist all negative environmental effects.
- Werewolves automatically unshake on their turn. Yup. Seriously.
- Werewolves can't choose to end their Rage, instead having to wait until they're Incapacitated, or the moon goes down.
- Now the bad.
 - On the human character sheet, write the Berserk edge.
 - Write down the Bloodthirsty, Vengeful (Major), Phobia (Silver – Major) and Wanted (Major) Hindrance on both the human and werewolf sheet.
 - Give them -2 to Persuasion in both human and werewolf form. Werewolves are not happy folks and they are not great with people.
 - Give them -2 to Electronics and Science rolls. They don't get it, and it's hard on them.
 - If Werewolf ever goes Berserk (by failing the Smarts roll) they automatically shift into Werewolf form.
 - If they're ever touched by Silver or Wolfsbane, they automatically berserk (no roll.)
 - They automatically go into werewolf form on any night with a full moon.
 - Silver weapons deal +4 damage against Werewolves and no Soak rolls can be made by Werewolves against silver damage.

Gnomes

Why the ever-loving hell, do you wanna be a Gnome? Alright, whatever brah.

- Gnomes have Pace 3 and a d4 Running Dice.
- Gnomes have Toughness (3) (they're tough little SOBs.)
- Gnomes start with a d8 in Stealth.
- Gnomes have -2 Persuasion. NO ONE LIKES THEM. Especially Orcs.
- They're small and hard to hit though, so they have (Parry 3).
- They also have Infravision.
- And they're Small, which gives them a -1 Size Modifier (don't give them the Toughness penalty though.)
- All Gnomes automatically start with the **Wanted (Major) Hindrance**. There is a standing PUFF Bounty on Gnomes. Some Gnomes can earn a PUFF exemption. To do so, they must dedicate a single Advance to buying off this Hindrance.

Elves

There are two types of elves in the world, snooty eurotrash Elves and redneck trash American Elves. However, the differences are social and environmental, not biological. You can use these rules for either sort of elf. Elves don't age at the same rate as humans, living much longer lives.

- Elves have a d6 in Agility. Generally speaking, they are lithe and fast.
- +1 to Persuasion rolls. When dealing with normal folks (read: not Orcs), Elves are personable and exude an aura of command and nobility (whatever form that might take.)
- Elves start with a d6 in Spellcasting (the Arcane skill for Arcane Background (Magic). They gain this benefit even if they do not have the Arcane Background (Magic) Edge.

- Elves get the Arcane Resistance Edge.
- Elves have TOUGHNESS (1). Being slender and lithe comes at a price.
- Racial Enemy: Orcs. Elves suffer -2 Persuasion when dealing with Orcs.)

Traits

- Like standard *Savage Worlds*, each hero starts with a d4 in each attribute. However, each character has 6 Points with which to raise their Attributes. All other rules for Attributes are followed.
- Skills: Being a Monster Hunter requires training and a certain amount of success. Due to the extensive training each member receives, all Monster Hunters consider the following skills Core Skills and therefore start with a d4 in them:
 - Battle
 - Occult
 - Research
 - Shooting

All other steps of Trait character creation remain the same.



Edges & Hindrances

There are several new Edges, including a new category of Edges called Team Edges to represent Monster Hunters who are exceptional examples of the training their particular team provides. *A character may never have more than one Team Edge.*

Restricted Edges: Arcane Background edges are not appropriate for this game (however, as always, there are notable exceptions. We'll go into that in the Game Master chapter.) Doubting Thomas is not an appropriate Hindrance for a Monster Hunter.

New Edges

Chosen One

Requirements: None

Effects: Various forces of the cosmos often choose champions to serve them. Once per session a Chosen One may ignore a wound that would move them to Incapacitated. After they do so, they gain one Benny. Being a Champion of the universe is risky business, and a lot of folks will want you dead than dead. Therefore, each Chosen One also gains the Enemy (Major) Hindrance. This Enemy is an opposed faction to the faction that selected the Chosen One.

Team Edges

Asgard Respons Hold (Asgard Response Team)

Requirements: Acceptance into the ARH, Seasoned.

Effects: All members of the ARH gain a damage bonus equal to the size of their enemy (for example, a Size +2 enemy would grant +2 to damage). This bonus caps at +4, unless the user spends a Benny, in which case it has no cap.

Balak Brigade

Requirements: Acceptance into the BB, Seasoned.

Effects: All members of the BB gain TOUGHNESS (3) and +1 to damage rolls.

British Supernatural Service

Requirements: Acceptance into the BSS

Effects: BSS members are trained in media relations, obscuring information and hiding the supernatural. They gain +2 to Persuasion Rolls and can spend a Benny to give d6x5 targets the Doubting Thomas Hindrance (this Hindrance is temporary, though 24 hours is usually enough for folks to forget and move on. It just...helps speed up the process.)

Cairo Paranormal Investigations

Requirements: Acceptance into the Cairo PI.

Effects: Members of Cairo PI are adept at investigation, subterfuge and intrigue. They gain +2 to all Persuasion rolls when in disguise or acting, and can spend a Benny to gain entrance to any location they wish (GM's discretion. Some hyper-secure facilities might be too far, even for Cairo PI.)

Carolingian Security Associates

Requirements: Acceptance into the CSA

Effects: All members of the CSA gain the Elan edge, and can always easily acquire silver bullets.

Cascade Crushers

Requirements: Acceptance into the Cascade Crushers.

Effects: Cascade Crushers were founded by a former SWAT officer and detective. They've got some of the best training when it comes to combining modern police work with monster hunting.

When making Research rolls related to monsters, Cascade Crushers gain +2 to the roll.

Durango Supernatural Exterminators

Requirements: Acceptance into the DSE.

Effects: All members of the DSE gain +1 to Persuasion and Subterfuge, and +1 to Soak.

Grimm Berlin

Requirements: Acceptance into Grimm Berlin, Seasoned.

Effects: Grimm Berlin is among the best in the world, and it shows. When dealing with other Monster Hunters, they gain +1 to Persuasion rolls. They also have +1 to one of the following, chosen when they take this Edge: Shooting, Fighting, Driving, or Piloting Rolls.

Jai Jiwan Security

Requirements: Acceptance into the JJS

Effects: All members of the JJS have the ability to acquire most equipment they want or need for monster hunting. They gain +2 to Subterfuge and Thievery.

Maccabeus Security & Investigations

Requirements: Acceptance into the MSI, Seasoned.

Effects: All members of the MSI gain +2 to Notice Rolls, and +1 to Fighting rolls (they have a strong emphasis on hand to hand.)

Monster Hunter International

Requirements: Acceptance into MHI

Effects: MHI team members are known for their dedication and gung-ho nature. Any MHI team members can share Bennies with other MHI teammates they can see.

New South Wales Expeditions

Requirements: Acceptance into the NSW.

Effects: Team Members of the NSW gain +2 when attacking or dealing with enemies from other planes of existence.



PLA Paranormal Combat Unit

Requirements: Acceptance into the PLA-PCU.

Effects: Members of the PLA-PCU are the best of the best in China. As long as they are operating in China, they gain +1 to Persuasion rolls, and the benefits of the Luck Edge.

PT Consulting

Requirements: Acceptance into PT Consulting.

Effects: PT Consulting is the second biggest monster hunting firm in the US. They're slick, corporate, well-equipped, pretentious assholes who can back up their talk.

PT Consulting Team Members gain +2 to Persuasion, except when dealing with non-PT Consulting Monster Hunters.

Sonderjagdkommandos

Requirements: Acceptance into the SJK

Effects: SJK members gain +1 on attack and damage rolls against Vampires. They're very good at killing Vampires.

Strike Team Kiratowa

Requirements: Acceptance into the STK, Seasoned.

Effects: As long as you can see another member of the STK, you can add a monsters size to your damage roll. You also gain +2 on Skill tests involving advanced or experimental science.

Suid-Afrikaanse Duiwel Jagters, Ingelyf (South African Devil Hunters, INC.)

Requirements: Acceptance into the SADHI.

Effects: All members of the SADHI gain PARRY (3), and +1 to Fighting Rolls.

The Heracles Foundation

Requirements: Acceptance into the HF

Effects: All members of the HF gain +2 on all Soak rolls, and the Overconfident Hindrance. They tend to take after their namesake in subtle ways.

The Secret Guard

Requirements: Acceptance into the Vatican Secret Guard, Seasoned, Vow (Catholic Church).

Effects: All members of the VSG gain +1 Damage to all damage rolls against monsters and PARRY (3).

Tyongso Corporation

Requirements: Acceptance into the TC.

Effects: All members of the TC gain +2 to Stealth Rolls, and +1 to Subterfuge rolls.

Uwharrie Special Security Services

Requirements: Acceptance into USSS.

Effects: USSS has a depth of knowledge related to occult lore due to their founder being a rare book dealer. They gain +2 to Occult and Academics rolls.

Van Helsing Institute

Requirements: Acceptance into the VHI, Seasoned

Effects: Members of the VHI gain +1 to attacks and damage against any Undead, and +2 to Occult rolls that involve Undead.

Vermont Stump Jumpers

Requirements: Acceptance into the Stump Jumpers

Effects: The Vermont Stump Jumpers are a new organization, but one with much potential.

Team Members of the Vermont Stump Jumpers gain the Stubborn Hindrance, but gain Luck and Alertness edges.

White Eagle Military Contracting

Requirements: Acceptance into the WEMC, Seasoned.

Effects: Members of the WEMC gain the Rock & Roll Edge when fighting alongside allies.

SETTING RULES

MHI:S uses the following setting rules from Savage Worlds.

- **Dynamic Backlash**
- **Fanatics**
- **Gritty Damage**
- **Multiple Languages**
- **Skill Specialization**

PUFF BOUNTY

When a monster is killed, the team receives a PUFF bounty!

This manifests in two ways. First the company gets paid after the paperwork is done. Pretty great. Means more money for everyone. To determine how much each player gets, simply take the total reward for killing the monster (see the Table on [page 20](#)) and take 10% of that amount. Split that as evenly as you can among players, with any odd percentages being bonuses assigned for particularly valorous and exciting moments.

Secondly, the team that took down the monster gets PUFF XP!

PUFF XP is a bit different from regular XP (which characters still get), in that PUFF XP can only be spent like Bennies. You can turn 2 PUFF XP into 1 Bennie. This can be done at any point.

When a PUFF monster is killed, the team receives 2d4 PUFF XP. This XP is divvied up among players as they see fit. You can only gain this bonus once per encounter, regardless of how many Monsters are killed.

MHI GEAR

Silver Bullets

Many Monster Hunting organizations use silver bullets (as many monsters are wounded more by Silver.) Generally speaking, Silver Weapons are provided by the Monster Hunting organization to their Hunters as requested for missions. Hunters rarely have to pay for their own silvered ammunition. However, it is not given out willy-nilly, instead with each Hunter generally carrying one clip of silvered ammunition for a weapon of their choice. Additional ammunition can be requested.

If a Hunter needs to purchase Silvered Ammo on the market, the cost is approximately \$500 per clip and can generally only be acquired in major centers of commerce or on the black market.

Silvered weapons does -2 damage against normal targets, but against enemies who specify a weakness to silver, silver weapons gain +4 damage (ignoring the -2 penalty) and no Soak Rolls can be made against damage from Silvered weapons.

MHI Body Armor

All members of MHI have access to two sets of Body Armor (detailed on [page 47](#).) You can not purchase MHI Body Armor normally.

MHI Body Armor offers 3 points of protection against most attacks. This armor applies to all locations but the head. Due to the inclusion of Kevlar and ceramic inserts, it also negates up to 4 points of AP from bullets and provides +8 protection from them as well.

The included light gloves offer no drawbacks or benefits, but the heavy gloves do. The Heavy Gloves do Str + d6 damage in melee but inflict a -2 on any finesse or Agility based skills (tasks like typing or lockpicking are very difficult.) that require your fingers to be able to easily manipulate the items or task.

The light helmet offers +3 armor to the head space, and the heavy helmet offers a +5 bonus.

The load bearing armor of the harness counts your Strength as one die step higher for the purposes of determining the amount you can carry (when calculating Encumbrance as per the Savage Worlds Adventure Edition rulebook.)

The armor will also automatically float in deep water if the occupant can activate the CO2 cartridge.

CHAPTER 9: THE GAMEMASTER'S VAULT

SECRETS OF THE MHI WORLD

The world of MHI is sometimes a world of secrets, hidden knowledge, and strange goings on. Here's where you, the GM, learn the truth behind the veil of everyday reality. When and how you reveal this information to your players — if ever — is up to you.

Secrets From Part One

The first part of this book touched on several things that are unexplained or mysterious. Here's what's *really* going on.

PAGE 81 – PT CONSULTING

PT Consulting's source of funding is something of a puzzle to MHI; the company seemed to come out of nowhere with the best gear, great training, and the marketing skills to snag contracts. Despite the conspiracy theories hatched by some Hunters, the truth is rather prosaic: venture capital. Rick Armstrong is a whiz at selling himself and his ideas, and with Shane Durant's help he convinced some very well-heeled people

(who happened to know about monsters already) to fund his operation. His backers believe that the existence of monsters is going to become public knowledge sooner or later, and when it does the monster hunting business is going to explode. They're positioning PT Consulting to be ready and able to handle that explosion — and when it does, they expect to make enormous amounts of money.

PAGE 85 – THE VERMONT STUMP JUMPERS

Veronica Naismith lured Walter Tisdale away from the MCB through a combination of blackmail and appeal to his baser instincts. On the one hand, she has proof he cheats on his wife and holds that over his head unless she does what he wants. On the other, like many veteran MCB agents Tisdale was annoyed that he couldn't claim PUFF bounties. Between those two things it wasn't hard to convince him to jump ship and go for the big bucks in private monster hunting.

PAGE 88 – GRIMM BERLIN

Grimm Berlin's company legend that Jakob and Wilhelm Grimm hunted monsters while gathering folklore is partially true. They didn't actively pursue monsters, but they did kill any they came across whom they thought they could handle — a werewolf or two, some zombies, one vampire, that sort of thing. MHI's claim to be the oldest organized monster hunting group is essentially correct.



PAGE 92 — MACCABEUS SECURITY & INVESTIGATIONS

Rumors that Maccabeus has some supernatural assets — monsters, in plain speech — on its payroll are true. It has one werewolf and a small band of orcs on call, though it keeps close control over the former (which the werewolf bitterly resents).

PAGE 94 — RUSSIA

Russia does have an official monster hunting organization, but it's even more secretive than the STFU. It doesn't even have a formal name; its members refer to it loosely as "the Firebird Brigade" (from the mythic Russian creature of the same name). Most of them are veterans of Spetznaz or other Russian military forces, and they tend to take a very hard-nosed approach to monster hunting. Unfortunately the ongoing turmoil and instability in Russia means they're not as well-equipped or -funded as they'd like.

PAGE 96 — TAIWAN

The Taiwanese Hunters are an official government agency known only as "Division 33." They aren't field-testing any equipment for the US Army or anyone else.

The Outsider Factions

"There are many factions of Elder Things. They don't care about us. They only want to control as many worlds, as many souls, as they can, and deprive the others of their ownership."

—Martin Hood explains a cosmic truth to Owen Pitt in *Monster Hunter Vendetta*

Unbeknownst to nearly anyone on Earth (not even most experienced Hunters and wizards), humanity and its home are the objects of a vast, interdimensional war. Several groups of ultra-powerful cosmic entities — referred to collectively in this book as the Outsider Factions — want to

take control/possession of Earth and her people for their own inscrutable purposes. Some of the Outsider Factions might be considered "friendly" to humanity (if for no other reason than that they want to protect it from the other Factions), but most of them are best described as inimical, predatory, destructive, evil, or most likely all of the above. They're forces of chaos and harm, interested only in pursuing their own cruel, selfish aims regardless of what happens to anyone or anything else. Some disturbed, twisted humans worship them, and they use these humans for their own ends. But if an Outsider Faction were ever to triumph it would consume its own servants just as quickly as it would the rest of the human cattle.

THE BEASTS

The Beasts are ancient animal spirits, once mighty on Earth but now weakened with the advent of humanity as the dominant species on the planet. This Faction is not of one mind. Some of the Beasts see humanity as a blight to be wiped out so that animals can roam the world untroubled by people. Others believe that all life is sacred and that their goal is to find a way to live harmoniously with humanity. Werewolves and other lycanthropes have some (subconscious/unknown) connection with this Faction. It's possible they were created by some of the Beasts either to show that animals and humans can truly be one, or as the vanguard of the animal attack on humanity.

THE FALLEN

The Fallen are disembodied spirits from before the dawn of mankind. Once they were all-powerful, but they fell from grace (as told of, in various forms, by the biblical story of Satan's fall and many similar myths from around the world). The vilest of them became demons, devils, and similar

embodiments of horror and evil. Others became simple nature spirits or other such beings worshipped by various religions. And a few, a very few... did something else. That “else” varies from Fallen to Fallen, based on their individual personalities, motivations, and circumstances. In many cases they found physical bodies to inhabit and began interacting with humanity in the world once they could.

Agent Franks is one such Fallen; so are the fearsome Bia and Cratos, and Franks’ arch-enemy Kurst.

THE GUARDIANS

This small Faction is even more mysterious than most. Its member entities seem to want to preserve the cosmic order the way it is, but whether they do so out of a benign or malicious attitude remains unknown. It may be that they somehow serve, are enslaved by, or are controlled by the Old Ones and/or the Others — or maybe they just want the other Factions to think they are.

THE OLD ONES

The most terrifying of the Outsider Factions, the Old Ones are powerful, Lovecraftian elder gods. There are many different “groups” of them, most clustered around some particularly strong Old One, and their motivations and desires often clash with one another as much as they do with the other Outsider Factions. However, it would be a mistake to think of any of these groups as “good” — they’re all unquestionably evil and destructive. It’s more a matter of some of them having utterly evil intentions toward humanity, and some being ambivalent toward humanity and not willing to go out of their way to destroy Earth as long as humans are convenient to have around.

The Dread Overlord whom Martin Hood served and Owen Pitt and Agent Franks killed was one of the Old Ones. Most of the “elder things” worshipped by various degenerate human cults are also Old Ones. How the death of the Dread Overlord and other recent events on Earth has affected or influenced this Faction remains to be seen.

THE UNMAKERS

Little is known about this faction, which appears to be led by an ancient chaos god known as Asag. Their goal seems to be the complete destruction of the universe down to the molecular level, and they are bitter enemies to both the Old Ones and Human Religion.

THE OTHERS

Even those humans who are aware of the Outsider Factions know almost nothing about “the Others,” an obvious catch-all term devised no doubt by some deranged novelist or philosopher. It may be that these are gods or spirits from a lot of human religion and folklore that has since died out or been “destroyed” by the dominant world religions (see below).

According to Susan Shackleford, the Others are the Faction who created the Guardian to protect the *Kumaresb Yar*, though not everyone seems to agree with that theory.

HUMAN RELIGION

The divine essence of “God,” however worshipped by the major modern religions (Christianity, Islam, Hinduism, Taoism...), seems to function in effect as an Outsider Faction. If so, it’s probably the only one that’s overtly beneficent toward humanity, even if its beneficence involves a sort of “tough love” approach to making humans take their destiny into their own hands and solve their own damn problems. That being said, though, it’s this Faction’s power that allows humans to use their religious faith to resist vampires, demons, and similar monsters.

THE CHOSEN

Owen Z. Pitt has been referred to on several occasions by several knowledgeable entities as “the Chosen One,” and has certainly demonstrated powers that justify that description (including the ability to use the *Kumaresb Yar*). However, exactly what’s meant by this remains a major mystery. Which Outsider Faction or elder entity did the Choosing? What other powers, if any, may he develop? What’s he supposed to do with his powers — what’s his purpose in this cosmic struggle, or more broadly put, his destiny?

In reality there is not just a Chosen One, but there are many Chosen. At different times each of the warring cosmic factions has picked special servants and entrusted them with specific missions. Their gifts, powers, and goals vary as greatly as the Factions which guide them.



THE FEY

Similar to the Outsider Factions, but not precisely one of them (as far as humanity knows...) are *the Fey*, a race or group of strange, powerful beings. (Broadly speaking, the term “Fey” applies to anything that comes from another world or dimension, but is not related to the Old Ones.) Banshees and doppelgangers are Fey. Many of the creatures who appear in human folklore and myth, particularly that of the British Isles, were inspired by humanity’s vague recollections of the Fey — or later encounters with them.

The Fey existed on and controlled Earth long before the rise of humanity. They created elves, orcs, and gnomes to serve them and to act as their warriors in vast conflicts, where one or more Fey contended with others of his kind for amusement (much in the same way two humans might play chess). They also created many monsters to fight for them on their battlefields.

When humanity evolved, the Fey sometimes let them be, sometimes enslaved them, and sometimes hunted them for sport. The mind colossus, among other monsters, was bred for the purpose of hunting humans. But as humanity’s numbers increased and he became more intelligent and skillful, the power of the Fey over Earth waned. Some of them fled Earth’s dimension for others more to their liking (and thus could be considered an Outsider Faction in truth); others stayed, sometimes degenerating into folkloric creatures and sometimes retaining their full, malignant power.

All Fey still on Earth are powerful in their own way, and thus dangerous to hunt. They often have strange mystic powers or abilities (such as a banshee’s wail, or a doppelganger’s shapechanging) that make it easy for them to prey on (or at least kill) humans.



CHAPTER 10: VILLAINS

A hero's nothing without a proper adversary to oppose him — and MHI has lots of enemies. This section describes some of the main ones, but of course you're free to create others to give your campaign its own distinct "feel."

THE MONSTER CONTROL BUREAU

"Boy, these policemen are not your friends. They are liars who hide monsters and threaten poor survivors. They do terrible, misguided things."

—the spirit of Mordechai

Byreika warns Mosh Pitt about the
MCB in *Monster Hunter Legion*

The Monster Control Bureau, or MCB as it's commonly known, is the United States government agency with primary responsibility for handling monster-related and supernatural incidents of all sorts in US territory. Despite the fact that it's described here in the "Villains" section (because it's often at odds with MHI and other private Hunters for various reasons), the MCB isn't truly villainous the way Lord Machado or Susan Shackelford are. When it comes right down to it, the MCB and the MHI both want to kill monsters and protect the citizens of the United States from them.

What sets the MCB apart from MHI is its focus and methodology. MHI's goal is to kill monsters, protect people, and make a good living doing it. The MCB kills a lot of monsters and protects a lot of people, but its main goal is to *keep the existence of monsters and the supernatural a*

secret. In pursuit of this goal it's willing, and authorized, to do just about anything: kill people infected with lycanthropy; concoct elaborate cover stories to explain supernatural events; pin the blame on innocent people; intimidate US citizens into keeping their mouths shut; arrange "accidents" to make sure witnesses are never able to talk; use nuclear weapons on American soil; and much more. It's an intensely Machiavellian organization...

...but it's Machiavellian with a purpose. MHI and most other Hunters think the MCB does what it does because of the government's misplaced sense of paranoia, or the desire of powerful movers and shakers to use supernatural resources for their own purposes. But that's not true. What MHI and its colleagues don't understand about the world, but MCB does, is something embodied in what the MCB calls the *First Reason*, the ultimate justification for its existence: *The more people who believe in the Old Ones, the more powerful they become*. To put it more broadly, the more people who know and accept the existence of magic and monsters, the more magic- and monster-related events (which rarely end well for humanity) will occur — and on and on, until the way is opened for the Old Ones (and other Outsider Factions) to enter Earth's reality and destroy humanity.

Thus, while the MCB's actions regarding an individual citizen may seem exploitative and cold-hearted, and its ways of keeping people from talking about monsters are bullying backed up with threats of murder, from a larger perspective the MCB is fighting the good fight in a way that MHI and other Hunters can't really grasp. Every person the MCB prevents from spreading the word about the supernatural is another brick in the wall that keeps Earth's dimension safe from unimaginable horror. Every cover story the MCB concocts is the mortar that holds the wall together. Keeping America in the dark about what's really going on in the world may seem paternalistic and heavy-handed — but the alternative is too horrifying to contemplate. The men and women of the MCB are on the front lines, making sure no one ever has to contemplate it.

History

President Theodore Roosevelt, no stranger to monster incidents himself, established the MCB in 1902. He offered the directorship to Bubba Shackelford, but MHI's founder had no interest in working for the government. The job finally went to Lucas Starmount, a veteran of the Spanish-American War who'd killed a vampire while fighting in Cuba.

The MCB didn't do much for the next twenty years or so, though it did begin to compile its now extensive archives and database regarding monsters and the supernatural. But as monster incidents began to rise in the Twenties and Thirties, the MCB became much more active (and grew significantly as a result). Disguised as revenueurs or FBI agents, MCB personnel kept a lid on the supernatural, often shunting real stories about monster attacks into the pages of pulp magazines where they were regarded as poorly-written fiction.

During World War II, and in the years immediately thereafter, the MCB often had its hands full covering up the repercussions and "side effects" of the Decision Week projects. The government often turned to the Bureau's experts for help finding ways to neutralize or contain various supernatural threats the Manhattan Project worked with. Similarly, when the Department of Defense began studying the supernatural in response to Chinese actions in the Korean War, MCB's expertise was crucial for steering its researches in the right direction — and more importantly, cleaning up the DoD's messes. This continued through the Vietnam War, though the DoD's experimentation with matters magical dropped off significantly in favor of just using supernatural assets in-field as part of Special Task Force Unicorn and other projects.

As monster incidents became more frequent in the last quarter of the twentieth century, MCB grew busier and busier, and recruited more agents than it ever had before. The rise of modern mass media, not to mention the Internet, complicated its job significantly, but it developed the skills to cope. It evacuated and then destroyed an entire small town in western Pennsylvania in 1987 to cover up a major lycanthropy outbreak with a story of "mine fires," passed the 1991 Oakland vampire incident off as the Oakland Firestorm, and explained the December 1995 tragedy as a mass hallucination and riot brought on by an unusual fungus strain that got into the food and air.

That last incident was also the last straw for the MHI's supporters in the government. Acting on the Bureau's recommendation, they outlawed private hunting as too dangerous. For the next six years, the MCB was the only organization in any way authorized to deal with

supernatural incidents in the United States. But as such incidents continued to increase in frequency, the workload proved too much for the MCB to handle. Finally it re-instituted the PUFF system — just in time for the Lord Machado incident.

Since the dawn of the twenty-first century, the MCB's been busier than ever. The Machado incident, the Hood incident, the Copper Lake werewolf attack, the Las Vegas incident, and the Nemesis incident have all occurred in relatively rapid succession. The Bureau's casualty rate is higher than it's ever been. Many Bureau agents fear this is only the tip of the iceberg — that “something big” is coming or just about to happen. If so, not all the resources of the US government may be able to keep the existence of the supernatural secret from the citizens of the United States.

BUREAUCRATIC MANEUVERINGS

After the DeSoya Caverns incident, Congress transferred the MCB from the Department of Justice to the Department of Homeland Security. But this didn't hamper the MCB's efficiency at all. It was deeply involved in the Martin Hood incident that same year; without its swift action, word and pictures of the arbmunep in New Zealand might have spread so quickly that containing the story would have been impossible. As it was, the MCB was able to pass the whole thing off as a UFO hoax. After Douglas Stark's reported stellar conduct during the Copper Lake incident, Acting Director Dwayne Myers, a former MHI member, was demoted to head of the Special Response Team and Stark became the MCB's Director.

During the so-called “Nemesis incident,” in which STFU framed Special Agent Franks and tried to destroy him, Director Douglas

Stark was so badly wounded that he could not carry on his duties. Former Director Dwayne Myers, who had been demoted to commander of the Special Response Team, temporarily assumed control, but within days was shot to death during a confrontation with STFU operatives. His second in command with the SRT, Special Agent Greg Cueto, was then named Acting Director of the Bureau.

HEADQUARTERS

Located in Washington, D.C. not too far from the Capitol Building (but not close enough to seem important), the MCB's headquarters looks like an ordinary office building, with a plain beige concrete and black glass exterior. Its unremarkable landscaping conceals a number of features designed to thwart car bombers and similar threats.

The interior of the building is an ordinary office building for the most part, but all important areas (including elevators and stairwells), and even most minor ones, are covered by (a) full-time CCTV surveillance in the visible light, ultraviolet, and infrared spectra (most of these cameras are hidden, but some are not); and (b) x-ray scanners that can see beneath a subject's clothing or skin from several feet away. Other security measures, including state of the art electronic locks, are present wherever needed. The laboratories where MCB scientists experiment on monsters (some of which are at other sites), the vaults where it stores dangerous items and materials, and its non-electronic archives are even more heavily secured, and are guarded 24 hours a day by specially-trained agents. If security detects a possible threat (such as a “human” whose body temperature is far too low or high), other devices can flood the relevant area with powdered silver, holy water, fire, or all of these in succession.

Organization

The MCB is a relatively small agency, particularly given the importance of its task. It has to be, since secrecy is absolutely necessary for its mission and a large organization simply can't be that well hidden. As it is, officials in charge of managing and supporting the Bureau can easily conceal its budget and requisitions requests amid those for the military and the intelligence community. An investigator trying to track the MCB down by studying government records is almost certain to be frustrated.

The Bureau answers to the Congressional Subcommittee on Unearthly Forces, which itself is highly secret and interacts directly with the President.

THE DIRECTOR

The head of the MCB is the Director, who's based out of the Bureau's secret headquarters in Washington, DC. The Director's ultimately responsible for deciding on the MCB's policies and procedures, for choosing its response to major supernatural incidents, and for interfacing with the rest of the US government as necessary. Among other things, the latter duty includes obtaining as large a budget from Congress every year as he can, and keeping in touch with the Bureau's allies and supporters throughout the halls of power.

The current Director of the MCB is Greg Cueto, but his official title is Acting Director, since Congress still hasn't formally approved the position.

ASSISTANT DIRECTORS

Serving the Director are several Assistant Directors (ADs). Each one is in charge of some department within the Bureau, or for overseeing some specific aspect of Bureau operations. For example there's an AD leading the Research and Development

department, one in charge of the Special Response Team, and one responsible for Administration & Logistics.

SPECIAL AGENTS IN CHARGE

The Bureau maintains regional offices in many major cities and other areas throughout the United States. These offices range in size from two agents to a dozen or more, though the average is 4-6 agents. A Special Agent in Charge (or SAC) runs each office and sees to it that the agents do their jobs (which mostly means intimidating witnesses into not talking, shutting down media coverage of supernatural incidents, and so forth). Depending on the size of the office, he may have one or more Assistant SACs helping him.

THE LOWER RANKS

Below ASAC, the MCB ranks its agents as follows: Lieutenant; Sergeant, Corporal; Agent. These ranks are mainly for administrative and pay purposes, though; they're rarely used in the field (outside of the Special Response Team, which is much more militaristic). Most MCB personnel simply refer to one another as "Agent."

DEPARTMENTS

As mentioned above, the MCB organizes its personnel into several departments. These include:

- **Administrative & Logistics:** The least glamorous but most important of the departments, A&L is responsible for the more mundane aspects of the Bureau's operations. It arranges for new offices, makes sure those offices are kept secret with proper cover stories and other measures, promulgates new regulations and policies to all agents, makes sure the Bureau's staffing needs are met, and so

forth. It also obtains all of the Bureau's needed supplies, ranging from paper and toner to assault rifles and the MCB's special silver ammunition. A&L's Technology Division is responsible for maintaining and dispensing the weapons and other field gear; agents sometimes jokingly call it "Q Branch."

- **Media Control:** Although misleadingly named (since it can't literally control the media), this department is responsible for "spinning" monster-related stories to keep the existence of the supernatural secret from reporters and journalists (and thus from the public). Using a variety of guises (press agents, unnamed sources within the such-and-such office, whistle-blower, inside man...) they maintain contact with many different media outlets and personnel and use those connections to manipulate media coverage as best they can.
- **Research & Development:** One of the ways the MCB keeps pace with monsters despite its small size is by using the best weapons and technology available. Its R&D department is constantly devising newer, better ways to inflict maximum havoc upon the supernatural. It also studies monsters and magic, maintains the Bureau's (highly secure) archive of grimoires and artifacts, and conducts experiments on captured monsters to learn their weaknesses.
- **Special Response Team:** The "SRT" is the Bureau's "military division." When there's a monster outbreak that a regional office can't handle, the brass send in the SRT. SRT agents, who almost always have a military Special Forces background, are big, heavily armed, thoroughly professional, and

capable of handling just about any threat with overwhelming firepower. They swoop in riding their black helicopters, use the latest gears and gizmos to track down the threat, and then put it down once and for all.

Policy And Procedures

"Keep in mind, however, that if you talk about us in public, the nice men from the Monster Control Bureau, that most of you have already met, will probably kill you."

—Raymond Shackelford III

warns some MHI newbies about the dangers of talking about monsters in *Monster Hunter International*

As the text above stresses, the MCB's policy first and foremost is containment. They want to keep all supernatural incidents from spreading, and more importantly they want to prevent verifiable information about monsters and magic from reaching the media or the American public. Protecting people from monsters is a secondary priority — and a distant second at that.

EVENT CLASSIFICATIONS

To better perform its mission, the Bureau classifies supernatural events on a six-step scale:

- **Condition Green:** A minor incident involving one (relatively weak) monster. Usually something one or two agents from a regional office can handle.
- **Condition Blue:** A major incident involving one powerful monster or multiple weaker monsters. May require the attentions of an entire field office.
- **Condition Yellow:** A serious incident usually beyond the capabilities of any one regional office. Multiple offices, or more likely the SRT, will be called in to handle the threat and manage the cover-up.

- **Condition Orange:** A serious incident threatening an entire town, city, or region in such a way that keeping the incident contained and secret poses a significant challenge. The SRT and “specialists” from headquarters will certainly be involved, as will multiple regional offices if possible.
- **Condition Red:** A major event threatening the national security of the United States or the lives and wellbeing of a significant number of her citizens. At this level the civil rights of all persons involved are suspended (though the constitutional authority for this is dubious at best); the MCB can torture confessions out of people, imprison people indefinitely, or kill anyone it deems necessary.
- **Extinction Level Event:** An event which threatens the very existence of humanity and/or Earth. The MCB is authorized to do whatever it takes to

safeguard humanity, including killing a significant percentage of the Earth’s population to protect the rest.

The Special Agent in Charge whose office handles an incident classifies it, though in the case of Code Orange and above they usually defer to headquarters due to the seriousness of the situation.

Monster Classifications

The MCB also has special classification codes for the monsters involved in an incident, with subcategories to better define the type of monster. These include:

- **Extradimensional:** Often considered the deadliest of monsters, “extradimensionals” are beings not native to Earth’s reality who must be sent here by a more powerful entity, or summoned here by a wizard (or some other unusual circumstance). Type 1 includes relatively minor menaces like imps. Type 2 includes significant demons, such as an infernal scouts and soldiers. Type



3 includes major demons, like winged terrors, battle fiends, and infernal warriors. Type 4 includes the most powerful demons and demon princes. Type 5 includes the servants of the Old Ones, such as shoggoths.

- **Fey:** The MCB doesn't entirely understand this category, but it recognizes that there's a certain "type" of monster with unusual mystical powers, typically inimical to humans for reasons other than feeding on them, and it lumps them all into this category. Type 1 is Fey of restricted habits or abilities, such as banshees. Type 2 is shapechangers like doppelgangers and skinwalkers. Type 3 are Fey with general mystical powers, or particularly potent abilities of some sort, such as Baba Yagas and mind colossi. Type 4 designates any type of Fey that doesn't fit into one of the other categories. Type 5 are full-blown "faerie folk" from world legends; they possess vast mystic power and are nearly impossible to come to grips with or kill.
- **Humanoids:** Monsters which have a human-like form and human-like sentience and motivations. Type 1 includes humanoids currently considered PUFF exempt, such as elves and sasquatches. Type 2 are humanoids who are mostly physical threats but lack significant mystic power, such as orcs, hobgoblins, reptoids, and ogres. Type 3 have notable magical powers or other unusual abilities, such as gnomes, minotaurs, deep ones, Humboldt Folk, and trolls. Type 4 are as much mystical as physical (if not more), such as oni and sirens; Type 5 are the most dangerous humanoids, such as really powerful oni, giants, and the like.
- **Undead:** Monsters which are humans or animals risen from death to a state of unlife. Type 1 includes zombies and

skeletons; Type 2 is ghouls, night-shades, mummies, and wights; Type 3 are incorporeals such as ghosts, shades, and wraiths; Type 4 is vampires; and Type 5 is master vampires, liches, and anything else of comparable power.

- **Unnatural:** A catch-all term for other monsters including lycanthropes, lindwyrms, chupacabra, and golems/gargoyles. Type 1 is golems/gargoyles and lesser lycanthropes (such as wererats). Type 2 is werewolves, werejaguars, and other highly dangerous lycanthropes. Type 3 is mutant animals and related creatures, such as giant spiders. Type 4 is small, bestial or mostly bestial monsters, including chupacabra. Type 5 is large, bestial monsters such as lindwyrms.

CONTAINMENT CLASSIFICATIONS

The MCB also ranks events according to how difficult they are to "contain" (meaning keep secret from the media and the public). There are five levels of containment:

- **Level One:** A minor incident easily covered up by one or two agents.
- **Level Two:** A serious incident requiring the efforts of most or all of a regional office to contain.
- **Level Three:** A serious incident involving multiple monsters, and/or witnesses whose credibility can be questioned or impugned with relative ease. (The zombie attack at Trip Jones's high school merited this classification; there were lots of monsters and witnesses, but the witnesses were mostly kids.)
- **Level Four:** A significant incident with several witnesses whose credibility is difficult to question. Multiple monsters may be involved, or it may simply be one or two powerful monsters.

- Level Five: A major incident with numerous credible witnesses and/or monsters whose existence and activities are extremely difficult to explain in conventional terms. (Cratos and Bia's attack on the Cabbage Point Killing Machine's concert in Montgomery was a Level Five; so were the Copper Lake and Las Vegas incidents.)

THE SECRET ENEMIES LIST

In much the same way that the FBI has a Ten Most Wanted list, the MCB keeps a Secret Enemies list. This ranks the top ten greatest known supernatural threats to the national security of the United States and/or to maintaining the secret of the supernatural. Currently Koriniha ([page 166](#)) ranks #1, Lucinda Hood ([page 171](#)) is #3, and Susan Shackelford ([page 175](#)) is #6.

OTHER POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

Like any other government organization, the MCB has many, many other regulations, procedures, official policies, and rules. Some of these make a lot of sense; others arose due to some bureaucratically-perceived need and live on to interfere with agents' work. Some of the ones Hunters are most likely to hear about include:

- Do not pursue werewolves or other lycanthropes into any natural environment involving significant cover (including forested areas) without a complete fire team.
- Do not pursue vampires after sunset without a complete fire team.
- All incidents of contact with extradimensional beings, or with human cultists who worship extradimensional beings, no matter how minor, must be reported to your commanding officer as soon as possible.

- Unless specifically ordered to do so by your commanding officer, do not attempt to capture or restrain monsters if you are able to kill them — just go ahead and kill them.
- Arrest or otherwise restrain any private individuals (including persons with PUFF charters) who in any way interfere with you or hinder your ability to carry out your duties.

Of course, all those rules come with an unspoken caveat: "unless absolutely necessary to maintain containment of the situation."

Resources

"I'm authorized to tow the moon down here and crash it into Earth if I think it would help."

—Agent Myers explains the extent of his authority during the DeSoya Caverns incident in *Monster Hunter International*

One of the things the MCB has going for it is that the government understands just how important its mission really is. Unlike many (if not most) federal agencies and programs it's never starved for cash or lacking in required equipment. If necessary it can call on just about any United States government resource, up to and including nuclear weapons, to get the job done.

WEAPONS

The standard issue weapons for MCB agents are the FN-F2000 and FN-SCAR-H assault rifles, the FN P90 and H&K MP7 submachine guns, and the Glock 20 10mm semiautomatic pistol. An agent can request to use a different weapon (particularly a handgun), and provided it's of the same caliber or he's willing to supply his own ammunition such requests are usually (but not always) granted.

In addition to standard ammunition, the MCB uses a sintered metal round — silver powder encased in a polymer matrix, made for and sold only to the Bureau. It's available in all of the MCB's approved calibers and qualifies as frangible ammunition.

Beyond firearms, the MCB can access any sort of weapon in the United States arsenal, and its R&D department is always hard at work trying to think up new and improved ways to destroy monsters. For example, for the past several years the MCB has been field testing a combat robot designed specifically for monster hunting. So far its software has only achieved a 98% monster recognition rate, though, so work continues. On the less high-tech end, the "MCB Special," a small explosive charge that's small and lightweight enough to carry comfortably but that packs enough punch to blow open steel doors or destroy most unholy altars, is a favorite of many field agents.

BODY ARMOR

MCB agents wear body armor made from the latest materials, with pockets for ceramic plates. It includes a load-bearing harness for agents' gear. Standard issue gear that comes with it includes a medical kit optimized for monster hunting necessities, a durable flashlight, and a high-quality multitool.

VEHICLES

The MCB has a large fleet of vehicles. Its agents typically travel in black, armored Suburban SUVs capable of moving at over 200 miles per hour. For aerial assaults or faster travel they fly in Blackhawk or Apache helicopters, or transport aircraft

like the C-130. If necessary the Bureau can even obtain M1A1 Abrams main battle tanks for use against truly dangerous monsters (though few monsters stand still long enough for a tank to shoot them, or live in places where tanks can go).

TESTING KITS

The Werecreature Field Test Kit and Zombie Infection Tester described on [page 207](#) are both MCB inventions. Field agents determining the extent of a monster "outbreak" use them frequently, and even SRT teams usually have at least one or two of each.

FALSE DOCUMENTATION

As part of their whole mission of "containment," MCB agents rarely tell anyone who they really are. Instead an agent in the field usually has ID cards and other documentation in support of at least three false identities. Ideally his "cover" is tailored to his specific mission, but if that's not possible he can fall back on broadly useful ones such as "FBI agent" or "CDC inspector."

ARTIFACTS AND ENCHANTED ITEMS

When the MCB gets its hands on grimoires, enchanted items, or other mystical objects, it makes the decision whether to destroy them (if possible) or keep them for study. Those it decides to retain are kept in a highly secure warehouse at a secret location in Nevada. (It may have, or may in the future build, other such facilities.) Protected by a Ward Stone, the latest in modern security systems, and a crack team of well-armed guards, it contains enough magical swords, arcane paraphernalia, and enchanted objects to outfit an entire cult. MCB agents are not allowed to "check out" or otherwise use these items (though R&D personnel do study and experiment upon them in secure rooms on site).

Key Personnel

Here are some of the primary MCB personnel whom MHI Hunters may encounter during their careers.

DIRECTOR/SPECIAL AGENT DWAYNE MYERS

Background/History: After an encounter with the supernatural that nearly left him dead, young Dwayne Myers was recruited by MHI and soon became a tough, competent Hunter. But after the supposed death of his close friend Martin Hood at the claws of Earl Harbinger, Myers soured on the idea of private monster hunting, quit MHI, and joined the MCB.

Thanks to his talents and attitude, Myers rose through MCB's ranks quickly, eventually becoming the Special Agent in Charge of the Dallas regional office. When the directorship opened, Congress appointed him Acting Director of the Bureau, but for various bureaucratic and political reasons the position was never made permanent.

Myers served as the MCB's de facto Director through the Machado incident, Martin Hood's attempt to turn the Earth over to the Dread Overlord, and the Copper Lake incident. After the Las Vegas incident the political winds shifted and his rival Doug Stark became Director. He was "demoted" to SAC over the Special Response Team, a job he didn't particularly care for and wasn't well-suited for, but which he performed to the absolute best of his ability. During Agent Stricken's failed attempt to frame and eliminate Special Agent Franks, Myers briefly re-assumed the top position at the MCB, but was later shot and killed by STFU operatives.

Myers had a foster son, Tom Strayhorn, who was an MCB agent until Kurst killed him during the Nemesis incident.

Strayhorn possessed some unusual powers, including the ability to return from the dead using the Elixir Of Life (which he could drink without suffering any negative effects such as pain or seizures), but he never revealed their exact extent publicly. The powers came from his real father, Special Agent Franks.



Personality/Motivation: Although he often comes across as cynical and world-weary, Dwayne Myers believes passionately in the ultimate goal of the MCB: protecting the United States and the Earth from the Old Ones and other monsters. He accepts the fact that this requires hard decisions and sacrifices, and as much as he hates to condemn innocents to death he'll do it rather than see the entire US placed at risk. (In fact, he initially participated in some of Martin Hood's attempts at trying to use magic to fight the Old Ones, though he soon realized that was foolish. In some ways he's been seeking atonement for that mistake ever since.) When it comes right down to it he's an eminently practical man.

Myers's experiences with MHI have left him highly skeptical of private monster hunting. If it were up to him PUFF would be abolished, private hunting outlawed, and the MCB expanded to the point where it can easily handle all monster-related incidents in United States territory.

Quote: "No matter what you think of me, you know everything I've done has been to protect America. I took a solemn oath to defend this country. I will continue doing that to the best of my abilities, no matter how dark things become, no matter what, I will fulfill that oath or I will gladly die trying."

Powers/Tactics: Although age, stress, and smoking have slowed him down considerably over the years, Special Agent Myers is still as tough and determined as ever. Since he has plenty of young, gung-ho, highly-trained soldiers at his command, he prefers to lead from the rear, using his tactical sense and decades of experience to help his men accomplish the mission while minimizing casualties.

Where Myers really shines is the bureaucratic and administrative side of his job. He knows a lot of people in Washington and can make

sure the MCB has no budgetary troubles, that any questions or problems are smoothed over, and that a belief in the importance of the Bureau's work remains firmly entrenched in most politicians' opinions.

Myers is equally skilled at what one might call "propaganda and damage control." He's handled so many mystic events and disasters over the years that he knows exactly what to do to corral threats, fool the media, and prevent the public from learning about the existence of the supernatural. And if that means intimidating witnesses into silence, violating constitutional rights, or other dirty tricks, so be it.

Appearance: Special Agent Dwayne Myers is a white male in his mid-forties. He's 5'8" tall, with thinning black hair and hazel eyes. His skin is pale from all the time he spends indoors, and he's thin — often too thin, when the stress and demands of work keep him from eating properly. He's a heavy smoker, leading to yellowed teeth and fingernails; he usually has a pack of cigarettes on him somewhere. Unless he's participating in a combat mission (which is unusual these days) he wears off-the-rack, dark-colored men's suits that somehow always look a little rumpled — some people think he looks a lot like a junior college English professor, when in fact he's a hardened fighter, monster-killer, and bureaucracy manipulator. He carries a Smith & Wesson 610 revolver most of the time. If he has to fight he dons body armor and uses an F2000 assault rifle.

Director/Special Agent Dwayne Myers

Stats: Agility D8 Smarts D10, Spirit D10, Strength D6, Vigor D6

Skills: Driving D6, Fighting D6, Gambling D6, Healing D4, Research D10, Occult D12, Notice D6, Persuasion D12, Shooting D10, Swimming D6

Parry: 5

Toughness: 5

Hindrances

- Habit (Minor – Smoking)

Edges

- Levelheaded

SPECIAL AGENT FRANKS

Background/History: Long and long ago, before the earliest human civilizations, one third of the heavenly host rebelled against God. When God defeated them, he ejected them from Heaven, and they fell into Hell, becoming demons and devils.

One such spirit, having greater will than most, found its way out of Hell. In the eighteenth century, the spirit came across a powerful flesh golem body created by an alchemist named Konrad Dippel, one that Dippel animated with a powerful alchemical substance unlike anything the world had seen before: the true Elixir of Life. While another powerful Fallen spirit, the Cursed, had declared its intention to claim the body for itself and frightened all other spirits away, the spirit that would become Franks used Cursed's pride against him and slipped in to possess the body before Cursed could. The Franks spirit took over the soulless body, thus gaining a physical form.

At first this new being was wild with pain and strange sensations. He smashed his way out of Dippel's laboratory and into the wild forest. Eventually, as the pain subsided and blood loss weakened him, he calmed down — just in time for the splendor of sunrise to astonish him. It was then that a messenger, presumably from God, came to him. It told him that, since unlike the other Fallen he had no desire to break the Plan or seek power, he would be allowed to keep his new body. But there was one condition: he had to use his body to fight other “invaders”:

monsters, evil spirits, and other supernatural threats to the world. He agreed.

The spirit-golem, whom the MCB would eventually come to know as Franks, lived on even after Dippel died, retaining the secret of the Elixir of Life for times when his body became so damaged it required repair. As a Hessian mercenary he came to America to fight the colonial rebels, but soon received indications from on high that he should acquaint himself with the alchemist Ben Franklin. He made another bargain, this time with Franklin, to work for what would one day be called the United States. In exchange the government would help preserve his secret (since even then many people, including George Washington, would have preferred to destroy him) and would put him back together whenever his body was severely injured. However, Franks kept the secret of his true origin to himself; as far as Franklin knew he was just a free-willed golem.

Ever since then Franks has worked for the United States government in a variety of ways under a variety of identities. For the past several decades he's been the legendary Special Agent Franks, the baddest MCB agent ever — the one who's never failed at a mission, who doesn't hesitate to do whatever the job requires, and who once killed a god. (Given his unique status, he has “Special Agent” rank even though he doesn't head a regional office.) In fact he's been such a valuable asset that the STFU launched Project Nemesis.

Having severely violated MCB regulations and federal law during the Las Vegas incident, Franks found himself on the outs with the Bureau. Agent Stricken of STFU manipulated things behind the scenes to make him look guilty and dangerous, forcing Franks to go into hiding. Stricken unleashed Project Nemesis, his plan to create numerous Franks-like beings under his direct control, to kill Franks, but this just

created more problems: they failed to kill Franks, then found a way to free themselves from Stricken's control. As Franks fought the Nemesis soldiers, eventually killing their leader Kurst as well as several more of them, Stricken fled into hiding, where he has remained ever since.

Thanks to his actions during the Nemesis incident, Heaven has ruled that his spirit is no longer automatically condemned to Hell. When Franks dies for good, he will be judged like any mortal.

Franks had a son, Tom Strayhorn, who was killed by Kurst during the Nemesis incident. Prior to his death during those same events, Dwayne Myers implied that Franks had other descendants as well — but if so, Franks knows nothing about them.

Personality/Motivation:

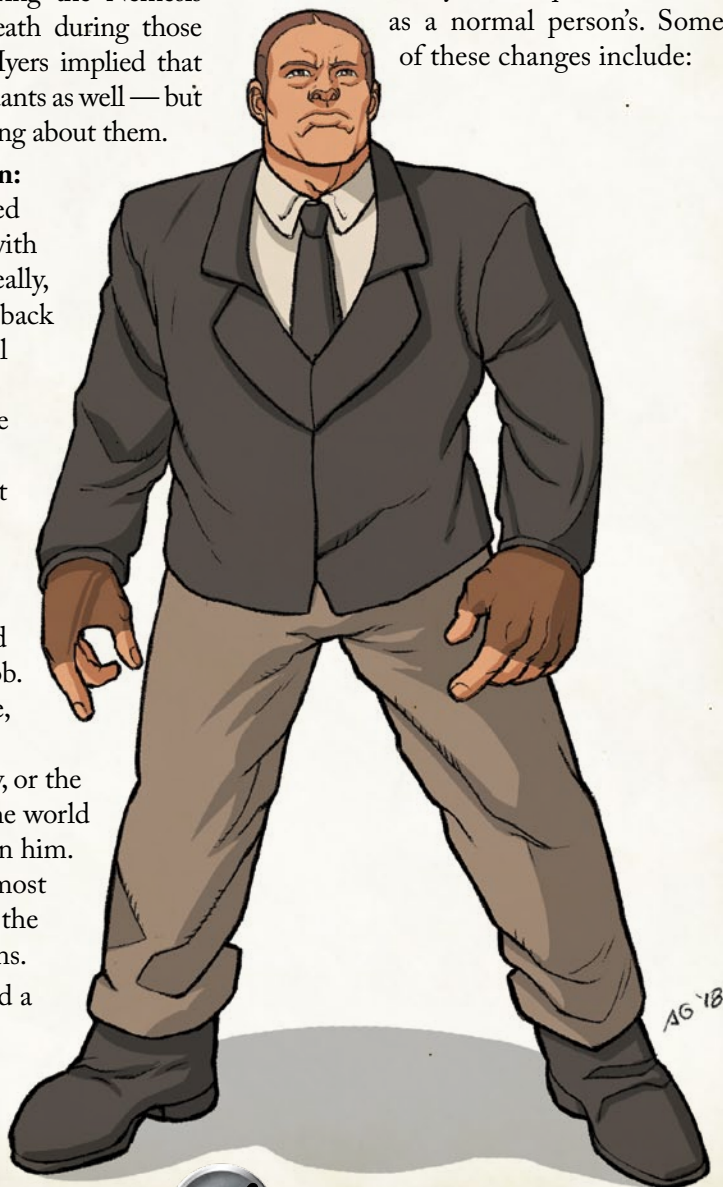
Franks is utterly dedicated to fulfilling his bargain with God, because he really, really, really doesn't want to go back to Hell. He has yet to fail at a mission, and he'll do whatever it takes to make sure that record remains unblemished — even if it imperils his freedom or existence.

Franks typically comes across as emotionless and entirely focused on his job. He doesn't raise his voice, act surprised or anxious, show kindness/sympathy, or the like — and nothing in the world can intimidate or frighten him. He speaks with a flat, almost monotone voice, even in the most stressful of situations.

Quote: "I've never failed a mission."

Powers/Tactics: As a golem animated/powered by the Elixir of Life, Franks is incredibly durable. He can withstand damage that would kill a normal human. Even better, when one of his limbs or organs becomes useless due to injury, government surgeons can easily replace it with "parts" from someone else. The MCB keeps a freezer full of "replacement parts" for Franks, and can also harvest them from people killed in monster incidents or in battle if necessary.

Additionally, some parts of Franks's anatomy aren't quite the same as a normal person's. Some of these changes include:



- two hearts arranged in a “relay system” — he can shut one down if it’s not working and activate the other so he can keep fighting.
- his ribcage is more solid/less flexible than normal — as Grant Jefferson once put it, “He doesn’t have ribs like we do. It’s more like they stuck an armored vest inside his chest to keep his guts in place.” (Franks himself refers to it as an “armored rib plate.”)
- he has extra brain tissue grafted to his spine, allowing him to retain some level of functionality (and to “back up” his memories) if he suffers a brain injury.
- his lungs function so well that he can hold his breath for as long as 50 minutes if he’s in good shape and holds perfectly still (injuries or the need to move around reduce this time considerably, but even when highly active he can usually stay submerged for at least 10 minutes without needing to breathe).

Occasionally Franks has tried out other “improvements” beyond the human norm, such as literally having eyes in the back of his head, but for various reasons these “upgrades” usually don’t work out (he found the extra eyes too disorienting, for example). However, Franks’s resistance to injury allows him to tolerate medical treatments that normal humans cannot. For example, he gets regular injections of an experimental DARPA serum into his eyeballs. An ordinary person who undergoes this treatment soon tears out his eyes because of the intense pain, but for Franks it’s merely a mild discomfort for a while. The serum enhances his ability to see in the dark (though his night vision doesn’t allow for much color differentiation). His hearing has also been enhanced. He is ambidextrous, and does not have to sleep.

Franks is immensely strong — and in a pinch he can exert even more strength than normal, though this tires him out quickly. (And of course, if he’s recently taken any of the Elixir of Life, which he knows how to make, that further increases his physical abilities.) He also moves and reacts faster than nearly any mortal on Earth. Despite his size he’s extremely stealthy, able to sneak up on even trained personnel without much difficulty.

Franks has been fighting in wars and killing monsters for centuries, and it shows. He hits like a freight train, shoots with deadly accuracy, and has studied virtually every martial art and fighting style on earth. There’s very little he hasn’t seen, encountered, or heard of in his time as a golem, and he puts his experience to good use as an MCB agent. Even his reputation, which is known throughout the Mystic World, helps him — many a demon or vampire prefers to escape rather than try to fight Franks, and spirits to whom he opens his mind flee in panic.

Franks maintains ‘stashes of equipment — sometimes just a single gun, sometimes enough gear to go into hiding for weeks — in various places throughout MCB headquarters, in Washington and its suburbs, and elsewhere in the United States and even the world (though the further you get from DC, the fewer his caches become).

Appearance: Agent Franks is an enormous brute of a man, standing 6’8” tall with shoulders and torso as wide as two normal men, muscles on his muscles, and the hard look of someone who doesn’t tolerate backtalk and has killed more than his fair share of men. Because his golem nature allows parts of his body to be replaced if they’re lost or badly damaged his appearance can change as the years

pass. He's extremely taciturn, rarely saying more than a few words at a time — and those words will be blunt and to the point, regardless of how this affects the feelings of others. His preferred weapons when he's not outfitted for serious combat are Glock 10mm Model 20s (he carries a pair of them) and whatever other supplementary weapons (including grenades) he can fit in his pockets. During combat missions he dons full body armor and carries an F2000 assault rifle.

Agent Franks (Legendary)

Stats: Agility D12, Smarts D10, Spirit D12, Strength D12, Vigor D12+2

Skills: Athletics D6, Driving D10, Fighting D12+2, Intimidation D12+2, Research D6, Occult D12, Knowledge (bureaucracy) D10, Notice D10, Piloting D4, Shooting D12, Stealth D6, Streetwise D8, Survival D10, Swimming D10, Tracking D6

Parry: 10 (12 with Improved Block)

Toughness: 14

Hindrances

- Mean
- Outsider
- Stubborn
- Vow (major)

Edges

- Ambidextrous
- Improved Arcane Resistance
- Brawny
- Block
- Improved Block
- Brawler
- Bruiser
- Brute
- Combat Reflexes
- Hard to Kill
- Harder to Kill

- Levelheaded
- Martial Artist
- Martial Warrior
- Menacing
- Improved Nerves of Steel
- Iron Jaw
- Two Fisted
- Improved Tough as Nails
- Franks gains +2 to Toughness, +2 on Rolls to Unshake and can hold his breath for up to 10 ten minutes without difficulty (an hour if he doesn't move or attempt any physical activity). Franks also has Infravision.
- **Can use Elixir** (see sidebar on [page 131](#)). Franks generally has 1 or 2 doses of Elixir on him.

OTHER FALLEN GOLEMS

Agent Stricken's Project Nemesis created thirteen more golems like Franks: manufactured flesh bodies inhabited by Fallen spirits. It improved on Dippel's work, making the bodies stronger, tougher, and more capable. Most, if not all, of these were destroyed during the events that followed, but some may have survived — or Kurst and his fellow Fallen may somehow make their way back to the mortal world and find new bodies to inhabit (perhaps with the help of STFU scientists who escaped the Project's destruction...).

To represent Kurst and the other Nemesis golems, use the Special Agent Franks character sheet, but eliminate any MCB-related skills he's learned, and make them just a little bit stronger, faster, and/or tougher to represent modern scientific improvements to Dippel's alchemical processes. Additionally, give them the ability to shape shift, courtesy of a serum created by the Sanctified Church of the Temporary Mortal Condition.

ACTING DIRECTOR GREG CUETO

Background/History: After an encounter as a military policeman with a succubus, Greg Cueto was recruited by the MCB. He worked for several years as a field agent, during which he earned an exemplary record and numerous commendations. Soon his high level of firearms skill and general toughness earned him a place on the Special Response Team. He displayed enough smarts and initiative for the MCB to promote him to the rank of unit commander when his former commander got torn apart by a giant spider. That in turn brought him to the attention of Dwayne Myers, who was then in charge of the SRT. Impressed by Cueto's seeming fearlessness and level head, he began relying for him on advice. Almost before Cueto knew it he'd become the de facto second in command of the SRT. When STFU murdered Myers, Congress appointed Cueto Acting Director of the MCB, a job he's held ever since.

Personality/Motivation: Cueto, who first came to Myers's attention due to his excellent work as an SRT unit commander, is widely regarded as "crazy" within the Bureau. They say that because of his utter fearlessness and the seemingly reckless behavior that results from it. But he's one of the best monster hunters out there, and the rest of the MCB has nothing but the deepest respect for him. They'd follow him into Hell — literally.

For better or worse, becoming Acting Director has tamed Cueto's craziness somewhat. He's had to learn to deal with political matters diplomatically (or at least, as diplomatically as he can), and has received a hands-on education about how things work in Washington. He's not entirely sure he truly enjoys it — and there are often times when he wishes he was back in his body armor putting down

undead and werewolves — but he doesn't hate it nearly as much as he did at first.

Quote: "Okay, enough of this boring bureaucratic crap for today. Let's hear some field reports and see what's going on out there."

Powers/Tactics: As an agent, Cueto carried standard MCB gear and weaponry. But since monsters often resist conventional measures, he became adept at finding ways to fight back, often using supplies found in the area (or adapting MCB equipment to unusual uses). A couple years behind a desk may have dulled his fighting instincts a hair, but he's still ready to strap on body armor and take the fight to some monster personally if he has to.

Appearance: Greg Cueto is a broad-shouldered man with the body that shows he still engages in regular intensive exercise to keep from getting soft. He's white, bald, and has a short, stylish black beard. These days he typically wears well-made suits and ties, but for most of his MCB career he's been more accustomed to heavy body armor and a field kit.

DOUGLAS STARK

Background/History: As a young Navy SEAL, Doug Stark learned about the existence of the supernatural when he helped rescue a cruise ship that was being attacked by Deep Ones. Sam Haven, who went on to become an MHI employee, had also been on that mission, and filed a report that claimed Stark choked under pressure. Fortunately for Stark, Haven argued with the MCB about eradicating anyone who might possibly have been infected by the fish-men and got drummed out of the Navy for his attitude, leaving Stark to be held up as the hero of the incident.

Fighting Deep Ones left Stark with psychological scars, but also gave him a purpose in life. He joined the MCB, and was partnered for some time with the (in)famous Agent Franks. Over 25 years he slowly worked his way up the ranks, eventually becoming Special Agent in Charge of the Chicago office. After his actions during the Copper Lake incident (which were not entirely admirable, but which he was able to pass off as heroic), he was promoted to Director of the Bureau, a position he held (at the sufferance of the STFU) until the severe injuries he suffered during the Nemesis incident forced him to take early medical retirement.



Personality/Motivation: Although he tries to put on a bold front, the truth is that Doug Stark is a coward. He much preferred his job as an office administrator to having to be out in the field. He can often bluff his way through unpleasant situations, especially if people are watching, but if he can do so without risking his reputation he'd rather flee.

Stark has a somewhat sour, contrarian nature. He's prone to arguing with people over every little thing, regardless of what he really believes. He's also good at weaseling his way into things he wants.

Quote: "It is my goal to usher in a new era of cooperation between public sector and private sector Hunters."

Powers/Tactics: Prior to suffering career-ending injuries, Stark kept himself in shape and lifted weights; his biceps were as big around as most men's thighs. Since the injuries he remains confined to a wheelchair, or even a bed, on all but his best days. But he still remembers a lot of what he learned as a SEAL, including how to use explosives.

Even in his prime, Stark couldn't run as fast as most MCB agents, due to a knee injury he suffered while chasing a sasquatch years ago; these days he pretty much can't run at all. The knee still aches if he sits too long in one position.

Appearance: Douglas Stark is a white male in his early fifties. He's 6'0" with short, sandy blonde hair, watery blue eyes, and a set of bulldog jowls. He used to be stocky, but due to his injuries he's lost a lot of weight. As an MCB agent/director, he typically wore tailored men's suits in dark colors and carried a Glock 10mm Model 20 handgun. In the field his preferred weapon was the FN-SCAR-H.

AGENT GRANT JEFFERSON

Background/History: Born into a wealthy New England family, and gifted with both intelligence and good looks, Grant Jefferson pretty much had it all from Day One. He breezed through college and law school with top marks and would likely have gone on to a brilliant career as an attorney had he not been attacked by a blood fiend one fateful day. He survived the attack, killed the monster, and was soon recruited by MHI.

Jefferson took to Hunting so well that he soon earned himself a place on Earl Harbinger's team, and even began dating Julie Shackelford. But his true colors came out when he left Owen Pitt to die during a mission rather than risk his own life to save the newbie. After that his star quickly lost its luster, and he eventually left MHI in disgrace...

...only to rejoin about a year later, this time as a "plant" for the MCB, who'd hired him in the interim. His true allegiance was eventually exposed, and he's worked as a full-time MCB agent ever since. Acting Director Myers thought very highly of him and relied on him frequently, but after Myers was demoted and Douglas Stark became Director, Jefferson found himself marginalized. He didn't like it, but he gritted his teeth and waited for fortune to turn his way once more. And it did when Greg Cueto became Acting Director after Myers's murder at the hands of the STFU. He is currently assigned as Agent Franks' partner and handler.

Personality/Motivation: Grant Jefferson puts on an act of being heroic and noble-minded, and to some extent it's not even an act. He genuinely enjoys hunting monsters and keeping people safe from them. But ultimately he's a self-centered jackass who'll find a way to justify doing whatever

he wants to do that makes himself look good in the process. He can be trusted... but only as long as it's in his best interest to help you.

Jefferson is full of pride and ego. He hates to lose at anything, hates not to be the best at anything, and hates to fail (or look like he's failed). While these aren't admirable qualities, they push him to do his best.

Quote: "I'm here for one reason and one reason only. I'm the best at everything I decide to do, and I can't quit until I prove I'm the best at this too[.]"

Powers/Tactics: Jefferson is a highly trained, experienced monster hunter. He's particularly good at sniping (though not as good as Julie Shackelford) and often prefers to remain at a distance, taking available shots with his Model 82A1 rifle. He's no coward, though, and will take on monsters from melee combat distance if he has to.

Besides his combat abilities, Agent Jefferson also has good social skills. He knows how to get people to like him and trust him, and his movie star good looks certainly don't hurt when it comes to persuading people. He's put this talent to use on behalf of the MCB's Media Control division, and has helped to defuse many potentially dangerous situations, including the Las Vegas disaster.

Before becoming an MCB field agent, Jefferson worked at MCB headquarters as one of the people who alters records and video to discredit or eliminate reports of supernatural activity. He can still put those skills to use, if necessary.

Jefferson is qualified as a pilot, though he rarely gets to fly anymore given the press of his duties.

Appearance: Grant Jefferson, MCB Agent 52293, is a white male in his late twenties. He stands 6'0" tall and has the firm, athletic build of someone who not

only gets regular exercise as part of his job but also hits the gym regularly to sculpt and tone. He's extremely handsome (movie star good-looking, in fact), with stylish blond hair, blue eyes, perfect teeth, and a charming manner and smile that most women (and more than a few men) find irresistible. In the field he wears a suit of body armor specially made to fit him perfectly, with the MCB seal as a patch on both shoulders, and carries an FN SCAR-H assault rifle, a Glock 10mm Model 20 handgun, and various other weapons and pieces of gear.

Grant Jefferson

Stats: Agility D12, Smarts D8, Spirit D8, Strength D6, Vigor D8

Skills: Driving D6, Fighting D6, Gambling D6, Healing D4, Research D10, Occult D12, Notice D6, Persuasion D12, Shooting D12, Swimming D6

Parry: 5

Toughness: 6

Hindrances

- Overconfident
- Arrogant

Edges

- Attractive
- Marksman
- Levelheaded
- Charismatic
- Monster Hunter International (Team Edge) – If you're using grant at the same timeframe as his membership in MHI.

SPECIAL TASK FORCE UNICORN

"Off the record, he worked for an operation you do not want to cross. MCB is a shield. They're a sword, or maybe a poisoned dagger would be more appropriate. They answer only to the highest levels. They're small, but they deal with things that I wouldn't want my agency to touch with a ten-foot pole."

—Acting Director Dwayne Myers
explains STFU to Earl Harbinger in
Monster Hunter Alpha

The MCB isn't the only US government operation involved with the supernatural. While the MCB exists to protect people from monsters and magic, another agency uses monsters and magic to further the interests of America. Even smaller and more secretive than the MCB, this agency is known as *Special Task Force Unicorn*, or STFU for short. The name was chosen because unicorns, as everyone knows, don't exist.

STFU got its start during World War II as "Operation Unicorn," an OSS project to use known, controllable monster assets for military purposes (primarily espionage, sabotage, and other "special forces" type missions). Raymond Shackelford II was attached to Operation Unicorn; so was a weredolphin codenamed "Miss Fish." Operation Unicorn was involved in some of the most secret, but also most vital, OSS activities during the war; according to some estimates, the war might have dragged on as much as another half a year had Unicorn not accomplished what it did.

Operation Unicorn was resurrected briefly for the Korean War, and then during the Vietnam War under its current name, Special Task Force Unicorn. Commanded in Vietnam by human officer Kirk Conover, its principle (but by no means only)

members included Raymond Shackelford II, a bullman named Travis Alamo Sam Houston, and a half-siren named Sharon Mangum. STFU performed numerous operations behind enemy lines, often clashing with its opposite Soviet number, a group led by werewolf Nikolai Petrov. Ultimately Petrov got the drop on STFU one day and massacred most of the humans involved; the Task Force was “disbanded” shortly thereafter.

Or so most people thought. In reality it continued, using what few monstrous assets the US could muster (mostly intelligent humanoids seeking a PUFF exemption) for various missions all over the world. It remains in existence today, though even in the highest circles of government and among the most knowledgeable in the Hunting World, few people know anything significant about it.

Agent Stricken

For approximately the past decade and a half, STFU has been led by a mysterious individual known only as “Agent Stricken.” He’s a 6’5”, deathly pale albino male. He’s thin to the point of gauntness, has notably long limbs, and is completely bald. He dresses in finely-tailored men’s clothing and usually wears persimmon-colored sunglasses to conceal his albino eyes. He rarely seems ruffled, perturbed, upset, or dirty, and dislikes showing emotion to his underlings. He has demonstrated superhuman swiftness — dodging a werewolf’s attack, for example — and may have other preternatural abilities, but if so what they are and how strong they are remain among his most closely guarded secrets.

Few people other than Stricken know his background. After a short stint in the military he became a top CIA field operative — a frighteningly capable one with a reputation for being able to complete any mission, no matter what it took. Then

he had the misfortune to encounter some sort of supernatural entity. Whatever it was he won’t say, but after that encounter a once healthy, muscular man was a slender, bald albino. Some people think he made some sort of deal with the Devil for his life, and that may very well be true. (What is unquestionably true is that he’s an evil, ruthless, conniving bastard.)

Now that he knew the truth about the world, Stricken was recruited for STFU. Although he’d changed physically he was still just as skilled as ever, and over time rose through the ranks until he became STFU’s “director.” He keeps a close eye on the Hunting World, and knows a great deal more about monsters, Hunters, and what’s going on out there than most people suspect.

Stricken’s focus for much of the 2010s was Project Nemesis, an effort to create more beings like Franks by creating bodies for Fallen spirits to inhabit. In theory the bodies were built so that Stricken had full control over them, but when he finally unleashed them on Franks, Stricken soon discovered, to his horror, that they had figured out a way to escape his control. At least some of them probably survived that incident, but if so where they’re hiding remains a mystery. Stricken himself, his illegal conduct exposed, is a fugitive from federal justice — but he remains determined to find a way back to the leadership of STFU so he can continue to protect humanity from supernatural threats.

The Flierls

After Agent Stricken’s ouster, the leadership of STFU passed to Beth Flierl, who along with her husband Colonel Greg Flierl had worked for decades as a monster hunter and STFU contractor. She has a far more normal and functional sense of morals, ethics, and duty than Stricken ever had, and treats the monsters under her command with much more sympathy and

compassion — but with just as much if not more vigilance. (People who underestimate Beth do so at their own peril; she may look like an ordinary housewife a lot of the time, but she has more combat experience than most soldiers and has seen and survived more supernatural weirdness than most Hunters.) It remains to be seen what effect the presence of a leader with integrity will have on the Task Force's culture and methodology, but things look brighter than they have for many years.

STFU's Current Assets

"I'm not the bad guy here, Harbinger. I'm just doing my job, just like you had to. I don't get off on dragging monsters into slavery. We're doing important work, and it absolutely has to be done."

—Agent Stricken explains himself to Earl Harbinger in *Monster Hunter Alpha*



STFU is even smaller and more secretive than the MCB, which limits its effectiveness in some respects. It can, however, field squads of extremely well-trained and well-equipped agents. You can use the MCB Agent character sheet for them, but increase their Shooting, Fighting, and Vigor by one dice size.

STFU's primary assets are several monsters, the most important of whom is the werewolf Heather Kerkonen.

HEATHER KERKONEN

Background/History: After returning to her native Michigan to take care of her parents instead of continuing a promising career as a big city cop, Heather Kerkonen was serving as a sheriff's deputy during the Copper Lake incident. She was bitten by one of the Amulet of Koschei-powered werewolves, and as a result became a lycanthrope herself—a most unusual one, perhaps because she had the blood of Aksel Kerkonen (the man who took the Amulet from Koschei and tried to hide it in an abandoned mine) in her veins. Her reddish fur set her apart physically, as did her greater resilience, enhanced self-control, and unusually severe reaction to Baba Yaga-made bullets, and does not suffer the normal werewolf weakness to silver. During the incident she teamed up with Earl Harbinger to defeat Adam Conover. The two of them became attracted to one another, and this attraction blossomed into love.

Harbinger took her to his Alaska cabin to learn more about her abilities, but their pleasant wilderness idyll was interrupted by Agent Stricken of STFU. Kerkonen had yet to earn a PUFF exemption, and he needed a werewolf to work for him for the next two years. She agreed, and is currently approaching the end of her "contract."

Personality/Motivation: Kerkonen has a strongly developed sense of right and wrong, which is what drove her into law enforcement. She'll do what's right, and damn the consequences, even if it means risking her own life. This makes her "job" for STFU hard on her, since she's not always on as firm a moral ground as she'd like (or at least can't know for certain that she is), but she's working her way through it as best she can.

Quote: "I've got this. Go do what you've got to do."

Powers/Tactics: Kerkonen is a werewolf, with all that implies. However, because she was created during the Copper Lake incident under the influence of the Amulet of Koschei, she's more powerful than a typical werewolf — stronger, faster, tougher. She also has greater self-control, which is what makes her so valuable to STFU.

Appearance: In her normal human form, Heather Kerkonen is an attractive woman in her late twenties who's 5'8" tall and weighs 130 pounds. She has short red hair and green eyes (though her eyes sometimes glow gold even when she's not in wolf-woman form). She usually wears casual, everyday clothing now that she's no longer a deputy sheriff. As a female werewolf, Kerkonen looks like a normal werewolf except that her fur is a distinctive reddish color (much like her hair when she's a human).

OTHER STFU MONSTERS

Some of the other supernatural assets currently working for STFU include:

Arthur Bellingham: A wizard caught violating a number of federal laws against the use of magic. Rather than take a bullet in the head from Agent Franks' gun, he agreed to work for STFU. He finds he enjoys the work, since it gives him more opportunity to use his magic than he'd otherwise have (and

to learn things he never could as a "civilian"), so he intends to stay with the Task Force even after he's "paid his debt to society." Beth Flierl doesn't trust him, but has come to find his advice useful on occasion.

Biggest: Biggest is an ogre. He suffers from the mental deficits typical to his species, but understands quite well that doing his job means he'll earn a "shiny" that will protect him from monster hunters. STFU only deploys him in situations where it can get a panel truck close enough to the battlefield to let him fight without the whole world seeing him.

Gregor: A troll trying to earn a PUFF exemption so he can "go public" (relatively speaking) and launch several get-rich-quick schemes he has in mind — none of which will make anyone other than himself rich, of course. He's a practical joker who rarely takes anything seriously and has a wisecrack for every occasion, much to the aggravation of his fellow agents.

James Hawxhurst: Hawxhurst has the ability to speak to, call up, and control ghosts that have lingered in the mortal realm because they died bitter, angry, or in some other profound negative emotional state. Furthermore, he's virtually impossible to kill; destroying him permanently would require reducing most of his body to tiny pieces or ash.

Neldarithorian: Better known simply as "Ned," Neldarithorian is a psychotic elf. He ran away from the Enchanted Forest Trailer Park as a young man and killed several people in Atlanta before being captured by the police. Fortunately for him, one of the officers knew someone in the MCB, who scooped Ned up, and the STFU later took him off the Bureau's hands. Cruel and clever, Ned enjoys killing people with knives or his magic, and sometimes that's just what STFU needs.

Michael Putlack: An American who became possessed by a go dokkaebi while visiting Korea. Like any such victim, he has a lust for blood which he can only sate (temporarily) by killing people. When not in the grips of his personal demon, Putlack is an intelligent, good-hearted fellow who bitterly regrets his situation and would do practically anything to get free of it. Agent Franks injured him so badly during a fight in the tunnels beneath Washington, D.C. — he literally stomped Putlack's skull flat, among other things — that STFU isn't sure he'll ever recover. He remains "on ice" at a secret STFU facility.

James Renfroe: Due to a Fey gift, Renfroe has so-called cyberkinetic abilities. He can mentally interface with computers and other electronic devices to control them, alter the data or images in them, and perform similarly tasks that are incredibly useful to STFU. During the Nemesis incident, Renfroe thought he was about to die. Over the years he'd accumulated an extensive archive of information about STFU and all of its black ops. So he released it all to the Internet, dealing the Task Force a nearly fatal blow. Following that he disappeared.

Natalya Semarovna: A recent immigrant from Russia, Semarovna claims that her mother was a *Baba Yaga*, and the magical powers she's demonstrated seem to back her up. But STFU can't verify many details of her background, so the truth may be very different. On missions she's usually intensely driven and laser-focused; at other times she rarely socializes with the other "assets."

MASTER VILLAINS

LORD MACHADO

Background/History: Lord Machado, the Cursed One, began life as João Silva de Machado, a sixteenth century Portuguese conquistador. Determined to win glory and riches, he led his men further into the Amazon Jungle than any explorers had ever gone before. There he found a fabulous city where Koriniha, High Priestess of the Temple of Neihor, led the people in the worship of that foul god. She believed he was the prophesied "Chosen One" who could master an ancient artifact called the Kumaresh Yar and bring her Old One masters to Earth. Ever eager for power, Machado joined forces with her, and they became lovers as well as allies.

For months Koriniha taught Machado her dark arts and helped him commune with the Old Ones. At last the time came where he felt he was ready to claim his full power as the Chosen One, so they trekked two weeks deeper into the jungle, to an ancient, crumbling temple. Unfortunately one of his soldiers, a huge, superstitious northman named Thrall, interrupted the ritual and killed Koriniha before Machado finished the ceremony.

In his frustration at having lost the power he craved, Machado cursed the Old Ones — and they punished him, transforming him into an immortal thing in human form. But driven by hatred, rage, and lust for power, he survived their tortures. He remained alive for five centuries, patiently awaiting the next time when the stars were right and he could try to master the Kumaresh Yar once more. He briefly teamed with the Nazis, but the time was too soon; Thrall, now the undying Guardian of the artifact, defeated him and hid the artifact.

It did not remain hidden for long. With the help of seven master vampires who served him, Machado found it once more, brought Koriniha back to life, and once more tried to take the power he'd so long coveted. But the new Chosen One, Owen Z. Pitt, defeated and destroyed him. Since then his ax has been in the possession of the MCB.

Personality/Motivation: Lord Machado is hunger for power personified. He wants to gain the power of the Kumaresh Yar so he can rule the world (though taking control of its full power might simply unleash the Old Ones into Earth's reality and leave nothing for him to rule). To achieve this end he sacrificed his humanity and waited five hundred years, only to suffer defeat at the hands of Owen Pitt. In the unlikely event he comes back to "life" somehow, he'll probably continue pursuing mystic power — though now that he knows of Koriniha's betrayal of him (see her character sheet below), he may seek out other sources than the artifact.

Quote: "Those who stand against me will be crushed. I shall kill you for eons. I will wear your skin as my cloak, I will grind your bones into powder, I will drink your blood, and I shall chain your soul to the artifact forever."

Powers/Tactics: Lord Machado possess vast mystic powers as a result of Koriniha's teaching and his transformation at the "hands" of the Old Ones. Some of these powers function more or less like Spells (though they may lack some of the standard Limitations), while others are unique to him.

For example, Lord Machado is telekinetic. He can use this power in a simple fashion (for example, to throw people around, or to tear objects

from their grasp) or in more subtle ways (such as invading someone's body with his mind to disrupt blood vessels and internal organs, leading to a swift, painful death).

Lord Machado's body is composed of slimy, protoplasmic tentacles. This makes it incredibly difficult to hurt him — more difficult than a master vampire, in his own way. In fact, just touching his body is dangerous, for the slime that coats his tentacular mass is acidic. Furthermore, his body's "soft" enough that he can hide small physical objects, like the Kumaresh Yar, inside it (provided they're tough enough to withstand the acid). On the downside for him, anyone can follow the tracks he leaves as he walks.



Just being in Lord Machado's presence is terrifying. Characters who get close to him (10m or less) are prone to fleeing in terror and must make a Spirit Test each round or turn tail and run!

If he needs a more physical weapon, Lord Machado has his ancestral ax, which has been in his family since the days of Alexander the Great. It can cut through nearly anything and never seems to dull. He can use it with surgical precision, cutting only as deeply as he needs to.

Appearance: Lord Machado is a horrifying, ancient entity. His flesh consists of midnight black, slime-coated tentacles that form a humanoid body, but often seem to twitch and move. Black fluids sometimes drip from his body to eat into the ground below like acid. His eyes burn with a reddish-gold fire. He wears a cloak-like red robe, a battered sixteenth-century steel breastplate, and morion helmet. He carries an ancient battle ax, its haft worn smooth with age and frequent use.

Lord Machado

Stats: Agility D10, Smarts D10, Spirit D10, Strength D12, Vigor D12+2

Skills: Academics d8, Athletics d6, Fighting d12, Intimidation d8, Occult d10, Notice d8, Persuasion d8

Pace: 8

Parry: 8

Toughness: 14 (6)

Gear/Attacks: Ancestral Ax (Str+d10, AP 4)

Special:

- Acid (any attacks that result in touching Lord Machado force the attacker to suffer 2d8, AP 2 damage from the acid that coats his body), Telekinetic (Lord Machado can use the Telekinesis Power as in Savage

World Deluxe. He activates it using a Spirit roll instead of a Spellcasting Roll, and always counts as having a Raise when determining how much he can lift.)

- Armor (6)
- Weakness: Holy Water, Fire and mystical wards or protection (magical attacks) allow no chance for an Agaran to Soak against damage.

KORINIHA

Background/History: Koriniha is an ancient, evil being of great power who serves an Old One called Neiher. She's been on Earth since before recorded human history, and has been known by various names to various peoples, many of whom worshipped her as a goddess (see Quote).

In the sixteenth century, Koriniha promulgated the worship of Neiher among a strange, isolated people living in a city in the Amazon Jungle. As related in Lord Machado's history, above, she realized he was the latest incarnation of the Chosen One and tried to give him access to the power of the Kumaresh Yar. But she failed, and Thrall, who would become Guardian of the artifact, slew her body. Lord Machado preserved her bones in the hopes of reincarnating her.

During the DeSoya Caverns incident, he did just that, giving of his own essence to restore her to life. But she betrayed him, using him as a sacrifice in an attempt to open a gateway to let the Old Ones into Earth's dimension. But he fought back, and during the struggle her fleshly form was destroyed once more as it was torn away from her in a mystical vortex. But her spirit lingers on, eager to find physical form once more, patiently awaiting the next time, five hundred years hence, when the stars are right and she can use the

artifact to open the way for the Old Ones.

Personality/Motivation: As an unearthly being who serves the Old Ones with total devotion, Koriniha is pure evil. When she has human form she can fake human emotions if necessary to get what she wants, but she feels no compassion for humans, seeing them only as tools to be used, victims to be exploited — and, ultimately, as food for her masters.

Quote: “I have lived a thousand lives. I have trespassed upon this world since the beginning. I am Unwelcome, Uninvited. Your people knew me as Azgeroth. The tribes that conquered your people thought of me as Hel. ... I am a thing of legend. To your mentor, the ghost, to his people I was Lilith[.] To the nation that carried them away into captivity I was Zaltu, daughter of Tiamat. Temples have been built in my honor across this world, all forgotten now. I am a false god in your pathetic mortal pantheon. You sad apes have made idols of me for ten thousand years.”

Powers/Tactics: Koriniha possesses vast mystic powers. She can use her mind to control other people, create illusions capable of fooling nearly anyone, see and hear things far away (or search for distant minds), or telekinetically attack her foes. She can also change shape into any animal or humanoid form, and steal souls similar to the way oni do. Beyond that, her command of Spells, magic in general, and magical lore is almost unequalled on Earth; if she so chose she could teach a wizard nearly anything (though whether a human body could handle the kind of power she wields is unknown).

Appearance: Koriniha’s human form is that of a dark-skinned, majestically beautiful woman who wears exotic black robes cut to display her attractive figure to best effect while still looking like the vestments of a

pagan priestess. Her hair is long and black; her eyes a smoldering green.

THE KUMARESH YAR

The Kumaresh Yar is an ancient artifact of vast power. It resembles a small, rectangular box made of ivory or stone, though it cannot open. It’s damaged on one side where Susan Shackleford removed a piece of it to use on Owen Pitt. It came into the possession of Martin Hood during the arbmunep incident in New Zealand, but was lost in the chaos of the fight when Julie Shackleford shot it away from Susan Shackleford’s grasp, and hasn’t been seen since.

The artifact is first mentioned by the Midianites and the Assyrians, though records of it throughout history are spotty. Somehow it ended up in South America with Koriniha; it’s possible she always had control or possession of it somehow, and simply moved around with it as she searched for the right Chosen One to master its powers.

According to what information exists, the Kumaresh Yar supposedly grants the one who can control it power over time, space, matter, and energy — but anyone who can’t master it and tries will die. All of this is essentially true, but it’s not the whole story. In truth the artifact is a “link” to the Old Ones — an item that can “tap” their power (when they want it to), but which the Chosen One (or presumably any other being who has the right powers or Spells) can use to open a portal that will let the Old Ones enter Earth’s reality. It is, as Owen Pitt put it, a “tool of invasion.” And when the Old Ones come through, of course, how much power any given human has is largely irrelevant.

Assume that a Chosen One, or any other human who somehow finds a way to access the power of the Kumaresh Yar,

can cast any Spell without the need for any paraphernalia, procedures, or skill. In some cases these Spells may be more powerful than the standard versions cast by wizards. Additionally, the wielder becomes better: stronger; faster; smarter; more charismatic; tougher. It may also grant other powers and abilities as the Old Ones see fit.

MARTIN HOOD

Background/History: Born in Great Britain, Martin Hood was the son of parents who dabbled in the occult, and got killed by one of the horrors they evoked. His grandmother gave their books away to MHI. Hood, who'd already begun instruction in the dark arts under his father, joined MHI as an adult to gain access to them via the MHI archives.

As his knowledge grew, Hood began animating zombies for his MHI team to kill to earn bounties. When his team leader, Carlos Alhambra, found out about this he put a stop to it — but Hood had bigger plans. Working with Raymond Shackelford IV, who shared Hood's belief in the power of magic, he continued his studies. His plan was to learn enough to protect the world from the Old Ones and other threats.

When Alhambra uncovered this scheme, Hood knew his time with MHI was about to come to an end, so he took steps to cover his tracks. Using dark magics, he switched minds with another man, then bewitched that man to let Earl Harbinger out of confinement on a night of the full moon. Everything went exactly as expected: "Martin Hood" was killed, and he was free to continue his studies unmolested. (He later tricked Raymond Shackelford IV into trying to recover Susan Shackelford from death and torching the MHI archives to cover his tracks.)

For years all of Hood's Hunter friends (including Special Agent Dwayne Myers, who left MHI in anger over Hood's "death") thought he was dead. He delved into the darkest of magics and sold his soul to the Dread Overlord, one of the Old Ones, for great arcane power. He would have continued with his plans undiscovered, but during the DeSoya Caverns incident the MCB dropped a nuclear bomb that struck the Dread Overlord and scratched his carapace. Enraged, the Overlord sent word that it wanted Owen Pitt — and Hood set out to please his master.

In the ensuing series of attacks, Hood nearly succeeded in capturing Pitt several times, and launched a full-scale assault on MHI's compound near Cazador, Alabama. Eventually he got his hands on Pitt and transported him to New Zealand, where he raised an arbmunep (the first of many, he claimed) and prepared to take over the world in a "dark new dawn." But MHI and the MCB attacked, disrupting his ceremony. Pitt and Agent Franks used a ward stone to kill the Dread Overlord, and as a result Hood lost all his powers. Pitt then killed him — but his daughter Lucinda remains heir to his lore and dark legacy.

Personality/Motivation: Hood, also known as the Lord of Shadows, is a devoted servant of the Dread Overlord — but with a purpose. He believes magic can be used to help humanity against monsters such as the Old Ones and other Outsider Factions. He thinks that if he takes over the world himself and gives it to the Dread Overlord as an "offering," the Old Ones won't utterly destroy humanity — some small portion of the world's population will survive, which won't happen if the Old Ones come through to Earth themselves. How much of this belief is sincere, and how much is self-delusion to allow him to fulfill his own dark ambitions and desires, is hard to discern.

Quote: “I’m not “selling out” humanity. No, I’m the savior of humanity. If I can conquer this world and present it to them, then we will be spared from their full fury. Those are the conditions of my employment.”

Powers/Tactics: Martin Hood possesses vast mystic power, partly as his result of extensive studies of various grimoires, and partly because he’s sold his soul to the Dread Overlord. For the latter reason, many of his Spells are easier for him to cast than they would be for ordinary wizards (granting him a +1 to casting rolls); some work through his Dread Overlord amulet rather than whatever paraphernalia or objects they normally require. Among other things, he can animate zombies amazingly quickly, even from a distance, and can speak through their mouths if necessary. (This isn’t represented by any specific power on his character sheet; it’s more of a “plot device” sort of thing the GM can use when necessary.)

Hood’s powers encompass magical abilities as well as Spells. The most impressive of these is his shadow form, which functions whenever he’s in darkness or shadow and makes him look larger and more impressive than normal. It allows him to ignore the effect of most attacks — they pass right through his body harmlessly, or his body reforms after they impact it. Shining a light on him, particularly sunlight, negates this power, leaving him as vulnerable to attack as an ordinary human (though he of course has defensive Spells like Bullet Barrier). He often uses his Spells and other powers to negate as much light in the area as possible (for example, by breaking bulbs, shorting out light sources, or invoking mystical shadows). Unfortunately for him, any large, intense fire — such as from a flamethrower — creates enough light to negate his shadow form.

Hood’s magic also makes him much stronger, faster, and tougher than an ordinary

person. When he wishes, his touch can chill, and his icy-cold punches hit with hammering force. He can even grasp and punch when in a shadow form intangible to his foes (though this may tire him out quickly). He no longer has bodily organs, and if he loses a limb he can regenerate it. And if his raw strength’s not enough to get the job done, Hood can create “claws” and “blades” out of pure shadow and use them to slice up his enemies, or can blast them with tendrils of shadow energy.

Hood carries a horrifying “pet” inside him: a creature of the Old Ones, sent to aid him. It’s a partly insectile, partly ichthyoid thing with many tiny red eyes and a circular mouth filled with fishhook teeth. A kind of feeder demon, it can latch onto a person’s head and suck away his willpower, intellect, and memories, leaving him nothing but a vegetable. To release this creature, Hood has to disgorge it (a process which takes several seconds), then “swallow” it back inside him when it’s done its awful work.

Hood owns many cemeteries and crematoria around the world; he uses them to obtain “raw materials” for his necromantic workings. Presumably his daughter Lucinda has taken possession of them after his death.

Appearance: In the body in which he fought MHI, Martin Hood is a skinny, tough-looking, seemingly unremarkable white man in his mid-thirties who’s 5’10” tall. His dark hair is so short his head almost looks shaved, and he often has some grey-brown stubble on his cheeks. He usually wears casual stylish clothes, but on occasions of mystic import he dons an ornate black robe and black cloak and wears a golden pendant with a likeness of the Dread Overlord (a sort of squid monster-looking Elder Thing), and sometimes a matching golden crown as well. He speaks with a British accent.

Martin Hood

Stats: Agility D8, Smarts D12, Spirit D8, Strength D6, Vigor D8

Skills: Driving D6, Fighting D6, Healing D4, Research D10, Occult D10, Notice D6, Persuasion D12, Shooting D8, Spellcasting D12, Swimming D6

Parry: 5

Toughness: 6

Hindrances

- Overconfident
- Arrogant

Edges

- Arcane Background (Spellcasting) – Always Necromantic trappings
- Charismatic

Martin Hood knows a variety of Powers as the GM determines appropriate. The beast inside Hood (as detailed on [page 169](#)) is not a combat Martin can use in battle, and so it's powers are left to the GM.

THE SANCTIFIED CHURCH OF THE TEMPORARY MORTAL CONDITION

The Sanctified Church of the Temporary Mortal Condition, usually referred to simply as “the Condition,” is the Old One-worshipping cult created by Martin Hood after he faked his own death. For most of its existence it's been a relatively small fringe group (though a dangerous one that the MCB and similar organizations have kept as close an eye on as possible). But in the wake of the “five second event” during the DeSoya Caverns incident, during which five seconds of time were reversed, interest in occult matters soared around the world, and the Condition's membership grew at a rapid pace. (Martin Hood, as High Priest of the cult, also made a concerted effort to recruit

monsters, thus bolstering the Condition's supernatural strength.) The Condition developed some serious connections in the worlds of entertainment, business, and politics. Between that and the fact that the Condition isolates its members in “cells” of just a few cultists each, the MCB had a hard time going after them.

Many Condition cultists were directly involved in Martin Hood's attempt to destroy MHI, sacrifice Owen Pitt to the Dread Overlord, and bring about his “dark new dawn.” Unfortunately for them, most were killed or captured when MHI and the MCB attacked the arbmunep summoning ceremony. Since Martin Hood's death, the Condition has largely fractured. Many of its “churches” around the world have been destroyed and their members arrested; in other places members have turned their back on the group or abandoned it to form their own cults. But in other locations the Condition's held on and is now led by Lucinda Hood in the worship of a new god — and many of these remaining members are the most devoted of the faithful, such as soldiers in the Exalted Order (see below).

Most Condition cultists are average people. They don't have any special training or powers, though they know more about the occult (and the Old Ones) than the average person, and more than a few of them have some minor ability to cast Spells. (A few may have Gifts as well.) Without their cult robes and amulets (see below), they look like ordinary folks. They can blend into society like a cancer, waiting for a signal from Lucinda Hood, or a time when the stars are right for performing some dread ritual.

Condition members typically wear gold amulets created by Martin Hood that show a rough, squid-like image of the Dread Overlord. These amulets have two

powers, though cultists aren't told about them. The first is that the amulet strangles the wearer if he tries to reveal information about the Condition, leaving him dead in the space of seconds. The second is that they enable Martin Hood (and after his death, Lucinda Hood) to raise the wearer almost instantly as a zombie. Whether the amulets retain this power after the death of the Dread Overlord is unknown. (The same is true of other resources the cult supposedly has, such as gates to the dimension of the Old Ones, arbmunep seedlings, and the like.) Cult members also use a black squid-like creature with evil red eyes as a symbol (on a patch or book, for example).

The Exalted Order Of The Shadows

Unlike regular Condition members, those who belong to the Exalted Order of the Shadows are the truest of true believers — the leaders, the fanatics willing to fight and die for the cause of the Old Ones. Even worse, most of them have military training. They are, in effect, the Condition's special forces unit, elite soldiers capable of performing the most terrifying and hideous missions if necessary.

For members of the Exalted Order, use a soldier or mercenary profile (like the one in the *Savage Worlds* rulebook.). The Condition's willing to spend the money to equip them with the latest, best gear, though the exact weapons and equipment they carry may vary from place to place around the world.

LUCINDA HOOD

Background/History: Lucinda Hood is the daughter of Martin Hood. Her father began instructing her in black magic from an early age, and she took to it with as much enthusiasm as he. She became his second in command in the Condition, and played a vital part in many of his rituals and other major magical workings.

She first revealed her existence to the world during the summoning of the arbmunep in New Zealand. Unfortunately for her, things went badly wrong — her father was defeated and slain, and the vampiress Susan Shackleford tore her right hand off at the wrist when she took the *Kumaresh Yar* away from her.



After creating a steel replacement hand for herself with her magic, Lucinda next became involved in Adam Conover's plan to have werewolves conquer humanity (see his character sheet below) — in fact, her magic was crucial to its success. Again she fell afoul of Hunters and other heroic people and the scheme unraveled, but she escaped unscathed.

Since then her whereabouts and activities remain unknown. It's thought she's trying to reinvigorate the Condition under her own leadership (and dedicated to the worship of their new god, Asag), but if so she's going about it slowly and cautiously.

Personality/Motivation: The extent to which Lucinda Hood shares her father's belief in taking over the world to "give" to the Old Ones in the hopes they'll be merciful is unknown, though she doesn't share his fanaticism enough to sell her soul to them in exchange for power. As far as anyone can tell, she pursues dark magic for the love of it — and out of desire for the personal power that mastery over magic can bring.

Lucinda's known for her fierce temper and biting tongue. Her minions and underlings do their best to stay on her good side, lest they fall victim to her fury.

Quote: "Those who mock shall mourn, unbeliever! ... Your fate is sealed. Your time is done!"

Powers/Tactics: Lucinda Hood isn't nearly as powerful a necromancer as her father was — yet — partly because she hasn't studied as long, partly because she hasn't sold her soul. But for her age she's remarkably knowledgeable and mystically strong. She's also found a new god to worship, one recently awakened from eons-long slumber who's much more interested in humanity and its doings than the Old Ones ever have been.

Lucinda's not much of a combatant. Her metal hand allows her to punch with more devastating effect than she could with a fleshly hand, but a martial artist or experienced brawler can still do better than she can. Furthermore, she has no special defenses against bullets, knives, claws, and similar deadly things. She can temporarily obtain some via a spell, but compared to her father Martin, Lord Machado, or Susan Shackleford (all of whom are phenomenally difficult to hurt), she's extremely vulnerable. As a result she strongly prefers to work behind the scenes. She doesn't want to ever come face to face with any gun-toting Hunters.

Lucinda always carries at least one Portal Rope with her, if not two or three, in case she needs to make a quick escape. She also likes to have at least two flesh golems or burrowers as her bodyguards, if she can do so without causing a stir.

Appearance: Lucinda Hood is an attractive white woman of British ancestry in her early twenties. She's 5'6" tall and has shoulder-length blonde hair. Her green eyes gleam with intelligence and malice. She usually wears stylish normal clothes, but when she expects to use her ritual magic often puts on intricately-decorated black robes, a golden pendant with a likeness of the Dread Overlord (a sort of squid monster-looking Elder Thing), and sometimes a matching golden crown as well. After her right hand was torn off by Susan Shackleford she replaced it with a steel one that she's made as flexible and dexterous as flesh with her magic. She speaks with a mild British accent.

Lucinda Hood

Stats: Agility D8, Smarts D10, Spirit D8, Strength D6, Vigor D6

Skills: Athletics D8, Driving D6, Fighting D6, Healing D4, Research D10, Occult D8, Notice D6, Persuasion D12, Shooting D8, Spellcasting D10

Parry:5

Toughness: 5

Hindrances

- Overconfident
- Arrogant

Edges

- Arcane Background (Spellcasting) – Always Necromantic trappings
- Attractive
- Very Attractive
- Charismatic

Lucinda Hood generally knows Zombie, and a handful of other Powers (generally defensive powers). Her metal hand does Str+d8 damage, and she always carries a Portal Rope (which functions as a single, automatic use of the Teleport power.)

ADAM CONOVER, THE ALPHA

Background/History: Adam Conover, the Alpha, the greatest of all modern werewolves, is the son of Kirk Conover (commander of STFU in Vietnam) and the half-siren Sharon Mangum. She was bitten by Earl Harbinger while pregnant with Adam. Although as a half-siren she couldn't contract lycanthropy, Adam did. Being one-quarter divine and a werewolf made him an immensely powerful lycanthrope — and that power led him to despise humanity as weak. He came to believe that werewolves should rule humans, as humans rule cattle.

As an adult he went to work for STFU and excelled, becoming one of Agent Stricken's confidants and most reliable operatives. It was during this time that he learned of the fabled Amulet of Koschei, which the earliest humans used to create the first werewolf. It contained the power to make him ruler of all werewolves and an unstoppable force of destruction. He began a long and frustrating search for it...

...and eventually discovered it had been taken from Europe to Copper Lake, Michigan. With the help of Lucinda Hood, he devised a plan to retrieve it and begin his attack on humanity (which included having packs of werewolves in most major US cities, ready and waiting for his call). The plan also required him to lure the powerful werewolves Earl Harbinger and Nikolai Petrov to Copper Lake, which he did with some unwitting help from his father. During what's become known as "the Copper Lake incident," Conover unleashed werewolves and vulkodlak on the town and stole Earl Harbinger's lycanthropy. Despite this, Harbinger, together with Petrov, Heather Kerkonen, and some other humans, found a way to defeat him (and in the process Harbinger was once again re-infected). The Alpha is now dead and the Amulet of Koschei destroyed, so in theory his threat has ended forever — but in the magical world of MHI, few such statements can be made with any certainty.

Personality/Motivation: The Alpha is a cold, cruel force of nature. He sees himself as the ultimate apex predator, and as such is entitled to rule (and terrorize) lesser beings such as humans. He envisions a world where werewolves run free, going where they will and hunting humans without repercussions — and where all werewolves pay him homage as the greatest of their kind.

Despite being the ultimate werewolf, the Alpha doesn't usually give in to instinct, rage, or passion. He's a logical man, a planner and schemer who prefers to analyze his moves before he makes them rather than doing something reckless.

Quote: "Let the great hunt begin."

Powers/Tactics: Adam Conover is a werewolf. He's actually the Alpha werewolf, the most powerful one ever to

exist since the species was created by dark, ancient magics before human history. He's stronger, faster, and tougher than a typical werewolf (or even Earl Harbinger).

The Alpha's ability to regenerate damage is significantly better than that of a normal werewolf, or even a master vampire.

After the Alpha's death, the packs he had waiting in various major cities went the way of most werewolf packs: they quickly broke apart due to their members' quarrels. Some few may have remained intact, though, and could pose a significant threat to humanity at any time. Similarly, in many places Conover hid werewolf-slain corpses that could be turned into *vulkodlak*; they may remain a threat as well.

Appearance: In his human form, Adam Conover is an unremarkable-looking white male in his late twenties. In his Alpha form he's the biggest, fiercest-looking werewolf in the world. He's nearly nine feet tall (and can grow bigger and taller), his fur is pitch black, and his eyes glow like molten gold.

Adam Conover

Use the Werewolf stats of Earl Harbinger, but with the following changes as per the Amulet of Koschei below.

THE AMULET OF KOSCHEI

A flat silver pendant marked with the image of a three-fingered werewolf hand, the Amulet of Koschei was involved in the creation of all werewolves, and still holds great power over them. When it's in use (or being openly worn), werewolves can sense its presence within five miles; often its pull on them is so strong that they transform

immediately. They instinctively respond to a werewolf who possesses it as if he were a leader. If that's not enough, its possessor can exert a powerful mental control over any werewolf. He can also summon werewolves from up to 100 miles away (though they must get to him under their own power).

Even worse, the Amulet empowers werewolves. Those created while the Amulet is in effect or being used don't suffer from the standard vulnerability to silver that lycanthropes typically have. It also increases their rapid healing powers significantly. Lastly, it can make a werewolf even bigger and tougher when worn. (increase their Strength and Vigor by one dice step.)

Additionally, the Amulet is a vital component in some Spells. It's the only known method that can remove the curse of lycanthropy from a person. It's also the only currently known way to create *vulkodlak* (zombie-werewolves, see [page 230](#)). It may have other powers and capabilities not yet known.

All these powers come at a price, though. The Amulet burns life force to power itself, so using it too much can leave someone weak, emaciated, and near death. In game terms, after every use, the target must make a Vigor Test. If they fail, they gain a level of fatigue and one wound. Furthermore, some of the Amulet's powers require the sacrifice of werewolf lives, or require energy drained from nearby werewolves (the faster healing and enhanced strength both do this, for example).

The Amulet of Koschei was generally thought to be indestructible, but it melted to nothingness during the Copper Lake incident. As far as anyone knows there's no way to re-create it or make a new one, nor are there any others like it. But who can say what may happen in a world where magic exists, and the Beasts are watching humanity ever more closely....

SUSAN SHACKLEFORD

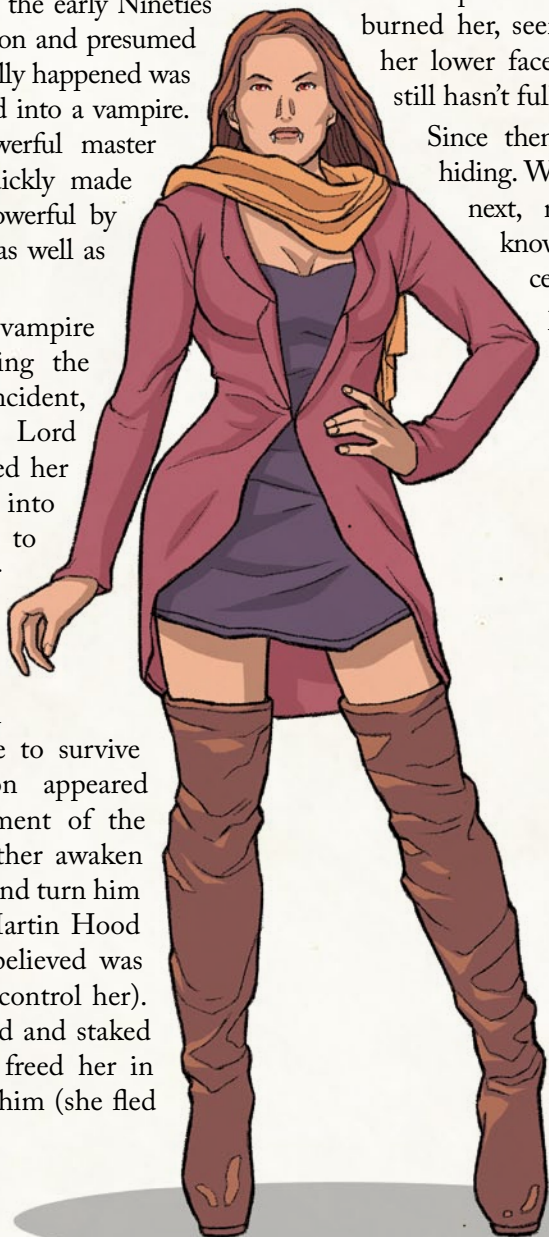
Background/History: Susan Shackleford (nee Miner) became an MHI Hunter in her early twenties after surviving a nasty encounter with a skinwalker. She met Raymond Shackleford IV on the job; they fell in love, married, and had three children, Julie, Ray, and Nate.

During a mission in the early Nineties Susan was lost in action and presumed dead. What had actually happened was that she'd been turned into a vampire. Her sire was a powerful master vampire, and she quickly made herself even more powerful by feeding on monsters as well as humans.

Susan's existence as a vampire became known during the DeSoya Caverns incident, when she served Lord Machado, transformed her now-insane husband into a vampire, and tried to turn her daughter Julie into a bloodsucker as well. She was the only master vampire in Machado's entourage to survive his plan. She soon appeared again, using a fragment of the *Kumaresh Yar* to further awaken Owen Pitt's powers and turn him and MHI against Martin Hood (whom she rightly believed was powerful enough to control her). Hood briefly defeated and staked her, but Owen Pitt freed her in the hope she'd fight him (she fled instead).

During Hood's summoning of the arbmunep in New Zealand, she showed up once more, attempting and failing to get the entire *Kumaresh Yar* for herself (and in the process tearing off Lucinda Hood's right hand). She also once again tried to transform her daughter into a vampire, but Julie's blood, now infused with the power of the Guardian, burned her, searing the flesh off her lower face so badly that it still hasn't fully healed.

Since then Susan's been in hiding. What she's planning next, no one but her knows — but it's for certain it won't be pleasant.



Personality/Motivation: Since becoming a vampire, Susan's been thoroughly selfish and evil. She cares only about herself and her goals and isn't worried about who she harms or kills with her schemes. She claims to have killed over ten thousand people in her pursuit of power, and it's entirely possible she's not lying.

Susan particularly wants to turn her daughter Julie into a vampire. As long as Julie possesses the powers of the Guardian that seems to be impossible. When it comes right down to it, though, she'll kill Julie or Nate if she has to and not feel a twinge of regret.

Quote: "I can do things you can't even imagine. I can feel things that would stop your heart if you experienced them. I have eternal youth and beauty. Come with me..."

Powers/Tactics: Despite her relatively young age, Susan has attained master vampire status and powers — in fact, she may be the most powerful master vampire on Earth at present. She's even stronger, faster, and tougher than most vampires, and backing up all that physical might is a devilishly clever brain and iron willpower.

As a master vampire, Susan can assume mist form. For game purposes she can also use this power to squeeze through small spaces (such as jail cell bars) by distorting her human form unnaturally, instead of turning into a mist.

Appearance: Susan Shackleford looks virtually the same as her daughter Julie — pale-skinned, achingly beautiful, 5'9" tall, black hair that falls slightly past her shoulder, brown eyes — though her greater age/maturity and her evil vampire nature can be seen in her features. When she chooses to, she can make her eyeteeth grow into long, needle-sharp fangs for puncturing throats and drinking blood. She wears stylish women's clothing.

Susan's lower jaw still shows scars from where Julie's Guardian blood burned her. The flesh will heal in full eventually, restoring her good looks, but for now she often wears scarves to hide it.

Susan Shackleford

Use the Master Vampire stats on [page 229](#), but with the Attractive and Very Attractive Edges applied.

ASAG

Background/History: The demonic entity known as Asag ("Disorder"), He Who Ends All Things, is one of the oldest beings in existence — and one of the most evil. A Sumerian poem refers to him as a demon whose mere presence causes fish to be boiled alive in the rivers. He slept for thousands of years, but when Owen Pitt briefly broke Time during the Lord Machado incident, he awakened.

Personality/Motivation: Asag is a sly, cunning being who enjoys using lies, deception, and trickery to manipulate his enemies (or anyone else for that matter). Even when he could easily accomplish what he wants with his own raw power (which is most of the time), he enjoys playing the puppetmaster, or the ambusher, so much that he takes the path of treachery instead.

Asag's ultimate goal isn't to rule humanity or destroy the world. It's to destroy all rules, all laws, all order, until chaos and entropy rule over everything. In his own words, "I would disband all cohesion."

Quote: "I don't like using brute force. I'm more of a facilitator."

Powers/Tactics: Asag's power approaches that of a god (and may even exceed some gods'). He can do virtually anything he wants, but like many malevolent creatures he doesn't usually act directly at first. He'd rather manipulate his enemies, toying with them like a cat with a mouse, and this may provide time to think of a way to stop him, or an opportunity to strike back at him.

A host of creatures known collectively as the Asakku serve Asag. They come in a variety of forms, but the most common is a white-skinned humanoid that tears humans apart to feed on the pieces. (Their skin is almost translucent, making them disturbing to look at close up.) Some are tall, others dwarf-like; some are skeletally thin, others disturbingly plump; they have fang-like teeth and claw-like nails (and can also wield weapons, including firearms); their eyes are solid black; they often have deformities or other unusual features, such as multiple sets of arms or eyes; some wear ragged clothes, others go naked. (To represent the Asakku, use the character sheet for an Orc or a Fast Zombie, adding extra arms or whatever else you need for a particular one.) Asag also commands a vast host of monsters, demons, and other horrors all over the world, collectively known as the Children of the Mountain.

Appearance: Asag can assume whatever shape or appearance he likes. When he appeared to Owen Pitt in the Nightmare Realm, he looked like deceased Hunter Jason Lococo, but in place of Lococo's missing eye there was a black hole, in which Pitt could see stars, with black veins spreading out from it.



CHAPTER 11:

MONSTERS

Agaran

Ecology: An agaran, also called a titeres de sombra (“shadow puppet”), is a kind of demonic creature that consumes human flesh. Humans know virtually nothing about their biology or ecology beyond that.

Agarans are code 41638-B in PUFF documentation.

Personality/Motivation: Evil, predacious, and cruel. Whether they have their own language or civilization remains unknown, but presumably they live in some strange hell until summoned to the mortal realm by a necromancer.

Powers/Tactics: Agarans are strong, tough enough to ignore bullets and most other conventional attacks, and extremely fast. Holy water and objects affect them, as do spells designed to harm or ward against demonic entities. You can also hurt them with fire.

Appearance: An agaran has been described as “a black nightmare of webs and teeth” and as “a rolling puddle of black.” When it’s possible to see one clearly, it resembles a sort of terrestrial squid, or perhaps squid-spider.

Attributes: Agility d10, Smarts d6, Spirit d6, Strength d10, Vigor d12

Skills: Athletics d6, Fighting d8, Intimidation d8, Notice d4.

Pace: 8

Parry: 6

Toughness: 8

Gear/Attacks: None.

Special:

- **Weakness:** Holy Water, Fire and mystical wards or protection (magical attacks) allow no chance for an Agaran to Soak against damage.

Akkadian Sand Demon

Ecology: Akkadian sand demons come from another dimension — a hell formed by the ancient mystical/religious beliefs of various Middle Eastern civilizations over the millennia. To date they’ve never been encountered outside of the Middle East, particularly in the Mesopotamia region.

Personality/Motivation: Like the demons of Western mysticism (see Demons, below), Akkadian sand demons are thoroughly evil and wicked. There’s nothing they won’t do to spread chaos and destruction, or cause people harm.

Powers/Tactics: Sand demons have various mystical powers (Spells) that vary from individual to individual. Their favorite powers seem to be spreading disease and causing fierce sandstorms. If their magic’s not enough to kill an opponent, they have sharp claws and a sting that injects the victim with deadly poison.

Attributes: Agility d8, Smarts d8, Spirit d6, Strength d8, Vigor d8

Skills: Academics d8, Fighting d8, Intimidation d8, Notice d4, Occult d4, Persuasion d6, Spellcasting d10.

Pace: 6

Parry: 6

Toughness: 6

Gear/Attacks: Claws (Str+d6, REACH 3), Parry +1), Poison Stinger (Str+d4, Poisonous Touch 1).

Special:

- Each Akkadian Sand Demon knows 1d3 Powers that can be cast as though the Sand Demon has Arcane Background (Magic).

Akkadian Sand Beast

Ecology: Akkadian sand beasts are strange, possibly demonic or Fey, beings who seem to be native to the Middle East and North Africa. Little is known about their customs or habits, but they do seem to have a taste for human flesh.

Personality/Motivation: Sand beasts are sentient, and thus doubly dangerous. How they act with others of their kind is unknown, but they definitely seem inimical toward humans.

Powers/Tactics: Akkadian sand beasts are creatures of ancient Near Eastern myth, or possibly creations of the Fey, and thus possess magical powers. These powers differ from sand beast to sand beast, except for the fact that any sand beast can cause arcs of lightning to surround his body and burn anyone who touches him.

Sand beasts can fly faster than most humans can run, so if confronted with force they can't overcome, they'll usually flee through the air.

Appearance: An Akkadian sand beast looks like an enormous winged bull with a man's head. The bull's hair is storm cloud grey, and its wings are a slightly lighter shade of grey. The head has a storm grey, square-cut beard and wears a tall, golden crown.

Attributes: Agility d8, Smarts d8, Spirit d6, Strength d8, Vigor d8

Skills: Academics d8, Fighting d8, Intimidation d8, Notice d4, Occult d4, Persuasion d6.

Pace: 8

Parry: 6

Toughness: 6

Gear/Attacks: Claws (Str+d8)

Special:

- **Lightning Arcs:** Each Sand Beast can summon arcs of lightning to surround them. If struck by a melee attack, these arcs deal 2d6 damage to the attacker immediately.
- **Flight:** Akkadian Sand Beasts fly at a Pace of 12"

Akkadian Storm Beast

Like the Akkadian Sand Demon, the origins of the Akkadian Storm Beast are nebulous at best, although both creatures have ties to the ancient Akkadian Empire, whose few historical records indicate that they plagued the region around the Middle East and North Africa during that civilization's reign. They seem to lack the sadistic cruelty of the demons, hence their differing name, but they do seem rather hostile toward humans. They are sapient creatures, making their motivations difficult to discern, but any attempt at communication with the creatures has resulted in being ignored as the creature departs, which is a best-case scenario, or being attacked outright, which seems much more likely. Their recent resurgence in activity has caused numerous potential exposure incidents when they have encountered American troops operating in the Middle East, something that the MCB has dealt with so frequently that a small, four-man task force has been permanently assigned to the region to deal with the fallout from these encounters, which at present are taking place roughly four to five times per year.

Storm beasts are powerful beings physically, but prefer to avoid direct, physical confrontation with others. This is not an issue for them, fortunately

GIANT MUTANT MONSTERS (KAIJU)

Japan is sometimes plagued by a different sort of gigantic monster: enormous, magical beasts referred to as *kaiju*. There's no record of kaiju ever attacking another country, but it's certainly possible.

Typically a kaiju looks like a gargantuan version of some existing creature or dinosaur (such as a toad, a tyrannosaur, a bat, or a bipedal triceratops). They often have strange magical powers. For example, some of them can breathe fire, fly, emit devastating sonic shrieks, cause people to experience intense mental pain, or the like. And all of them are immensely strong and tough.

Japanese Hunters have developed many techniques for fighting these colossal monsters, but ultimately each one is different and requires some creative tactical thinking. Besides using military-grade heavy weapons (including things like tanks and jetfighters), Hunters have lured them into high-tension electrical lines, tripped them, caused them to sink in muddy or swampy ground, and collapsed buildings on them.



(unfortunately for literally everyone else), because they possess significant magical powers that vary from one individual to another, making prediction of their true capabilities difficult at best. It does seem to be the case that they universally possess weather-based abilities, however. More specifically, they can project lightning from themselves toward an opponent, or

summon it from nearby clouds. They can also surround themselves with an aura of electricity that causes significant damage to anyone who attempts to touch the storm beast. They also possess the capability for flight, and can do so at high speeds, enough to outrun even the fastest human and some slow-moving vehicles.

Akkadian Storm Beasts have a peculiar appearance, with some hunters having referred to them as the anti-minotaurs; this is likely because they have the body of a large, powerful bull with a human head, as well as large wings. They appear exclusively male, with thick, carefully sculpted beards and large, golden crowns atop their heads. Their entire bodies are in shades of grey, like storm clouds, except for the flesh of their head, which is normal skin tones. Differentiating between two different storm beasts can be difficult unless they are side by side, because most have very little variation in their appearance.

Attributes: Agility d8, Smarts d8, Spirit d6, Strength d10, Vigor d10

Skills: Academics d8, Fighting d8, Intimidation d8, Notice d4, Occult d8 Persuasion d6, Spellcasting d12.

Pace: 7

Parry: 6

Toughness: 7

Gear/Attacks: Claws (Str+d8)

Special:

- **Spells:** A Storm Beast know 2d3+1 Spells. and all their spells have Elemental or Weather related Trappings. A Storm Beast always knows Bolt.
- **Arcane Background (Magic):** An Akkadian storm beast has 15 Power Points and knows Bolt+2d3 powers.
- **Flight:** Akkadian Storm Beasts fly at a pace of 24"

Al (Demon)

Ecology: An al is a demonic being native to parts of the Middle East and central Asia (most commonly in the region from Armenia to Iran). They attack women, especially pregnant ones, and children; they eat the children, and will even rip fetuses out of a woman's womb to consume.

Als live underground, often using their claws to dig out vast subterranean warrens. They only come out to the surface during the night, though it's unclear whether they simply dislike sunlight (if for no other reason than it blinds their sensitive eyes) or suffer harm when exposed to it.

Personality/Motivation: Als are evil, cruel, and predacious. They regard humans as food.

Powers/Tactics: An al fights with its claws and fangs, which are hard as steel and sharp as razors.

Als can use their claws to burrow underground at tremendous speed. Attacking from below allows them to surprise most targets. They can climb so well they can even crawl across ceilings. Their eyes let them see without difficulty underground or in pitch-black darkness, but they can't stand even moderately bright light, and typically flee from it. (Flashbang grenades are highly effective against them.) They can twist their heads all the way around to look behind themselves.

Appearance: An al looks like a humanoid female, but with gray, leathery skin, shiny red eyes, black, matted, rope-like hair, unnaturally wide mouths filled with white fangs, and yellowish claws on their hands and feet. Some legends attribute other characteristics to them, such as porcine features or fur, but these seem to be mistakes or exaggerations.

Attributes: Agility d8, Smarts d6, Spirit d6, Strength d6, Vigor d6

Skills: Fighting d6, Intimidation d8, Occult

d8, Notice d4, Persuasion d6, Spellcasting d12

Pace: 6

Parry: 5

Toughness: 6

Gear/Attacks: Claws (Str+d6), Fangs (Str + d4)

Special:

- **Burrow 6"**
- **Wall-Walker**
- **Infravision**
- **Weakness:** Sunlight imposes a -2 on all rolls an al undertakes. Sudden bright light (like a Flashbang) will immediately cause an al to be Shaken.

Alp (Nightmare Feeder)

Ecology: An alp, or nightmare feeder, is an extradimensional creature that lives in a sort of "nightmare" dimension that only barely connects with Earth's own. At times alps find their way through to Earth's reality, where they use their powers to cause people to suffer nightmares, then feed on the terror their victims experience.

Personality/Motivation: Although they're devilishly clever, alps aren't truly sentient. They're more like animals, acting on instinct to feed off the fear they inspire in others.

Powers/Tactics: An alp desires to feed on fear, and to that end it tries to "bond" itself to a sleeping victim and cause that victim to suffer nightmares. It prefers to attack children, who are easier to manipulate, but will attack an adult if necessary.

Campaign Use: Alps aren't PUFF eligible because they have no corporeal body to turn in.

Appearance: An alp is invisible and has no corporeal form. If a character could find a way to "see" it, it would look like a formless, floating protoplasmic sort of blob.

Arbmunep

Ecology: An arbmunep is a horrifying extradimensional thing, a creation/servant of the Old Ones sent to this world. They exist as “seeds” hidden under the ground, awaiting the proper Spell or command to come to life. When they receive that command, they instantly grow to enormous height and threaten everything around them.

An arbmunep “eats” light. Its bark glows phosphorescently as it “feeds.” The longer it exists, the greater the gloom that spreads around it (see below). However, too much light at once (such as direct daytime sunlight) can cause it pain.

According to Martin Hood, there are hundreds of arbmunep seeds around the world. If this is true, fortunately no one’s discovered a way to “activate” any of them.

Personality/Motivation: Unknown/uncertain. As far as anyone can tell an arbmunep exists solely to wreak havoc, spread destruction, and inspire terror.

Powers/Tactics: The arbmunep’s power to eat light is defined initially as the Obscure Power since it can rarely consume all the light in an area at once (especially not during the daytime). At the GM’s option, the longer an arbmunep exists, the greater this power spreads, and the worse it gets.

An arbmunep has so many branches it can attack many different targets.

An arbmunep can pull its roots out of the ground and “walk.” It moves the roots slowly, but each “step” is so large that it can cover a lot of ground relatively quickly.

If killed, or cut off from the power of its Old One masters, an arbmunep transforms into a grey, stone-like substance.

Appearance: An arbmunep is a demonic thing that resembles a gargantuan, twisted tree with a trunk a hundred yards wide and a crown 300 meters high, though it also has a

notably insectile look to it in some respects (particularly the shape and movement of the countless branches, which have joints like insects’ legs). Sometimes membranes like insects’ wings stretch between the branches, or dangle from them like leaves. Its skin/bark is a sickly, mottled green, and it twitches and pulses with unnatural life.

Of course, since only one arbmunep has ever been seen, it’s possible others have different dimensions, coloration, or features, just like humans vary widely among their type.

Attributes: Agility d4, Smarts d4, Spirit d6, Strength d6, Vigor d12+4

Skills: Fighting d10.

Pace: 2

Parry: 7

Toughness: 12

Gear/Attacks: Branches (Str+d6)

Special:

- **Branches:** An Arbmunep can make up to 6 attacks on it’s turn, with no multi-action penalty.
- **Infravision**
- **Size (4):** Grants +1 Wound and +1 Reach
- **Slow:** An arbmunep has the Slow (Minor) Disadvantage.
- **Weakness:** Direct sunlight causes the Arbmunep to become Shaken.

Aswang

Ecology: An aswang is a sort of viscera-eating Filipino ghou. Some have made their way to the US or other countries by hiding in shipping containers, but for the most part they’re only found in the Philippines.

An aswang can be either male or female, though most are women. A person becomes an aswang either voluntarily (by performing certain dark magic rituals) or involuntarily (when an aswang spits in one’s food, or when

an old, dying aswang passes his monstrous essence on to another person by breathing into his mouth). Regardless of how it's created, an aswang lives a normal life during the day, seeming to be just another person. At night he transforms into his monstrous form and goes out to hunt.

A person can keep an aswang away through a variety of methods. Blessed palms (from Palm Sunday), displays of the crucifix, holy water, and burning incense all ward off the aswang. Repeating the *oracion*, a jumbled mix of Latin phrases and words, in the house of the ill wards off the attacks of an aswang. A wide variety of fruits, leaves, seeds, spices, and woods keep an aswang away, including the *barwang* (allium sativum), the lemon, *talampunay* (datura metel) seeds, and the leaves of the *gabi-gabi* (bootia reniflora) plant. In addition, the smell of chicken feathers, leather, rubber, and talampunay leaves drives the aswang away. One can also keep a fire burning under one's house or at a window, or place fish hooks and sharp knives in the floor of the house (to catch or cut any aswang who crawls under the house). Finally, burning the shavings of cattle horns, various leaves, or garlic keeps an aswang away.

Personality/Motivation: Varies from individual to individual. Most, if not all, aswang have a strong hunger for fresh meat and blood, and seek them out whenever possible. He carefully plans his trips before leaving home to hunt.

Powers/Tactics: The powers ascribed to the aswang are virtually endless, so monster hunters may encounter types that defy current knowledge about the species. But typically the aswang divides its body into two halves. He leaves the lower half hidden while the upper half flies in search of prey using wings that sprout from its back or arms (or sometimes its hair forms wings). The aswang's inner organs usually dangle from the torso. It lands on the roof of a

house and sucks out the liver and entrails of newborn children. The body of an aswang who's recently fed becomes so swollen with blood as to look eight months pregnant.

Appearance: An aswang is a sort of Filipino witch or ghoul. It looks like a normal human during the day, although it can be detected by the lack of a notch (philtrum) in the upper lip under the nose, or by having a "transparent" throat. A viscera sucker may have an all-black body. Due to their nocturnal activities, some aswang are sickly-looking, with thin bodies, pale skin, and tired faces. At night, however, they're strong and healthy. In any case, an aswang dresses like any other person during the day.

Attributes: Agility d4, Smarts d4, Spirit d6, Strength d6, Vigor d8

Skills: Fighting d8, Stealth d6

Pace: 6

Parry: 6

Toughness: 6

Gear/Attacks: Fangs (Str +d4)

Special:

- **Blood drain:** Every Wound an aswang inflicts grants it a bennie and heals it 1 wound.
- **Darkvision:** An aswang can function in the dark with no difficulties and suffers no penalties.
- **Flight:** An aswang has can fly at a pace of 6".

Baba Yaga

Ecology: A *Baba Yaga* is a witch-like Fey found primarily in Russia, but sometimes in other parts of northern Europe as well (it's possible some may exist among communities of immigrants from those places, but none have been encountered in the United States... yet). They seem to prefer to live in the wilderness and on the outskirts of human civilization — but like most Fey they're extremely secretive, so little is known about them for certain.

Personality/Motivation: Baba Yagas' personalities vary. The kindest of them can best be described as irascible, grumpy, hard to please, and easy to upset — but sometimes they help mortals in need, if the mood takes them. The worst are cruel, mischievous, evil, and even enjoy the taste of human flesh.

Powers/Tactics: A Baba Yaga possesses significant magical powers. In addition to being able to cast Spells, she can turn invisible or change shape into various animals native to northern Europe and Russia. She also knows a great deal about magic and monsters in general, and may be willing to share her knowledge with those who help her in some way. On the other hand, if one encounters an evil or dangerous Baba Yaga, they're vulnerable to silver weapons.

Appearance: A Baba Yaga looks like an ugly, wizened female hag dressed in ragged grey and brown clothing, often leaning on a staff or walking stick. Her eyes gleam with intelligence and wisdom, and often malice as well.

Attributes: Agility d4, Smarts d8, Spirit d6, Strength d6, Vigor d8

Skills: Fighting d4, Intimidation d6, Notice d8, Persuasion d6, Spellcasting, d10, Stealth d6

Pace: 4

Parry: 4

Toughness: 6

Gear/Attacks: Staff (Str+d6), other Gear/Attacks as determined by the GM.

Special:

- **Spells:** A Baba Yaga knows any spells that are appropriate for it, but all Baba Yagas know Invisibility & Shapechange.
- **Weakness:** A Baba Yaga cannot Soak damage from Silver weapons.

Banshee

Ecology: The banshee ("faerie woman" or "woman of the mound") has no known ecology; it appears at specific times for specific reasons, and otherwise remains hidden. She's found primarily in the British Isles, though it's possible some may have "emigrated" to other countries with their families.

Personality/Motivation: A banshee appears to warn of an impending death (or sometimes other disaster) in the family. Traditionally only old, notable Irish or Scottish families receive this treatment, and in some cases know their banshees by name, but Hunters could also encounter a banshee "haunting" nearly any family. Typically a banshee only warns of the deaths of people who are powerful, holy, or otherwise particularly important.

Powers/Tactics: The banshee appears only at night, usually by the water near the house of the person who's going to die. Some banshees are bolder, leaving their customary place by the waters to sit in the courtyard of a castle where the soon-to-be-deceased person lives, or to stick their heads in the windows of his house. It begins a dreadful wailing (or keening) that disturbs, even terrifies, anyone who hears it. If confronted in any way, it vanishes.

Appearance: This often dangerous Fey usually takes the form of an old, emaciated woman dressed in robes of green or grey (often a grey cloak over a green gown), or more rarely black. She weeps constantly, which makes her eyes red, particularly in contrast with her pallid skin. Sometimes her stringy hair (red or grey) can be seen, other times a hood covers her head. Her clothes often look wet. She appears by a body of water, sometimes washing the grave-clothes of the person who's about to die while she wails her mournful lament.

Blood Fiend

Ecology: Blood fiends are found all around the world, though they're most common in southern and eastern Asia and in the tropics. As the name implies, they feed on the blood of other beings. They prefer human blood, but can make do with animal blood if nothing else is available.

Although they're usually solitary, in areas with lots of humans to prey on blood fiends sometimes form "packs" or "clans" of up to a dozen individuals. Packs and individuals alike usually lair in underground areas (such as sewers) or in abandoned/ruined buildings.

Personality/Motivation: Blood fiends are predatory and cruel. Unlike some monsters they don't just look upon humans as prey; there's a demonic side to them that makes them malicious. They actively enjoy causing harm, and will often kill humans for fun even when they're not hungry.

Powers/Tactics: A blood fiend seeks to drink human blood. It does this through tiny "mouths" in the palm of its hands that are normally unseen (they look like ordinary folds in the skin of the hand). Once a victim is injured and bleeding — whether by the blood fiend's own sharp claws and teeth, or something else — the fiend clamps its hand over the wound and

begins to suck out the victim's blood at a rapid pace. In just a few seconds it can drain an adult human dry.

Blood fiends are essentially cowards. If confronted with any sort of force or resistance they usually flee to look for easier prey. There's always another, less vigilant, human victim awaiting them.

Appearance: Blood fiends are wretched, twisted, demonic-looking beings about 5'0" tall. Their skin is usually tinged red, and after they've gorged on blood it becomes noticeably redder.

Attributes: Agility d6, Smarts d6, Spirit d4, Strength d8, Vigor d8

Skills: Fighting d6, Stealth d6

Pace: 6

Parry: 5

Toughness: 6

Gear/Attacks: Claws (Str+d4), Bite (Str+d4)

Special:

- **Bloodrain:** Every Wound a Blood Fiend inflicts heals it 1 wound.
- **Feeding Hands:** The Blood Fiend may spend its action to inflict an automatic Wound on any foe it has grappled.

Burrowers

Ecology: Burrowers are undead creatures made by the necromancers, or by the Old Ones whom they serve.

Personality/Motivation: A burrower has only slightly more mental capacity than a zombie. It can think for itself a little and respond to outside stimuli (such as attackers), but generally it simply follows orders.

Powers/Tactics: A burrower is tall, extremely strong, and armed with large claws on each hand. But its most fearsome attack is its ability to swallow a person whole. Swallowing a target requires a successful Grappling Test. The damage comes partly from muscle

contractions, but mostly from stomach acids and the like.

A swallowed character can try to cut himself free if he has the means to do so.

Appearance: A burrower is a 10-12 foot tall monstrosity composed of armored plates fitted around a core of quivering, blubbery grey flesh that shows at the joints and gaps; the whole thing looks vaguely like a horrific, deadly scarecrow. Its arms are so long that they drag the ground, and its block-like hands are tipped with three large, sharp metal claws. Its bulbous head is featureless except for a slash of a mouth large enough to swallow an adult human whole (when it swallows someone, the loose skin around its midsection bulges forward proportionately). Its neck is abnormally long, and the loose skin around it sways sickeningly back and forth as it moves. Its feet are two feet long and something like a rooster's, with three long, taloned toes and a sharp spur behind.

Attributes: Use the Zombie statistics in *Savage Worlds* rulebook and add Burrow 6" and the following special ability:

- **Swallow:** As an action, the Burrower can swallow a grappled foe. A swallowed foe suffers 2d6 damage each round.

Cerberus

Ecology: A cerberus is a magical, three-headed dog originally bred from more monstrous dogs by the elves, gnomes, and other humanoids of Europe. Some have been brought over to the United States as those beings migrated to the New World.

Personality/Motivation: Normal animal motivations, though they're often trained to work as guard dogs or attack dogs.

Powers/Tactics: This character sheet represents a typical cerberus, such as the gnomes of Birmingham keep as pets. It's

possible for them to grow larger, up to approximately the size of a cow. The larger a cerberus gets, the fiercer and less controllable it becomes. (For a larger cerberus, make it stronger, tougher, and with larger claws and fangs that do more damage.)

Appearance: A cerberus looks roughly like a large, fierce, dark-furred dog with three snarling heads.

Attributes: Use the Wolf statistics in *Savage Worlds* rulebook as the baseline and increase the abilities and dice as the Cerebus grows larger.

Chupacabra

Ecology: A chupacabra ("goatsucker") is a small humanoid creature that typically drinks blood from domesticated animals (hence its name). However, if it ever tastes human blood, that becomes its preferred meal, and it will kill more and more humans until killed. It consumes blood using a proboscis-like "tongue" that's hard and sharp enough to pierce a human skull.

Chupacabras usually hunt by themselves, but sometimes form packs of up to two dozen individuals. The largest, toughest chupacabra leads the pack, though any other chupacabra may fight him to the death for the position at any time.

Chupacabras are primarily found in Mexico, though they also range into the southern parts of the United States and south into Central America. Occasionally one or more somehow sneaks onto a truck or ship and gets taken even further afield.

Personality/Motivation: Monster experts debate whether chupacabras are sentient or more akin to highly intelligent animals like dolphins and pigs. They seem to be far more clever than the average predator, but definitely don't write or display any other signs of civilized behavior (though they have been known to use the simplest of tools, like using

a rock to smash a window safely). At present the majority of academic opinion falls on the “not sentient” side, but no one’s ever studies chupacabras in the wild long enough to answer the question with any certainty.

Powers/Tactics: Typically a chupacabra approaches its prey by stealth, pounces on it, and holds it down while using its proboscis to suck blood until its satiated. Usually it won’t drink enough blood on its own to kill a goat (much less an adult human), but if it’s hungry enough it might. A pack of chupacabra will almost always drink enough blood to kill its prey. If confronted with force or fire, a chupacabra typically flees.

Appearance: A chupacabra is a roughly humanoid creature standing three to four feet tall. Its features and form are partly demonic, partly reptilian, and partly insectile, giving it an appearance guaranteed to horrify most people. From its large mouth projects a mosquito-like proboscis strong and sharp enough to pierce a human skull. It moves mostly by hopping.

Attributes: Agility d6, Smarts d4, Spirit d4, Strength d6, Vigor d10

Skills: Fighting d8, Notice d6, Stealth d10, Survival d8

Pace: 6

Parry: 6

Toughness: 7

Gear/Attacks: Claws (Str+d4), Bite (Str+d4)

Special:

- **Blood drain:** Every Wound a Chupacabra inflicts heals it 1 wound.

Cinder Beast

Ecology: A cinder beast is a demonic quadruped that “eats” by burning things. It prefers substances like paper and cloth if possible — they’re almost like delicious junk food to it — but anything flammable will do (including human flesh).

Personality/Motivation: Normal animal motivations, tinged with a certain demonic malice. Mostly it just wants to eat and keep itself safe from anyone who wants to harm it.

Powers/Tactics: Cinder beasts fight in two ways. First, they have fangs and talons capable of inflicting deadly injuries. Second, they spread fire not only to eat, but offensively. If a flammable substance touches them for a second or so, it usually bursts into flames. And if they stare at an flammable object (including most living creatures) within about eight meters, they can make it catch on fire as well.

Spells that banish or otherwise affect demons usually work on cinder beasts. Usually.

Appearance: A cinder beast is a four- or six-legged hell-creature whose skin is the color of ash, shot through with veins of lava-like fire. Its head looks like a cross between a mastiff’s and a crocodile’s.

Attributes: Agility d8, Smarts d4, Spirit d6, Strength d8, Vigor d8

Skills: Fighting d6, Notice d8, Stealth d8, Survival d6

Pace: 8

Parry: 5

Toughness: 6

Gear/Attacks: Claws (Str+d8), Fangs (Str+d4)

Special:

- **Ignite:** Any flammable substance that comes into contact with a Cinder Beast immediately ignites. As an action, the Cinder Beast can stare at a target within 8”, and the target will immediately catch on fire (suffering 2d6 damage each round until the target puts the fire out.)

Cyclops

Ecology: A cyclops eats the same sort of food as humans. Contrary to what it says in Homer's *Odyssey*, cyclopes aren't necessarily interested in eating human flesh. The wilder and more evil ones are, but plenty of them are happy with a good steak or pork chop. In ancient times they dressed in furs and lived in caves, but modern day cyclopes prefer nicer accommodations and clothes when they can get them.

Due to human activity (hunting cyclopes for their eyes, thinking they could somehow grant magic powers, which they cannot) and their own spotty breeding patterns, cyclopes have died off in recent centuries. It's been decades since anyone collected a PUFF bounty on a cyclops, and it's possible only one or two remain in existence.

Personality/Motivation: Normal humanoid motivations. For example, Poly, the cyclops encountered by Owen Pitt and Julie Shackleford, was friendly and helpful — but another cyclops somewhere else might have regarded them as a threat and reacted violently.

Powers/Tactics: Although they're not as big as ogres (or even some trolls), cyclopes are tougher and much stronger than a human of the same size. In combat they use whatever weapons they have available, or if none their big fists. A cyclops's most impressive power, though, is his "remote viewing" capability. Using his one eye, a cyclops can see visions of distant places on Earth, or places in other dimensions. In some situations he can even see into the past or the future. (The further away a place is, physically and/or temporally, the "blurrier" a cyclops's visions tend to be, but even at their worst they're often still helpful.) A cyclops can also see through walls and other solid objects, making it difficult to sneak up on them.

Appearance: A cyclops is a humanoid with a single large eye in the center of its head. Most are 6-7 feet tall and tend toward plumpness, but their body type varies with the individual. They wear whatever sorts of clothes they're most comfortable in.

Attributes: Agility d6, Smarts d8, Spirit d6, Strength d12, Vigor d12

Skills: Fighting d8, Notice d8, Occult d8, Stealth d8

Pace: 8

Parry: 6

Toughness: 8

Gear/Attacks: Fists (Str+d4), weapons at the GM's discretion.

Special:

- **Eye:** A Cyclops may view other places in the world. This requires a Occult test. If the location is on earth, the test is made with a -1. If it is another dimension, the test is made with a -2. If it is through time, the test is made with a -4.
- **Size (2)**

Deep Ones

Ecology: Deep Ones, also known as Saughagin, are ichthyoid beings who live in the oceans (there are no records of them living in bodies of fresh water, even large ones such as inland seas). When they attack surface-dwellers it's almost always in large numbers, which probably means that they live in underwater communities of dozens or hundreds of individuals.

Deep Ones often drag humans underwater when they attack the surface world. It's unknown whether these victims are eaten, transformed into more Deep Ones, or sacrificed to the Deep Ones' gods. What is known is that some cults have at times commingled with groups of Deep Ones, producing horrific crossbreeds — humans

with vaguely fish- or frog-like features and an affinity for the magics and languages of their aquatic forebears. The cross-breeds can sometimes pass as humans, especially when they're young, but as they age their unnatural heritage becomes more and more apparent. At first they can sometimes hide their evolving features (like gills that grow in the neck) with clothing, but in most cases a cross-breed reaches a point where he cannot conceal his monstrous nature with anything but absolute seclusion — or going to join his Deep One ancestors in the sea.

Personality/Motivation: Deep Ones are malicious and cruel. Based on evidence they've left behind in some of their attacks (or that has been recovered from their bodies), they seem to be devout worshippers of some foul, ancient god(s).

Powers/Tactics: Deep Ones fight using their sharp claws. They usually attack in groups, trying to overwhelm their prey with numbers; if they don't have a numerical advantage, or if they face determined opposition, they often retreat and wait for a better opportunity to renew the attack.

Appearance: Deep Ones, also known as Saughagin, are fish-men (though some of their features have a slightly reptilian look to them as well). They're about five feet tall with ichthyoid heads, sickly green scaly skin covered with slime, and webbing between their clawed fingers and toes.

Attributes: Agility d6, Smarts d6, Spirit d4, Strength d8, Vigor d8

Skills: Fighting d6, Notice d6, Shooting, d6, Stealth d6, Survival d6, Swimming d10

Pace: 6

Parry: 5

Toughness: 6

Gear/Attacks: Claws (Str+d4), Bite (Str+d4)

Special:

- Aquatic (6")

DEMONS

Foul beings who inhabit other dimensions, demons (also known as devils) embody evil, chaos, destruction, torment, and wicked emotions. They exist only to further the causes of evil and mayhem, and revel in the terror and havoc they cause. Some rely on subtlety to work their wickedness; others prefer raw might.

Demons have a strict hierarchy based on power. Those who are weak serve those who are stronger, with the terrible demon princes ruling over all. The many princes connive and war with each other continuously, as each seeks to extend his sway over a greater and greater portion of the Hosts of Hell. Sometimes these wars spill over into the World of Men, but more often demons come to Earth only when called. Some calls are subconscious or unwitting — a desire for cruel vengeance in an aching heart, a curse inflicted out of malice. But most are deliberate, the work of sorcerers who summon demons to serve them or grant them power, and who all too often lose control of them, or find themselves the ones controlled....

Ecology: Demons are native to many other planes. Beyond that, they have little in common — some prefer fire and heat, others revel in cold and frost; some feed on human blood, others souls, others living flesh; some mate in "traditional" ways, others spawn their broods through magic or diabolic alchemy.

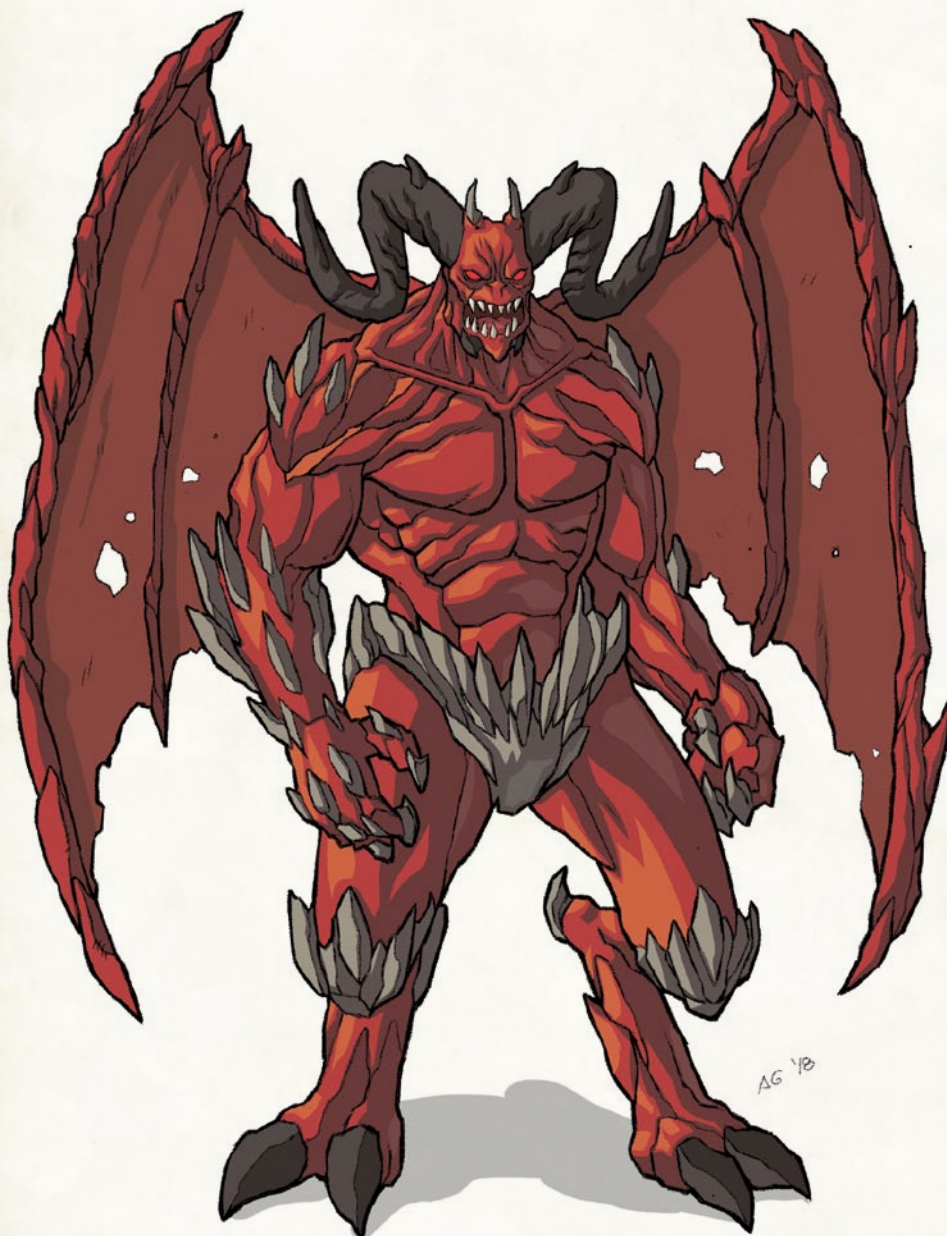
Personality/Motivation: All demons are thoroughly evil. Even if they seem to act out of kindness or charity, they ultimately intend only malice and woe.

Powers/Tactics: Most demons share several common abilities. Some are physical (unusual strength, claws, batwings, resilience, immortality) and others mental or spiritual. But they also share some weaknesses. Pentagrams render them

trapped and helpless (a fact most often taken advantage of by conjurors). Holy places and things can hurt or slay them. Someone who knows a demon's or devil's true name can command it effortlessly. And, oftentimes, their unwavering desire to do only evil things makes them easy to trick or elude.

Battle Fiend

Description: A battle fiend looks a lot like an infernal soldier (see below), but it's bigger, more massive, has no spines on its arms, and has bony plates over its joints (such as around the neck) to protect what are vulnerable spots on the soldier. It spits balls of green acid from its large mouth.



Demon Prince

Description: A demon prince, one of the most powerful demons that can appear on Earth, looks a lot like the stereotypical demon: reddish-brown humanoid body, horns curving up from its head, batwings projecting from its shoulderblades; cloven feet; forked tail. It has three eyes in its blunted, skull-like head.

Homunculus Demon

Description: A homunculus demon is one of the weakest demons around — so weak that it can't even manifest its own body on Earth. Instead, a sorcerer who wants to summon one must use alchemy to stitch together a body for it out of animal and human parts (all depending on what's available) and then summon the demon "into" that body to animate it. A homunculus demon is as free-willed as any other demon, but since its body is likely to need repairs on a frequent basis, it often prefers to maintain good relations with its creator/summoner.

Infernal Scout

Description: An infernal scout is a humanoid demon about half the size of an adult human, with two multijointed arms and legs. Its insectile carapace is red-orange; its face a bony, skull-like thing with a large, fang-filled mouth and half a dozen eyes. Its hands and feet are tipped with claws sharp enough to tear through body armor.

Infernal Soldier

Description: An infernal soldier is a roughly human-sized demon, though its body is so hunched and contorted that it usually seems to be at least a foot smaller than it usually is. It's vaguely insectile, with an orange-red, hard outer carapace, four arms and two legs, two (sometimes three) joints in its limbs, and claws tipping its feet and hands. It has two sets of interlocking jaws filled with sharp, jagged teeth and a dozen red eyes in its blunted, skull-like face. Along their arms

are needle-sharp spines which they can project at foes.

Infernal Warrior

Description: An infernal warrior, a type of demon that may be a more powerful version of an infernal soldier, looks like an eight foot tall, six-armed, bipedal porcupine with an orange-red insectile carapace. Its fingers and toes are clawed.

Succubus

Description: Resembling a human female of incredible beauty (sometimes with one or two minor, easily concealed, diabolic features, like fangs or small horns), the succubus is a manifestation of the sin of lust. When she first appears, she relies on her Charm Skill and Seductive Form power to get close to the victim. Once within touching distance, she can employ her Irresistible Embrace to make her victim desire her completely (if he doesn't already).

If her victim shows strong character and rejects her, a succubus may become vicious, growing claws from her fingers and attempting to destroy by violence what she could not through her perverted sexuality. However, she is no combatant, and quickly flees if confronted with force or other danger.

The male counterpart of the succubus is the incubus, sometimes called a "pleasure eater," who seduces women in like manner. At least some of them look more demon-like in reality — bat-like wings, large fangs, a serpentine tail, thin body — but can change shape into a handsome male human and use mental control to lure their victims in.

Winged Terror

Description: A winged terror looks like a smaller, weaker version of a demon prince. It's about the same size as an adult human, with a dark red body, bat wings, a horned head, clawed hands and feet, and a forked tail.

Doppelgangers

Ecology: Doppelgangers are carnivores who eat the flesh of humans. They use their powers of shape-changing and shape-mimicking to approach their victims without arousing suspicion, then attack from surprise.

Doppelgangers are rare; usually MHI goes decades between encounters with them (though the one working for Martin Hood claimed there were far more of them on Earth than any human realizes). Therefore no one knows what sort of society (if any) they maintain, or how they reproduce.

Personality/Motivation: Normal sentient humanoid motivations, tinged with a certain predatory malice. Many of them enjoy using their powers to play mind games with their prey.

Powers/Tactics: A doppelganger has two powers that make it extremely dangerous. The first is the ability to change its shape, including the ability to flawlessly mimic an existing human (right down to things like accents and body odors). The second is telepathy, which they use to pull details out of someone's mind so they can imitate people that person will find trustworthy or difficult to deal with.

Doppelgangers rely on stealth and surprise to make their attacks. All they have to do is get close enough to use their strong hands and arms to Grab someone, and then it's usually over after a brief struggle (no normal human can break a doppelganger's grip, and even a strong, trained Hunter will find it difficult at best).

Appearance: A doppelganger is a type of Fey with the ability to mimic the forms of other humanoids perfectly. In its natural form it's a light ochre-colored, damp-skinned, doughy, asexual humanoid blob with few distinguishing features — it doesn't even have a true mouth, just an indentation in its head. Its flesh is soft and squishy to the touch; it's been compared to the consistency of raw dough. Its fingers are white, stubby, and terminate in yellowish points.

Attributes: Agility d6, Smarts d6, Spirit d4, Strength d12+4, Vigor d8

Skills: Fighting d8, Focus d8, Notice d6, Stealth d10, Survival d6

Pace: 6

Parry: 5

Toughness: 6

Gear/Attacks: Claws (Str+d4), Bite (Str+d4)

Special:

- **Arcane Background (Gifted):** A Doppelganger has 15 Power Points and knows Shape Change and Mind Reading.

Elves

Ecology: Elves — or *alfar*, in their ancient language — are humanoids who (unbeknownst to them) were created eons ago as servants by one of the Outsider Factions (see [page 139](#)). This same Faction created orcs as warriors and lesser servants, and set the elves to control them as overseers and commanders, resulting in the two species having a deep-seated, almost instinctual hatred for one another. (The legends and histories of both species speak of an ancient war between the two, which actually occurred when the Faction stopped paying attention to them and the orcs revolted against the elves.) After this conflict the elves settled primarily in Europe, but have since migrated to many parts of the

world through various means. They came to the Americas approximately 400 years ago.

Like humans, elves can live just about anywhere. Typically their communities are isolated from nearby human settlements and are ruled by elf royalty — a king or queen, who's served by various elf nobles as well as the common folk. Elven populations tend to have an even gender mix, so two-spouse households are the custom. Children are born after a nine-month gestation period and are raised by their parents.

Elves speak their own language — a flowing, musical tongue that's a delight to human ears. They also tend to learn at least one human language to help them remain unnoticed in human society and interact with human merchants when necessary.

Elves are currently exempt from PUFF as long as they don't attract any attention to themselves or use magic. Some of them do a little "work" or cast spells on the side secretly; for example, Queen Irondelia sometimes hires out her best elven trackers ("diviners") to MHI to supplement the "welfare" checks she gets from the government.

Personality/Motivation: Normal sentient humanoid motivations. Elves' personalities range from kind to selfish, lazy to ambitious, just like humans'.

Powers/Tactics: Elves are swifter, more graceful, and lighter on their feet than humans. By human standards even the clumsiest elf looks like he's moving with great dexterity.

Elves are innately magical, and thus have a gift for using magic. They can see the presence of magic (which sometimes involves seeing partly into other dimensions), and often learn to cast spells. See the Magic section (page 108) for more information on elven magic.

Appearance: The average elf looks more or less like a finely-featured, long-limbed, attractive (even very attractive) human, though he's several inches shorter than the average human. They're often blonde-haired and blue-eyed. The primary visual difference is that elves have pointed ears, but those who frequently mingle with unaware humans usually arrange their hair to conceal this fact. The elves that MHI most often deals with, the ones who live in the Enchanted Forest Trailer Park, tend to dress and talk in a "redneck" way, and some of them (such as Queen Irondelia) have really let their bodies go. Elves living elsewhere dress and act in different ways according to the customs of their local community.

Gargoyles

Ecology: Gargoyles are a form of stone golem created with powerful magic spells.

Personality/Motivation: As golems, a gargoyle only obeys the orders of its creator. However, it's more intelligent than most other automatons (such as zombies), and can react to changing circumstances and its opponents' actions to a certain degree.

Powers/Tactics: Gargoyles fight with the talons on their hands and feet, and to a lesser extent with their short fangs. They favor flying, which allow them to swoop past their prey and claw it to death. Older, more experienced gargoyles are often quite agile while in the air, difficult to capture or hit.

The most vulnerable places on a gargoyle's body are its joints: elbows, knees, shoulders, hips. They need the flexibility to move, so they're softer and weaker there — almost fluid, in fact. Consider those places to have only half as much toughness as the other parts of the body. Attackers can target any given joint by doing a Called Shot. When an attacker does this, a gargoyle often folds

its wings around itself for full protection, but this prevents it from flying or attacking.

If a gargoyle's lava-like blood splatters or leaks onto flammable objects, there's a good chance they'll catch on fire. This isn't likely to bother the gargoyle, but may cause serious difficulties for any Hunters fighting it.

Since they're "manufactured" by sorcerers, gargoyles can come in many shapes and varieties. You can easily add extra limbs or heads to this basic character sheet, for example, or make a gargoyle larger or smaller. Due to the wide range of sizes and "varieties" of gargoyle, their PUFF bounty varies widely.

Appearance: A gargoyle is a type of stone golem — its body is animated rock, its "blood" akin to lava. It has a twelve foot tall humanoid form with a horned, reptilian head, unnaturally long arms, clawed hands and feet, a stubby tail, and large, bat-like wings sprouting from its shoulderblades (their wingspan is approximately 40 feet).

Attributes: Agility d4, Smarts d6, Spirit d4, Strength d12, Vigor d12

Skills: Fighting d8, Notice d6, Stealth d10, Survival d6

Pace: 6

Parry: 5

Toughness: 8

Gear/Attacks: Claws (Str+d8), Fangs (Str+d4)

Special:

- **Fly 6"**
- **Lava Blood:** Whenever the Gargoyle suffers a Wound, adjacent creatures might get splattered by lava. Everyone adjacent to the Gargoyle must make an immediate Agility Test or suffer 2d6 damage and catch on fire.
- **Weakness:** Called Shots to the joints of a Gargoyle halve it's toughness.

Ghosts

Ecology: Most ghosts inhabit the place or region where they died, though a few have the power to range freely over the world, bringing terror to whomever they encounter. Most feel a driving need to consume the life-force of living beings (by using their Chilling Touch and Presence Attack).

Personality/Motivation: Some ghosts exist only to cause fear in the living and consume their life-force. Others are tied to the place and circumstances of their death by the need to complete an important task they were working on when they died — delivering a message to a loved one, finishing a book or construction project, or something else of deep emotional significance. They try to show the living what it is they want done, and when someone performs the task, the ghost passes away to true death.

Powers/Tactics: Ghosts are incorporeal; only magic can affect them. But they can affect the world of the living with their touch and ability to inspire fear. A few ghosts have mightier powers still — spellcasting or other mystic abilities they possessed in life, and retain in death. They rely on their intangibility and powers of invisibility to keep themselves safe from harm.

Campaign Use: Alps aren't PUFF eligible because they have no corporeal body to turn in.

Appearance: A ghost is the incorporeal spirit of a person who's died. Sometimes they look like they did in life, only obviously insubstantial and "faded." At other times they adopt more eerie appearances, such as those recorded in folklore. They might appear as sheet-like phantoms, carry their heads under their arms, glow with a macabre light, or the like.

Attributes: Use the Ghost in the Savage Worlds Adventure Edition.

Ghouls

Ecology: Ghouls have a ravenous hunger for human flesh and blood. Typically they dig up graves and break into crypts to feed on corpses, but they gladly eat fresh human meat if they can obtain it without great risk to themselves.

Personality/Motivation: Ghouls are barely more than animals; they think about little more than safety, shelter, and feeding. They possess a devious, malicious cunning that serves them well for eluding or tricking foes.

Powers/Tactics: Ghouls prefer not to fight at all, but if they must, or if they feel they can defeat a victim with numbers, they use their teeth and claws to rip a victim to shreds. More organized, intelligent groups of ghouls use Tactics and Teamwork to overwhelm their prey.

Campaign Use: Ghouls sometimes make tough opponents due to their resistance to physical damage. You can compensate for this by decreasing or removing their Toughness bonuses. Alternately, if your PCs find ghouls easy opponents, make them stronger, tougher, and smarter.

Appearance: A ghoul looks like a thin (if not emaciated), dead human whose teeth have become jagged fangs and whose eyes have a frightening, feral gleam. Any clothes they wear are rotten rags.

Attributes: Use the Zombie profile in *Savage Worlds Adventure Edition*, but increase their smarts to d6, give them Survival d6, and increase their Toughness by +2.

ICE GHOUL

A variant of the normal ghoul found only in polar latitudes, the ice ghoul has bluish skin and white hair. Its body is freezing cold; touching or being touched by it is painful.

Gnolls

Ecology: Gnolls are scavengers. Collecting trash, refuse, and anything decaying is both their way of life and their pleasure. They usually live in or around sewers, dumps, landfills, junkyards, and the like. As a result, they have a horrible stench.

Personality/Motivation: Normal humanoid motivations. For the most part they just want to stay hidden from humanity so they can go on enjoying their malodorous lives.

Powers/Tactics: Gnolls aren't warriors; they usually run rather than fight. But if forced into a situation where they can't get away, they attack viciously with their short fangs and whatever weapons they can get their hands on.

Appearance: A gnoll is a short, thin humanoid with vaguely australopithecine features; the average ones are about 1.25–1.5 meters tall. They cover themselves with debris and trash for camouflage purposes, but don't wear clothing.

Attributes: For a Gnoll, use the Wolf profile in *Savage Worlds Adventure Edition*, but increase its Smarts to d6 (and remove the Animal tag), and remember that Gnolls are humanoid, but very akin to wolves.

Gnomes

Ecology: Gnomes (or *tomte*, in Old Country parlance) are diminutive humanoids who (unbeknownst to them) were created eons ago by the Fey as servants. As the Fey faded away from the world over time, Gnomes eventually gained their freedom and began creating their own culture and customs.

Gnomes originally hail from Scandinavia, but have since spread to many parts of the world. Gnomes in the United States have adopted a “gangsta” culture based on where they’re from in their homeland — gnomes from Norway forming gangs that fight with gangs of gnomes from Denmark or Sweden, for example. Swedish gnomes (the kind MHI most often deals with) live in the southern US and wear red hats; Norwegian gnomes live in California and wear blue hats.

Gnome females are even rarer than males. The gnome males keep them extremely well hidden and protected.

Personality/Motivation: Normal sentient humanoid motivations. Some gnomes are kindly, some selfish or malicious; some are loyal, other treacherous; and so on. However, nearly all gnomes tend to distrust “Talls” (as they refer to humans and other ordinary-sized humanoids), and often get angry if a Tall makes jokes about gnomish height.

Powers/Tactics: Gnomes have several powers that help them hide from humans and also make them excellent spies. First, they can teleport over short distances (up to 30 meters). Second, they’re so stealthy they can actually become invisible. The invisibility’s most likely to “hold” if they remain still, but they can move when invisible if they want to.

Appearance: Gnomes are humanoids who are typically about 18” tall, though some reach the towering height of as much as 30”. They have long white beards and pointy red hats. They have long white beards and pointy red hats, and six fingers on each hand. In modern



America they often dress in “gangsta” fashions — sports jerseys, sweatpants, bling, gold grills on their teeth. They usually carry handguns or other weapons. Their voices are surprisingly deep, given their size.

Go Dokkaebi

Ecology: A *go dokkaebi* is a type of Korean spirit and is only rarely encountered outside the Korean Peninsula. Traditional Korean lore describes it as a mischievous, sometimes hostile spirit that’s skilled at weapon use and wrestling, but this misses the mark to some extent. Michael Putlack, an STFU operative who became possessed by one while visiting Korea, has labeled it a “rage ghost.” Essentially it is a spirit that hates humanity and revels in bloodshed and murder. It must commit violent acts against the living to satisfy its lust for violence. A human possessed by one, such as Putlack, discovers that the *go dokkaebi* pushes him to do terrible things more and more until he just can’t stop himself. After he gives in, his murderous acts quiet the *go dokkaebi* down and allow him to lead an ordinary life — until the spirit becomes hungry again.

Personality/Motivation: See above. A *go dokkaebi* is filled with rage, bloodlust, and a love of violence. Using guns rarely satisfies them much; they want a possessed host to engage in hand-to-hand combat — and to make it as bloody as possible.

Powers/Tactics: On their own, *go dokkaebi* know how to use weapons and to wrestle. Some accounts say you have to attack them on their right side when they expose it to win; others say some *go dokkaebi* have only one leg, and you can beat them by hooking it and pushing them to the ground. But most *go dokkaebi* encountered by monster hunters have possessed a human host and use its abilities and whatever weapons they

can get their hands on to attack. (Michael Putlack, for example, favors a framing hammer as a weapon.)

Additionally, a human possessed by a *go dokkaebi* becomes not only extremely strong, but highly resistant to the effects of injury. There are examples of one being shot point-blank in the head, but then returning to the fight within a minute or two.

This character sheet represents a human possessed by a *go dokkaebi*, not the spirit itself.

Appearance: In their own form, a *go dokkaebi* is a hideous, demonic-looking being, sometimes with animal parts like a lion’s head or the legs of a bird of prey. Its human host could be nearly anyone, though they prefer young, fit individuals if possible. When the human host gives into the *go dokkaebi*’s desire for violence, his eyes become gaping black pits.

Attributes: Agility d6, Smarts d6, Spirit d4, Strength d12, Vigor d12

Skills: Fighting d8, Notice d6, Stealth d10, Survival d6

Pace: 6

Parry: 5

Toughness: 8

Gear/Attacks: Weapons of the bearers choice.

Special:

- **Hardy**
- **Regeneration (Fast)**
- **Bloodthirsty:** *Go Dokkaebi* have the Bloodthirsty Hinderance.

GOLEMS

Golems are humanoid constructs, sculpted or made out of various materials (anything from dead flesh to iron) and animated with magic. Wizards and priests create them as servants and bodyguards.

Ecology: Golems, being constructed creatures, have no ecology per se. They do what their creator orders them to do, go where he says go, and so forth. They do not need to eat, sleep, or perform most of the other functions living beings must to survive.

Personality/Motivation: None. Golems, as Automaton, follow their creator's orders. They do not think or feel. In potentially confusing situations, the GM may allow a golem a Smarts Roll to interpret its orders correctly.

Powers/Tactics: Golems possess enormous strength and use it to good effect in combat. Most know how to use weapons, but even those who do not can strike devastating blows with their fists. Their implacable nature, high degree of invulnerability, and untiring bodies make them terrifying opponents.

Campaign Use: Due to the wide range of sizes and "varieties" of golem, their PUFF bounty varies widely.

Golem stats in this book assume golems of roughly human size. Wizards and other golem-makers often prefer much taller or smaller versions, which you can create by applying the appropriate Sizes Modifiers as in the *Savage Worlds* rulebook. Similarly, by adding wings, claws, or the like to a golem during the creation process, the maker can give it many additional abilities. (A gargoyle, described above, is essentially a type of stone golem in a specific shape.)

You can easily use these golems as "Templates" for creating golems made of other substances. The possibilities are practically endless.

Attributes: Agility d4, Smarts d4 (A), Spirit d4, Strength d12, Vigor d12

Skills: As the creator determines.

Pace: 6

Parry: 5

Toughness: 8 (12)

Gear/Attacks: Weapons of the bearers choice. Fists (Str+d6)

Special:

- **Armor 4**
- **Construct**

Clay Golem

Description: Formed and sculpted of clay, the clay golem typically resembles a statue of a person — until it starts to move. Artistically gifted creators sometimes embellish their clay golems with fierce countenances, the appearance of clothing or armor, or the like. Most clay golems fight with weapons, but their fists alone are enough to deal deadly blows.

Flesh Golem

Description: Sewn together from pieces of corpses, and animated through Necromancy or Alchemy, a flesh golem is, in essence, an improved form of zombie. Although its movements are jerky and seemingly inept, it has more speed and agility than its appearance and composition suggest. It attacks with a weapon (if it has one) or its fists (if not). Most flesh golems are made entirely from human parts, but it's not unknown for a necromancer to include parts of appropriate animals instead (either to save the trouble of acquiring human parts, or to make the golem more terrifying and effective in combat).

Stone Golem

Description: More powerful than a clay golem, but not as mighty as one made of metal, the stone golem typically resembles a large stone statue of a man. As with a clay golem, its creator may sculpt it with fanciful features, or leave it mostly blank and unformed.

Grinder

Ecology: Undetermined. Grinders may be extradimensional creatures who serve the Old Ones or some other Outsider Faction, but it's also possible (and perhaps more likely) that they were created by the Fey tens of thousands of years ago to hunt humans. They're carnivorous, and seem to prefer eating humans over other prey.

Personality/Motivation: Normal animal motivations, including a hunger for human flesh.

Powers/Tactics: A grinder's main weapon is its bite, from which it gets its name. Its mouth is circular and filled with sharp teeth. Once it bites someone, the mouth locks on and the teeth begin rotating with a horrible sound like a demonic chainsaw. Unless the grinder's killed quickly — which is difficult because their pulpy bodies absorb bullets and other physical attacks with relatively little effect — it will usually chew its prey into bloody gobbets and consume them within seconds.

A grinder's main weakness is that it moves slowly. It has to rely on surprise, or on trapping its prey, to catch it. Its most

common way of feeding is to burrow under a house, dig up through the floor, and eat the inhabitants while they're sleeping.

Appearance: A grinder is a black, almost protoplasmic blob-monster with hundreds of small tentacles and cilia surrounding a circular mouth with multiple rows of sharp teeth that it uses to grind and ingest its prey (hence its name).

Attributes: Agility d6, Smarts d4 (A), Spirit d4, Strength d12, Vigor d12

Skills: Fighting d8, Stealth d6

Pace: 6

Parry: 5

Toughness: 8

Gear/Attacks: Bite (Str+d8)

Special:

- **Latch On:** A Grinder latches on to its target. Once it bites a target, on the targets turn, the target must succeed at a successful Strength Test or suffer a Wound that allows no Soak roll. The target may make a new Strength Test every turn, but on failure will continue to suffer Wounds.



Hell Hounds

Ecology: The hell hound resides in the fiery parts of the infernal realms, except when its masters wittingly or unwittingly release it into the World of Man. There it sometimes serves evil wizards, wicked giants or trolls, and other such folk.

Personality/Motivation: Normal animal motivations, as tainted by demonic evil.

Powers/Tactics: Hell hounds prefer to weaken their foes with a blast of Fiery Breath, and then follow up by leaping on them for a fang and claw attack. If overcome by hunger, they may leap before using their fire breath.

A hell hound is a tenacious tracker, able to use its nose to follow prey or escaping foes. Few who try to flee from a hell hound manage to elude it for long.

Appearance: Hell hounds (also called hell-hounds or devil-dogs) are enormous, dark-fanged, coal-black hounds with eyes of flame and mouths filled with fire.

Attributes: Use the Dire Wolf profile, add a d8 Survival Skill, and the following attack:

- **Fiery Breath:** Hell Hounds breathe fire using the Cone Template. Every target within this cone may make an Agility roll at -2 to avoid the attack. Those who fail suffer 2d6 damage and must check to see if they catch fire.

Hobgoblin

Ecology: Similar to orcs in many respects (but more bestial and brutish), hobgoblins were, like orcs, created eons ago by one of the Outsider Factions as servants and warriors on Earth. Their original homeland seems to have been somewhere in the Middle East or eastern Africa.

Modern groups of hobgoblins tend to live in wilderness areas (mostly in Europe and Asia). They form small communities and support themselves through robbery and

banditry against local humans. They usually kill their victims; survivors usually believe their attackers wore monstrous masks.

Personality/Motivation: Normal sentient humanoid motivations. Most hobgoblins are self-interested and greedy, making them difficult to lead or command except through force and fear.

Powers/Tactics: Hobgoblins use the full range of tactics available to sentient humanoids. In millennia past they relied on melee weapons and bows, but modern hobgoblins arm themselves with the best firearms they can obtain — often some form of the AK-47 or surplus US Army weaponry.

Appearance: A hobgoblin is about 4'0" to 5'6" tall, broad-shouldered, and hirsute (though usually lacking facial hair). His facial features are brutish and sometimes slightly porcine; some have tusks. His skin tends to be green-black, but sometimes takes on a more reddish or purplish sheen.

Attributes: Use the Orc profile and increase their Strength by one die size.

Humboldt Folk

Ecology: Humboldt Folk are humans warped by dark magics. Whether they were the ones practicing the magic or had it practiced on them is uncertain; it may be both. Regardless, once transformed they have an instinctive desire to join up with others of their kind. They live in "clans" by themselves in wild places such as swamps and deep forests. They kidnap humans to eat (or, in the case of women, forced breeding).

Personality/Motivation: Aside from satisfying their desire to eat human flesh (and make clothing out of human skin), Humboldt Folk primarily just want to be left alone — don't bother them, and they won't bother you (until they get hungry). However, if you trespass on their chosen land, they'll kill you immediately.

Powers/Tactics: Humboldt Folk use weapons, though they prefer knives, hatchets, and other bladed weapons to firearms. In some ways they seem to “feed” off the terror they create and thus will either toy with their victims (for example, letting them think they’re escaping when in fact they haven’t a prayer of getting away) or attack in overwhelming numbers. Their speed and toughness make them dangerous opponents.

Appearance: The Humboldt Folk are eerie, cannibalistic mutants whose formerly human bodies have been warped by curses and other dark magic. They emit a green glow.

Attributes: Agility d8, Smarts d6, Spirit d6, Strength d10, Vigor d10

Skills: Climbing d6, Fighting d8, Knowledge (Occult) d6, Notice d8, Shooting d8, Stealth d5

Pace: 6

Parry: 6

Toughness: 9 (11)

Gear: Generally speaking Humboldts use either gear outfitted to them by their masters or Swords (Str+d6), light armor and Firearms.

Special:

- **Naturally Tough:** +2 Toughness.
- **Clan Tactics:** When a Humboldt Folk can see an allied Humboldt Folk and they attack the same target, the Humboldt Folk gains +2 to Attack Tests and Damage Rolls.

Kraken

Ecology: Krakens live in the deepest depths of the ocean, where they hunt whales and other huge marine animals as prey. They are solitary, and fight with others of their kind if they encounter them. Occasionally, driven by impulses

no human understands, they rise to the surface to snatch people off the decks of ships, or even drag entire vessels down beneath the waves.

The kraken lacks the camouflage and ink-jetting ability possessed by normal-sized octopi, since its size and power make it impossible to hide and remove the need for escape adaptations.

Personality/Motivation: Normal animal motivations.

Powers/Tactics: Krakens attack aggressively, using their long, immensely strong tentacles to Grab and crush. They also have a large beak with which they can bite prey, if they get close enough.

Appearance: A kraken resembles a gargantuan octopus or squid. Sometimes its tentacles are tipped with claw-like barbs that can rip through stone or flesh with ease.

Attributes: Agility d8, Smarts d4 (A), Spirit d6, Strength d12+6, Vigor d12+4

Skills: Fighting d10, Swimming d12

Pace: 6

Parry: 7

Toughness: 15

Special:

- **Tentacles:** Generally speaking, the only thing hunters will see on a Kraken are its tentacles. Treat each Tentacle as a Minion that uses the Kraken’s stats. A Kraken generally has 8 to 12 tentacles (2d6, no less than 6 as a result), and as such can make that many attacks per turn.
- **Massive Tentacles:** Str + 2d6, Reach 3
- **Snatch:** On a successful melee attack, a Kraken can immediately initiate a grapple using the Grappling Rules in *Savage Worlds*.

Lich

Ecology: Liches were once powerful spellcasters who, realizing that their natural lives were about to end, were unwilling to leave this plane of existence just yet. By working mighty, and often evil, magics, they preserved their life-force in a powerful undead body so they could “live” forever. It’s said some necromancers look forward to becoming lichs, regarding it as the pinnacle of their careers and power.

Personality/Motivation: Normal sentient humanoid motivations. Most lichs are thoroughly evil, desiring only to continue their foul arcane researches, slay the living, and acquire power by any means necessary. A rare few are somewhat more benevolent, at least at first, but even they inevitably seem to slide into madness and wickedness as the centuries pass.

Powers/Tactics: Liches typically fight with their spells — and they’re powerful spellcasters indeed, with a wealth of magics both necromantic and otherwise. Most have servants to fight on their behalf as well: undead they’ve created; monsters they’ve summoned; acolytes and apprentices who hope to share in their power someday. A few are also capable hand-to-hand combatants, with finger-bones like claws or a touch that necromantically drains the vitality of the living.

Some sources claim that lichs store their life force in “phylacteries” — objects separate from themselves which they then conceal and protect as carefully as possible. Unless a Hunter finds and destroys a lich’s phylactery, that lich can never truly be laid to rest; it will always come back to “unlife.” (In some cases the lich’s heart is removed and put in the phylactery, and a mystical object or device replaces it in the lich’s chest; in this case the only way to kill the lich is to destroy that “heart object.”) However,

other sources seem to describe Hunters permanently killing lichs without any mention of anything like a phylactery being involved, so it’s hard to say what the truth is. There may even be multiple types of lichs, some with phylacteries and some not.

Campaign Use: Because lichs are so powerful, you should use them carefully to make sure you don’t overwhelm the heroes. In most cases it should take a long time before the PCs actually meet or see a lich; before they get to him, they have to wade through encounters with his living agents, his armies of skeletons and zombies, his pet monsters, and the traps he uses to protect his lair. Only after surviving all of that will the heroes have the experience and power to confront the undead master himself.

Appearance: A lich is the skeleton, sometimes with a few scraps of dessicated flesh clinging to the bones, of a powerful wizard re-animated by Necromancy. Liches wear whatever clothing most appeals to them, though many favor some variety of wizard’s robes. An evil greenish fire fills the eye sockets of their skull heads.

Lindwyrms

Ecology: Undetermined. Monster experts theorize that lindwyrms are some sort of offshoot of dragons — perhaps even a form of dragon mutated eons ago by exposure to strange magics. It’s also possible that, like many monsters, they’re creations of the Fey.

Due to their size, lindwyrms need to eat a great deal, so once one moves into an area it’s usually discovered pretty quickly and someone calls Hunters to go after it. Some scholars believe that, like dragons, lindwyrms hibernate for decades or centuries after eating enough food; that’s why they appear so rarely and suddenly.

Some orc tribes consider lindwyrms a delicacy.

Personality/Motivation: Normal animal motivations.

Powers/Tactics: A lindwyrmling relies on its size and strength in combat. If possible it prefers to open battle so it can charge and trample its prey. Then it uses its fang-filled mouth and sharp talons to cut its prey to pieces before feasting.

Because its eyes are on stalks, a lindwyrmling can see all around itself for a great distance. This makes it difficult to sneak up on one. Hunters have found that sniping them is an effective tactic, especially if the sniper's skilled enough to shoot through the eyestalks and blind the beast.

Appearance: A lindwyrmling looks something like a lizard that at adulthood is at least 25 feet long, and can reach lengths of up to 100 feet if it lives long enough. It typically has at least two pairs of clawed legs per ten feet of length, sometimes more. Its eyes are on stalks, allowing it to see further and more clearly than it otherwise could, and its sharp fangs fill its mouth.

Attributes: Use the Giant Worm profile and scale the Size modifier as needed. Increase the Notice to d12.

Luska

Ecology: A luska is a fearsome monstrosity that's almost perpetually hungry. Except when driven by its annual need to mate in the late winter, or protecting itself from an attacker, it's on the search for food. It usually consumes other marine life, but will also prey on land creatures near the shore. (It can breathe air, but prefers not to spend time on the land because it's difficult to support its bulk.)

Personality/Motivation: Normal animal motivations, though it's virtually intelligent as a human and possesses a devilish cunning.

Powers/Tactics: A luska is aggressive and fearless. It attacks by Grabbing its prey with its tentacles, then pulling it toward its jaws to be bitten and torn into pieces. It then carries the pieces to its underwater lair to devour at its leisure. If harmed too much, a luska will flee, unless overwhelmed by hunger.

Appearance: A luska, sometimes known as a shark-kraken or sharkkraken, looks like a thirty foot long, red-eyed, particularly vicious black or grey shark with a ring of heavy, squid-like tentacles fringed all around its head. The two longest tentacles end in jagged barbs that look something like hands with long fingers similar to a crab's legs. It can use these to grasp prey even more firmly than its regular tentacles can. It has a smell of ocean rot when out of the water.

Attributes: Agility d8, Smarts d8 (A), Spirit d6, Strength d12, Vigor d12

Skills: Fighting d8, Swimming d10

Pace: 6

Parry: 6

Toughness: 8

Special:

- **Bite:** Str+d8
- **Tentacles:** Str+d6. A Luska generally has 4 to 8 tentacles (2d4, no less than 4 as a result), and as such can make that many attacks per turn.
- **Snatch:** On a successful melee attack, a Luska can immediately initiate a grapple using the Grappling Rules in *Savage Worlds*. A Grappled enemy can be bite without an attack roll if the Luska hasn't bitten a target yet this turn.

Lycanthropes

Lycanthropes are humanoid beings with the characteristics of a type of animal (such as a wolf). While they're often thought of as man-beast hybrids or crossbreeds, in truth each lycanthrope is a separate species from humanity. However, as discussed below, a lycanthrope can infect a human with a DNA-altering virus that turns him into a lycanthrope himself — one with the power to change shape between human and man-beast forms. Many people consider lycanthropy a curse, a dreaded disease they would give anything to be cured of, but some accept (or even revel in) their bestial nature and abilities.

The most common type of lycanthrope by far is the werewolf, which is described here. See **Other Lycanthropes**, below, for information on other types of man-beasts. Other than information particular to the wolf foundation of a werewolf (such as sometimes working in packs), what's said about werewolves generally applies to other lycanthropes as well.

Ecology: Werewolves are, loosely speaking, beings who can transform into man-wolf “hybrids.” The first werewolf was created in prehistoric times, when primitive men used magic to infuse one of their number with the power of the Wolf, but then lost control of him.

Many (if not most) werewolves live as humans in human society, transforming into their true bestial selves at night to feed whenever the need or mood takes them. As humans they eat cooked human food and conduct themselves as humans, though their predatory nature may reveal itself in their lives (for example, a financier who's a werewolf is likely to be a “corporate raider” type, rather than a more peaceful sort of capitalist). But some

werewolves spend nearly all their time in bestial form and live in the wilderness and on the outskirts of human society, preying on animals and men.

Although many werewolves are solitary, as befits their lupine nature they join together in packs (usually of up to a dozen, rarely more) when they live in proximity. Each pack is led by the “alpha male” — the toughest werewolf in the bunch, the one who can fight off any challengers. (Similarly, some werewolves believe that a werewolf belongs to the “pack” of the werewolf who created him, and must obey that werewolf's orders.) As a whole, the world's “werewolf community” is in theory ruled by the King of the Werewolves. He establishes the rules for werewolf conduct — but his rules are usually far more often observed in the breach than in obedience, because many werewolves scoff at the idea of having a King unless he's standing nearby. For the past several decades Earl Harbinger has been King, though Adam Conover deprived him of the title for a few hours during the Copper Lake incident. Harbinger's primary rule is that werewolves must leave humans alone. But as can be seen from all the werewolf hunting work MHI and similar organizations do, few werewolves pay any attention to this rule. His second rule is “Don't get on my bad side,” and most werewolves who break that one end up dead.

A mating between two werewolves produces a child who's also a werewolf. A mating between a werewolf and an ordinary human produces offspring who's a werewolf about half the time.

Personality/Motivations: Werewolves have ordinary human motivations (ranging from pure beneficence to utter evil), but their personalities usually have a touch of the bestial nature of their wolfish self, as mentioned above. Initially a werewolf

is often disgusted or horrified by his condition, and does whatever he can to control it (which usually isn't much). But as time goes by even the strongest-willed victims of lycanthropy usually come to accept and even revel in their condition, eventually thinking of themselves as a species apart from humanity — a predator species. Eventually even the saintliest person becomes a bloodthirsty killer.

Werewolves also have an intense survival instinct. That urge prevents them from committing suicide, but it can also compel them to flee when faced with what are (or seem to be) overwhelming opposition. The desire to live burns stronger in them than any other... except appetite.

Powers/Tactics: Werewolves possess two forms: a normal human form; and a human-wolf “mixed” form that runs on two legs and has claws on the tips of its fingers.

Changing from any one of a werewolf's forms to any other form typically takes about 30 seconds once a werewolf is relatively experienced. (Younger werewolves may take as long as one minute, or rarely more, whereas extremely experienced and powerful werewolves like Earl Harbinger or Nikolai Petrov sometimes can transform in as little as 10 seconds.) During this time the werewolf can do nothing else (for example, he can't fight, run, or drive) — the transformation is too physically demanding and too painful. In situations of extreme stress, or where magic is involved, the GM may rule that the change takes place much more quickly — even instantaneously.

Werewolves are significantly stronger, tougher, and faster than most humans (even trained humans like Hunters). They often retain their speed and strength even when in human form. They rely on their natural weapons — sharp fangs and claws — which they use with great skill. What's

MUTANT & MONSTROUS ANIMALS

The magical forces in the world, not to mention evil wizards, sometimes “mutate” ordinary animals, turning them into large, monstrous creatures — creatures that often desire human flesh, or that cause other significant problems for humans through property damage, spreading disease, or the like.

Space considerations prevent including animal character sheets in this book; you can find plenty of them in the *Savage Worlds* core book. Then mutate them to taste. Often all you have to do is apply a Size Template to make the creature bigger, stronger, and meaner.

Some of the mutated or monstrous animals — and plants — MHI has encountered include:

Bat, Murderer
 Bear, Tentacle
 Catfish, Giant Mutated
 Crocodile, Giant (a.k.a. Sobek)
 Frogs, Giant Acid-Spitting
 Frogs, Screaming Killer
 Lizard, Mutant Shrieker
 Mole Rat, Giant
 Mollusk, Giant Killer
 Rat, Giant
 Rat, Intelligent
 Shrimp/Crawfish, Giant



worse is that a person bitten by a werewolf who's not killed in the attack will himself become a werewolf. Additionally, there's a much smaller chance that a claw attack

that pierces the skin will infect the victim. In either case, the signs of werewolfhood always show up within five days at the latest.

On the first night of the next full moon, or when exposed to some other appropriate form of stress, an infected character transforms into man-beast form and goes on a rampage. As far as anyone knows, there is no cure for lycanthropy once it's contracted, aside from a special magic ritual involving the Amulet of Koschei (which was destroyed during the Copper Lake incident and presumably cannot be remade).

As far as anyone knows, only humans are susceptible to lycanthropy. Divine and semi-divine beings (such as sirens and half-sirens) are definitely immune to it; so are elves and sasquatches. Whether orcs are is unknown, with scholars of the subject divided in their opinions.

But werewolves aren't just good on offense, they're plenty defensive too. Hurting them is difficult; they quickly regenerate most types of harm they suffer, and they don't get sick. However, they cannot regenerate lost limbs or similar significant injuries. A werewolf also cannot regenerate around a foreign object inserted into his body (such as a spear, a sword, or a piece of deeply-imbedded shrapnel). The best way to hurt one is with silver weapons (see below), fire, or major amounts of physical trauma (like smashing into him with a car, crushing him under a bulldozer, chopping his head off, cutting out his heart, or somehow causing him to lose most of his blood). If injured to the point of death, a werewolf stops regenerating — self-healing requires energy, and there's only so much any werewolf's body contains. (In fact, after going through a lot of shape changes or regeneration in a short period a werewolf is often ravenously hungry.)

Werewolves have extraordinarily keen senses, particularly smell. Once a werewolf gets someone's scent, he's not likely to ever forget it. Wearing wolfsbane can conceal a person's (or another werewolf's) scent from a werewolf — the herb distorts the smells around it to a werewolf's nostrils — but the presence of wolfsbane tells a werewolf that there's a knowledgeable enemy nearby.

Werewolves relate well to wolves and other canines. Sometimes this relationship is based on respect and sometimes on fear, but in either case it benefits the werewolf.

Despite their many strengths, werewolves also have some weaknesses that Hunters know well and exploit whenever possible. First and foremost, they're badly hurt by bullets and other weapons made of silver — not only do they take extra damage from them, their rapid healing powers don't apply to that damage! Second, they're not always able to control their ability to remain in human form. All werewolves automatically change to man-wolf form during the three nights of the full moon; not even the oldest, most experienced werewolves can resist this lunar call. Beyond that, various forms of stress — being injured or tortured, being subjected to serious emotional turmoil, smelling another werewolf, smelling significant amounts of blood, being extremely hungry — can sometimes force a change. Lastly, werewolves are prone to losing control and becoming bestially fierce when hurt in battle; this makes them even more terrifying opponents, but also deprives them of the ability to think with human cunning.

Even a new werewolf (like Cecil Huffman) is worth a high PUFF bounty (\$50,000). Experienced ones are double that. And for an old, experienced one — a werewolf with "a lot of blood on its jaws," as an MCB agent once put it — the sky is practically the limit.

Pursuant to the Anti-Lycanthropy Act of 1995, it's US policy to terminate all confirmed lycanthropes immediately. The

MCB has special testing kits it can use in the field to determine if someone's a lycanthrope, though these are not 100% reliable. Its full laboratory tests are, however.

Appearance: A werewolf looks like a cross between a wolf and a man, with a man's body, the head of a ferocious wolf, and sharp claws on his fingers and toes. Typically a werewolf's fur is roughly the same color as the person's natural hair color when in human form, and its eyes are golden.

OTHER LYCANTHROPES

Most of the time when a Hunter or MCB agent says "lycanthrope" he means "werewolf," since werewolves are by far the most common type of lycanthrope encountered (particularly in the United States, Canada, Europe, and Russia). But they're not the only type. Some other known lycanthropes include:

- werebears, found primarily in Siberia and Alaska/northern Canada.
- weredolphins, who tend to be friendly and helpful toward humans when they can do so without being discovered. A weredolphin codenamed "Ms. Fish" served with Operation Unicorn during World War II doing naval reconnaissance.
- werejaguars, found in Mexico and Central/South America.
- wereleopards, found in various parts of Africa.
- wererats, found in some large cities
- weresharks, who are the opposite of weredolphins in many ways: aggressive, fierce, and prone to eating humans. Weredolphins and weresharks tend to fight when they encounter each other.
- werespiders, or *anansi kama*, native to Africa
- weretigers, found in India.

How these other types of lycanthropes came to exist is unknown, since they weren't affected by the Amulet of Koschei.

Perhaps similar amulets exist for other types of creatures, or maybe the Beasts have more than one way to re-skin a human.

Man Of The Forest

Ecology: A man of the forest, or *zoovnuj txeeg txivneej* in Hmong, is a humanoid monster native to South Asia (primarily Vietnam, Laos, Cambodia, and surrounding regions). It lives in the forests (as the name indicates), but often attacks hunters, travelers, or villages, primarily to steal food.

Other names for the man of the forest include *kukubomo* and *orang minyak*.

Personality/Motivation: A man of the forest's driving motivation is hunger. They eat the same sorts of foods as humans, and as much of it as possible. They're easily distracted by any opportunity to eat, especially if the food is good. They're also known for carrying off village girls into their woodland lairs to live with and look after them.

Powers/Tactics: Men of the forest aren't particularly violent in most circumstances, but can put up a fierce fight (using their claws and fangs) if necessary. Ordinary and silver ammunition has almost no effect (other than to anger them), but they're highly vulnerable to fire.

Appearance: A man of the forest is a small, purple-skinned humanoid with a pot belly. Its long-nosed face looks like a cross between a bat and a pig, with large tusks thrusting upward from the lower jaw.

Attributes: Agility d6, Smarts d6, Spirit d6, Strength d6, Vigor d6

Skills: Fighting d6, Stealth d6, Survival d8, Tracking d8

Pace: 6

Parry: 5

Toughness: 5

Gear/Attacks: None

Manticore

Ecology: The manticore lives throughout temperate, subtropical, and tropical regions, though it prefers forests, plains, and wastelands. It's carnivorous, feeding on large mammals (including humans) and similar creatures. In their voraciousness manticores often devour the entire body (including the bones) of their prey, even clothing and worn objects.

Personality/Motivation: Normal animal motivations, with a touch of cunning and wickedness not seen in ordinary creatures.

Powers/Tactics: Fierce, vicious, and aggressive, manticores prefer to attack on the ground by pouncing on their foes, then biting and clawing. If they fight from the air, they perform flying rakes with their claws. Before they pounce or rake, they often open the battle with a volley of long, needle-sharp spines that they shoot or throw from their tails.

Appearance: A manticore has the body of a lion (colored cinnabar red), the head of a man (with an enormous mouth containing three rows of razor-sharp fangs), bat-wings, and a tail tipped with sharp spines it throws at its prey.

Attributes: Agility d6, Smarts d6 (A), Spirit d8, Strength d12, Vigor d12

Skills: Fighting d8, Shooting d6, Stealth d6, Survival d8, Tracking d8

Pace: 6

Parry: 6

Toughness: 8

Gear/Attacks: Claws (Str+d8), Needle Volley (2d8, 10/20/30)

Special:

- **Size (2)**
- **Fly:** A manticore can fly with a pace of 10"

Mind Colossus

Ecology: A mind colossus, or *blarg* in the Elvish tongue, is a monstrous creature created eons ago by the Fey to help them hunt humans. The Fey used them like highly intelligent hunting dogs, basically, though they're far more dangerous than any terrestrial beast.

Personality/Motivation: A mind colossus is as intelligent as a human and as cruel and ruthless as a starving wolf. It has an inbred desire to consume human flesh and can easily kill dozens of people at a time when it's hungry.

Powers/Tactics: The Fey bred mind colossi to have mental powers that affect humans strongly (other humanoids, such as elves and orcs, are immune). First, they radiate a 16m radius psionic field around themselves that gives humans intense headaches that will eventually knock them out if they don't get outside the affected area soon enough. Second, they can cause humans to experience hallucinations, suffer confusion, or even go insane. If all that weren't enough, they also have razor-sharp claws and long, flexible tails to attack their foes with.

Appearance: A mind colossus has a body that looks like a human from the waist up, and from the waist down has four reptilian legs and a long tail that it can whip back and forth. Its scaly skin is green with black spots, and it has sharp claws on its fingers and feet. Its head is mostly human-shaped, but it has multiple green brains growing out of the top, sides, and back.

Attributes: Use the Dire Wolf profile, and remove the (A) from it's Smarts. Add the following ability:

- **Psionic Field:** Any human who starts their turn within 16" of a Mind Colossus must make a Smarts Test or be Shaken.

Mirelurks

Ecology: A mirelurk is an aquatic monster most often found in swamps, bogs, and bayous, but occasionally in lakes and seas. It eats flesh, anything from fish to humans, to sometimes other mirelurks.

Personality/Motivation: Normal animal motivations, though it seems to possess a much higher degree of intelligence and cunning than most animals.

Powers/Tactics: Mirelurks are huge and strong; their claws can cut through a car or a cement wall with ease. Their shells are thick and tough, able to bounce even high-caliber bullets — but the shell doesn't protect the head or its tentacles from the front.

Appearance: A mirelurk resembles a sort of monstrous crab; it's a sickly gray color speckled with purple flecks, and can weigh over 1,000 pounds. It has a shell, several dozen tapered, tentacle-like limbs, a head that looks sort of like a mass of tentacles, and two enormous crab-like claws. They bleed a thick, tacky ichor.

Attributes: Agility d6, Smarts d6 (A), Spirit d8, Strength d12, Vigor d12

Skills: Fighting d8, Swimming d8

Pace: 2

Parry: 6

Toughness: 18 (10)

Gear/Attacks: Claws (Str+d10, AP 2)

Special:

- Aquatic (6")
- Armor (10)

Minotaurs

Ecology: Minotaurs (or, as some of them prefer to be called, bullmen) live in small, isolated groups. They prefer temperate, Mediterranean, or at worst subtropical climates. They're vegetarians; eating meat is not only abhorrent to them, it makes them physically ill. As a result they can only live in places where they can gather a lot of plant material on a regular basis; otherwise they have to be nomadic, with all the dangers and difficulties that implies.



Travis Alamo Sam Houston

Like humans, minotaurs form couples and raise children in a nuclear family environment (though it's customary for minotaurs to look after one another's children in the group much more closely than humans tend to). A minotaur reaches adulthood at 12 years of age.

Personality/Motivation: Most minotaurs are intelligent, and have the normal motivations common to intelligent beings: comfort, power, survival, and more. Some are entirely bestial. But no matter how intelligent, minotaurs have short tempers; they're quick to anger and slow to forgive.

Powers/Tactics: Minotaurs typically fight by bellowing (to scare the opponent) and then charging, so they can butt their opponent or gore him with their horns. They prefer to fight one-on-one, and usually avoid charging into groups of foes if they can. However, knowing how well-protected they are by their thick hides, they don't hesitate to take on multiple enemies, or to take other risks, if they have to.

Appearance: A minotaur is a creature with the body of a large, muscular man and the head (and sometimes hooves) of a bull. His horns can be up to a foot long on either side (rarely longer). Thick, coarse, short dark hair covers his body.

Attributes: Use the Minotaur in the *Savage Worlds Adventure Edition* book and change the weapons to modern weapons.

Mummies

Ecology: Certain cultures (particularly the ancient Egyptians) preserve their dead by removing most of the organs from the body, replacing them with herbs, flowers, and precious substances, anointing the body with preservative oils and salts, and then wrapping it in linen bandages before placing it in a crypt or tomb (and usually in a sarcophagus as well). If the person returns to life as one of the undead, it becomes a mummy.

Most mummies arise for specific reasons: either a necromancer animates them; or powerful magic spells placed on them after their death cause them to rise up and seek vengeance on those who desecrate or rob their tombs. Occasionally, a mummified corpse comes back to life of its own accord, perhaps (in revenant-like fashion) to avenge itself on its killers or tormentors.

Personality/Motivation: Mummies have no personalities. They simply follow the orders given them by their creators. When they have fulfilled these commands, they return to their sarcophagi.

Although they're extremely rare, a few mummies retain their full intelligence (in other words, they're not built as Automaton, though they may have some Automaton powers to represent the way their bodies work). They also tend to be extremely powerful.

Powers/Tactics: Mummies use their tremendous strength in battle to smash and strangle, attacking tirelessly until they slay their target. They can also wield weapons.

Campaign Use: Mummies are strong opponents with plenty of story hooks. The PCs might find themselves pursued by one after robbing a tomb (if necessary, be sure to increase the mummy's abilities so it presents a threat to the entire group), or receive a request for help from some scholar with a mummy on his trail. A semi-intelligent mummy might even seek the PCs' aid to accomplish whatever goal it came back to life to achieve.

Appearance: Mummies are shambling human corpses entwined with linen bandages. (The intelligent ones often wear ordinary clothes instead, to disguise themselves.) Often the bandages begin to come loose, showing the desiccated brown flesh beneath.

Attributes: The Lich profile adequately matches the Mummy. Simply increase their Strength to d12 and their Vigor to d12.

Naga

Ecology: A naga is a serpent-man. Its natural habitats are warm, humid places such as jungles and swamps, but if summoned by magic a naga can appear practically anywhere that isn't frigid. (Once the temperature reaches freezing or below, nagas become significantly slower, weaker, and stupider, so they avoid such areas as much as possible.) It can eat many kinds of food, but considers human flesh and blood a particular delicacy.

Personality/Motivation: Malicious and cruel, nagas like to torment humans before eating them. While not as powerful as most demons, they're just as cruel and cunning.

Powers/Tactics: Nagas are stronger, faster, and tougher than humans (but not tough enough to resist gunfire or other physical weapons). Their bite is venomous, able to kill a healthy adult human within three minutes; only a special anti-venom prepared via Alchemy can save the victim. Many nagas also possess magical powers or can cast spells.

Appearance: A naga is a serpent-man: he has the (scale-covered) torso of a human, a serpent's body instead of legs, two arms (sometimes more), and the head of either a serpent or a human (but always with a large, fanged mouth). A naga's ophidian parts and scales have colors and patterns similar to the sorts of snakes native to the region it comes from.

Attributes: Agility d8, Smarts d8, Spirit d8, Strength d8, Vigor d12

Skills: Fighting d8, Survival d8, Swimming d8, Tracking d8

Pace: 8

Parry: 6

Toughness: 10 (2)

Gear/Attacks: Bite (Str+d4, Poison 4)

Special:

- **Armor (2)**
- A Naga might also be a Spellcaster at the GM's discretion.

Night-Shade

Ecology: A night-shade is a free-willed corporeal undead. Sometimes they're created by necromancers. Others are thought to arise when a person dies while experiencing extreme fear, and then isn't properly buried (or cremated).

Personality/Motivation: Like many other undead, night-shades hate the living and wish to destroy them. They don't seem to eat flesh, though. It's thought they subsist on the fear they create in their victims.

Powers/Tactics: A night-shade's main form of attack is its eyes: just looking at them can paralyze a living being. But its paralytic gaze only works if it establishes direct eye contact with someone. Characters can fight a night-shade without looking at it directly (such as by keeping their eyes on the ground, or looking at the creature's reflection in a mirror or pool of water), but this entails a penalty to attacks.

A night-shade's biggest weakness is the same as that of many other powerful undead and demonic entities: it can't stand the touch of holy objects or places, including holy water. It's also subject to the Banish Power.

Appearance: A night-shade is a tall, gaunt, shadowy black and grey undead humanoid dressed in ragged clothing (if it's dressed at all). Its eyes are large and burn with an eerie, greenish fire.

Ogre

Ecology: Ogres are large, monstrous humanoids — and like others of their ilk, were created by one of the Outsider Factions in the time before humanity existed to serve as soldiers and playthings. Monster experts' best guess is that they originated somewhere in what today is eastern Russia.

Modern ogres live in small bands in wilderness areas and prey on local humans, or serve a sorcerer, lich, or other master.

Personality/Motivation: Brutish and crude, ogres usually have simple motivations: hunger, comfort, greed, a love of fighting and violence. They make superb shock troops and guards, provided the tasks assigned them don't require much mental acumen.

Powers/Tactics: Ogres carry weapons appropriate to their size and enormous strength (and can even use large, everyday items, like stop signs or pieces of furniture, as weapons when necessary). They typically don't know how to use firearms; to them an assault rifle would just be a small, easily-broken club. They usually attack aggressively, trying to quickly overwhelm foes with brute force.

Appearance: Ogres are eight to ten foot tall humanoids with dun, ochre, grey, or dark skin (sometimes mottled). They have thick, squat, prognathous heads featuring large, heavy browridges, disproportionately long arms, and pointed ears; some have upward-pointing tusks.

Attributes: The profile in *Savage Worlds Adventure Edition* serves admirably as an Ogre. Simply add Arcane Backgrounds and the Spellcasting Skill to create a Ogre Mage.

OGRE MAGE

Occasionally an ogre is born with both a high intelligence and a natural affinity for magic. These are *ogre magi*, and they are fearsome foes indeed for a Hunter to take on, since they possess not only the physical durability and strength of an ogre but the power of their spells and minds. Some ogre magi live solitary lives, but most prefer to have a "court" of as many ogres or other humanoid monsters as they can safely control. Some Fey courts use them as "shock troops."

Oni

Ecology: An oni is a physical being, but its physical form is a "vessel" for the souls of those it has slain (or with which sorcerers "pay" them for services). It has the power to leech the soul from living beings, thus adding that soul to its own "life substance." As long as it gets a regular supply of souls, it's effectively immortal. If an oni's injured, its souls leak out of it like a white, wispy vapor — that's how it "bleeds."

Personality/Motivation: As intelligent beings, oni can have just about any motivation or personality, but nearly all of them are greedy, rapacious, and cruel. They enjoy causing harm and destruction, particularly if they get something out of it (like souls to feed on, or treasure).

Powers/Tactics: An oni is immensely strong and resilient, with large claws and fangs. That alone would qualify it as a major threat to mortals, but what really makes it dangerous is its mystical power over souls (see above). Its soul leeching power has a range of about 20 meters.

An oni can withstand most forms of physical injury (and can regenerate as well). Energy, such as electricity or fire, can harm it more easily.

Oni have the power to become invisible. Some may have other mystic powers as well, or are even stronger and tougher than average.

Appearance: An oni is a large, well-muscled humanoid ten to thirteen feet tall with unusually-colored skin — typically some shade of purple or red. Its head and face are longer and pointier than a human's, and its eyes may be a burning red or an evilly-gleaming pure black. Tusks, sometimes extremely large ones, jut up from its lower jaw. It has six fingers on each hand, each one tipped with a razor-sharp black claw as long as a steak knife. Its toes are also clawed.

Attributes: Agility d8, Smarts d8, Spirit d8, Strength d12, Vigor d12+2

Skills: Fighting d10, Notice d6, Survival d8, Stealth d8, Tracking d8

Pace: 8

Parry: 7

Toughness: 12 (2)

Gear/Attacks: Bite (Str+d4, Poison 4)

Special:

- **Armor (2)**
- **Hardy**
- **Invisibility:** An Oni can cast Invisibility as an action on itself, as per the Power. No roll or Power Points are required, and the Invisibility is always the base power.
- **Regeneration (Fast)**
- **Soul Leech:** As an action, an Oni can target a living creature within 20" and leech their soul. The target of this ability must make a Spirit Test. If they fail, the Oni kills them immediately, leeching their soul, and healing the Oni 1 Wound.
- **Weakness:** Electricity and Fire damage ignore an Oni's Armor and halve it's Toughness.

Orc

Ecology: Orcs — urks, in their language, or Homo ogrillion in Latin — are humanoids who (unbeknownst to them) were created eons ago as servants and warriors by one of the Outsider Factions (see [page 139](#)). This same Faction created elves to serve as their overseers and commanders, resulting in the two species having a deep-seated, almost instinctual hatred for one another. (The legends and histories of both species speak of an ancient war between the two, which actually occurred when the Faction stopped paying attention to them and the orcs revolted against the elves.) Orcs were originally found primarily in Central Asia,

BIA AND CRATOS

During the Martin Hood incident, two supernatural mercenaries hired by Hood stalked Owen Pitt: a pair of ancient, powerful oni called Cratos and Bia. They were no ordinary oni. Like Agent Franks, they were Fallen spirits who found physical forms to occupy so they could exist on Earth rather than in Hell. How they took over two onis' bodies remains unknown, though it probably relates to the fact that oni "feed" on souls.

Both Bia and Cratos were "killed" during the Hood incident. Thereafter they were fortunate enough to become two of the Fallen to inhabit new Franks-like bodies created by Project Nemesis. They might have escaped destruction during the Nemesis incident, but have not been seen or heard from since.



but have since migrated to many parts of the world through various means.

Like humans, orcs can reside just about anywhere. They typically live in clans or tribes whose size is dictated by the available local resources and the need to maintain secrecy (so typically no more than a few hundred orcs, at most). A chieftain — typically the strongest or cleverest orc in the group, or the eldest male — rules the tribe (his first wife often also has a prominent role in tribal matters).

Females tend to outnumber males by a significant margin in most orc tribes, so the typical custom is for a male to take multiple wives. To win a wife's hand he has to kill an enemy or monster on her behalf — and the tougher or more dangerous the foe, the more devoted the wife will be, and the more sons she'll supposedly give her husband.

Orc children are born after a seven-month gestation period. They're raised communally by their village or clan until they reach early puberty, when they undergo the "Reckoning Day" ritual (see below). Depending on the outcome of that ritual and his tribe's customs, a young orc may find himself now considered an adult, exiled, or executed. An orc who is accepted into the tribe and passes into adulthood must then complete some sort of challenge or journey to prove himself to the tribe. The chieftain or tribal elders may suggest one to him, but it's more likely he'll find something a challenge to his life gift and tackle it on his own.

Orcs have prominent tusks. Although they can use these as weapons if necessary, generally they prefer not to.



Edward

Orcs are omnivores, though they prefer a meat-heavy diet when they can get it. Their systems are better able to handle not fully ripe or partly spoiled food than humans' without negative consequences.

Orcs speak their own language, one that's very difficult for humans to learn. Like human languages it comes in variations and dialects; *Uzbek* Orcish differs from *Kazakh* Orcish, for example. They can learn human languages (and usually do learn the dominant one in the region where they live), but they tend to speak them haltingly, with a harsh, grating accent.

Orcs aren't PUFF-exempt and therefore rarely mingle with humans (even human allies). When they must interact with humans, they usually wear full-body clothing (including deep hoods, balaclavas, or masks) to hide their unusual appearance.

Personality/Motivation: Normal sentient humanoid motivations. Many orcs seem brutal and harsh by human standards, but this is simply their cultural/biological norm — they were bred as a warrior species, after all. Despite this they're capable of great kindness toward one another, profound acts of creativity and philosophy, and significant learning, should any of those things appeal to a given orc.

Most orcs worship the god Gnrlwz, the "fist of the North." He's a powerful warrior deity who represents all the best qualities of his people.

Powers/Tactics: Orcs use the full range of tactics available to sentient humanoids. They tend to favor large, powerful, and/or noisy weapons as a cultural matter, but they're more concerned with winning a battle than anything else.

Compared to humans, orcs are unusually tough and strong. Their senses are also more highly developed; they can see easily at night, and can smell things that elude the human olfactory senses.

As inherently mystical beings, orcs possess an unusual quality: the life gift. Each orc is supernaturally gifted at one particular endeavor or skill — so much so that he makes even the best human experts look untalented by comparison or violates what humans would consider the incontrovertible laws of physics. Life gifts can range from the relatively focused (for example, Skippy's piloting abilities) to the relatively broad (Edward's melee combat prowess, Gretchen's healing skills). They also range from the extraordinarily useful (like Skippy's, Edward's, and Gretchen's gifts) to the mundane (skill at gambling, skill at working crossword puzzles, phenomenal cooking ability, having a great singing voice). Life gifts aren't unique; more than one orc can have the same gift. For example, many orc women share Gretchen's gift for healing and shamanic magic.

As compensation for the life gift, each orc is also dismally bad at something — usually something that mirrors his life gift. For example, Skippy's a great pilot but can barely drive no matter how much he practices; Edward is death on two feet with a blade but can't shoot accurately regardless of how much time he spends at the target range.

An orc's life gift usually becomes apparent long before puberty; it shows in what interests him and what he seems to have a native talent for. His elders, recognizing this, encourage him to explore his interests and develop his abilities. It's expected by the time the child hits puberty that he'll have become well-versed in whatever his life gift is, so that he can demonstrate it to the tribal chieftain at his Reckoning Day ceremony and thus prove his worth to the tribe.

Appearance: Orcs are humanoids who are about 5'0" to 5'6" tall on the average. Their bumpy skin is usually a dark green, sometimes grey-green and/or mottled with hints of brown. Their heads are prognathous and somewhat porcine, with squat or snout-like noses, visible tusks jutting up from the lower jaw, and long, pointed ears. Their eyes

are rounder than humans', and are usually blue or yellow; they're deeply set, with heavy, bony brow-ridges and short foreheads. Many have piercings on their face or other parts of their body set with gold or bone jewelry. Most males are bald, or have wispy white hair; females tend to have more hair, also white.

Pixies

Ecology: Pixies, like their much larger distant cousins elves, were created by the Fey eons ago. The Fey used them as "scouts" to seek out humans during hunts, but also valued them as entertainment and snacks.

Pixies are relatively rare. They're most often found living near elf communities. They feed on dew, nectar, and other ephemeral natural substances.

Personality/Motivation: Pixies are impish, mischievous troublemakers. They've got a seemingly boundless curiosity and love to stick their noses into other beings' business. If someone isn't nice or tries to scare them away, they respond by playing nasty tricks.

Powers/Tactics: Pixies are too small and frail to be combatants. They rely on their size and Flight to stay out of the way of "Big People," or to make a quick escape if necessary.

Appearance: A Pixie is a three to five inch tall humanoid creature with insect- or butterfly-like wings. His skin may be unusual colors (typically light green or light blue), and he may or may not wear simple clothing.

Attributes: Agility d8, Smarts d8, Spirit d8, Strength d4, Vigor d4

Skills: Fighting d4, Stealth d8

Pace: 8

Parry: 4

Toughness: 4

Gear/Attacks: Claw (Str+1d4)

Special:

- **Fly:** Pixies can fly with a pace of 6"
- **Size** (-2)

Redcap

The fey are an infinitely varied faction, and the majority of those encountered on Earth are little more than common servitors crafted for specific functions over the course of thousands of years. One particularly unpleasant variety of servitor are the redcaps, cruel and vicious little monstrosities that exult in violence against humans of all kinds. It is believed that they were created to help protect sites important to the fey, which gave rise to the legends that the creatures protected old ruins and abandoned castles, particularly those that had been the sight of evil deeds or acts of particular violence. Some legends hold that certain individuals had redcaps in their service as familiars, but this is likely an exaggeration, although it is also possible that these individuals were themselves fey or at least sorcerers.

Redcaps are particularly rare in the modern day because of mankind's tendency to catalogue and quantify every old ruin and castle anywhere in the world. Some believe that historical societies have done more to curb the population of redcaps than any hunters. Despite this, some of the particularly tenacious creatures remain hidden away in their homes, waiting for the tour groups and security guards to go home for the night before wandering around their homes and preying upon anyone who intrudes upon their domain under the cover of night. Burglars and trespassers are rarely ever heard from again.

Redcaps resemble small, hunched old men, at least superficially. They tend to be around four feet tall with wrinkled skin and grey hair. Their eyes are particularly cruel, and they have both long, menacing fangs as well as significant talons. They can easily rend flesh from an opponent, to the point that even light body armor is no guarantee of protection against them. Their name comes from the

stocking caps that they wear, which they ritually soak in the blood of their enemies after any successful kill. The presence of the red hats has, on occasion, led to the barely indoctrinated new hunter to mistake them for gnomes. This rarely ends well.

Attributes: The Goblin profile in *Savage Worlds Adventure Edition* serves wonderful as a Redcap.

Reptoids

Ecology: Reptoids are reptile-men created eons ago by one of the Outsider Factions for its inscrutable purposes — perhaps as warriors or guards, maybe for some other reason. They most likely originated in what today is South and/or Central America, but today live in many places around the world. They typically prefer wet, underground lairs, and thus can frequently be found in the sewer systems of major cities. They're carnivores, and while they can subsist on the meat of animals, they tend to prefer human flesh. Those who live in cities try to prey on the homeless, prostitutes, and others who aren't likely to be missed.

Personality/Motivation: Reptoids are secretive and clever. They know their existence depends in large part on not attracting human attention, so they've gotten good at hiding, striking from surprise, and fleeing before anyone's aware of what really happened.

Powers/Tactics: Reptoids usually rely on their natural weapons in combat — claws and fangs to rend enemy flesh, the tail for blows from unexpected angles. They can wield simple weapons (clubs, knives, and the like), but have never been known to use firearms. However, they're quite skilled at setting up ambushes and traps.

Appearance: A reptoid is a 5'5" to 6'5" tall reptilian humanoid with green, scaly skin, a fang-filled mouth, short claws on its

fingers and toes, and a tail. Some are saurian in appearance, others more ophidian.

Attributes: Agility d6, Smarts d8, Spirit d4, Strength d6, Vigor d8

Skills: Fighting d6, Notice d6, Shooting, d6, Stealth d8, Survival d8, Swimming d6, Tracking d8

Pace: 6

Parry: 5

Toughness: 6

Gear/Attacks: Claws (Str+d4), Bite (Str+d4), simple weapons like clubs and knives.

Special:

- Aquatic (6")

Revenant

Ecology: A revenant is a free-willed corporeal undead. It's typically created when a person of particularly strong will (often a wizard of some sort) is murdered or dies in a criminally negligent accident, and wants to obtain revenge on its killer.

Personality/Motivation: A revenant's sole motivating factor is a desire to find and kill the person responsible for its death (or persons, in some cases). It's virtually impossible to dissuade it from this goal (though as a sentient being, a revenant is susceptible to appeals to reason and the like). Once it destroys its killer, it usually collapses and dies on the spot, or immediately returns to its grave and dies there.

Powers/Tactics: Although it looks something like a zombie, a revenant lacks the zombie's natural weapons (its teeth and fingernails look normal for a dead person's). Instead it has enormous strength, particularly for grabbing targets. Its preferred attack is to corner its killer and strangle him to death.

Appearance: A revenant is a type of corporeal undead. It looks similar to a zombie, though it's intelligent, free-willed, and much faster. Its body usually displays a death-wound of some sort, and it may still ooze blood. It usually

wears tattered clothing, but may sometimes dress in much better garb to conceal its true nature from the living (at least in bad light). It has a noticeably unusual gait, and its eyes usually appear extremely bloodshot.

Attributes: Agility d6, Smarts d6, Spirit d4, Strength d12+4, Vigor d8

Skills: Fighting d8, Notice d6, Stealth d10, Survival d6, Tracking d6

Pace: 6

Parry: 5

Toughness: 6

Gear/Attacks: Fists (Str + d4) and Grappling.

Special:

- Undead

Sasquatches

Ecology: Uncertain. Monster experts and cryptozoologists have tried to study the sasquatch for years, but the creature is both intelligent and highly secretive, making proper analysis of its customs and habits difficult. As near as scientists can determine, sasquatches live in single families, or sometimes in small bands of up to four families. They prefer deep wilderness where they're not likely to encounter humans (most notably that of the Pacific Northwest, but sasquatches can be found in many other wild areas across America). They have their own primitive language, one that only a few humans have studied to any degree, though it is known that it has dialects (words used by Pacific Northwest sasquatch may differ, slightly or greatly, from those used by sasquatch living in Louisiana or Florida.)

Sasquatches are immune to the lycanthropy virus.

Personality/Motivation: Normal sentient humanoid motivations. Though they live a very primitive lifestyle by human standards, sasquatches have a culture all their own (though humans know almost nothing

about it). They value their privacy highly and hide from humans as much as possible, even going so far to use their wilderness skills to spread false tracks, obscure their real tracks, and leave false or misleading “evidence” for investigators.

Powers/Tactics: Sasquatches are large and immensely strong. They’re relatively gentle and prefer to flee rather than fight, but if threatened in a situation where they can’t escape, or if their children are in danger, they attack fiercely, delivering powerful blows with their long arms and heavy fists.

Sasquatches have been PUFF exempt since their sentience was confirmed in the 1980s.

Appearance: A sasquatch is a humanoid about six to seven feet tall that looks something like a cross between a man and an ape. Its body is covered with dark grey thick hair or fur.

Giant Serpent

Ecology: A giant serpent is more or less the same as a regular serpent — just much, much larger. Small giant serpents can eat children; larger ones can easily consume adults. Some giant serpents grow even larger than this. For example, the infamous “Glasgow Mega-Snake” ate an entire train!

Like regular snakes, giant serpents are cold-blooded, and thus only found in warmer climates. They tend to eat a single large meal and live off that for weeks or months at a time, which often allows them to go undetected by Hunters for long periods.

Giant serpents are at home both on land and in the water. Some types prefer the water, since it’s harder for humans to find and kill them there.

Personality/Motivation: Normal animal motivations.

Powers/Tactics: Most giant serpents prefer to avoid combat, since there’s no benefit in it

for them. If forced to fight, they strike with deadly speed, using their fangs and brute strength to great effect. Some species are even faster, and/or venomous. A person bitten by a venomous giant serpent is almost certain to die unless someone administers antivenin immediately (which is rarely possible).

Appearance: A giant serpent is just that — an enormous snake, its mouth filled with fangs that drip deadly venom. Even the smallest is a serious threat to human life, and the largest can inflict serious harm on a population.

Attributes: The Venomous Snake profile in *Savage Worlds Adventure Edition* represents this monster perfectly.

Shades

Ecology: Shades are free-willed incorporeal undead, similar to ghosts in some respects but different in others. Like ghosts they feed off the life-force of the living via their chilling touch power.

Personality/Motivation: Shades hate the living. They hate their vitality, their color, their warmth — everything about them — and seek to take all that away by tormenting and killing them.

Powers/Tactics: Since they’re incorporeal, shades are immune to most non-magical attacks (and there’s no PUFF for them). But they have the power to affect the physical world in various ways, such as their chilling touch.

A shade’s strangest power is the ability to “weave” shadows, creating an area of impenetrable darkness (through which it can see without hindrance). It must have some shadows to work with, and the more it has the bigger the area of darkness it can create (up to its limit of 8m radius). For example, if it only had a few furniture shadows in a well-lit room to work with, a shade could only create about 2m radius of darkness; in a

dim room lit only by a candle or two it could create its full 8m radius darkness.

On the other hand, shades are weaker in light. If exposed to strong direct light (such as from a flashlight, a well-lit room, or sunlight), a shade suffers serious damage.

Appearance: A shade is similar to a ghost, but is usually somewhat smaller than it was in life and instead of looking insubstantial or wispy, it looks dark, shadowy, and evil.

Attributes: Simply use the Ghost profile, and give the Shade the ability to use the Darkness Power as an action (no roll required.)

Shoggoth

Ecology: A shoggoth is an extradimensional horror sent to this world by the Old One or other Elder Thing it was made by.

Personality/Motivation: Shoggoths are intelligent, though their thought processes are at least partly alien to humans. Their goal in life is to serve their master and carry out his every order.

Powers/Tactics: Fighting a shoggoth is difficult due to its semisolid body, its ability to grow however many tentacles and pseudopods it needs, its multiple sets of fangs and claws, and the fact that it has eyes looking every direction and thus is difficult to surprise. Its chief vulnerability is to fire, which it avoids if possible.

Appearance: A shoggoth is an extradimensional horror, a servant of the Old Ones. It's a black, blob-like creature about fifteen feet across and weighing approximately two tons. It's bulbous, lumpy, and asymmetrical, with white eyes and sharp-toothed mouths at many different points all over its body. It can grow tentacles and pseudopods at will.

Attributes: Agility d4, Smarts d8 (A), Spirit d6, Strength d12, Vigor d12+10

Pace: 4

Parry: 2

Toughness: 18

Special:

- **Smash:** A Shoggoth simply smashes into its enemies. No attack rolls are required for a Shoggoth to hit its foes in melee.
- **Smash:** Str+d10
- **Weakness (Fire):** A Shoggoth is automatically shaken when hit with an attack or power that uses Fire. If a Shoggoth is already shaken, they then suffer a Wound.

Sirens

Ecology: Sirens are bird-women creatures who are semi-divine or angelic in nature. Contrary to their appearance in many myths and legends, they're not normally inimical to men, though they may punish sinful men if ordered to do so by their divine superiors. Scholars speculate that the Fey created them as entertainers, or that they evolved their musical powers to keep the Fey (who become entranced by beautiful music) at bay.

Personality/Motivation: Normal sentient motivations, affected by their divine and generally beneficent nature.

Powers/Tactics: Sirens avoid battle unless it's with the forces of evil or necessary for their own survival. When it is, their most potent weapon is their persuasive speech (which can also be sung). When a siren speaks, it's difficult for any being to resist doing what she asks (though women are more resistant to a siren's powers than men). In a pinch a siren can also use her talons.

Sirens have the power to assume a fully human form so they can mingle undetected among men. Typically a siren's human form is that of a beautiful woman with blonde or black hair (or sometimes hair matching the shade of her feathers in her true form). In

human shape a siren may fall in love with and have children with a human male; these “half-siren” children possess their mother’s power of persuasive speech, but at most with two-thirds of a full siren’s effectiveness.

Appearance: A siren is a strange, beautiful creature with the body and of a human female and a bird’s wings projecting from its shoulder blades. Its voice is always enchanting to listen to, even when it’s just speaking normally.

Attributes: Agility d6, Smarts d6, Spirit d6, Strength d6, Vigor d6

Skills: Fighting d6, Performance d8, Persuasion d10

Pace: 6

Parry: 5

Toughness: 5

Gear/Attacks: GM’s discretion.

Special:

- **Very Attractive** (+2 to Performance and Persuasion rolls)
- **Fly 6”**
- **Siren’s Song:** Whenever a Siren speaks, anyone who can hear wants to obey. As an action, the Siren can instruct someone who can hear it to carry out a specific action. To disobey, the individual must make a Spirit test at the start of their turn, or follow the Siren’s instructions.

Skeletons

Ecology: Skeletons are the bones of the dead, re-animated through necromantic magics.

Personality/Motivation: Skeletons have no personalities. They simply follow the orders given them by their creators.

Powers/Tactics: In battle, skeletons wield weapons (typically swords), though they can use their bony fists if they must. They never flee (except when exposed to certain necromantic or holy powers); they fight until victorious or destroyed.

Appearance: Skeletons are walking human skeletons. They may wear a few tatters of cloth or carry weapons and shields.

Skinwalkers

Ecology: A skinwalker is a creature from American Indian mythology (though it can be found around the world; many cultures have legends of similar creatures). It steals the skins of its victims and wears them, taking their place in life for a short period to wreak even more harm and obtain even more victims. After it strips the skin from a body it consumes that body: blood, flesh, even bones, until there’s nothing left.

If it can’t find enough food, or if it needs to hide, a skinwalker can “hibernate” for long periods of time (as much as 200 years). During that time it ages at only 1/10 the usual rate, extending its long life even further.

Personality/Motivation: Skinwalkers aren’t precisely evil; it’s more like they’re predatory. But they do seem to take a fiendish glee in killing humans, eating their bodies, and taking their place for as long as they can get away with it. While disguised as someone they inflict emotional harm on that person’s loved ones, commit unethical and illegal acts, and so forth. Initially they do very little of this because they want to preserve the “disguise” as long as possible, but the longer they remain in a person’s skin the more their malicious nature comes to the fore.

Powers/Tactics: A skinwalker has the power to assume another person’s identity by wearing his skin (and imitating his voice with mimicry). Of course, the “disguise” can only last so long, since the skinwalker generally doesn’t know much about its victim (other than what it reads in his personal records, if it has time to review them). When it thinks the jig is almost up, the skinwalker tries to get close enough to someone else to kill him and take his identity. It then destroys the old

skin completely so it will seem as if its last victim simply vanished.

A skinwalker relies on deception and stealth, not physical power. Once uncovered it's relatively easy to kill, compared to most monsters. It will flee rather than fight unless it has no alternative or is convinced it can kill its attacker with its claws.

Appearance: A skinwalker is a hideous humanoid being that in its natural form looks like a short, dark-skinned, emaciated human.

Attributes: Agility d6, Smarts d8, Spirit d8, Strength d6, Vigor d6

Skills: Fighting d6, Notice d6, Performance d6, Persuasion d8, Stealth d10, Survival d8.

Pace: 5

Parry: 5

Toughness: 6

Gear/Attacks: Standard human weapons.

Special:

- The Skinwalker can take the form of any individual it kills. This disguise is perfect from a visual standpoint, but the Skinwalker has no special knowledge of the victim or their life.

Giant Spiders

Ecology: Giant spiders are like regular spiders — just much, much larger. As such they're the stuff of many peoples' nightmares.

An especially large female giant spider — typically about the size of an elephant! — is sometimes referred to as a “shelob,” after the monster in J.R.R. Tolkien's *The Two Towers*.

Personality/Motivation: Normal animal motivations.

Powers/Tactics: Giant spiders prefer to attack from ambush. They sneak up on prey using their Stealth and Climbing to remain unseen, then leap to the attack. Once a giant spider sinks its fangs into someone,

that person usually doesn't have long to live, for those fangs inject a virulent poison. (In some cases the poison merely paralyzes, allowing the spider to take the victim back to its lair and suck out his innards at leisure.)

Most giant spiders are of the “wolf spider” variety — they chase prey down and pounce on it rather than building webs. If you want a giant spider that spins a web, simply allow them to use the Entangle Power, which defines both a standing web and webbing that the spider might wrap around an unconscious enemy.

Appearance: A giant spider resembles a tarantula, but is much larger — from roughly the size of a kitten to the size of a large dog.

Attributes: Simply use the Giant Spider profile in *Savage Worlds Adventure Edition*, but remove the Poison ability.

Helicopter Spider

Ecology: Helicopter spiders primarily feed on carrion, using their acidic spittle to soften it to almost liquid form for easy consumption. But they're not averse to eating living flesh, especially if there are enough of them to “gang up” on a target.

Helicopter spiders reproduce by laying eggs. Usually the eggs are laid in a small hunk of carrion shortly before they're due to hatch; the young eat their way out. But females have been known to lay their eggs inside living animals at times. In this case, the hatching young simply kill the victim when they hatch.

Personality/Motivation: Normal animal motivations.

Powers/Tactics: Helicopter spiders can fly and have large fangs. But their most dangerous weapon is their acid-like spittle, which can eat through cloth, body armor, and even metal with ease. If enough

helicopter spiders attack a target at once, the odds for that target's survival aren't good.

On the other hand, helicopter spiders are weak and easy to kill — a single bullet will do it. A grenade or flamethrower can take out whole “flocks” of them in one swift blow.

Appearance: A helicopter spider is a black spider about the size of a softball, with wings similar to those of a hummingbird. It has large, pronounced fangs that drip deadly venom.

Attributes: Simply use the Giant Spider profile in *Savage Worlds Adventure Edition*.

Stonecoats

Ecology: A stonecoat is a spirit of deep earth and cold streams. They slumber far underground, and unless disturbed or unleashed — for example, by an earthquake, digging a mine, or drilling for oil — they may become enraged and attack the humans responsible, or any human in the region.

Personality/Motivation: Stonecoats mostly just want to be left alone to enjoy their subterranean existence. As long as they're not disturbed, they usually cause no trouble. They're quick to anger if human activity rouses them. But once someone calms the stonecoat down, or it sees that there is still “worthy strength” in the world (i.e., heroes with enough skill and bravery to oppose it), it will let its body collapse and return to its home. (For example, Bubba Shackleford once defeated one by counting coup on it with a coup stick.)

Powers/Tactics: When it needs to interact with the physical world — for example, to attack annoying humans — a stonecoat forms a body from gravel, rubble, and whatever other rocks it can find. This makes it immensely strong and highly resistant to injury. It's strong enough to throw huge boulders a hundred yards or more, and

can smash through vehicles and buildings with ease. The best way to defeat one is to either calm it down somehow and convince it to return home, or to impress it with your bravery and fighting skill so that it acknowledges your worthiness and departs.

When a stonecoat pronounces its curse upon someone, that person first develops a chill he can't shake, and that nothing seems to cure. Steadily he becomes colder and colder, as the curse settles in him more deeply. He craves warm drink and food, like soup or coffee, but that's not enough to dispel the cold. In time he develops a yearning to drink hot human blood, and at that point the transformation's complete: he becomes a *chenoo*, a mindless, evil thing that seeks to kill humans. Chenoo are also difficult to hurt. One Indian legend claims that the only way to kill a chenoo is to shoot it with seven arrows in the heart, but modern hunters have discovered that a lot of bullets do the trick just as well. When a stonecoat chooses to return to its lair, it usually makes all the chenoo it controls collapse and die instantly.

Appearance: A stonecoat looks like a gigantic humanoid made out of rocks and stones, with few if any significant features.

A chenoo looks like a man who's been frozen to death or died from exposure to the cold, with white skin dotted with blue pustules, red, bulging eyes, and claws; they give off so much cold that any water near them freezes. They have blood like slushy, red water.

Attributes: The Earth Elemental profile in *Savage Worlds Adventure Edition* is suitable for a Stonecoat.

To represent the Stonecoat's curse, use the following: The Stonecoat must pronounce its curse on a single target. That target must make a Spirit Test every day when they wake up. On a failure, they get colder and colder. After the fourth failure, they become a *chenoo*, and are effectively a zombie (and dead.)



Thistlemen

Ecology: A thistleman is a humanoid plant creature native to dry, dusty, hot regions (such as the American Southwest). They're carnivorous, but can go long periods without food if necessary. According to the best available information, they live in nuclear families or small, multi-family groups.

Personality/Motivation: Thistlemen regard humans, animals, and other fleshly creatures as nothing but food — “the blessing of meat,” as they put it. While they're fiercely protective of their own kind, they regard humans with evil disdain and kill them gladly.

Powers/Tactics: A thistleman is fast — as fast as a vampire, according to Owen Pitt — and tough enough to withstand even heavy gunfire. It regenerates much like a lycanthrope, though not quite as quickly. It relies on its claws and spine-like teeth in combat, but just touching it causes injuries thanks to the spines and prickly leaves all over its body. As a plant-based life form, it's vulnerable to fire. It can scuttle and crawl along the ground just as easily and quickly as it can walk.

Perhaps worst of all, thistlemen have shapeshifting powers that allow them to look like ordinary human beings. This deprives them of their natural weapons, but allows them to escape detection or to blend in so they can assess potential prey.

Appearance: A thistleman has a humanoid body covered with sharp spines and prickly leaves. Its claws, and the spines it has in place of teeth, are jet black; instead of human-like eyes it has two black holes that serve the same function.

Attributes: Agility d10, Smarts d8, Spirit d8, Strength d6, Vigor d6

Skills: Fighting d6, Notice d6, Persuasion d8, Stealth d10, Survival d8

Pace: 10

Parry: 5

Toughness: 5

Gear/Attacks: Claws and Spines (Str+d8, AP 1)

Special:

- **Wall-Walker**
- **Fast (as per the Edge)**
- **Hardy**
- **Regeneration (Fast)**
- **Shapeshifting:** A Thistleman can look like an ordinary human being by spending an action to shift shape. This deprives them of their natural claw and spine attacks.
- **Weakness** (Fire – The Thistleman can't soak damage from fire.)

Trolls

Ecology: Trolls, like most other humanoid monsters, were created by one of the Outsider Factions eons ago to serve them. In the modern world they've spread across the world and often live in small communities called “packs,” which support themselves through their computer skills (trolls take to computers like Hunters do to firearms). Occasionally a particularly strong or clever troll will set himself up as the “king” of one of these packs. Compared to many humanoids, trolls are intelligent and clever.

Trolls are carnivores who prefer to eat human flesh (especially that of children). Some of them have developed a taste for junk food instead.

Personality/Motivation: Most trolls are malicious and cruel; they like to make trouble for the sake of trouble, and have no qualms about hurting their human prey. But some have, through exposure to the Internet, become at least slightly better mannered.

Powers/Tactics: Trolls are lazy and usually prefer to avoid fighting (or any other hard work) if possible. But if they must fight, their enormous strength and long claws serve them well. Even better, trolls are very difficult to harm. They regenerate injuries at a rapid pace, and can even regrow lost limbs. The one chink in their armor is fire; they can't heal burn damage any faster than a human can.

Appearance: A troll is an eight foot tall humanoid with green, rubbery skin; its body looks almost like a mass of greasy water hoses rolled up and stacked into a human shape. (Their flesh feels warm and squishy to the touch.) Its nose is long and pointed, its mouth full of large, dirty, blunt teeth. Its arms and legs are unnaturally long; its hands and feet are large and sport claws a half-inch long. It has round, yellow eyes and stringy black hair.

Attributes: The Troll profile in *Savage Worlds Adventure Edition* works wonderfully to represent MHI Trolls.

Tsuchigumo

Ecology: A *tsuchigumo* (or *jorogumo*) is a horrific Japanese monster that feeds on humans. Most of them are female, and they tend to be solitary except when the urge to mate comes upon them. Traditionally they live in deep, dark forests, caves, swamps, and other such places, but as humanity has expanded and tamed the wilderness many of them have moved to the cities, where they hide among the teeming millions and live in abandoned buildings, sewers, and similar lairs.

Personality/Motivation: Tsuchigumo are cruel, predacious beings. They're completely self-centered and rarely even get along well with their own kind; it's not unknown for a female to kill and eat a male after mating with him. They view humans as food, though they sometimes find them amusing in their

own alien way; after all, paying attention to human culture helps them blend in with their unsuspecting prey.

Powers/Tactics: In addition to her natural weapons (mandibles, claws on all limbs), a *tsuchigumo* possesses the power to generate highly believable illusions which can affect not only sight but the senses of hearing, touch, and smell as well — a *tsuchigumo* disguised like a child will feel like a child if picked up, and sound like one when it speaks.

Besides using her illusions to make herself look like a human, a *tsuchigumo* can distract or trick her enemies so that she can get close enough to strike, or can flee if the situation becomes dangerous for her. So powerful are these abilities that a *tsuchigumo* can maintain two (and sometimes more) illusions within approximately a 100 meter radius area, and those illusions remain stable and completely believable even though she is unable to maintain line of sight to them.

People covered by a *tsuchigumo*'s illusion (for example, an ally she's hiding from a sentry) often hear a strange buzzing noise, and experience a slight "shifting" or warping of things they see (at least temporarily).

Appearance: A *tsuchigumo* resembles a sort of humanoid spider. It has six arms in addition to its two legs, its head has sharp mandibles and multiple eyes, and stiff black hair covers most of its body. (A few *tsuchigumo* are other colors, such as green or red.) However, when among humans it uses its illusion powers to disguise itself as some sort of human, ideally one that will put humans at ease and allow it to get close and attack. Since most *tsuchigumo* are female, they disguise themselves as some sort of attractive or seductive woman. For example, the *tsuchigumo* who worked for STFU (until Special Agent Franks killed it) favored the guise of a cute Japanese schoolgirl.

A tsuchigumo's blood is a sort of greenish slime, and its smell may depend in part on the disguise it "had on" when it was injured. For example, Heather Kerkonen noted that the blood of the tsuchigumo employed by STFU smelled like "bubble gum and spider webs," since her disguise was that of a Japanese schoolgirl.

Attributes: Agility d10, Smarts d8, Spirit d8, Strength d6, Vigor d6

Skills: Fighting d8, Notice d6, Persuasion d8, Stealth d10, Survival d8

Pace: 6

Parry: 6

Toughness: 5

Gear/Attacks: Claws & Mandibles (Str +d6)

Special:

- **Multiple Attacks:** A tsuchigumo can make up to 3 attacks as one action.
- **Illusions:** As an action, a tsuchigumo can summon up to two illusions within 30". These illusions are automatically believed to be real, unless those who'd occupy that space pass a Spirit roll with a -2 penalty, or unless the illusions are physically interacted with.

Vampires

Ecology: Vampires are a powerful form of undead — the most powerful kind, in fact, other than lichs (which are much rarer). No one knows for certain how the first one was created (probably through some particularly foul necromantic ritual), but all subsequent ones have arisen when an existing vampire kills a human while drinking his blood. (This typically occurs 3-6 nights after death if the body's not destroyed.) Monster experts have suggested that there may be a limit to how many "children" a vampire can create, but if this is true, it may apply only to standard vampires and not to masters.

Vampires survive by drinking the blood of the living (though they can also ingest normal human food if desired). Typically they like to consume about one adult human's worth of blood per week (more when they're younger, less when they're older), though they can substitute less tasty animal blood if they must. At a minimum a vampire needs one adult human's worth of blood per month, or he'll starve to death. Some vampires ensure themselves of a food supply by keeping kidnapped humans in "pens" (typically pits in the ground) and bringing them out periodically to feed on them.

Broadly speaking, vampires come in five types:

- the standard (or "lesser") vampire, by far the most common type. Relatively inexperienced, they tend to be driven by primal emotions and feelings — anger, hunger — and are often confused by their transformation, sometimes to the point of mental breakdown.
- the higher vampire, which is similar to a standard vampire but has calmed down and gotten some experience at being a bloodsucker. They usually sleep during the day, and even if not sleeping are often slower and more easily confused during daylight hours.
- the major vampire, which is stronger and faster than higher, and also perfectly alert during the daytime if it needs to be.
- the greater vampire, even stronger and faster than a major, and able to withstand anything but direct sunlight during the day.
- the master vampire, the rarest and most powerful of its type — far more powerful than even a greater — with a host of supernatural powers. One scholar has estimated that to reach master level, a vampire has to kill and consume the blood of at least fifty thousand humans.

A vampire's initial power at the time of his creation depends primarily on how strong its creator is: "the more powerful the creator, the stronger the creation," as Julie Shackleford once put it. Thus, a vampire created by a higher vampire begins unlife more powerful than one created by a standard vampire. Thereafter

Susan Shackleford



a vampire grows in power based upon its age and experiences, the types and number of beings it feeds upon, and so forth, eventually ascending into the ranks of the masters if it lives long enough. An experienced master vampire is a terror almost unequalled in the supernatural world. The most powerful vampire known to MHI to have ever existed is Jaeger, a former soldier of Nazi Germany who was at last slain during the DeSoya Caverns incident. Susan Shackleford (see [page 175](#)) may soon be in a position to usurp that title, though — if she hasn't already.

Standard vampires sometimes work in groups of two to three (rarely larger), though they're often solitary. Master vampires always work alone; the only known instance of them working together (seven of them, possibly all there were in the world at the time) was the DeSoya Caverns incident.

Personality/Motivation: Vampires are thoroughly evil and cruel. They exist only to satisfy their perverse and deadly appetites, and gladly toy with humans and meddle in human affairs purely for the joy of causing misery, despair, and havoc. But each vampire is an individual, with his own approach to evil.

Powers/Tactics: Vampires possess a plethora of powers and abilities, making them the ideal predator. Most obvious are their fangs and claws, backed by their immense strength, agility, and speed — a standard vampire reacts at least three times as fast as an ordinary human, a master vampire five or six times as fast. Thus, either type can move so quickly in combat that it's difficult for normal human sight to track them continuously; with a master vampire it may seem as if he can cross large spaces in the blink of an eye.

But vampires possess many other weapons as well. First, they have hypnotic gazes, which they use to render prey helpless so they can feed. Second, master

vampires can change form into a mist and thus approach by stealth or escape a dangerous foe. Third, masters can also invade human minds telepathically to send messages, read memories, and the like.

On the other hand, vampires have a number of severe weaknesses which are well known to Hunters. First, they suffer horrendous burns if they touch, or are touched by, holy objects or places. (Though greater and master vampires can tolerate this pain enough to get rid of the source before it causes them any truly serious harm.) Second, they cannot enter a dwelling unless invited in by someone inside or the building's owner. Unfortunately, even something as simple as a doormat saying "Welcome" constitutes an invitation. After a vampire's entered a building once, it can freely do so forever. Third, they do not show reflections in mirrors or shiny surfaces. Fourth, they cannot stand direct sunlight; it burns and kills them quickly.

Fifth, a vampire can be weakened by impaling him through the heart with a wooden stake. This paralyzes standard, higher, major, and greater vampires, leaving them totally unable to move or regenerate, and thus vulnerable to having their heads cut off so that they die. But it only weakens a master vampire.

Lastly, a vampire can be fought off by someone with sufficiently strong religious convictions — with faith, in other words. The religion in question isn't what matters; what's crucial is genuine, sincere belief in a higher, divine power. The victim of the Vampire must make a Spirit Test with a -2 Penalty. If the victim wins the contest, the vampire cannot approach close enough to touch him (unless the victim's concentration waivers for some reason). However, the vampire could throw things at the victim, set the building he's in on fire, or the like. This is rare (most vampires flee

and await another opportunity to strike if defeated by faith), but it's possible. If the vampire wins the contest, the victim's faith simply isn't strong enough and he ends up becoming a tasty meal for the bloodsucker.

Although many old stories about vampires contain useful information, some of the "facts" presented in vampire legends, movies, and books simply aren't true. They can't change shape into wolves or bats, nor can they summon wolves, bats, or any other animal. They're not scared of garlic (unless maybe you put way too much of it in their lasagna). They can freely cross running water, and aren't harmed by water (other than holy water). They don't have to sleep in coffins filled with their graveyard soil, but many of them prefer to (though why this is remains unknown).

Appearance: Vampires look like normal human beings, with pale skin; their hair is the same color as it was when they were alive (unless they dye it). Some dress at the height of fashion; others favor a punk or goth look. Only when they allow their fangs and claws to grow is it obvious they're not human.

When a vampire's extremely angry or badly injured, it may reveal its true form: elongated body; grey skin stretched tight over twitching muscles; fangs and claws as long as fingers; ears lengthened and swept up to give it a bat-like look.

Vampire, Lesser

Lesser Vampires are newly turned vampires, not yet used to their abilities and powers.

Attributes: Agility d8, Smarts d8, Spirit d6, Strength d10, Vigor d10

Skills: Climbing d8, Driving d6, Fighting d10, Intimidation d8, Knowledge (All) d6, Notice d8, Persuasion d8, Shooting d8, Stealth d8, Streetwise d6, Taunt d8, Throwing d6, Tracking d8.

Pace: 6

Parry: 7 (8)

Toughness: 7 (9)

Gear: This can depend on the vampire, but generally swords (Str +d6), or various firearms and armor can be found on vampires.

Special:

- **Weakness (Sunlight):** Each round a Vampire is in the sun they suffer an automatic Wound.
- **Bite:** Str+1d4
- **Stake:** A Lesser Vampire can be staked in the heart. This is a called shot with a -6 penalty to the test. If successful, a Lesser Vampire is killed.
- **Undead:** Vampires gain +2 to Toughness and +2 to Recover from Shaken.
- **Lightning Reflexes:** Vampires get two initiative cards each round and may act on both.
- **Sire:** Anyone slain by a vampire via its bite rises as a Vampire on the next Sunset.
- **Edges:** Lesser Vampires gain the following edges:

o Acrobat	o Alertness
o Ambidextrous	o Attractive
o Block	o Brawler
o Charismatic	o Command
o Improved Dodge	o Quick

Vampire, Greater

Greater Vampires are powerful and experienced vampires, accustomed to their abilities and powers. They often have followers and cultists with them.

Attributes: Agility d10, Smarts d10, Spirit d10, Strength d12+2, Vigor d12+2

Skills: Climbing d10, Driving d8, Fighting d12, Intimidation d10, Knowledge (All) d8, Notice d10, Persuasion d10, Shooting d10, Stealth d10, Streetwise d10, Taunt d10, Throwing d8, Tracking d10.

Pace: 7

Parry: 8 (9)

Toughness: 10 (12)

Gear: This can depend on the vampire, but generally swords (Str +d6), or various firearms and armor can be found on vampires.

Special:

- **Weakness (Sunlight):** Each round a Vampire is in the sun they suffer an automatic Wound.
- **Bite:** Str+1d6
- **Unarmed Strikes:** Str+d4+2
- **Stake:** A Greater Vampire can be staked in the heart. This is a called shot with a -6 penalty to the test. If successful, a Greater Vampire is paralyzed, but not killed.
- **Undead:** Vampires gain +2 to Toughness and +2 to Recover from Shaken.
- **Lightning Reflexes:** Vampires get two initiative cards each round and may act on both.
- **Sire:** Anyone slain by a vampire via its bite rises as a Vampire on the next Sunset.
- **Edges:** Greater Vampires gain the following edges:

o Acrobat	o Alertness
o Ambidextrous	o Attractive
o Block	o Brawler

- o Charismatic o Command
- o Improved Dodge o Quick
- o Woodsman

Vampire, Master

Master Vampires are terrifying and earth-shattering opponents. Old beyond memory and powerful beyond belief, a Master Vampire is more than a match for a team of experienced hunters.

Attributes: Agility d12+2, Smarts d12+4, Spirit d12, Strength d12+6, Vigor d12+6

Skills: Climbing d10, Driving d8, Fighting d12+2, Intimidation d10, Knowledge (All) d10, Notice d12, Persuasion d12, Shooting d12+2, Stealth d12, Streetwise d10, Taunt d10, Throwing d10, Tracking d12.

Pace: 9

Parry: 10 (11)

Toughness: 18 (20)

Gear: This can depend on the vampire, but generally swords (Str +d6), or various firearms and armor can be found on vampires.

Special:

- **Weakness (Sunlight):** Each round a Vampire is in the sun they suffer an automatic Wound.
- **Shift into Mist:** As an action, a Master Vampire can shift into Mist. This renders them immune to attacks and damage and allows them to fly at their normal Pace.
- **Mind Control:** Once per turn, a Master Vampire can use the Puppet power. This use costs no power points, and uses their Persuasion Skill in place of a normal Arcane Skill.
- **Regeneration:** Master Vampires automatically Recover from Shaken and heal 1 Wound each action. Wounds from Sunlight can not be healed by this ability.

- **Stake:** A Master Vampire can be staked in the heart. This is called a shot with a -6 penalty to the test. If successful, a Master Vampire is paralyzed, but not killed.

- **Bite:** Str+d8

- **Unarmed Strikes:** Str+d4+2

- **Undead:** Vampires gain +2 to Toughness and +2 to Recover from Shaken.

- **Quicksilver Reflexes:** Master Vampires get three initiative cards each round and may act on all three.

- **Sire:** Anyone slain by a vampire via its bite rises as a Vampire on the next Sunset.

- **Edges:** Greater Vampires gain the following edges:

- o Acrobat o Alertness
- o Ambidextrous o Attractive
- o Very Attractive o Block
- o Brawler o Charismatic
- o Command o Improved Dodge
- o Quick o Woodsman

Vodyanoy

Ecology: A vodyanoy is a part-man, part-frog-like Fey creature who inhabits bodies of water in Slavic regions (preferably small ponds or the like). It eats human children, whom it lures into the water and drowns. No vodyanoy have ever been reported in North America as far as MHI knows.

Personality/Motivation: Vodyanoy are cruel and predacious. They care nothing for the suffering they cause among humans, only for keeping their bellies full.

Powers/Tactics: A vodyanoy is most at home in and around the water, and rarely travels far from whichever pond or stream it's made its home. It won't fight away from water, and uses its ability to breathe underwater and swim swiftly to its best

advantage in combat whenever possible. It can also cling to walls and other vertical surfaces, though it prefers not to climb very high unless there's no other way to attack (or escape). Despite its appearance it moves with blinding speed when it has to. In addition to its great strength and claws, it can also use its tongue (which can be as much as ten feet long!) as a weapon in combat to grab people, snatch objects out of hands, and so forth. Its rubbery skin resists impacts well, including most attacks with edged weapons.

Appearance: A vodyanoy looks something like a cross between a human and a gigantic frog. It has big, glassy, bulging eyes, a lumpy, jowly head, and a huge mouth with an extremely long tongue. Its body is fat, squat, and heavy. Its hands and feet are webbed.

Attributes: Agility d6, Smarts d4 (A), Spirit d4, Strength d6, Vigor d8

Skills: Fighting d6, Swimming d6, Tracking d8

Pace: 6

Parry: 5

Toughness: 6

Gear/Attacks: Bite (Str+d4)

Special:

- **Fast (as per the Edge)**
- **Aquatic (6")**

Vulkodlak

Ecology: A vulkodlak is a type of corporeal undead created from the body of a human slain by a werewolf (or by an existing vulkodlak). Under the influence of special necromantic magics, the body returns to life as a twisted, half-human half-werewolf sort of "zombie."

As far as anyone knows, the only way to create vulkodlak involves the Amulet of Koschei, which has been destroyed. But in the world of MHI, absolutes like that aren't always so absolute...

Personality/Motivation: Like zombies, vulkodlak have no personalities; they unhesitatingly obey their creator. They also have a driving need to spread their curse — to kill living humans so that they, too, will become vulkodlak.

Powers/Tactics: Vulkodlak are similar to zombies, but much faster — they can run as swiftly as a living man. They have werewolf-like claws and fangs. However, the distorted form of their bodies makes some tasks difficult; they suffer a -2 on all Agility-based rolls (except for Stealth). On the other hand, while they are automatons they're smarter than zombies — better able to react to changing circumstances or their foes' tricks.

Like zombies, vulkodlak transform their victims into more of themselves. This happens whenever a vulkodlak kills its victim, regardless of whether it does this with claws or fangs.

Due to the random nature of their transformation, some vulkodlak don't have claws and/or fangs (or may only have claws on one hand). Vulkodlak without natural weapons rely on their immense strength; they simply beat victims to death. On the other hand, some are more werewolf-like, and thus faster!

Appearance: A vulkodlak is sort of a zombie werewolf — an undead creature that arises when a human's killed by a werewolf under certain conditions. It looks like an undead human who died in mid-transformation to werewolf, its body a horrifying, warped thing that mixes features of man and lycanthrope. For example, its torso and arms might be werewolf-like but its head and legs human, or it might have one werewolf arm and one human arm. The death-wounds it suffered at the hands of its killer are usually obvious.



Attributes: To create a Vulkodlak, simply use the Werewolf profile in Savage Worlds Adventure Edition and apply the Undead Monstrous Ability to it.

Wendigo

Ecology: A wendigo is a terrifying Fey monstrosity that arises when a shaman commits some horrible sin (often cannibalism) and is doomed to live forever as a guardian of the land.

Personality/Motivation: The wendigo is a personification not only of the fear of cannibalism, but of famine/starvation, greed/gluttony, and similar sins. Its goal is to protect the region it lives in from exploitation, degradation, overhunting, and the like. It avoids interacting with humans except to punish them for harming its protected land.

Powers/Tactics: A wendigo is not only physically strong and swift, but magically powerful. It can cast Spells and several other powers, including the ability to summon and control animals native to its region. (At the GM's option it can

also use this power to summon beast-like local monsters, such as sasquatches, giant spiders, and mutated animals).

Appearance: A wendigo is ten feet tall, unnaturally lean, and has deer antlers rising from the center of its oddly elongated head. It wears filthy animal skins.

Attributes: Agility d8, Smarts d8, Spirit d8, Strength d12, Vigor d12+2

Skills: Fighting d10, Notice d6, Spellcasting d8, Survival d8, Stealth d8, Tracking d8

Pace: 8

Parry: 7

Toughness: 12 (2)

Gear/Attacks: Bite Bite (Str+d4), Claws (Str+d6, AP 1)

Special:

- **Armor (2)**
- **Hardy**
- **Arcane Background (Magic):** A Wendigo has 3 powers and 10 power points. All the Wendigo's magic will have Weather related Trappings

Wights

Ecology: Wights are the corpses of the dead, returned to life through necromancy or other foul sorceries. Although superficially similar to zombies, they're superior to them in three respects (and thus are often referred to by Hunters as "the worst of the zombie family of undead"). First, they're usually better preserved; second, they retain their own intelligence and malevolence (i.e., they're not Automaton); third, they're not slow, but in fact are faster than ordinary humans.

Personality/Motivation: As creatures created by necromancy or the powers of greater undead such as vampires, a wight must obey its master (at least until he dies or grants it its freedom). If left to itself, a wight's driven by its hatred and hunger for the living.

Powers/Tactics: In battle, wights use their claws and teeth to slaughter living victims. But the most dangerous thing about wights is that their touch can paralyze the living, even through body armor. The immobility only lasts for a minute, but that's usually more than long enough for the wight to tear his victim to shreds while he's not even able to scream.

Escaping from a wight is difficult. Not only can it crawl up walls like an insect, its acute senses allow it to sniff out or hear a victim it can't see. Its senses also make a wight difficult to sneak up on.

Appearance: A wight is a corporeal undead creature similar a zombie, but faster and more powerful. It looks like a normal, if pallid, human except that its face is horribly distorted and it has red eyes and sharp, black teeth.

Attributes: To create a Wight simply use the Zombie profile, increase the Smarts to d6, and bring their pace up to 8", adding in the Climbing 8" ability.

Will-O-The-Wisps

Ecology: A will-o-the-wisp is one of two things. Most of them are Fey spirits cursed to wander the earth for some reason. They're often found in swamps and other desolate places. The second, rarer type is a human cursed into wisp form by the Fey for some reason.

Personality/Motivation: Mischievous, if not cruel. Ordinary will-o-the-wisps are known for luring travelers into dangerous areas (such as a marsh or deep forest) to watch them suffer and die. Transformed will-o-the-wisps retain their human memories and feelings, though many soon go mad from being changed into such an alien shape.

Powers/Tactics: As a nearly intangible, floating ball of light, a will-o-the-wisp can get into places no human could reach or fit. Even more impressively, they can transmit their consciousness down power lines, fiber optic cables, and the like, allowing them to rapidly travel throughout the world if necessary.

Appearance: A will-o-the-wisp resembles a floating ball of misty light. Sometimes the light becomes slightly dimmer or more intense based on what the wisp's emotions.

Attributes: Agility d8, Smarts d8, Spirit d8, Strength d4, Vigor d4

Skills: Fighting d4, Stealth d8

Pace: 8

Parry: 4

Toughness: 4

Gear/Attacks: None

Special:

- **Fly:** Will-o-the-wisps can fly with a pace of 6".
- **Incorporeal**

Wraith

Ecology: A wraith is a rare type of undead that arises in certain circumstances when a person's killed by a wight or ghost and the body's left mostly intact. (Necromancers can also create them using spells that are difficult to learn and dangerous to cast.) Like other undead, it hungers for the life of the living, which it can drain with its touch.

Personality/Motivation: Wraiths are filled with hatred for, and a desire to destroy/feed off of, the living. Eventually this desire gets the best of most wraiths and they attack too many humans, attract attention to themselves, and are hunted down by the likes of MHI.

Powers/Tactics: In combat a wraith can use its fangs and claws, but primarily relies on its ability to drain the life-force of living beings with a touch. As long as it can maintain contact with someone (typically by Grabbing them), it automatically deals 1 Wound each turn.

Wraiths have the power to become incorporeal for short periods, allowing them to walk through walls or avoid the effects of non-magical attacks entirely. This drains their unliving essence so much that they can only do it for a few seconds at a time, though.

Like vampires, wraiths are injured by exposure to sunlight or to holy objects, though their vulnerability to them isn't as severe.

Appearance: Wraiths are a powerful form of corporeal undead. They often wear dark-colored robes, but the red- or green-glowing eyes within the robe's hood clearly indicate the being's true nature and evil disposition. Without the robe a wraith looks something like a zombie, but not nearly so corrupt or slow-moving and the eyes still glow evilly.

Attributes: Agility d8, Smarts d8, Spirit d8, Strength d4, Vigor d10

Skills: Fighting d4, Stealth d8

Pace: 8

Parry: 6

Toughness: 10 (3)

Gear/Attacks: Fangs & Claws (Str +d6)

Special:

- **Armor 3**
- **Life Drain:** Any round that a Wraith has grappled a target, the Wraith inflicts 1 Wound at the start of the Wraith's turn.
- **Shift:** As an action, a Wraith may become incorporeal for the remainder of this turn, and their following turn. They may only use this power after they have successfully used a Life Drain on a foe.
- **Weakness:** Sunlight & Holy Objects. When exposed to Sunlight or Holy objects, a Wraith is Shaken.

Zombies

Ecology: Zombies (known to the British as "mincers") are the corpses of the dead re-animated by necromantic magics (or sometimes mad science). However, the root causes of zombieism is a virus. Any organic, relatively normal being with earthly DNA (including elves, orcs, trolls, minotaurs, and ogres) can be zombified. Mystical beings or those not originating on Earth (such as chupacabra and demons) are immune to the zombie virus... as far as anyone knows.

Zombies hunger for human flesh, particularly brains.

Personality/Motivation: Zombies have no personalities. They simply follow the orders given to them by their creators. If given no orders, they're usually motivated by their hunger for human flesh.

Powers/Tactics: In battle, zombies use their fists, their fang-like teeth, or their claw-like fingernails (they can also wield weapons). They never flee; they fight until victorious or destroyed.

A zombie's bite is especially dangerous. A person bitten by one is destined to turn into a zombie, even if they're just bitten once and not killed by the zombie — even immediate amputation of the bitten limb can't stop this from happening. If the zombie kills the victim, or he dies shortly after being bitten, the transformation into a zombie happens quickly (depending on the strength of the strain of zombie virus, it can be almost immediate). If the victim survives the zombie attack, he'll spend the next few hours (an average of less than two, maximum of five) sick and in pain. Over that time the virus works its way throughout his body and eventually overwhelms his brain. Then the transformation completes itself, and he dies and then simultaneously rises as one of the shambling undead.

Zombies are hard to kill. They don't feel pain, though a wound that removes a limb (or renders it nonfunctional) hampers them. The surest way to kill them is to cut off the head or destroy most of the brain — a shot to the head usually does the trick, but it's got to destroy enough of the brain to matter. Some devious necromancers bolt armor plating onto their zombies, making the undead horrors even harder to kill (even just bolting on a metal helmet of some sort makes a zombie much more dangerous). (Similarly, it's possible to replace a zombie's teeth with steel fangs, attach bladed weapons to their arms, and so forth.)

Zombies have one significant weakness: they're slow. A trained Hunter can easily outrun one (assuming he has some place to run to). Unfortunately, some necromancers know how to create fast zombies, who move much more quickly (though still not as fast as a Hunter).

Appearance: A zombie is a walking human corpse in some stage of decay. It may have some body parts missing or obvious death-wounds. Its teeth are black, rotten, and often sharp; its fingernails have become thicker and more claw-like.

Attributes: The Zombie Profile in *Savage Worlds Adventure Edition* words wonderful for Zombies in MHI.

CONSTRUCTS

Skilled necromancers know how to combine parts from multiple bodies (including animal bodies) into one before zombifying the overall creation. These creatures are known to Hunters as constructs, and they come in a basically infinite variety of shapes and sizes. Most commonly they have multiple arms (thus allowing them to attack more, or to Grab some targets while attacking others), multiple or animal legs (so they can run faster), or multiple eyes arranged so they can see all around themselves. You can find powers to represent these abilities under Options, above, but you can also think up other construct powers that aren't listed here.

ZOMBIE CREATURES

Expert necromancers (such as Martin Hood) can also animate the bodies of animals as zombies. Bears seem to work best for this (since they're big, tough, and can stagger around on two legs), but just about any large or predatory creature makes a fearsome zombie. And zombie creatures that are large and strong enough can even have armor plating bolted to their bodies!

CHAPTER 12:

The Long, Good Knight

A Plot Point Campaign for Savage Worlds: Monster Hunter International

This plot point campaign takes place during the events of the novel *Monster Hunter: Siege*, the events of which see the majority of MHI's most skilled hunters occupied for months on end with an extended operation halfway across the world. This leaves the company woefully short handed, and eager for new blood to fill the ranks. Toward that end, two of the highest ranking MHI employees left behind, Julie Shackleford and Albert Lee, have been overseeing a new class of newbies in hopes that some of them have what it takes not only to bolster the ranks of their many teams, but also to investigate some unusual events that the company can't spare a full team to look into.

Like all plot point campaigns, this series of adventures is intended to serve as the skeleton for a larger campaign, with additional encounters scattered in throughout to make sure that there is a suitable diverse experience. Each of these points contains numerous suggestions about what can and perhaps should happen, but many can be expanded to include additional opponents and encounters. Some suggestions for ways to increase the scope of this campaign include:

- The MCB agent who appears in plot point 2, Special Agent Anna Marson, could prove to be a consistent problem for the Hunters if she continues to follow up on the disappearance of Charles Sheppard and proves to be as adept as the Hunters themselves. With each passing encounter, she will garner greater resources from the Bureau and her irritation with the Hunters will increase until she may determine that they need to be detained until she can determine what exactly it is that they know.
- It's possible that the enemy of this campaign is not limiting his attention to MHI washouts, but perhaps retired hunters from other organizations as well, or it could just be that his operatives encountered another organization in passing and piqued their interest. A competing team of hunters from one of the non-friendly hunter organizations, such as Paranormal Tactical, could pose any number of obstacles to the team during the course of this investigation.
- The dark Sidhe who are responsible for the curse affecting the enemy of this campaign regard his activities as entertainment, something along the lines of reality television for the fey. If they think it will prove more entertaining, they will throw obstacles in the Hunter's path, although the enemy himself is unlikely to accept direct aid from the fey, as he hates them almost as much as he hates the other foes he pursues.

Who exactly is the enemy of the Hunters in this campaign? That information is to be doled out at a pace of the Game Master's choosing, and thus details are sparse in the plot point writeups themselves. However, the enemy's true story and identity are revealed in the write-up at the end of this campaign, and individual GMs should dispense that information as they see fit.

Plot Point #1: Graduation Day

The story begins with the characters completing their training at the MHI compound in Cazador, Alabama. Each of them should have had some traumatic encounter with the supernatural in the not-too-distant past, something that put them on the path.

Welcome to Cazador, Alabama, home of the corporate headquarters for Monster Hunter International. For the past several weeks, you've been taking part in a ruthless, grueling training program designed to make you ready to fight monsters and get paid vast sums of money. Nice deal, huh? Your class started out a lot larger, but now there are only a few of you left, and although it looks like you're all going to graduate, it's time to see once and for all who the best newbie Hunter in the bunch is.

The "final exams" for a class of newbies at MHI HQ are largely ceremonial; anyone who has made it to this far is going to graduate unless they make some kind of spectacular error at the end. The exams are simply an expression of the alpha-dominant, hyper competitive mindset so common to Hunters, and a chance for them to showcase their skills for recruitment by team leaders from all across the United States.

The final exams take the form of a series of skill-based challenges, emphasizing the most important skills a Hunter will need and increasing in difficulty until the best of the class is identified. Virtually any skill can be used to create a challenge, because the leaders of MHI understand that literally anything can happen on a hunt and they want to understand the true strengths and weaknesses of their rookie class. Some potential skill challenges that the instructors might consider include the following:

- Most Hunters would probably insist that Shooting is the most important skill, and they're probably right. Different Hunters excel at different types of ranged weapons, but ultimately the most important aspects are accuracy and speed. Accuracy contests would involve participants firing at equidistant targets, which are then moved farther and farther away with each subsequent firing, until only one Hunter successfully hits the target. Because of the caliber of even newbie Hunters, this can be an extremely difficult contest to win.
- While not necessarily as important as Shooting, Fighting is a skill tremendously emphasized by Hunters. To test the hand-to-hand skills of their impending graduates, the MHI instructors have brought in some opponents. These individuals are covered from head to toe in black, with goggles and balaclava obscuring their facial features. Hunters square off against one of these mystery opponents and anyone who defeats one of them moves on to the next round. In the event that no one defeats one, which is a real possibility, the Hunter who lasted the longest wins. (These are actually young orcs, the equivalent of

teenagers, and students of Edward. None are as deadly as their master, of course, but they are exceptionally skilled nevertheless.)

- Hunters get injured. It's just part of the job. And when they do, triage is necessary. Healing contests don't involve actual injuries at this point, but skilled medics among MHI's ranks will provide newbies with supplies and then describe situations that can come up. The newbie has to assess the fictional injury and determine how best to treat it. Those whose answers are deemed satisfactory are ranked by the group of medic instructors.
- The potential graduates are presented with actual case files from MHI's history and tasked with solving whatever enigmatic incident prompted MHI's involvement in the first place. This is a particularly difficult test but those who are successful in identifying the problem and how to resolve it tend to be viewed with particular promise by MHI's leadership. Obviously, this particular exam relies heavily upon Investigation and Knowledge (Monsters), which are two skills the company values highly.

Regardless of who wins the different exams, barring any unusual circumstances, every newbie still in the process at this point will graduate and receive the coveted Gut Crawl Challenge Coin. Bragging rights, of course, are extremely important and the real point of the exams, as well as to see which of the new Hunters can handle stress the best. After all is said and done, the instructors will announce who has been chosen by what team lead. A number of newbies, the player characters, are all announced simultaneously and told to report to Julie Shackleford in her office for a special assignment.

Plot Point #2: Old Friends

Julie Shackleford's office is neat and precise, and covered with pieces of MHI's sordid and glorious history. The obviously pregnant Shackleford didn't call the new Hunters for show and tell, however, and she seems vaguely concerned about something as she eases into her office chair with a creak and a grimace, muttering something about her husband being punished for doing this to her before fixing the group with a pointed look.

"Congratulations," she said with a slight smile. "You know not many people make it this far. There were a lot more of you when training started. That's what I want to talk to you about, actually. We have a large number of washouts out there. We keep an eye on them, because even though they didn't end up with us, their association with the company is enough to make MCB a little harsher on them than necessary. Plus, it's just good business to make sure they're abiding by their non-disclosure agreements." She reaches into a drawer and withdraws a manila folder. "On one of our recent random check-ups, we found one of our washouts missing." She pushes the folder forward. "I'd like you to check it out and see what's going on, please."

The folder contains information on Charles Sheppard, a former linesman for a standard utility company who had a nasty encounter with some kind of critter that feasted on electricity. It killed Sheppard's partner and did a lot of property damage before he managed to overload and explode it, which caused a three-county blackout in the process. MCB was not pleased. Sheppard lost his job but took MHI up on an offer to come to training. It didn't turn out to be his calling, but

he parted on good terms and was very happy with his severance package, and was generally rated as an extremely low threat by MHI's risk analysis. His disappearance is suspected to be more likely foul play than any malfeasance on his part, but the company still wants to check it out. Anyone who suggests that local law enforcement be allowed to handle it will promptly be laughed and mocked for a solid ten minutes. At MHI, that is considered a "spend prom night crying in the bathroom" level offense.

MCB Agent

The average MCB agent serves admirably as a template for any standard member of a Monster Hunting Organization with a change to the Obligation, and the addition of the appropriate Teamwork Edge.

Stats: Agility d6, Smarts d6, Spirit d6, Strength d6, Vigor d6

Skills: Athletics d6, Common Knowledge d6, Fighting d6, Intimidation d6, Notice d6, Occult d8, Persuasion d4, Shooting d8, Stealth d4

Pace: 6

Parry: 5

Toughness: 5 (9)

Hindrances

- Obligation (Major): MCB

Edges

- Connections
- Menacing
- Soldier

Gear/Attacks: FN-F2000 (use rules for Steyr AUG in Savage Worlds Adventure Edition), H&K MP7 (use rules for H&K MP5 in Savage Worlds Adventure Edition), and Glock 9mm. Low Profile Body Armor

If anyone inquires as to why this group has been given the assignment, Julie will simply say that the group as a whole demonstrated numerous important skills and that she thinks they will work well together. Furthermore, the on-sight teams are stretched past the point of breaking, what with Earl Harbinger's team being on the other side of the world and the other teams trying to pick up the slack. The newbies aren't in the running to be a new Cazador-based team on their own, she's quick to point out, but they do have the potential to show the company their true value if they handle this job correctly.

Charles Sheppard is a native of a small town outside Tulsa, Oklahoma, which is where he still lives despite all the fallout from his firing. He invested his severance wisely and lives comfortably with a part-time job at a sporting goods store. The recent MHI check-in with him found his mail piling up and a fellow employee at his house trying to get in to check on him because he hadn't shown up for work for three days after having been off for a four day vacation. His home is small but tidy and tucked away in an out-of-the-way neighborhood that affords privacy without sacrificing anything major other than a social scene.

Investigating Sheppard's house reveals little other than what one might expect from an almost-hunter: numerous firearms, a larger-than-average reading selection on all manner of monster-related topics, survival rations, etc. There are library records indicating that his recent reading had shifted from mythology to Dark Age era English history, which is peculiar only because there are also entire notepads with rough sketches of an English-style longsword marked with a peculiar symbol that is not immediately recognizable.

Unfortunately for the Hunters, they have a limited amount of time to look around before an MCB sedan shows up outside and disgorges four agents. They are not overtly hostile, but their demeanor might best be described as “frosty.” Special Agent Anna Marston is in charge and is the only one who speaks. She suggests that the agency often monitors former MHI trainees because the agency considers them a significant security risk, so they get more attention than survivors who have no affiliation with the company. They proceed to confiscate any and all personal effects that might be located in Sheppard’s house, and demand the Hunters turn anything that they have taken over. The MCB isn’t looking for a fight, but will be happy to respond to any hostility on the part of the Hunters and then, once they’ve had their fun, promptly charge them with obstruction of justice.

Plot Point #3: Kicks on Route 66

Investigating Sheppard’s residence and dealing with the MCB should leave the Hunters with a feeling that something peculiar is going on, and they are absolutely correct. Unfortunately for them, what seems like a general bit of oddity will shape up to be much more than that in the very near future. Right now, for instance.

Hunters rarely fly because they tend to travel with enormous arsenals that no sane airline would permit. Ergo, the trip to Tulsa to investigate Sheppard will likely require at least a brief stay in a hotel after the investigation into his house and the subsequent encounter with the Monster Control Bureau. On the one hand, the fact that the MCB was present and trying to find out what happened to Sheppard may be reassuring to the Hunters,

Special Agent Anna Marston

Stats: Agility d6, Smarts d8, Spirit d6, Strength d6, Vigor d6

Skills: Athletics d6, Battle d8, Common Knowledge d6, Fighting d6, Intimidation d6, Notice d6, Occult d8, Persuasion d4, Shooting d8, Stealth d4

Pace: 6

Parry: 5

Toughness: 5 (9)

Hindrances

- Obligation (Major): MCB

Edges

- Connections
- Menacing
- Soldier

Gear/Attacks: FN-F2000 (use rules for Steyr AUG in *Savage Worlds Adventure Edition*), H&K MP7 (use rules for H&K MP5 in *Savage Worlds Adventure Edition*), and Glock 9mm. Low Profile Body Armor (+4)

since it strongly suggests that the nefarious government agency was in no way related to his disappearance. On the other hand, it means that there is almost no clue whatsoever what happened to him other than the strange drawings left behind at his house. At least, not yet. But Sheppard isn’t quite gone just yet, and both he and those responsible for his disappearance are not particularly pleased that someone is looking for him. Sheppard has been the victim of low-level magical brainwashing, hence the frantic sketches in his house, and has now converted to the cause of a previously unknown enemy of MHI. And that particular enemy doesn’t care for loose ends.

As the Hunters are returning from their trip to Tulsa, Sheppard and a few of his new associates attempts to take them out. This could take place in a number of different places, such as a roadside motel during the trip, but since there's a motel recommended as a location later in this campaign, an attack on the road might be exciting and provide more variety. And who doesn't love a good chase-slash-fight scene? Hunters love that kind of story, so it makes good sense for them to experience one for a change.

Charles Sheppard

Stats: Agility d6, Smarts d4, Spirit d6, Strength d6, Vigor d6

Skills: Athletics d6, Common Knowledge d6, Fighting d6, Intimidation d6, Notice d6, Persuasion d4, Shooting d8, Stealth d4

Pace: 6

Parry: 5

Toughness: 5 (9)

Gear/Attacks: Desert Eagle (2d8, AP 2, ROF 1, Shots). Sheppard carries two Desert Eagles

Charles Sheppard

Stats: Agility d6, Smarts d4, Spirit d6, Strength d8, Vigor d8

Skills: Athletics d6, Common Knowledge d6, Fighting d8, Intimidation d6, Notice d6, Shooting d6, Stealth d4

Pace: 6

Parry: 6

Toughness: 6

Gear/Attacks: SAW (2d8 damage, AP 2, ROF 4)

The attempt to remove the Hunters from the equation begins with a distraction. In this case, a beautiful woman in a revealing dress driving a classic muscle car. The choice will vary depending on the group, obviously, but there's no going wrong with an old Corvette or Mustang. Just saying. The woman (who is being paid to provide the distraction and has been told it's to ensure that the Hunters don't beat their competitors in some sort of across-the-country race) will keep pace and, if they don't notice her on their own, begin making sure they do by acting in a seductive manner. What that means is up to the individual GM, who should absolutely make sure it's something that won't make their group uncomfortable. Regardless, it's some serious movie scene stuff that should effectively distract most if not all of the Hunters.

While the Hunters are otherwise engaged, Sheppard and two cohorts of his (simple hired muscle, no one who can lead back to the enemy in any way) approach in a specially modified windowless van, one of those very "free puppies inside" kind of affairs. The vehicle was supplied by Sheppard's new masters and is both reinforced to prevent it being shot full of holes through the sides, and the engine has been tuned up to account for the extra weight of the reinforced sides. Sheppard is driving and is armed with a pair of very high caliber handguns. His two hired thugs are riding in the back and are wielding rifles modified to be fully automatic, exactly the kind of thing to make certain news pundits cream their jeans in outrage. The Hunters, on the other hand, would probably be at least mildly impressed if they weren't being fired at with the same rifles.

The attackers' goal is rather simple: they want to get as close to the Hunters' vehicle as possible without alarming them, then take them out. Depending on how close they might be able to get, this could involve shooting the tires, the engine, or the Hunters themselves.

The Hunters will doubtless take issue with this plan, and if they manage to avoid or survive the first opening salvo, one of two things will likely happen: the Hunters will attempt to escape their attackers, or they will attempt to pursue their attackers. Whichever one they choose, Sheppard will respond and either flee or pursue accordingly, understanding as he does that the Hunters need to be taken out no matter what or his masters will be displeased or, even worse, placed at risk.

Regardless of who is chasing whom, the chase will go less than twenty miles before law enforcement is able to set up a barricade and attempt to put an end to the chase. Any civilian deaths will escalate the situation to the use of deadly force, at least against anyone involved in the chase who has used firearms. (And let's be honest with one another, that's very likely going to include the Hunters in 99% of all circumstances.)

How the Hunters evade being detained and charged by the authorities will prove a very interesting scenario that will depend heavily upon the skills of the team. It is possible that they will be able to duck out without being caught or, if they are apprehended, that they may be able to handle it without bringing MHI into the matter, so much the better. If that proves unavoidable, then Julie Shackelford will pull some strings to get them released, but she won't be happy. Still, it's lucky that Earl Harbinger is out of the country or else things could get more... punitive.

Plot Point #4: Back to the Books

The outcome of the previous plot point will determine the attitude the folks back at MHI HQ have toward the team. If they managed to avoid being embroiled in a messy legal battle, then the brass is pleased but also concerned about what could have caused the disappearance of Charles Sheppard and the

subsequent attack on the highway. Because of the nature of the fight it is entirely possible that the Hunters were able to recognize Sheppard as the driver, and if they weren't, subsequent photographs from the authorities (likely secured by Melvin, the company's often mentioned but never seen IT department) will confirm that he was involved. This causes a significant issue for the company, as Albert Lee will mention as he addresses the team due to Shackelford being indisposed.

Albert Lee is a relatively short man with an extensive leg brace, but despite that and his bookish nature, there's no denying the hard gleam of a Hunter in his eye. He looks at an assortment of documents spread across the table in front of him and grimaces. "This is not good," he says, stating the obvious. "After you left to investigate Sheppard, I did a little digging and it turns out there are a number of former trainees who have gone dark. All of them were on the list of washouts we didn't monitor anymore because they had integrated back into society with no problems. Jobs, families... whatever criteria we needed to decide they were not a risk." He looks up at them. "But now they're out there, and they know a lot about us. They know a lot about the MCB. They know a lot about everything in our world and we need to find out what's going. Starting with this." He holds up a rough sketch of the symbol that you found on the various sword drawings in Sheppard's house. "We need to know what this is, and what it means. And we need to know right now."

The Hunters have been drafted into that most scintillating of all MHI duties: adjunct archivists. It's a painstaking, difficult job that Albert Lee makes look easy, but which nine out of ten MHI employees would probably rather saw a leg off than do on a regular basis. The MHI archives are vast, but thanks to Lee's ongoing efforts, they are at least very well organized. Still, looking for

a single symbol, and one that they have no frame of reference for, is going to be almost impossible. Is it Sumerian? Is it fey? Is it from one of the infernal symbol sets, most of which MHI hasn't even identified yet?

Allow the Hunters some time to search the archives with suitably difficult Knowledge tests to see how much progress they are making. Consider alerting them to minor supernatural occurrences near Cazador to give them something to distract them from the primary campaign purpose. Or do something altogether different, like have them attend a festival at the nearby orc village. Basically just break the monotony. When sufficient time has passed, the Hunters (or Lee, if they are both grossly unskilled and unlucky) will discover a passing reference to the symbol in question, just enough to let them associate it with the fey in some way. Although the company has very incomplete records on such things, there is the suggestion that it is perhaps associated with longevity or prosperity.

Any further research grinds to a halt when Shackleford returns to duty and, after conferring with Lee, deploys the Hunters to another MHI washout that fits the profile of the disappeared trainees, but who was reported still in place only a few weeks earlier. The brass orders the Hunters to stake out Victoria Anderson's house in Raleigh, West Virginia for a while and hope that whoever has been trying to poach the MHI washouts makes a play for her and gets caught in the process.

Plot Point #5: Ordering Stakeout

Raleigh, West Virginia is not a particularly active town. It's a former coal town and there's very little excitement to be had there. On the one hand, that makes it easy for the Hunters to keep an eye out for anything unusual. On the other, their presence will be noticed almost immediately and will make them the talk of the town unless they have some kind of mundane excuse for their presence. Whatever excuse that is depends on the Hunters, of course, but if they don't make it a reasonable one, they are likely to tip the hand of anyone hoping to contact Victoria purely by hearing the buzz around town about the strangers.

Victoria Anderson was the only survivor of an attack by a particularly nasty ghoul that crawled out of an old mineshaft. She held her own long enough for some MHI employees to help her finish it off, and earned herself a place in a newbie class about seven years ago. She didn't wash out of the program; as she was doing very well in the training itself. However, she did ultimately decide that she didn't want to spend her life wrapped up in violence and went back to what she had been doing before the attack: teaching elementary school. She continues teaching today, although she does teach a number of self-defense classes locally and has competed in state-wide martial arts competitions with an impressive degree of success. That's good enough for her. Hunters may even be envious of her calm, fulfilling lifestyle. But probably not. The most important thing is that they have to be very cautious when observing her or else she might spot them. Perhaps even more important, however, is that they may very well get the feeling that someone else is watching her, and they would be correct.

A trio of enemy agents are in town, but they remain concealed from prying eyes by sorcerous enchantments placed on them by their master. They will not be revealed until they choose to be seen, which will not be until they make contact with Victoria. When they do, assuming that the Hunters are watching, they may at first mistake them for MCB agents due to their black suits and sunglasses. But the suits are far more expensive than anyone who works for the MCB can afford, and the sunglasses seem strangely out of place at night. But when they approach Victoria's house late at night, they are allowed in almost instantly, which seems even more out of place than the sunglasses, because Victoria never lets anyone in unless they are expected, which her facial expression and the loaded gun she answers the door with suggest they were not. It should be enough to set off an alarm bell for the Hunters, who presumably have her under surveillance.

Any incursion into Victoria's residence, or closer observation that would allow them to see inside, will reveal that the teacher is sitting on her sofa facing the three new arrivals, two of whom are dark-haired men and the third, always in the center of the trio, is a platinum-blond woman. Victoria has a vacant, fascinated expression, and all three of the strangers have daggers drawn (they are aids in the sorcery being conducted, as they have no intention of harming Victoria, but the Hunters likely have no idea this is the case). If the Hunters do nothing, the three new arrivals will complete their task, which is channeling a simple glamour for their master that will fascinate Victoria and subvert her will to a sufficient degree that she will go with them, no questions asked. Presumably, however, the Hunters will interfere with this scenario.

Mysterious Suits

Stats: Agility d6, Smarts d4, Spirit d6, Strength d10, Vigor d10

Skills: Athletics d8, Common Knowledge d6, Fighting d10, Intimidation d6, Notice d6, Occult d10

Pace: 6

Parry: 7

Toughness: 7

Edges

- Connections
- Menacing
- Soldier

Gear/Attacks: Occult Ritual Dagger (d10+d6, AP 2)

If the Hunters do interfere, the three enemy agents will not respond kindly. They will recognize them from the failed attempt to eliminate them after leaving Tulsa and take it upon themselves to finish the job. They carry no weapons other than the daggers, but they are stronger, faster, and more resilient than normal humans. If their sunglasses are removed at any point during the conflict, their eyes are a bright, brilliant blue that seems somehow otherworldly. The enemy agents will not be taken alive under any circumstances, and will kill themselves if it seems that they might be captured. Should this occur, the same brand found on the drawing of the sword also appears on their collarbone, somewhere between a tattoo and a brand. Before the enemy leader, the blonde, perishes, she will fix one of the Hunters with a piercing gaze and a sneer and say, "Roderick will make you pay."

Plot Point #6: An Enchanted Interlude

With only a name and the intimation that the enemy they face is linked in some way to the ancient courts of the fey, the Hunters may be unsure on how to proceed. If any of them are particularly well versed in the background of the fey or in MHI's network of allies, it may occur to them to seek an audience with the queen of the Enchanted Forest. If not, Albert Lee will suggest the course of action, in a vaguely bemused manner, when they update Cazador on their current state of affairs. Specifically, he recommends they check in with the queen of the American fey contingent at her court and seek her wisdom.

What the newly minted Hunters are likely unaware of is that this particular elven ruler, Queen Ilrondelia, is an astonishingly powerful woman who nevertheless is morbidly obese, ruthlessly redneck, lives in absolute squalor in her court at the Enchanted Forest Trailer Park, and largely abstains from the use of her magic in order to continue collecting her check from the government. Let that all sink in.

Reaching the Enchanted Forest isn't that difficult, particularly because the Hunters mean no harm. Those who do approach with ill intent often find it more difficult. The Queen and her court have history with MHI, however, and the company's representatives have always been fair to them. However, the current MHI operation on the other side of the world has several members of the Queen's court, including her daughter, participating, which makes the Queen's inclination to offer the company even more assistance less likely. However, the Queen has always been imminently susceptible to bribery, and the company is well aware of this. Albert Lee will be more than willing to

share with the Hunter the kind of tribute that her majesty prefers. Hopefully they'll know to bring a lot of it. Unfortunately for them, things are a little more complicated than usual. And when 'usual' refers to dealing with an inhumanely powerful elf monarch who lives in a white trash trailer park, that's no small statement.

The Hunters' visit to the Enchanted Forest comes during an irregularly occurring fey season of exchanges. Gifts are exchanged, yes, but information and service are the most common currencies, and that may result in significant obligations on the part of the Hunters specifically or MHI more generally, something that the company's leadership will not look upon favorably. For her part, the elf Queen is a morbidly obese woman with a penchant for hair curlers and muumuus, an affinity for junk food and cheap beer, and a tendency to slather almost anything she eats in a heroic amount of "ranch drassin'."

Fortunately, the Hunters only want information, so once the Queen's attendants explain that they must offer something of comparable value in exchange for information from her (not counting the gifts they brought her, because during this season those only grant them access, not cooperation), it will likely seem like they are looking for something minor. Unfortunately, the truth is far different, as the Hunters will soon learn. They have little information other than that there are former Hunter trainees being extracted from their lives and either turned or enchanted such that they are working for an unknown but hostile enemy of presumably fey origin. The Queen is aware of the nature of the threat, but will not reveal that information for anything less than lengthy indentured servitude, which she knows the Hunters will not offer and thus she will give no indication of the breadth of her knowledge. What she can and will divulge includes the following:

- The drawing of the sword that the Hunters first found in Sheppard's house is an ancient blade called Wyrmborn.
- The wielder of the blade is the victim of an ancient *Sidhe* curse, one that even the Queen herself could neither levy nor remove.
- The blade's owner has an ancient enemy that he seeks to kill at all costs, and that anyone associated with his enemy, he also regards as an enemy.
- MHI must have some affiliation with the blade owner's enemy, which is why he has been targeting the Hunters specifically, and recruiting or enslaving those who have knowledge of the company and its practices.

On the other hand, the Queen will extract a price for each piece of information she divulges, and the cost is not inconsiderable. Her asking price will be one of the following for each piece:

- One Hunter must engage in trial by combat with one of the Queen's finest elven warriors. Fortunately, her finest are helping MHI in Russia and those who remain are roughly on par with a newbie Hunter, so the contest will not be entirely one-sided. Still, success is not a foregone conclusion, and the Hunters should take this very seriously.
- The Hunters must retrieve an item of power that the Queen lost long ago from a dangerous location, such as the outskirts of Natchy Bottom. (Not the interior. That's death incarnate for newly minted Hunters.)
- More entertainingly, the Hunters must re-enact important moments from the elf clan's history. A simple spell from the Queen will ensure that the "script" is present in the Hunters' minds, but they will have to really sell it to the Queen and her attendants in order to make

this count. Cellphone recording is not only welcome but encouraged, and the possibility that the performance will wind up on the internet is strong.

Assuming that everything goes according to plan, the Hunters should end up with some new information that will help them narrow down the kind of enemy they're facing. This is beneficial, of course, but doesn't paint a clear target that the team needs in order to move ahead. Fortunately, just as their time in the Enchanted Forest is coming to a close, the Queen receives word from her daughter Tanya about things going well in the Russian mission. This pleases the Queen and, in an uncharacteristic fit of generosity, she encourages the Hunters by telling them that "y'all need to take a look at that there Mountain of the Pilot."

Plot Point #7: Pilot Mountain

Pilot Mountain State Park is a national park located in North Carolina. It is a popular destination for tourists, who make use of it for camping, hiking, fishing, and various other outdoor activities, so gaining entry will not prove difficult. However, as one might imagine with any park that is slightly larger than 3,700 acres, there are plenty of places that no one ever goes, mostly covered by dense forest and rocky outcroppings that are unsuitable for climbing or hiking.

Knowing that Pilot Mountain is a point of interest to the Hunters' enemy is one thing, but being more precise is something altogether different. A little internet research should bring about the information that Pilot Mountain is regarded as a "hub" of ley line activity within the United States, and as such is of keen interest to those who study such

things. If none of the Hunters are of a scholarly bent, checking in with Albert Lee is more than enough to let them know that ley line intersections are preferred locations for powerful rituals, and that the MCB should in theory have some assets on site somewhere in the general area to keep an eye on things for just that reason. Conferring with the MCB is unlikely to be a preferred source of action, however, so the Hunters will probably have to try and find the hub on their own. However, Albert's information does help narrow the search down quite a bit, thankfully.

Once inside the park, the Hunters may soon notice a slightly subdued atmosphere. Several hiking parties have recently gone missing, and as a result there are numerous search parties scouring the woods in search of the missing. Although the rangers will not discuss it readily, anyone with contacts in their organization may be able to discover that several rangers have gone missing as well, but all from a region removed from the area where the hikers were last reported. There are a small number of rangers searching for their missing brothers in arms, but so far, they have not reported in, and the rest of the rangers' resources are devoted to trying to locate the hikers; the other rangers must be secondary until the civilians are located. The Hunters may surmise, correctly, that the missing rangers are the MCB assets in this region. Having been missing for less than 48 hours, it is likely that the Bureau is aware of something being amiss but unlikely that they have deployed more teams just yet, giving the Hunters a narrow window of opportunity.

Locating the ley line intersection is not as difficult as one might imagine. The existence of a hub causes mild magnetic fluctuations that can be tracked with certain electronic equipment or, if one is particularly skilled in Survival, with a simple compass.

Unfortunately, the missing hikers are all far from where they disappeared, and roaming around the hub in a fugue state, having been partially bled out and driven mad by the ritual the enemy's agents were using. Now they are nigh-feral and will attack anything that comes near, including the Hunters. The wildlife in the area is pretty well freaked out and will avoid anyone at all costs, leaving the forest eerily quiet in the wake of the ritual.

There is no mistaking the ritual site. It might be visible from the air if the search copters had any reason to be searching for the missing hikers in this area. The enemy's agents laid out a stone circle and used some sort of chalk dust (the by-product of another ritual) to draw intricate designs around the circumference; just looking at them makes the Hunters feel a little bit dizzy. Luckily, the ritual site is also the site of one of the first big breaks that the Hunters will get after visiting the Queen of the Enchanted Forest: one of the ritual participants was killed in the opening of the ley line energy and his comrades simply burned the corpse and left. However, the corpse did not burn entirely and, as it is lying on its front, there is a receipt in the breast pocket for a local motel, presumably where the ritualists were staying. At last, a solid target!

Unfortunately for the Hunters, the ley lines that make Pilot Mountain a valuable site for ritual use are also a source of danger, because accessing them causes a surge in natural, primal energy that is a veritable beacon for supernatural creatures. The recent ritual that was conducted here has drawn the attention of numerous creatures of ill intent. Although woodland creatures would be best, any supernatural creature from a temperate region could conceivably have been drawn to the ritual site once the ley line energy was opened. This is

an opportunity for the Hunters to get a little PUFF action in the midst of their investigation, which of course would also go a long way toward placating any concerns MHI might have regarding their continued traveling and strange investigation.

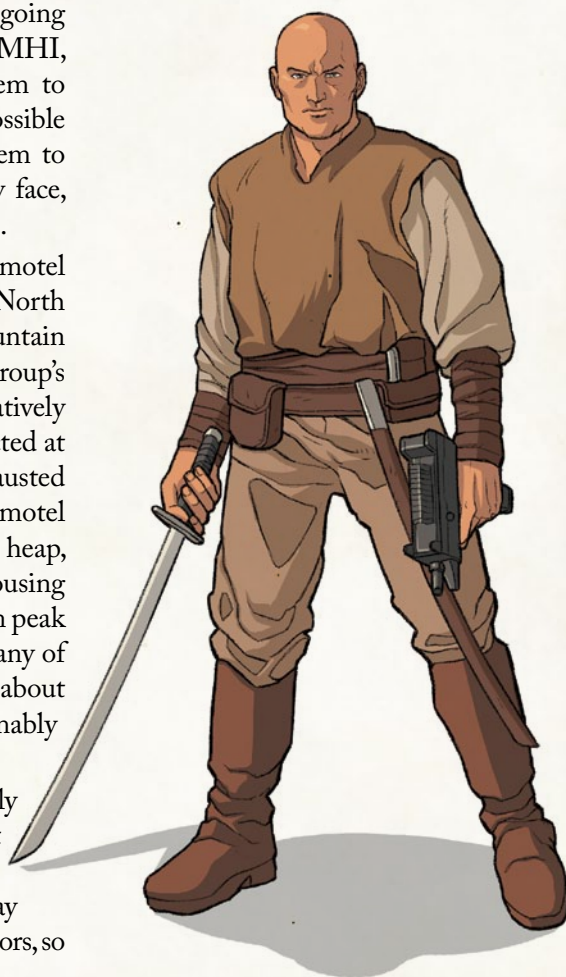
Plot Point #8: Battle at the Don't Fall Inn!

This plot point allows the Hunters to go on the offensive for perhaps the first time, given that they have been relegated largely to reacting to their enemy's actions for much of the campaign thus far. Now that the body at the ritual site has yielded a clue, however, they have the chance to strike and gain valuable information. Being Hunters, this is almost certainly what they're going to do. If for any reason they contact MHI, Shackleford and Lee will order them to take out the local agents as fast as possible and try to get information from them to find out more about the threat they face, which as of yet is still fairly nebulous.

The Don't Fall Inn is a roadside motel on a secondary highway in rural North Carolina not too far from Pilot Mountain State Park. Even though the group's headquarters isn't that far away, relatively speaking, the ritual they have conducted at the park leaves its participants exhausted and they barely made it back to the motel before most of them collapsed into a heap, meaning that they're just now rousing from their rest and are still at less than peak condition. The Hunters won't know any of this, of course (especially that part about the group's headquarters), so presumably they'll approach with caution.

Physically, the motel is extremely unassuming and lacks any significant security. It's the kind of place that Hunters would use because they can pay cash and all the rooms have external doors, so

no one ever sees what they bring in and take out. Privacy is assured because no one really cares, and because there are plenty of other things going on there that the other guests don't want outsiders knowing about, so no one's looking at the Hunters. Or, in the case, the former Hunters-to-be turned nefarious arcane ritualists. It's just semantics, really. The inn has twenty-two rooms, but judging from the parking lot, which has only a dozen cars or so, it's nowhere near capacity. The ritualists are in room twelve and thirteen, information that the desk clerk is perfectly willing to part with for a very reasonable sum. After which, he will take his ill-gotten gains and take a lengthy break at the Waffle House down the street, because this isn't his first rodeo.

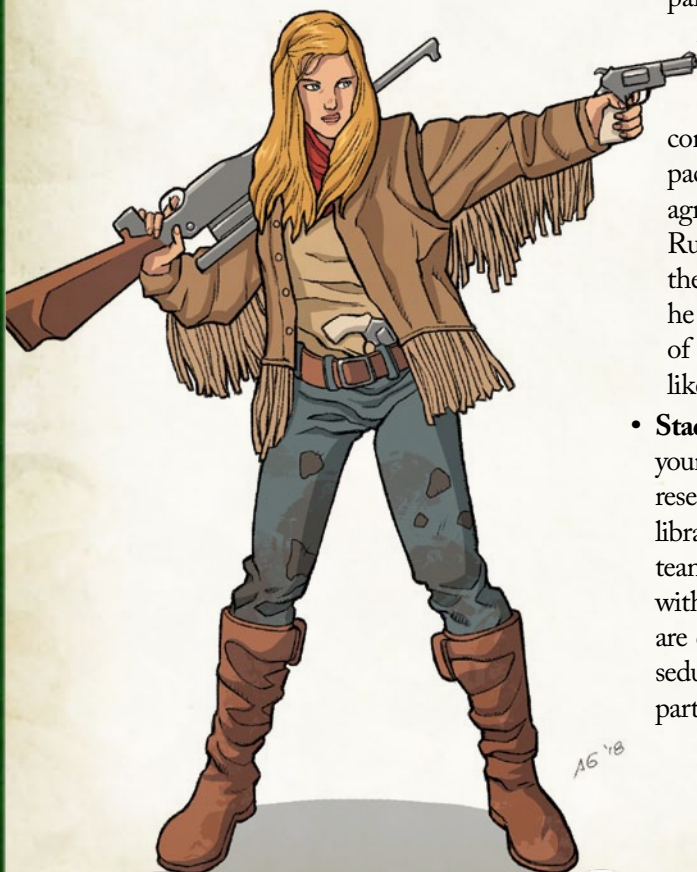


Fortunately for the Hunters, none of their enemies are skilled sorcerers. Some have a dabbling of mystical knowledge imparted by their master, but they all prefer to rely on more conventional tools of a would-be Hunter's trade than anything unusual. The enemies number five strong, having lost one of their number at the ritual site. Their ranks include:

- **Diana Rustov** – An iron-eyed woman in her early 40s, Rustov washed out of Hunter training over a decade ago after earning his way in by surviving an encounter with a rabid warg. She is a deadly shot with a pair of matched .45s and is equally skilled with a blade. She carries an enchanted dagger given to her by her master, both as a symbol of her authority and as a means of communicating with him through its mirror polished surface.

These enemies are specifically left without mechanics, in order for you to create them. The possibly variance in size between player groups, the number of side-missions, and more will require this encounter be customized to each group.

- **Juan Delgado** – Rustov's second in command is a barrel-chested man in his late 20s who lost his brother to a Akadian sand demon while both were on deployment in the Middle East, and Delgado has numerous scars to prove it. Delgado favors shotguns and has a large, drum-fed custom job that he never lets out of arm's reach.
- **Johnny Cooper** – A brash and irritating twenty-two-year-old, Johnny washed out of the Hunters' class in the first week and will recognize them on sight. He's a capable combatant and particularly good with knives, but lazy in general. He has no idea but he's on the brink of being cut loose from the enemy organization, which comes with a very literal severance package that he would not find as agreeable as the one MHI gave him. Rustov is considering killing him on the way home and deeply regrets that he did not die at the ritual site instead of the other team member, whom she liked much better.
- **Stacey Clark** – A very unassuming young woman of about thirty, Clark resembles nothing quite so much as a librarian out of her element. She is the team's information specialist, complete with laptop at all times, but her looks are deceiving. She is a masterful liar and seductress, and a gifted marksman as well, particularly at long range.



- **Hank “Tank” Gaskin** – Gaskin was probably once fit like the others, but that was a long time ago. He’s in his early 40s and reasonably overweight. He never complains, however, and does whatever is asked of him by Rustov without question. Other than the team leader, he is absolutely the most loyal and will not falter in killing the Hunters if he has the chance. He’s nursing serious burn marks over the left part of his face that came about as a result of the ley lines opening, but has refused to take painkillers until they get back to base because he doesn’t want to dull his edge in the field.

Assuming that the Hunters deal with their enemies in proper Hunter fashion, it’s possible that they will take prisoners, although Rustov and Gaskin at the very least will fight until death to avoid that fate, and will take their own lives if necessary. Not long after the conclusion of the conflict, the dagger Rustov had, which is extremely noteworthy and should be noticed by one of the Hunters during or immediately after the fight, will emit a low chiming sound and vibrate very slightly. Once that happens, anyone who looks at the dagger will see a hazy image shimmer in its finish. First it will be a grandiose estate of some sort, seeming vaguely familiar, and then a crystal clear set of blue eyes will appear, as if someone was on the other side of the blade. The eyes will regard the Hunter flatly for a moment, then in a clear voice with a crisp British accent say “How disappointing,” and the image will fade. The dagger will glow red hot for a moment and then quickly crust over with a thick black substance that makes it look like it was just unearthed from beneath a volcano after a thousand years or so, rendering it useless as a weapon.

Anyone with knowledge of the North Carolina area, or even just the South in general, may be able to identify the image

seen fleetingly in the blade’s mirror finish. If not, a simple Knowledge roll might suffice. Either way, it shouldn’t take the Hunters a terribly long period of time to identify it. It was the Biltmore Estate in Asheville, North Carolina, a major tourist attraction and one of the grandest personal residences in the region, if not the entire country.

Plot Point #9: Backstage at the Biltmore

The Biltmore Estate is one of the great treasures of North Carolina, in the minds of most. It is a massive estate constructed by an incredibly wealthy industrialist toward the end of the 1800s. It is, for all intents and purposes, a castle of American royalty, which is almost certainly why it was selected by the enemy forces as an operational point. Not to put too fine a point on it, but the enemy has an affinity for fancy things, and why shouldn’t they use one of the most elaborate personal estates; and one that is not as gauche and tasteless as modern “McMansions.”

The Biltmore is where the enemy conducts the majority of its operations, although not where the enemy leader resides. Leading from the front is for lesser men, after all. His most trusted vassal, a fellow fey-cursed anachronism that the others call Master Squire. Squire has, through financial manipulation and a side dish of enchantments, essentially assumed control over the employee compound that rests out of sight of the main estate, unseen by the millions of tourists who visit each year. Squire is the only one that the enemy truly trusts to enact his schemes without direct oversight, primarily because the curse that afflicts squire prevents acts of disloyalty to his master. It was Squire who sent the group of agents to Pilot Mountain, hoping that the ritual would unleash sufficient energy

to divine the location of his lord's ancient enemy, but it was ultimately unsuccessful. His master is unaware that the ritual was being conducted at all, and Squire is painfully aware that he would likely not approve of such a high-profile action in the wake of the recent harassment by the Hunters.

Squire's operation at the Biltmore is the single largest concentration of the enemy's forces outside of the personal guard their leader keeps with him at all times. There are a dozen enemy agents present at all times, at least half a dozen of whom are former Hunters or Hunter washouts. Only four of them are former MHI trainees, but if the team is able to identify them, it will at least check some boxes off for the home office and close certain investigations taking place. Squire and his people are not on the MCB's radar at present, as their magic is

kept extremely low-key, other than that the aforementioned four former Hunters were at one point on a table of periodically monitored individuals who have gone off the grid and somewhere there's an open file wondering where they are. Ironically, the biggest threat to Squire and his men are the Hunters, whom the MCB is very interested in questioning about what they've been up to at this point (Special Agent Anna Marston is pretty good at connecting the dots and even if she doesn't have any proof, the brief encounter with the Hunters at the beginning of her investigation into the missing witnesses keeps coming back to bother her.)

The Biltmore Estate poses a number of significant problems for the Hunters in terms of gaining entry. Because it is a major tourist attraction, the security there is considerable, including an extensive network of closed circuit security cameras and a small number of armed guards, as well as the regular presence of law enforcement during both hours of operation and after closing. That doesn't take into consideration the presence of Squire, who sports a minor enchanted blade called Wyrmsion, and his dozen agents. The agents don't often carry much in the way of weaponry during open hours (although most have a sidearm secreted on them somewhere, because they're former hunters and come on, seriously), but tend to travel well-armed after the tourists leave, all under the guise of "enhanced security."

Obviously, this poses a conundrum for the Hunters. On the one hand, this is a tremendous opportunity to find out what the enemy is up to, or even who they are. On the other, this is very much a dangerous location to try and assault. The Hunters will need to determine what approach they want to take: do they go in stealthily to try and determine the nature of their foe, or do they go in with the intent to neutralize

Squire (Wild Card)

Stats: Agility d6, Smarts d8, Spirit d8, Strength d8, Vigor d8

Skills: Athletics d6, Battle d6, Common Knowledge d6, Fighting d10, Intimidation d6, Notice d8, Occult d8, Shooting d6, Stealth d4

Pace: 6

Parry: 6 (7)

Toughness: 6

Edges

- Aristocrat
- Elan
- Improved Block
- Counterattack
- Feint
- Hard to Kill
- Sweep
- Trademark Weapon (Wyrmsion)

Gear/Attacks: Wyrmsion
(STR+1d10, AP 3)

an ongoing threat with whom they've already crossed swords on more than one occasion. Ultimately that decision will vary depending on the group (although honestly the latter seems pretty likely given the kind of people who gravitate toward becoming Hunters). The following bits of information may be of assistance during the planning of the incident:

- The Biltmore is connected to the local power grid, although it has its own backup generators in case of a significant power outage.
- Because the estate is preserved from upgrading its local facilities, most of the compound is wireless and has only basic security. Squire and his operatives have their own dedicated server that is completely separate from estate's network, but it is heavily encrypted.
- One of the peculiarities surrounding Squire is that the curse that grants him longevity (he's approaching 200 years old and favors crisp British style suits that highlight his pure white hair) requires an extensive record of his deeds, which he keeps in a large grimoire style journal that could be found in a safe on site.
- In addition to the enemy agents there are at least eight mundane security guards on site at all times, and about half the time there's a patrol car with the local police department present as well. Police response time to the estate is roughly eleven minutes.

Regardless of how or if the Hunters make use of this information to try and gain entry to the Biltmore and find more information, they can do so by securing Squire's journal from the safe or hacking into the encrypted wireless network, neither of which will

be a simple matter. Squire and his agents will not surrender and, if they are capture, will not talk. Squire in particular will fight to the death if at all possible, and if he should die, his body will rapidly revert to its true age and crumble to dust. His enchanted blade, Wyrmsen, will rapidly rust and become a powerless decrepit relic.

Plot Point # 10: A Good Knight to You, Sir

After a great deal of back and forth, hunter-and-prey machinations, the Hunters finally have the information they need to find Sir Roderick and put an end to his machinations. It's possible that some of the Hunters may find this a bittersweet resolution, because there may be some who are sympathetic to his plight and agree that any association with monsters of any sort can only lead to bad things in the long run. But then, this guy did try to kill members of MHI just because he thinks they aren't pure enough of heart, so screw that uptight jackass.

The former knight has moved his base of power regularly throughout his years in the United States, but has a penchant for places that remind him of his mortal life. His current personal residence is in Overlook Castle in Asheville, North Carolina. He finds the place a bit gauche, honestly, but it beats living in some apartment or normal house like a filthy peasant. He is painfully

Roderick (Wild Card)

Stats: Agility d8, Smarts d12, Spirit d6, Strength d10, Vigor d10

Skills: Athletics d6, Battle d8, Common Knowledge d6, Fighting d10, Intimidation d6, Notice d8, Occult d10, Persuasion d8, Shooting d6, Stealth d4

Pace: 6

Parry: 7 (9)

Toughness: 7

Hindrances

- Arrogant (Major)
- Delusional (Minor)
- Driven (Major)
- Ruthless (Major)
- Shamed (Major)
- Vengeful (Major)

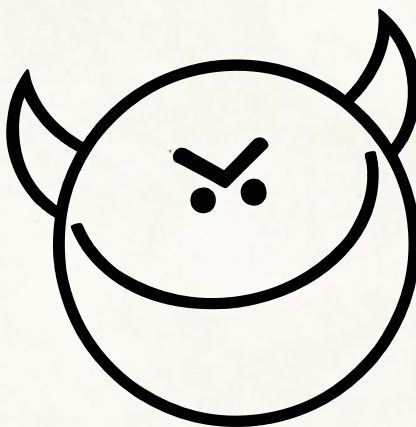
Edges

- Arcane Background (Magic)
- Aristocrat
- Elan
- Giant Killer
- Improved Block
- Counterattack
- Feint
- Hard to Kill
- Harder to Kill
- Sweep
- Trademark Weapon (Wyrmborn)

Gear/Attacks: Wyrmsion (STR+2d8, AP 4, +1 Parry)

aware that the new Hunters from MHI have been moving up the power structure of his organization and he regrets not building a larger group up until this point, but has always chosen to eschew visibility in fear of attracting the attention of his enemies. Right now he is in Overlook with a dozen of his most trusted retainers, all of whom are genuinely loyal former trainee hunters who have, just to be on the safe side, willingly submitted to loyalty spells to ensure they will not betray their lord for any reason.

The knight does not suspect that the Hunters are on their way, although he is aware that they are getting uncomfortably close to tracking him down, and is making plans to move to one of his other locations. Overlook is closed for “renovations” and his agents are in the midst of preparing all their trappings for transport. This means that they have to depend largely on conventional modern weaponry, including firearms comparable to what a team of Hunters would carry. The knight himself, however, has his blade Wyrmborn and a number of powerful spells at his disposal.



Who Is the Enemy?

The villain of this particular campaign is a once mortal man with an immortal vendetta, wronged by a dragon, cursed by the fey, and ruined by his own hubris and instability. All the information about his background is more or less omitted from the plot point campaign described above, but individual GMs may choose to parcel out the following information in whatever manner they see fit. In particular, plot points four, six, and nine provide ample opportunity for the Hunters to learn as much information as the GM feels is necessary for the campaign to maintain appropriate investment and dramatic tension.

The man, for he is a man no matter how far removed, causing so much trouble was once called Sir Roderick. He was a knight in service to the crown of England during the Dark Ages. In particular, he was a knight whose quest was to slay a dragon, a terrible wyrm who plagued a remote corner of the kingdom and preyed upon its inhabitants. Or so Sir Roderick believed, anyway. The truth is that the dragon had little to do with any of the locals and they left him alone as well. But Roderick found the wyrm's very existence and affront to the English throne, and vowed to destroy it. He was, of course, spectacularly unsuccessful and served as little more than a mild irritant to the dragon. He was marginally more successful in routing other supernatural threats, however, serving as a hunter during his own era, more or less. During one of his quests, he faced off against powerful fey that made their home in what is today the Forest of Dean. The fey had him at their mercy and he spitefully cursed at them, saying that if he perished at least he would no longer have to bear the existence of the accursed dragon that he hated so much.

The fey, from one of the dark courts of the Sidhe, found this wildly entertaining for some reason, and did not kill him. They tortured him extensively, cursed him with immortality, and left him near death in a small village where they did not know him.

Over the course of his centuries-long existence, Sir Roderick has become progressively less sane and rational. His only desire in the world is to destroy the dragon he once faced, and he has accumulated as much power as possible toward that goal. He is a sorcerer of no small skill, and while he absolutely believes that he is a hero on a sacred quest, he is every bit as twisted and evil as any other nemesis that MHI has been forced to face and destroy over the years. Despite this, he believes that he is in the right, and his sources indicate that the dragon he seeks until recently made its home in Las Vegas. He knows that MHI was in some way involved in the incident that caused the dragon to move to a new, unknown location, and he is enraged that his chance at justice was thwarted. He has been recruiting MHI washouts to learn more about the company and to build a force that can help him end the "threat" posed by MHI, and in doing so, hopefully learn the location of the dragon that, unknown to him, currently calls itself Management.

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