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Spring Into Savagery

We're back with Volume 3! Thanks to some last-minute help from talented savages, we've got a jam-packed issue full of material you can drop right into your ongoing game. Whether you're a player or a GM, you're bound to find something to jazz things up.

For you sci-fi gamers, we've got a nice little system for adding mutations and defects to your character (mmm, tastes like *Gamma World*), a community and a Savage Tale for Dave Bezio's *Erth 3000*, plus expanded rules for vehicles and a new type of robot that'll watch your character's back—except when it doesn't! And who doesn't like power armor that grafts itself to your spine? Nobody, that's who.

If horror is your thing (and *Rippers* the venue), be prepared for outbreaks of lycanthropy. Oh, and be sure to mind your manners at the Drones Lodge, even if the clientele is beneath your character's contempt.

Thanks to extradimensional explorer Beth'ud, we present some secrets of psionics throughout the multiverse. With any luck we'll be learning more Savage Lore from this intrepid traveler in the near future.

For those of you plying the seas of Caribdis, a new Savage Tale explores one of the setting's iconic locations and reveals its secrets. The trick is getting out alive...

Got a thing for new settings? We've got you covered. If you prefer a little inspiration to jump-start your own campaign creation, look no further than "Greetings from Mars," a detailed journal describing a ruined future.

If you prefer your settings fast, furious, and ready-to-play, jump right into "Pusher." Ever wondered what it would be like to be a dealer in the seamy, violent underworld of mid-80s Miami? This edgy little setting—equal parts *Scarface*, *Miami Vice*, and *Grand Theft Auto*—lets you be one of the Bad Guys. Just watch out for the cops...especially Docken and Scrubbs!

If that wasn't enough, we've got eight new Adventure Cards, ready to add to your deck.

Special thanks go out to Shane Hensley, who took a little time out of his super-busy schedule to participate in this month's "10 Questions." Thanks, Shane!

As always, keep sending in those submissions, and we'll catch you on the flip side.

M. A. Cutter

March 15, 2007

Editor: M. A. Cutter

Contributing Editors: Bob Bretz, William Reger

Cartography: M. A. Cutter, Ralf Tschulena

Webmaster: Peter Leitch

Shark Bytes created by Bill "JB" Littlefield

Art: Otherworld Art Portfolio, OtherWorld Creations; Some artwork from *Fantasy Filler Art*, © Rick Hershey, All Rights Reserved.

Erth 3000 created by David "grubman" Bezio.

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10 Questions

Interview by M. A. Cutter

*This time around **Shane Lacy Hensley**, creator of *Savage Worlds* and CEO of Pinnacle Entertainment, was gracious enough to spare some time for the *Savages*.*

1. How did you get into RPGs?

Shane: I was a comic book kid. In the back of one of my Spidey issues was an ad for *D&D* that ended with the red dragon saying, "Greetings, mortal worm." I thought it was super cool and ordered my first *D&D* Basic Set through... wait for it...the Sears catalog! After that it was scavenging modules and other accessories at Toys-R-Us.

2. Racism in the Solomon Kane stories has been a frequent subject of conversation lately. How will this be handled (or avoided) in *The Savage World of Solomon Kane*?

Shane: Lightly. There are some places in the book where it's discussed, but honestly, like *Deadlands*, it's not a treatise on racism. Kane is about action, adventure, and above all, willpower and righteousness. Kane himself fights slavers in "The Footfalls Within," and your heroes will have the chance to do the same.

I'm often criticized for not tackling slavery in *Deadlands*, and it will happen again here. That's one criticism I don't lose any sleep over, though. It's just not what either of those books are about. What is odd is that you'll see some very vehement posts saying how I'm SO pro-Southern I must own slaves myself (because the South even *existing* in *Deadlands* is pro-slavery, I guess). Then I'll find another thread where people complain how pro-Northern I am. (The truth is I was raised in Ohio and would have worn a blue coat had I been alive at the time.) Ah, people. Gotta love 'em.

3. Can you give our readers any tantalizing hints about Solomon Kane's contents?

Shane: Sure! Your heroes will get to explore all the incredible places Kane did, as well as dozens more. There's also a fully fleshed-out Plot Point campaign, awesome new Edges and Hindrances, and a new setting rule called "Righteous Rage" I think people will really dig.

4. What, if anything, can you tell us about the oft-rumored *Deadlands* MMO?

Shane: Well, I can tell you I'm sitting here

working on it right now. How's that? What I can't tell you is anything concrete, because we have seed funding but not the actual big bucks it takes to make one of these things (tens of millions). When all that is set and the money's in the bank, we'll go public and tell the world. And if things blow up, well...that's business for you. But right now, things are *blazing* along.

5. Speaking of *Deadlands*, how are those Plot Point books coming along?

Shane: Plot Point books are really, really hard. We're having a bit of an academic exercise right now to really figure out how to make these things work. At first I think everyone thought the idea was that Plot Point Campaigns (PPCs) are just a neat way to tell the big backstory—such as the fight with the Sea Hags in *50 Fathoms*. But the *real* intent of PPCs was to make the campaign as FFF as the *Savage Worlds* rules system.

My ultimate goal is for a strapping young lad like, say, Matthew Cutter to be able to pick up our setting books, read about a dozen pages of text, and be ready to run the campaign. When it's game night, he should be able to read a single spread or so and have an entire session's adventure at his fingertips.

The trick though is that it has to be non-linear for the most part. If our strapping young GM wants to do his own campaign, he should be able to insert or add it in as well. If a player has a cool backstory she wants to explore, she



Shane GMs a *Deadlands* session at Con on the Cob, 2006 (photograph by M. A. Cutter)

should be able to go on a tangent to do so without wrecking the campaign.

50 Fathoms worked well because you're on a boat and you go places for whatever reason *you* want, and interact with the various Savage Tales you encounter when you get there—if *you* as a player and GM want to. Or you can add your own.

Necessary Evil doesn't work as well in that regard, in my opinion, because the players essentially sit around waiting for events to happen. They aren't encouraged to be as proactive as they should be.

The first *Deadlands* Plot Point book proved to have some of the same issues in playtesting so we're trying to solve that now.

I can hear the sighs of disappointment. Yes, that means it won't be out any time soon. I'd say late summer at the earliest. No one feels worse about that than me, but the quick and easy approach we had at first just didn't work out, so it was back to the drawing board. Better good and late than bad and early(ish).

6. The RPG industry is said to be going through a rough patch right now. What do RPG companies need to do to survive and prosper? How can gamers help?

Shane: Hmm. Tough question. *Savage Worlds* and Pinnacle survive for three reasons. The first is that we've embraced, encouraged, and grown a loyal and direct fanbase over the last decade who keep us alive. Their enthusiasm (and patience) is our number one strength, and we give thanks for it every day.

The second is obviously the success of *Deadlands*. Having a flagship property like that really does a lot for the bottom line.

Finally, we have a virtual office and a very good deal with our fantastic and reliable fulfillment service, Studio2. This gets rid of a TON of overhead and allows me to pursue things like the MMO, while Simon and Wiggy pour their hearts into our core business of books and the upcoming *Slaughter Gulch*. Add folks like Joe Unger, Clint Black, Dirk Ringersma, Chaos Steve, and Evil Mike to the mix and you can't lose. By the way, the latter don't get any real wages from us, and are for the most part volunteers. Their participation is invaluable, and I can't say thanks enough to these fine folks for giving of their time and energy.

Okay, here's a fourth. We combine retail hardbacks with direct-sale PDFs for a really profitable combination. That said, we want to do more POD work, especially on things like Wiggy's awesome Toolkits, that combine the best of both worlds. POD tech is just about where we need it to be now to give us the quality we're comfortable with, so you should see a sea-change there for PEG (and others) in '07.

What can other companies do? Bow down before all that is Savage! Seriously? Oh...well...

I think big companies with tons of bucks (for slick products and marketing) can come in with the hottest art, preprinted minis, and "Dungeon Quest"-style game play and

accessories. I think you're seeing the beginning of that with all the preprinted stuff on its way. You're looking at a bare minimum of \$600K in capital here, and more likely a million or more.

Smaller companies can do VERY well as a part-time gig on the internet by selling direct via POD and PDF. \$500 can get you started safely there, though a good art budget of a few thousand would serve you far better.

Mid-size companies, like PEG or FASA in the '90s, I think are pretty screwed. The retail model doesn't serve them, and the direct model isn't enough for them either.

That's fine by me for PEG, at least. Life is the best it's ever been for us. We're profitable, have had zero money worries in years, and are as excited about the things we're working on as we've ever been.

7. What's your favorite movie of all time, and why?

Shane: I have often said that *Evil Dead 2* is the pinnacle of human achievement. If you have to ask why, I'm afraid we can't be friends.

8. Got any convention appearances planned for 2007?

Shane: I'll be at the GAMA Trade Show, Origins, and GenCon. I was smart enough to build them into my contract this time, so I'll be there with cowbells on. (It's a cowboy thing...)

9. Who's cooler—pirates or ninjas?

Shane: Definitely pirates. I went through a ninja phase in high school. We used to camp out and have huge ninja wars. Yes, I'll admit it. I had a complete costume, including tabi. I even wrote a ninja computer game and made ninja comic books. But pirates are where it's at these days. Ninjas got left behind with the '80s in my book, I'm afraid. (Sorry, Sho Kasugi!)

10. What do you consider the most exciting current trend in RPGs?

Shane: Well, duh! *Savage Worlds*!

For a real answer, preprinted minis. I hate the collectible aspect, but find it really exciting that I might soon be able to pick up a new RPG and a bunch of preprinted minis to go with it. I just have no interest in painting anything myself these days, but I LOVE the tactile (and tactical) quality of having minis.

My ultimate goal for PEG is to give you at least a set of player characters and common bad guys for each of our games in this format. It's not close to happening yet, but I think it will be. How cool would it be if you could pick up a pack of minis for *Red Rising*, for example? Or *Slipstream*? Or Wiggy's secret epic that he's working on...

...what? You don't know about that? Sounds like the next interview...

Keep it Savage!

Altered Humans

Mutations and defects for *Savage Worlds*

by Zac Corbin

Only players with Altered Human characters follow this step in Character Creation. All others should skip to Step 3. Players with Altered Humans need a standard deck of cards with the Jokers in. Draw 3 cards from anywhere in the deck and consult the mutations table. Individual mutation descriptions are presented below. A Joker allows the player to choose any mutation from the chart or design a new mutation, with GM approval. Characters who end up with Power Mutations will want to put a few points into their Mutation Use Skill as well.

After mutations are determined, reshuffle and draw 2 times from anywhere in the deck. Now consult the Defects table. Individual Defect descriptions are presented below. A Joker lets the player draw again on the mutation chart (redraw repeat mutations), but in that case he also has to draw 2 more times on the Defects chart (redraw repeat Defects).

New Weird Edge

Arcane Background (Mutant)

Arcane Skill: Mutation Use (Spirit)

Starting Power Points: 10

Requirements: Novice, Spirit d6+

Starting Powers: 1 additional random Power Mutation (roll d20, rerolling a 20, and consult the list of Power Mutations below)

Some mutants are able to unleash the power of their mutations more often. They roam across the ravaged landscape of the future, drawing on their own inner strength and willpower to fuel their mutations. This Edge may be taken at any time, with GM approval.

New Professional Edge

Mutant Incarnate

Requirements: Arcane Background (Mutant), Spirit d8+, Mutation Use d8+, Special

These mutant masters have discovered the secrets of harnessing their mutations to the fullest potential. They have had the time to practice and develop techniques that make using their mutations easier. Each raise a mutant gets on a Mutation Use roll reduces the Power Point cost by 1. The mutant must have the points available to use in the first place before rolling. Since the AB (Mutant) Edge can be taken at any time, this Edge can only be taken during a Rank after you have acquired the AB (Mutant) Edge.

Mutation Descriptions

(P): Physical (M): Mental

General Mutations

These mutations do not require activation and are always active.

Acute Senses (P): as Alertness Edge.

Agile (P): Agility starts at d6.

Aquatic (P): The mutant appears fish-like. He has scales, gills, webbed hands and feet, and possibly fins on his back, head and limbs. The mutant can “breathe” underwater and receives a free d6 in Swimming.

Berserk (M): as Berserk Edge.

Chameleon (P): The mutant can change the pigments and patterns of her skin to match her surroundings. She receives

	Mutations		
	Physical Mutations		Mental Mutations
	Clubs		Diamonds
2	Quick		2 Smart
3	Fast Healer		3 Light Sleeper
4	Poison		4 Strong Willed
5	Resistance		5 Danger Sense
6	Acute Senses		6 Duality
7	Efficient Metabolism		7 Obscure
8	Photosynthesis		8 Mind Reading
9	Pheromones		9 Deflection
10	Dual Brain		10 Light
J	Fleet Footed		J Healing
Q	Natural Weapon		Q Quickness
K	Chameleon		K Force Field Generation
A	Speed		A Blast
	Spades		Hearts
2	Low Light Vision		2 Photographic Memory
3	Wall Walker		3 Fearless
4	Agile		4 Berserk
5	Tough		5 Pain Resistance
6	Strong		6 Invisibility
7	Sonar/Infravision		7 Fear
8	Glider		8 Boost/Lower Trait
9	Natural Armor		9 Mental Bolt
10	Improved Natural Armor		10 Cryo/Pyrokinesis
J	Great Natural Armor		J Stun
Q	Aquatic		Q Puppet
K	Slow Regeneration		K Telekinesis
A	Power Hands		A Death Field Generation

from +1 to +4 on her Stealth rolls, depending on the amount of clothing and equipment worn or carried. Your character's skin automatically changes even if she cannot see her surroundings.

Danger Sense (M): as Danger Sense Edge.

Dual Brain (P): The mutant has another brain located somewhere in his torso. This extra source of intellect lets him to roll 2 dice (but only one Wild Die) for Knowledge, Investigation, and Common Knowledge rolls, as well as any rolls to resist mind-influencing effects.

Duality (M): The mutant is very skilled at multi-tasking. When performing multiple actions she is not subject to the multi-action penalty. For example: A mutant with this mutation could pick a lock with one hand, while defending herself and attacking with the other, without suffering the multi-action penalty. Note that in this example, the mutant would still suffer the off-hand penalty to one action.

Efficient Metabolism (P): The mutant requires half as much food and water to sustain himself per day.

Fast Healer (P): as the Fast Healer Edge.

Fearless (M): The mutant is immune to fear effects and receives +4 to resist Intimidation.

Fleet-Footed (P): as the Fleet-Footed Edge.

Glider (P): The mutant has developed glide wings or skin flaps with which she can ride air currents. These new growths resemble the skin flaps of a flying squirrel or the expandable ribs of draco lizard. She can glide, descending 1" for every 2" moved horizontally. The mutant also gains a free d6 in the Flying skill. A Flying roll during a round in which the mutant glides allows her to stay level for that round. A raise allows the mutant to climb 1", but sacrifices 2" of horizontal distance. If there is no wind, the mutant cannot glide.

Light Sleeper (M): Your character requires half the sleep that other people do. Also, he gets +2 to Notice rolls to "wake up" from a noise or other disturbance.

Low-Light Vision (M): The mutant ignores penalties for Dim and Dark lighting, allowing her to see in all but pitch black conditions.

Natural Armor (P): Your mutant has developed scales, thick hide, bony plates, a shell, or some combination of them to give him +1 Armor to virtually his entire body. Improved Natural Armor grants +2 Armor, and Great Natural Armor grants +3 Armor.

Natural Weapon (P): The mutant has some evolved claws, fangs, bony projections, horns, spurs, or something similar that allows her to Str+2 damage.

Pain Resistance (M): as Nerves of Steel Edge.

Pheromones (P): Your character exudes chemicals that are odorless and undetectable under normal circumstances. Others find these pheromones to be relaxing and appealing, granting you +2 Charisma.

Photographic Memory (M): The mutant has excellent memory, granting him +2 on Knowledge and Common Knowledge rolls.

Photosynthesis (P): The mutant's skin and internal organs have evolved to absorb and use solar energy. She does not need to eat. All that she requires is water, sunlight, and the occasional meal, to provide vitamins and minerals, to survive. This mutation also makes the mutant somewhat photo-dependent. While this confers no game penalties, the mutant tends to be lethargic and moody at night, on very cloudy days, or when underground or inside for extended periods of time.

Poison (P): Your character has developed poison glands somewhere in his body. You can deliver a poisonous attack, forcing the victim to make a Vigor roll at -2 or be affected by the poison. Roll 1d4 and consult the following: 1. Sleep Poison, victim is knocked out for 1d6 hours; 2. Debilitating Poison, victim's Strength and all Strength-based skills are reduced by one step for 1d6 hours; 3. Neurotoxin, as Debilitating Poison, but Agility is affected instead; 4. Wounding Poison, the victim receives 1 Wound. The mutant can choose either an Injected (stinger, fangs, etc.) delivery system doing Str-1 damage, or an Inhaled (breath, spore sacs, etc.) delivery system granting the victim a +2 to their Vigor roll (+0 total).

Quick (P): as Quick Edge.

Resistance (P): The mutant is exceptionally resistant to a particular element or attack form. She has +4 Armor and +4 to rolls to resist the element. Roll 1d6 to determine your resistance: 1. Radiation; 2. Energy/Plasma; 3. Fire/Heat; 4. Ice/Cold; 5. Electricity; 6. Mental/Psychic.

Slow Regeneration (P): Your mutant makes a Natural Healing roll every day instead of every five days.

Smart (M): Smarts starts at d6.

Sonar/Infravision (P): Either your mutant has developed bat-like ears and a voice-box capable of producing ultrasonic sounds, or her eyes have evolved to see heat radiation. In either case, the mutant halves (round down) the penalties for bad lighting.

Strong (P): Strength starts at d6.

Strong Willed (M): as Strong Willed Edge.

Tough (P): Vigor starts at d6.

Wall Walker (P): The mutant has developed gecko-like fingers and toes, and can climb vertical surfaces and even hang from ceilings. He moves at his Pace while climbing and only needs to make Climbing rolls in extremely stressful or adverse conditions.

Power Mutations

Power Mutations are activated by the Spirit-based Mutation Use Skill. The mutant receives a number of Power Points determined by the specific mutation (PP-3 means 3 Power Points). If you draw more than one Power Mutation, you add the allotted Power Points together. These Power Points replenish as usual (1/hour).

Blast (M): as Blast Power. Roll 1d6 to determine trappings/element: 1. Fire/Heat; 2. Ice/Cold; 3. Electricity; 4. Radiation; 5. Energy/Plasma; 6. Mental/Psychic. PP-2

Boost/Lower Trait (M): as Boost/Lower Trait Power. PP-2

Cryo/Pyrokinesis (M): PP Cost: 2; Range: Spirit x2; Duration: 3/1. The mutant picks a point to place a Small Burst Template within the range of this mutation. This template cannot be moved once placed. Inside the area of effect, the temperature begins to drastically lower or raise (cryo or pyro) as determined by the mutant at the time of activation. Every round, on the mutant's turn, the damage inflicted to those who are in, or pass through, the area of effect increases by one die step. Ex. On round 1, the damage is 1d4; round 2, 1d6; round 3, 1d8; to a max of 1d12. On a raise, you get +2 to damage for the duration of the power. PP-2

Death Field Generation (M): PP Cost: 4; Range: Large Burst Template centered on you; Duration: 3/1. Everyone inside the area of effect, except you, must make a Vigor roll on your turn or take 1 level of Fatigue. Victims who take 3 levels of Fatigue are Incapacitated; those who take 4 are Dead. On a raise, those inside the Death Field have -2 to their Vigor rolls. One hour of rest will recover a Fatigue level from this power. PP-4

Deflection (M): as Deflection Power. PP-2

Fear (M): as Fear Power. PP-2

Force Field Generation (M): as Barrier Power. PP-4

Healing (M): as Healing Power. PP-3

Invisibility (M): as Invisibility Power. PP-5

Light (M): as Light Power. PP-2

Mental Bolt (M): as Bolt Power with mental/psychic energy trapping. PP-2

Mind Reading (M): PP Cost: 3; Range: Spirit; Duration: 1/1. You can read another's thoughts. This is an opposed roll versus the target's Smarts. A success detects surface thoughts. A raise reveals deeper thoughts, and a second raise reveals any memory in the subject's mind.

Obscure (M): as Obscure Power. PP-2

Power Hands (P): as Bolt Power, but roll 1d4 to determine energy trapping. 1. Electricity; 2. Fire/Heat; 3. Ice/Cold; 4. Energy/Plasma. PP-2

Puppet (M): as Puppet Power. PP-3

Defects			
Black		Red	
2	Extra Vestigial Limb(s)	2	Severe Phobia
3	Bad Eyes	3	Hard of Hearing
4	Obese	4	Anemic
5	Ugly	5	Crude Hands
6	Poor Dual Brain	6	One Leg
7	One Eye	7	One Arm
8	Small	8	Lame
9	Bad Reflexes	9	Distinctive Scent
10	Poor Respiration	10	Poor Metabolism
J	Fragile	J	Sensitivity
Q	Sickly	Q	Dumb
K	Clumsy	K	Weak
A	Cancer	A	Bleeder

Quickness (M): as Quickness Power. PP-4

Speed (P): as Speed Power. PP-2

Stun (M): as Stun Power. PP-2

Telekinesis (M): as Telekinesis Power. PP-5

Defects

Anemic: as Anemic Hindrance.

Bad Eyes: as Bad Eyes Hindrance.

Bad Reflexes: Your mutant has extremely bad reaction time. Any time he is in a combat that he did not initiate, all opponents get "the drop" on him during the first round of combat. Also, he must discard any initiative card higher than 5.

Bleeder: Your character has insufficient levels of platelets in her blood. This causes her wounds to take longer to heal. You have -2 to all Natural Healing rolls.

Cancer: The mutant has a potentially fatal malignant cancer in one of his major organs. Once per game week, at the beginning of a session before bennies are handed out, you must make a Vigor roll. If you fail, you receive one level of Fatigue. This Fatigue level can only be removed by a raise on the weekly Vigor roll. If someone with the Healing skill treats your character for a week, you may add +2 to your roll. With 3 levels of Fatigue the character is Incapacitated and bedridden; with 4 she is dead.

Clumsy: Your mutant is uncoordinated and not very graceful. It costs you 2 points to raise your Agility during character creation, and 2 leveling opportunities to raise your Agility afterwards.

Crude Hands: Your character's hands aren't fully developed or are deformed in some way. You suffer -1 to all actions involving your hands.

Distinctive Scent: The mutant has a distinct and recognizable, but not necessarily bad, odor. This makes it easier for predators that use scent to find her and even those whose sense of smell is not highly developed (humans, mantids, other PC races) can identify her by smell alone.

Dumb: Your mutant is not a deep thinker. It costs you 2 points to increase your Smarts during character creation, and 2 leveling opportunities to increase your Smarts afterwards.

Extra Vestigial Limb(s): You have developed one or more extra appendages that are useless and serve no purpose other than to get in your way. Any armor that you wear must be made especially for you and costs double the normal price. A suit of armor can be modified with a successful Knowledge (Armorsmithing) roll, and some time also. If you wear armor that is not made or modified to fit you, you suffer a -1 penalty to all actions.

Fragile: Your mutant is particularly sensitive to physical trauma. You are automatically Shaken by any successful physical attack against you.

Hard of Hearing: as Hard of Hearing Hindrance except roll 1d6. On a 1, you are Deaf.

Lame: as Lame Hindrance.

Obese: as Obese Hindrance.

One Arm: as One Arm Hindrance.

One Eye: as One Eye Hindrance.

One Leg: as One Leg Hindrance.

Poor Dual Brain: Like the Dual Brain Mutation, your mutant has a second brain located somewhere in your torso. This brain however is a bit deranged and has a separate personality that hates your other, main, personality. During sleep or stressful situations (combat, negotiations, etc.), the second brain tries to assert dominance over your main personality. You must make a Spirit roll or switch personalities. You can only have this Hindrance if you agree to play out both personalities. You make another Spirit roll to switch back to your main personality under the same conditions as those stated above.

Poor Metabolism: Your digestive system is very inefficient. Your character requires twice as much food and water as normal per day.

Poor Respiration: The mutant is easily winded. After 5 rounds of combat or other strenuous activity, you must make a Vigor roll. If you fail, you receive 1 level of Fatigue that can only be removed by 10 minutes of rest. There is a cumulative -2 penalty every 5 rounds of continued activity. If you rest and do nothing for 1 round, the "5 round timer" resets.

Sensitivity: Your character is exceptionally vulnerable to a particular element or attack form. You have -4 Armor and -4 to rolls to resist the element. Roll 1d6 to determine your Sensitivity: 1. Radiation; 2. Fire/Heat; 3. Ice/Cold; 4. Energy/Plasma; 5. Electricity; 6. Mental/Psychic.

Severe Phobia: You are deathly afraid of something fairly common in the campaign. When confronted with your phobia, roll Spirit. If you fail, your character freezes in his tracks, overcome with fear. If you are successful, you are not frozen with fear, but you are very nervous and suffer -2 to all actions.

Sickly: The mutant is prone to illness and is not very hardy. It costs her 2 points to raise her Vigor during character creation, and 2 leveling opportunities to raise her Vigor afterwards.

Small: as Small Hindrance.

Ugly: as Ugly Hindrance.

Weak: Your character could never be called Hercules. It costs you 2 points to raise your Strength during character creation, and 2 leveling opportunities to raise your Strength afterwards.



Sleeping Buffalo

A Community for *Erth 3000*

by M. A. Cutter

"One hundred and one years ago, Richard Nero Ames brought our people here.

"They'd've been lost otherwise, you know. Utterly lost. Everything provided for, wanting for nothing, gadgets to take care of everything you or I can imagine, and also some other gadgets for things we can't. A fortunate and foolhardy people, they weren't ready for what lay ahead.

"But ready or not, the Fire came. In a flash everything they knew was gone.

"A fire in the blood is what started it. What followed was fire from the skies. Then other, secretly-developed technologies were unveiled. Destruction unlike our people had ever seen was unleashed by one man upon another. No ones knows all that took place, and that's likely a merciful thing.

"Our people would have burned in the Fire, but Richard Ames brought them here.

"Ames picked the spot. Ames built the wall. Ames weathered the storm.

"We've kept safe the life-bearing waters of the spring, and we've built strong shelter to protect ourselves. We have done our utmost to return life to the earth, be it a simple flower or a child. We've kept this oasis a secret for as long as we've lived, and despite that fact we've also managed to trade with other communities.

"Now we have voted to take a historic step. We're ready to begin the work that my grandfather envisioned so long ago.

"We're ready to step into the light and reclaim our world.

"By the Spring, by Ames and all he held dear, I hope we have chosen wisely."

—from Alec Nero Ames' address to the Council

Sleeping Buffalo, a walled settlement, is well-hidden in a square-mile of sparse forest near three natural hot springs. All but one of the town's buildings are of post-Ruin construction. The community upholds some pre-Ruin traditions and values technology highly, but has also created their own spiritual dogma. Sleeping Buffalo may be placed anywhere the GM prefers.

Estimated population: 77 (Mostly human, approximately 21 fertile)

Economic Assets: Livestock (cattle, horses, pigs, chickens), fertile soil, water surplus (Khan, Martin & Xhang Springs), wise leadership, vehicles of note (1 humvee, 2 skidoos)

Social Structure: Democratic Cooperative/Elder Council (one vote per household)

Local Law: *Lex Talionis*, or "Law of Retribution." Order is maintained by strong traditions and community awareness; rarely, stronger measures are required. The Keeper of Law,

an elected official, is responsible for seeing that the law is upheld, that grievances are heard before the Council, and that punishments are meted out swiftly. The current Keeper of Law is Falks Magnus, a leathery man known for his skill at breaking wild beasts to the bit and bridle.

The Families of Sleeping Buffalo

The Original Five: Ames, Hanrahan, Khan, Xhang, and Martin.

The Rest: Ingram, Jefferson, Grunwell, Elbert, Magnus, Bird, Rvachew, Shriberg, Denckla, Smith and Bleile.

The Elder Council

(E=Expansionist; I=Isolationist; U=Undecided; N=Neutral)

Alec Ames the Elder (E) The Patriarch, aged 71.

Les Hanrahan (I) moon-faced, receding hairline, hairy hands, aged 57.

Odan Khan (I) obese, thick-lipped, sharp eyes, aged 45.

Sapphire Xhang (E) elegant beauty, aged 63.

Kelvin Martin (E) thin, blue eyes, aged 48.

Ada Shriberg (U) gray-streaked hair, ancient spectacles, aged 54.

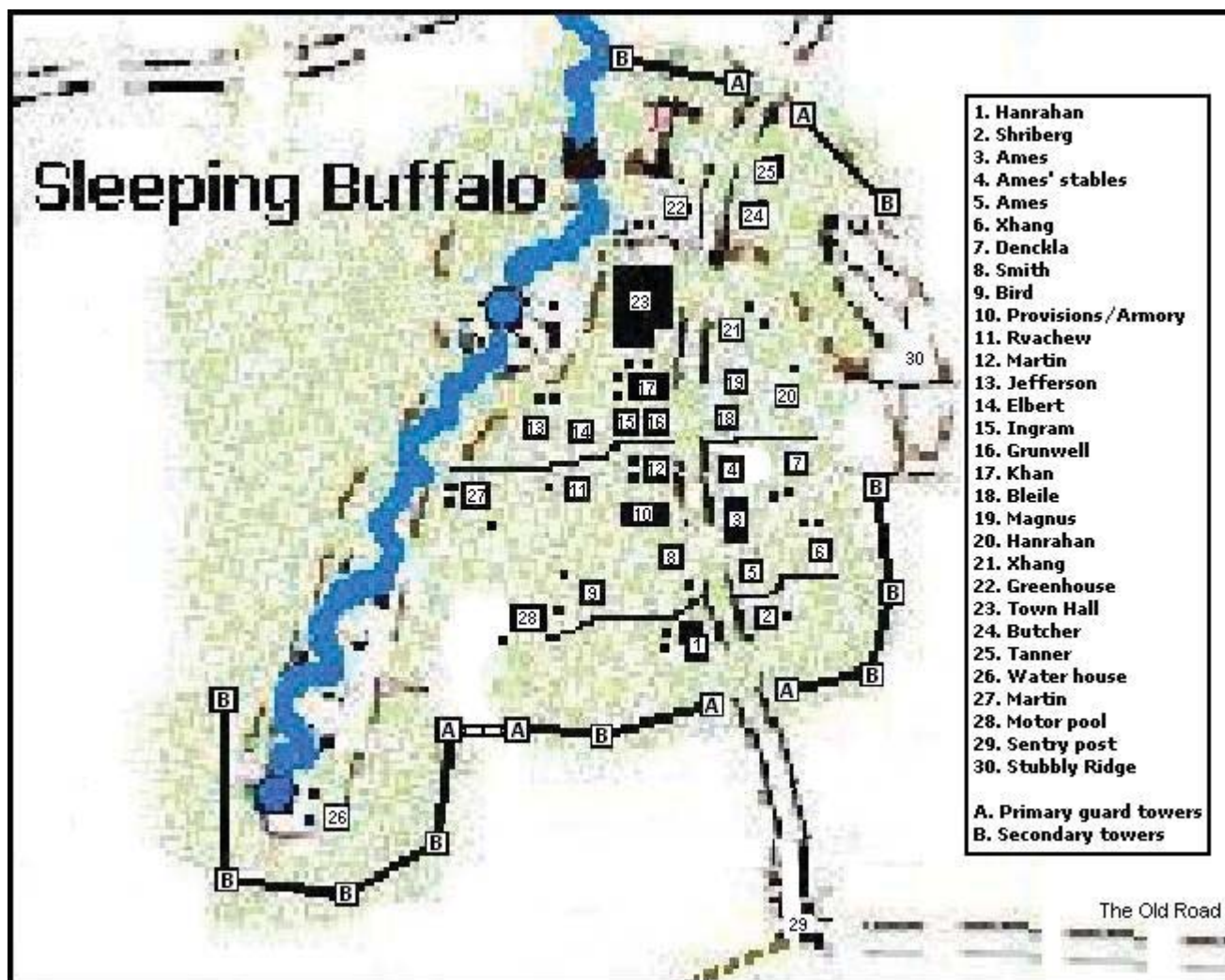
Falks Magnus, Keeper of the Law (N), leathery, taciturn, aged 44.

Tolerance: Screened/limited entry

General reaction: Indifferent

Sleeping Buffalo is a storehouse of Ancient tools—a good deal is known about the technology used by the Ancients in the years preceding the Ruin. Only a little is known about the society of the Ancients, except what is contained in the few books they have, or the Ruin itself—what caused it, how it transpired, and what remains of the wider world. And due to the policy of isolationism that kept the community safe for so long after the initial struggle, almost nothing is known about the current state of the world. Richard Nero Ames directed his followers to build their palisades around the hot springs, effectively walling in the resource that would bring life through the years of darkness to come. The community has lost track of exactly how much time has passed since the time of Richard Ames, and so it is perpetually “one hundred and one years ago” that the community was founded.

Today a good portion of the palisades has been replaced with sturdy stone and earth fortifications, and the town itself sports approximately twenty-five well-constructed cabins of stone and logs. The former “National Parks Visitor Center”—a squat, red brick building of the Ancients—serves as town hall and meeting chamber. A huge, tattered American flag covers one wall. A small trove of Ancient books is also kept here, guarded by the Keepers of the Lore. These are the paltry remnants of a library that was consumed by fire about



seventy-five years ago.

The people of Sleeping Buffalo have an active spiritual life, giving thanks and offerings to the Springs every morning at sunrise under the direction of the Keepers of the Springs (traditionally these are from the Khan, Martin and Xhang families). Vegetables and fruits—the “descendants” of seeds carried by Ames and his people—are cultivated in enough quantity to feed the populace, and animal husbandry is common as well. Currently the community is in possession of one Ancient vehicle: a military transport once designated “humvee” (functional if the GM wishes).

The current Elder of Sleeping Buffalo is Alec Ames, a descendant of Richard Ames himself. Alec is a beloved and respected leader, but he grows old. Once he passes, a struggle is expected between the Isolationists and Expansionists over control of the Council. Currently, the community is seeking trading partners in the area, while carefully avoiding the enclaves of Fleshy Headed Mutants they’ve encountered.

Two of Sleeping Buffalo’s respected elders are provided for the GM’s use. Either would work well as a mentor or contact for the characters.

Falks Magnus, Keeper of the Law (WC)

Though he’s leathery, taciturn, mean, and never met a horse he couldn’t break to the bit, Falks Magnus holds nothing in higher regard than the people of Sleeping Buffalo—his people. You’d never know it from his demeanor, but Falks would leap in front of a mutant grizzly to save his folk. He makes a gruff but protective mentor for the characters.

Attributes: Agility d10, Smarts d8, Spirit d8, Strength d8, Vigor d10

Skills: Fighting d8, Guts d8, Knowledge (Animal

Husbandry) d8, Intimidation d10, Notice d10, Riding d12, Shooting d10, Taunt d8, Throwing d8

Charisma: -2; **Pace:** 6; **Parry:** 7; **Toughness:** 8

Hindrances: Mean

Edges: Block, Combat Reflexes, Command, Connections, Danger Sense, Level Headed, Nerves of Steel, Steady Hands, Strong-Willed, Tough as Nails

Weapons: Ancient six-shooter, 8 rounds, knife, sword

Gear: Flop hat, simple clothing, ancient sheriff’s badge, lasso, boots

“Shooter” Jefferson (WC)

Upholding the proud traditions of an ancient military order, “Shooter” Jefferson acts as sentry and scout to the community of Sleeping Buffalo. He can be found ranging the land all around the settlement, most often keeping watch over the region from the Ranger Outpost. He is soft-spoken and friendly, but could take the wings off a blackfly at a hundred paces with his antiquated sniper’s rifle.

Attributes: Agility d12+2, Smarts d8, Spirit d8, Strength d10, Vigor d10

Skills: Fighting d10, Guts d8, Notice d10, Persuasion d8, Shooting d12, Stealth d8, Survival d10, Throwing d6, Tracking d10

Charisma: +0; **Pace:** 6; **Parry:** 8; **Toughness:** 7

Hindrances: Cautious

Edges: Alertness, Block, Dodge, Expert (Agility), Hard to Kill, Marksman, Quick Draw, Rock and Roll!, Tough as Nails, Trademark Weapon (Improved), Woodsman

Weapons: “Annabelle” (H&K G3 assault rifle), 23 rounds, knife, saber, brass knuckles

Gear: Backpack, bedroll, canteen, compass, travelers’ clothes, hiking boots



ON THE MENU

A Savage Tale for *Erth 3000*

by R. Hall

Frontier Town

Wrock is a small but prosperous community on the shores of a vast ocean. While fishing and farming are common pursuits, the real reason Wrock exists is to cater to the steady stream of hopefuls that scavenge in the nearby ruins of the city of Mond, by outfitting expeditions and dealing in the artifacts that are found. The artifact dealers have grown relatively wealthy on the trade and have developed more sophisticated tastes than are normally found in a frontier town.

Marlin's Prize

Marlin Jim, a 'smart animal' ferret, runs a restaurant on the waterfront called, appropriately enough, Marlin's. While the place is a little rough around the edges, the cook (he prefers chef) is excellent and specializes in exotic seafood. That is, anything that comes from the sea and can still be considered food.

The chef has gotten word of an exotic squid, perhaps a new mutation, perhaps not, in the waters off the coast. He wants to sample it. Marlin Jim, being smarter than your average smart animal, is willing to do what it takes to keep his chef happy. He'll pay premium prices to anyone who can bring one back. The price offered is 100 creds, but he will go higher if the PCs are skilled negotiators. Marlin Jim describes a particular specimen of squid with a reddish hue.

If the PCs are willing, Marlin Jim can set them up with a boat charter. The captain of the boat isn't happy about the deal and will grumble incessantly, but he owes a few favors to Jim and goes along with the deal.

Captain Max Stern is a middle-aged human with perpetual black stubble covering his jaw and a bloodshot look to his eyes. He may not look it, but he is competent enough when it comes to his boat, and has been through more than his share of close calls at sea.

Calamari

The trip to where the squid was last seen takes a couple of hours, during which Captain Max will stick to the wheelhouse and complain about the foolishness of this trip, stating that any damage to his ship is going to come out of the PCs' earnings. Of course, the boat is in pretty rough shape to begin with, with peeling paint and an old diesel engine that promises to cough up a few parts at any moment (**Fishing Boat**: Acc/Top Speed 2/6; Toughness 13(2); Crew 1+9). Note that the PCs aren't responsible for the boat; it's all bluster on the Captain's part.

Once there, Max kills the engine (or it dies, your choice), and the boat falls silent. Soon enough, white shapes are seen flitting underneath the boat. Harpoons (Str+2, 10 lbs., min. Str d8, Reach 1, two-handed) are available to any who can

wield them, as are nets. The white squid (sharpbeaks) are the common variety, although they are dangerous enough on their own. The PCs are looking for the reddish specimen described by Marlin Jim. Fortunately, 15 minutes and a good Notice roll will spot one. Unfortunately, it isn't going down without a fight—and it's a little bigger than Marlin Jim let on (see p. 11 for Mutant Squid stats).

Captain Max will stay out of the fight, unless the squid directly threatens his boat, in which case he'll hack at any tentacles with an axe (give him straight d6 in Traits). He will, however, happily criticize any PCs, and offer less than useful advice ("Put your back into it!" or "No, that's not how you throw a harpoon!") as they struggle with the beast.

The mutant squid will try to snatch the PCs off of the boat and throw them into the water, where a sharpbeak swarm awaits. It will also attempt to put a hole in the boat with its massive beak. Needless to say, the captain will be most displeased. If the squid manages to do enough damage to the boat, it will capsize and the characters will have to man the rowboat (Rowboat: Acc/Top Speed 1/2; Toughness: 8(2); Crew: 1+3). The squid may also dive beneath the water and attempt to surprise the characters several tense minutes later.

After the PCs, hopefully, triumph, they'll have the matter of hauling the beast on board, or more likely, lashing it to the side of the boat, but the PCs' troubles aren't over. A sharpbeak swarm will center on the dead squid and start eating it! The PCs have to both claim their prize and prevent it (and themselves) from being devoured by the swarm.

Aftermath

Assuming the boat hasn't taken too much damage, Captain Max will gladly turn it around and head back towards Wrock. While he still grumbles, he has a newfound respect for the PCs. If the good captain didn't survive, a Boating roll will be necessary to make it back. If the boat didn't survive, another fishing vessel comes along within a few hours to pick them up.

Depending on the condition of the squid when the PCs return, Marlin Jim will either be all smiles, or somewhat disappointed. He doesn't seem the least bit surprised about the size of the animal, despite not telling the PCs about it beforehand. In any case, he'll pay the negotiated price and may have further work for them in the future.

Sharpbeak Swarm

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

Skills: Notice d8

Pace: 6; **Parry:** 4; **Toughness:** 6

Special Abilities:

- **Aquatic:** Pace 6
- **Bite:** the squid dart in and out, taking chunks of flesh with them, causing 2d4 damage to everyone within a medium burst template.
- **Split:** The swarm can split into two smaller swarms each covering a small burst template. Toughness for the smaller swarms is 4.
- **Swarm:** Parry +2, cutting and piercing weapons do no damage (try harpooning an entire swarm!).

All the Usual Refinements

by Bob Bretz

The ace pilot who climbs into his fighter...the master spy who outruns the mastermind's minions in his modified Astin Martin...the reckless rocket jockey who pilots his space craft through asteroid fields...they all have one thing in common: vehicles with really cool gadgets built into them. Sometimes a brave adventurer only has his wits and cunning—and the smoke screen built into his car—to get him out of danger.

Vehicles have a lot more going for them besides their Acceleration or Toughness Attributes. *Savage Worlds* calls them special abilities, and they're listed in the Notes section of a vehicle's stat block. Some of these abilities might be considered mundane items, such as a supercharger for a car or an auto-pilot for an aircraft. Some settings feature vehicles with futuristic, fantastic or just plain unrealistic vehicle abilities; the aforementioned smoke screen comes to mind, as well as a car that can also fly.

To create settings with vehicles in *Savage Worlds*, rules are provided for vehicles that include a few of these special abilities on pages 46 and 47 of the revised rulebook. There are also additional rules in a few of Pinnacle's Toolkits that handle vehicles in genre settings (the Sci-Fi and Pulp Toolkits in particular). But generally, vehicles have not been as expanded upon as comprehensively as, say, arcane powers. The rules and optional equipment provided here can help enhance the vehicles in your setting with those little extras that make driving a little more fun and useful.

It should be said that these rules and special abilities are meant to be very "fast and loose," and not meant to be a strict method for equipping vehicles. Keep in mind that we are talking about options that aid vehicles in combat situations; other options (such as air conditioning or AM/FM radio) are useful and may be rare, but mundane items should be considered standard if appropriate to the setting. The point is to keep things fairly flexible as well as fast, furious and fun!

New Vehicle Rules

In order to include the vehicle special abilities seen in movies, television shows, books and other media—not to mention options available to actual vehicles—a few new rules are needed. These rules are optional, but are highly recommended to enhance the use of vehicles in your campaign, even if the appropriate ability isn't generally available to your settings' vehicles.

Mutant Squid (WC)

Attributes: Agility d8, Smarts d8(A), Spirit d8, Strength d12+2, Vigor d10

Skills: Fighting d8, Notice d6, Stealth d8

Pace: 8; **Parry:** 6; **Toughness:** 11

Special Abilities:

- **Aquatic:** Pace 8
- **Size:** +4 (Large)
- **Tentacles:** The squid may attack two different victims per turn. A success can be used to knock a character into the water (where they will possibly face a sharpbeak swarm), and a raise means the character is entangled and suffers strength damage each round (use an opposed strength roll to break free).
- **Bite (Str+2):** large beak.

Bailing Out

In combat situations, a vehicle often goes out of control and is in danger of crashing. The operator and passengers may be forced to endure crash landings or collisions with stationary objects. However, a character may want to try and exit the vehicle while it is in motion before it crashes, avoiding a potentially deadly wreck. This is universally called Bailing Out, regardless of the type of vehicle.

After the vehicle is determined to be out of control, if a character wishes to Bail Out they must make an Agility roll at -2. If they fail the roll, they are forced back into the vehicle due to centripetal force. If the roll is successful, the character is free to exit the vehicle per the "Falling or Jumping From Vehicles" rule found in *Savage Worlds* (p. 96).

Wheels

Ground vehicles without the Tracked option (see *Savage Worlds*, p. 47) or the Hover Movement option (see below) are assumed to have wheels. Wheels come in all types and sizes, but are generally vulnerable to attacks. In most cases, the Toughness of a wheel is less than the Toughness of the vehicle itself. As a rule of thumb, tires made of the following substances have the listed Toughness:

Wheel Toughness	
Wheel Type	Toughness
Wood	5
Rubber, non-steel radials	7
Rubber, steel radials	8
Rubber, solid	9
Stone	10

If the vehicle is in motion and a wheel takes any damage by an attack it suffers a blow out (or if a solid tire is degraded enough to fall apart) and the vehicle automatically goes out of control. Attackers, however, are at -4 to their rolls to target a tire.

Optional Rule: Equipping Vehicles

As it stands, there is no system in the *Savage Worlds* rules for equipping vehicles. Most of the example vehicles in the book have equipment that seems appropriate to their nature, use or setting. Few of the rules explain how a vehicle can be adjusted or modified by a player or GM to suit their needs.

In order to keep things simple all vehicles have a number of “slots” that allow for the addition of optional equipment. Each time an option is selected, it takes up a slot. It doesn’t matter if one option seems “smaller” than another, all options take up one slot. Options listed in the core book (e.g., Air Bags, Night Vision, Sloped Armor, Tracked) and any of the new abilities listed below are considered to take up one slot. Each weapon system a vehicle possesses is also considered to take up one slot.

Since vehicles come in a variety of sizes, the larger the vehicle is the more slots it has. Use the following chart as a general guideline for determining the number of available slots a vehicle possesses:

Slots per vehicle	
Vehicle Size	No. of slots
Compact Car	5
Mid-size Car	6
Large Car / Pick-up Truck	7
Fighter Aircraft	5
Bomber Aircraft	7
Small Jet-liner	7
Large Jet-liner	8
Speed Boat	5
Cabin Cruiser	6
Frigate	8
Destroyer	10
Cruiser	12
Battleship	15

Other aspects of equipping vehicles, such as cost, time necessary to equip the vehicle and other such details are variable depending on the setting and other factors set by the GM. If a GM allows a player to modify a vehicle, they should make clear how many slots the vehicle has (the chart above should be considered a rough guideline), which options are available, what (in round figures) it will cost and any other relevant factors.

New Vehicle Special Abilities

The vehicles section of *Savage Worlds* has a number of special abilities listed. Here are a few more meant to broaden the list to include other special equipment that many *Savage Settings* might employ.

Alternate Movement: In addition to its standard method of movement, the vehicle has one other type of movement that must be specified when this option is taken. The types of movement available are: air-fixed wing, air-rotor, ground,

underground, water-surface, water-subsurface and space. The Acceleration and Top Speed of the new movement type is whatever makes sense based on the size of the original vehicle and the type of movement involved (e.g., a car that converts into a helicopter might use the Bell Jet Ranger Helicopter’s Acc/Top Speed stats, as they are roughly the same size). The GM has the final say on which speed is appropriate.

Armored Wheels: The vehicle’s wheels have an Armor value of 4. See rules regarding wheels above.

Auto Control System, Basic: By setting the vehicle on Auto Control, it travels on a prescribed path regardless of whether a pilot or driver is at the controls. For all practical purposes, the vehicle has its own Drive Skill at d6, but can only make basic maneuvers (no tight turns or stunt maneuvers). It takes an action to activate the Auto Control or change its course.

Auto Control System, Advanced: This system works similarly to the Basic System, but it is capable of operating along a prescribed course along with any necessary maneuvers. Although effectively an artificially intelligent device, it still requires a programmed course to follow.

Cloaking Device: The vehicle can literally become invisible, but shimmers slightly. Anyone attempting to Notice the cloaked vehicle is at -4 to their roll. The same penalty is applied to attacks, even if the attacker has noticed the vehicle. Note that the benefit of the Cloaking Device supersedes any other type of camouflage (like Advanced Stealth Tech or Stealth Paint) and doesn’t add to the modifier.

Communications: The vehicle is equipped with a radio or some other system that allows communication with other vehicles or ground locations with similar equipment. Without such systems, vehicles can only communicate with visual or sound signals, which can be blocked or easily interfered with.

Compartmental Hull: Watercraft with this option have special compartments with fast-closing doors that delay the vehicle from sinking. If a craft with this option is sinking, add 1d6 to the appropriate type of craft as indicated by the Sinking rules in *Savage Worlds* (p. 99).

Disguise System: Transforming panels, instant paint jobs, revolving license plates and other similar systems allow the vehicle to change its appearance to fool pursuers. When the character takes an action to activate the disguise, it takes until their next action for the full disguise to take effect—anyone observing the vehicle before that time can witness the vehicle changing. Once disguised, anyone trying to find the vehicle is at -2 to Notice rolls or any other appropriate Trait roll to identify that the disguised vehicle is the same one they are searching for. Note that this is only a disguise; an automobile that can disguise itself as a airplane cannot also fly.

Drop Spikes: Small spikes are dropped behind the ground-based vehicle in a Small Burst Template. Any pursuer must make a Notice roll at -2 to see them; a failure means they drive over them (assuming they are traveling in that direction) inflicting 2d6 damage to their tires. If the pursuer sees the spikes and tries to avoid them they must make a successful

Drive roll (but keep the Speed Kills rule in *Savage Worlds*, p. 96, in mind).

Ejector Seat: When Bailing Out of an out-of-control vehicle, no Agility roll is necessary with an Ejector Seat (see Bailing Out, above). A character wishing to activate this escape mechanism must wait for his initiative and use an action. Capital ships have Escape Pods instead of Ejector Seats (see Escape Pods below).

Escape Pods: Capital ships with Escape Pods allow crew and passengers to escape an out-of-control capital ship. A ship so equipped has enough Pods to accommodate everyone on board (maybe even more), but anyone wishing to use one must take the appropriate action to do so. If there isn't enough time to reasonably reach a Pod before the ship crashes or explodes, then all aboard take damage as per the standard rules.

Fire-Suppression: The capital ship has sensors that detect on-board fires and has a suppression system in place to control the spread of fire. When rolling on the Fire Table (*Savage Worlds*, p. 99), subtract one from the roll, with a minimum result of one.

Homing Weapon: One or more of a vehicle's weapons locks on, tracks and homes in on its intended target, using the target's heat signature, radar signature or some other similar process. If the attacker misses the target then the Homing Weapon continues to attack on the following turn. Note that on the second round the attacker can launch yet another attack, essentially getting two attacks for the round. If the attack misses a second time, then it is finished; there is no third attack. This second attack doesn't cost the attacker an action. If the first attack missed because of an anti-missile system that actually destroys or deflects weapon fire, then a second attack is not possible.

Hover Movement: This option works similarly to the Tracked option (see *Savage Worlds*, p. 47), but no physical part of the vehicle actually touches the ground. Assume that the vehicle can hover between 5 feet and 25 feet above the ground, but every foot above 5 subtracts 1" from the vehicle's Acceleration (the vehicle is ground-based and not air-based, after all). The vehicle can't go high enough to reduce its Acceleration below 1". Note that the vehicle is subject to all ground-based movement rules (e.g., Tight Turns).

Jump System: Using jump jets or high-speed lift jacks, the ground-based vehicle can jump off the ground and clear a great distance without the use of a ramp. Use the Jump Maneuver rules in *Savage Worlds* (p. 101), but the vehicle can rise its Acceleration in inches off the ground at the start of the jump.

Off-Road Tires: Ground-based vehicles with off-road tires can travel on difficult ground at -1 to the operator's Drive Skill as opposed to the usual -2 (See the Difficult Ground rule in *Savage Worlds*, p. 96). Tracked vehicles can't have this option.

Oil Slick Projector: A Medium Burst Template of slippery oil is expelled directly behind the ground-based vehicle. Any vehicle that travels through the oil must make a successful Drive roll at -2 or go out of control.

Parachute Braking: By releasing a small parachute, the vehicle can decelerate at three times its Acceleration. After use, it takes several minutes to reload the parachute.

Ram Plate: A strong plate or spear-like implement is placed on the front of the vehicle to aid in damaging opponents during ram-type collisions. For every 5" of current speed, add +1 to the collision damage roll (see Collisions in *Savage Worlds*, p. 96).

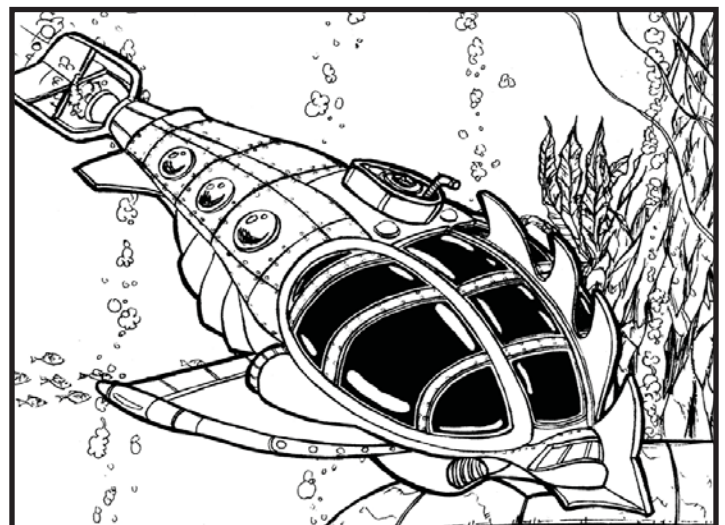
Remote Control: By use of a remote control, a driver or pilot can control the vehicle whether they are inside it or not. As long as they have the remote, they can make Driving or Piloting rolls for the vehicle as if they were inside it.

Sensors: Call it radar, sonar or some other name, the vehicle has the ability to detect other vehicles within a mile of its current location. Sensors counteract the benefit of all camouflage systems (like Advanced Stealth Tech or Stealth Paint) except Cloaking Devices (see above).

Slick Tires: These are bald tires that aid ground-based vehicles in making tight turns. When making these turns, any penalty for Tight Turns is improved by +1. If the ground is wet or covered in some other slippery substance, then the vehicle is penalized an additional -1 due to the baldness of the tires.

Smoke Screen: The vehicle can release a cloud of thick smoke that blocks vision in a Large Burst Template. Anyone caught within the smoke are at a -6 on attack rolls to hit any targets. The smoke clears after two rounds (one round in conditions of strong wind). There are two standard methods for using this feature: directly behind the vehicle (warships and super spy automobiles generally have this feature) or projecting smoke bombs in any direction, up to 10" (modern-day tanks often have this option).

Speed Burst: Call it turbo, overdrive, afterburners, fuel injection or a nitrous oxide system—the vehicle is capable of a short-term speed boost. When activated (an action by the vehicle operator on their card) roll a d6 and add the value to the vehicle's Acceleration. This boost can increase a vehicle's speed over its Top Speed, but in the following round the vehicle must decelerate back to its Top Speed. Keep the Speed Kills rule (*Savage Worlds*, p. 96) in mind when using Speed Burst systems.



Positronic Robots

by Curtis F. Kaylor

Positronic Robots are controlled not by a traditional computer (or electronic brain), but rather a positronic brain—a platinum-iridium alloy device containing a complex collection of positronic circuits to approximate the neurons and synapses in a biological brain. A positronic brain is an analog device that operates on principles of logic contained within three laws. The Three Laws of Robotics state:

1. A robot cannot harm a human being, or allow one to be harmed, if at all possible.
2. A robot must follow the orders of humans, unless doing so would cause a human being to be harmed.
3. A robot will protect itself only if neither aforementioned conditions have been invoked.

A robot stands about 5 1/2 feet tall with proportions similar to the average human. Older models were large and boxy, but current models are thin and streamlined in appearance.

Robots are “gear”—and must be purchased as such by the characters—costing \$10,000 (based on book standard). A robot’s Advances take the form of mechanical upgrades called Modifications. The fine-tuning of such Modifications means the benefits are not realized until the robot gains an Advance like any extra (see *Savage Worlds*, p. 90) and involve a monetary cost as well (usually \$1,000 for Attribute and Skill upgrades).

Some suggested robot Modifications based on Edges are listed below; the GM is encouraged to allow other Edges, working with the player to determine what form of Modification is warranted. For example, a “Social Interactivity Enhancement” might grant the Charismatic Edge, or “Tactical Overhead Scanning” could approximate the Level-Headed Edge. The robot’s owner must pay the cost of any Modifications.

Positronic robots are somewhat useful allies, but are not generally suited to be Wild Cards, particularly not player characters. Since a robot is incapable of harming a human being, or even allowing a human to be harmed, they tend to be a liability in battle situations (unless they’ve been hacked; see sidebar).

Various circumstances create different levels of potential in the robot’s positronic pathways. These levels determine a robot’s behavior in different situations. For example, if a robot is given a casual order, but carrying that order out would lead the robot to certain destruction, the third law would create a higher potential than the second law would, causing the robot to stop until given further orders. A human in imminent danger will in no case be overridden by the second two laws.

A robot’s Knowledge skill is appropriate to the task for which it was designed.

Attributes: Agility d6, Smarts d6, Spirit d4, Strength d8, Vigor d8

Skills: Climbing d6, Fighting d6, Knowledge (Program) d8, Notice d6, Stealth d6, Throwing d6

Pace: 6; **Parry:** 5; **Toughness:** 9 (3)

Special Abilities:

- **Armor +3:** Robots have steel bodies. If an access cover is removed, then that part of a robot is considered –3 Toughness and a small target for Called Shots.
- **Construct:** Robots add +2 when attempting to recover from being Shaken, take half damage from piercing weapons, and do not suffer from Wound modifiers, disease, poison, or radiation. They do, however, suffer additional damage from a Called Shot to the head.
- **Fearless:** Robots never suffer from Fear effects and cannot be Intimidated (though they may be affected by Taunts).
- **Ambidextrous:** A robot ignores the –2 penalty for using its off-hand.
- **Repairs:** A wounded robot does not heal, but must be repaired. This requires a repair roll and 1d6 hours per Wound the robot has suffered. Field work requires at least a toolbox and basic supplies, and subtracts 2 from the roll. A robotics laboratory negates this penalty.
- **Fatigue:** Robots do not suffer Fatigue from normal sources, but do require monthly maintenance. Maintenance requires a successful repair roll, as well as a toolbox and basic supplies. A robotics laboratory adds +2 to this roll. After 60 days without maintenance, and every 30 days thereafter, a robot must make a Vigor check. Failure adds a Fatigue level. Fatigue levels must be repaired (using the same rules as Wounds).
- **Weakness:** The Three Laws of Robotics (see above)

Modifications

- **Built-In Tool/Weapon:** The price of the item (or weapon, if the robot is designed to fight other robots) plus \$1,000.
- **Enhanced Servos:** These confer the Brawny Edge. This is usually found on robots designed for construction, mining, and other jobs requiring heavy lifting. Cost: \$1,000
- **Improved Locomotion:** This confers the Fleet-Footed Edge. Robot couriers generally have this modification. Cost: \$1,000
- **Infrared Scanners:** These add the Infravision monstrous ability. This is usually built into robots that deal with humans on a regular basis, such as domestic models. Cost: \$500
- **Night Vision:** This gives the robot Low Light Vision. Adding this to a robot reduces the need for artificial light. Cost: \$500

Brain Hack

Cost: \$3000

The single most feared Modification to a positronic brain—among humans, at least—is the Brain Hack, whereby a robot is permanently freed from its compunction to follow the Three Laws of Robotics. Such rogue entities may use their abilities to harm, or allow to be harmed, any human being they wish. They tend toward selfish protection of themselves in most situations; a robot so modified will rarely put itself at risk to aid a human (even its owner). For this reason, they make better Wild Cards than your typical robot.

A positronic robot may receive a Brain Hack in place of any Advance/Modification, but this is a risky procedure. Robots that have been hacked are ruthlessly hunted and destroyed (if possible) by other robots designed to do so. This Edge is also a Hindrance! —Ed.

Host Armor

by Lord Abaddon of Wormwood

Using *Dark Space* from I.C.E. and *Savage Worlds*, *Sci-Fi Gear Toolkit*, Power Armor section.

Host armor resembles a seven-foot-plus creature from legend made from a full-body graft. Like most grafts, these creatures are non-intelligent and have no mobility without a host. The host literally climbs into a suit of this large humanoid armor via an entrance in the back, a series of muscles that seals once entered. The Host armor confers a number of advantages. The host armor has an armor type of its own and like traditional power armor has the following base equipment:

- Audio sensors
- Visual sensors
- Hermetically sealed, oxygen taken from internal stores and the Host armor has the ability to filter air that is unclear
- Internal comm-unit with a 5-mile range
- Host armor requires a nutrition injection or bath every 72 hours or they will wither and die. It takes a full week for Host armor to become useless.
- Most are installed with a biolock, meaning that the armor will only operate for someone with the correct bioprint. The bioprint comprises a complete analysis of all bodily structures, functions and metabolism.

Gryllidae

- Based upon a grasshopper, this armor has Leg Servos and Jump Rockets. The chassis is Light. The Jump Rockets come in the form of wings, allowing for short flights.
- The Medium version of this armor has the above plus Chameleon Circuitry and a Weapon Mounted Flechette.
- Sting (Str+1) in thorax

Gecko

- Lizardlike in appearance, this Light chassis has Arm Servos, Chameleon Circuitry upon the skin and Magnetic Grapples. The Magnetic Grapples are hi-grade suction, thus being able to climb upon almost any surface.
- Medium version adds Armor Panels, looking like thicker scales and Stealth Circuits.
- Heavy version adds a weapon mount plus a targeting computer. This version is used as shock troops.
- Bite (Str+2)

Lupus

- The werewolf of the myths has become real. This shaggy Heavy armor is assault infantry's best friend—but only if you are on the right side.

- Arm Servos and Armor Panels all come in the form of muscle-rippled body. Enhanced power unit and targeting computer with Ultrasonics (ears) enable this Host to survive on the combat field far longer than most. This allows for deep insertion missions. A weapon mount is also provided.

- Medium version Arm Servos, Leg Servos, Enhanced Sensors and weapon mount. These armors are the pathfinders of a squad.

- Light keeps the Arm Servos and Chameleon Circuitry, plus adds Stealth Circuits. Light and very sneaky, good for silent ops. Also used with high Fight skill.

- Claws (Str+3)

Chelate

- Needless to say, this Heavy layered plate armor has the distinct look of a crab. This is a hostile environment Host armor.

- Twin mounted Weapons add to the look of claws on a crab.

- Add with Self Sealing, Propulsion Jets, Armor Panels and AutoDoc.

- This unit is ideal for underwater or the void of space, but the Propulsion Jets need to be reconfigured for the different roles. The chassis is Heavy.

The Drones Lodge

by Gordon Lawyer

Influence: 6; **Membership:** 8; **Resources:** 11;
Facilities: 4

Located in London on Dover Street, the Drones Club is to all appearances a fairly typical gentlemen's club. The membership consists primarily of what are known as "gentlemen of leisure." Marxists of the time use less polite terms, such as "Non-producers who will be the first against the wall when the revolution comes." While there, the members indulge in drinking, smoking and other such activities similarly lacking in intellectual stimulation. Strange as it may sound, this den of freeloaders is actually a cover for a Rippers lodge. Of course, only a small percentage of the members are actually aware of this. The typical Drone is dull of wit and easily cowed by a domineering aunt and wouldn't stand a chance against the Cabal. However, a few are made of sterner stuff and are typically bored with the frivolous pursuits they engage in. It is from these individuals which the Drones lodge gains its recruits. Due to their thrill-seeking nature, the membership leans mostly towards the Masked Crusaders faction. Their greatest benefit is their access to funding, as many of the Drones are quite adept at sponging off rich uncles. This peculiar lodge is headed by Galahad Threepwood, younger brother of the current Lord Emsworth.

Curse of the Wolfman

by David Goecke

It was on him before he knew it. A snarling beast, that this morning had been a man, pounced on Liam Sheppard from the shadows of the alley. He had been a fool to separate from the rest of the group, and now he was paying for it. In the light of the full moon and the flickering of a dirty street lamp, he could see the hairy face biting and snapping at his own. Saliva and blood, Liam's blood, glistened on the werewolf's face. The last thing Liam heard before he blacked out was an ear shattering BANG and a yelp of pain from his attacker.

Lord Godalming rolled the dead body off his friend. The corpse looked like a man, but he had seen what it was a moment before, and thanked God he thought to load silver in his pistol tonight. The sounds of footsteps running toward him made Godalming turn quickly with his pistol aimed—but saw his fellow Ripper, Jenny, approaching.

"Arthur, I heard the gunshot. Did you get it?" she called.

"I did. But not before it got Liam." Arthur Godalming looked sadly at his mauled friend.

"Is he...?" she gasped.

"No, he's alive, but just barely. We need to get him back to the lodge quickly," Arthur said with a grunt as he began to lift Liam.

"But Arthur," said Jenny with a tinge of apprehension in her voice, "He's been bitten. He'll *change*."

Lord Godalming met her eyes for a just a moment before they both looked at the pistol still in his hand. Five silver bullets remained...

So your Ripper was bitten by a werewolf. What now? Does he run off immediately to start maiming and killing for the Cabal? Does he save his friends and countless innocents by putting a silver bullet between his eyes? Do his 'comrades' strap him down and cut off the choice bits for their Rippertech? In any case, does a player really need to hand in their character sheet when they get infected with lycanthropy? No! Well, not yet anyway. There may be time yet for redemption and a heroic end for your Ripper. Here's a few quick rules to help manage a werewolf character. Don't think this is a quick way to new powers; the Curse of the Wolfman is a rough ride.

Your reward for surviving being mauled by a werewolf and surviving is a decrease of 1 Reason if you become a wolfman. Your Ripper now suffers the same weaknesses as a wolfman; you should add the Supernatural Weakness (Silver) Hindrance to your character (if he doesn't already have it). In addition, the character has a -2 penalty to attack anyone carrying wolfsbane, and a -2 penalty to all actions if he has wolfsbane in his possession. Every full moon your Ripper will transform into a wolfman under the GM's control, so it would be a good idea to lock yourself up someplace secure well before moon rises. While there's no fighting the pull of the moon, the Ripper can still fight to hold onto his sanity and not give in to the monster he becomes. Make a Spirit roll every full moon (remember your Reason penalties!). Failure means you change into a dangerous and deadly wolfman and lose 1 point of Reason. Success means you still change and are a danger to anyone around you, but you don't slip any further down into madness.

There are only two benefits to being a wolfman. Any Rippertech implants that come from werewolf tissue have a +1 bonus to be implanted into the lycanthrope Ripper. Lycanthrope Rippers can also make Notice rolls to identify other werewolves in human form. It works both ways, however, and other wolfmen may smell the Ripper's affliction as well.

The Ripper is essentially doomed. Sooner or later he's going to snap or get loose from his cell on the full moon, and will have to be hunted down by his old friends lest he kill them in his rage. The best thing he can hope for is to die heroically in the line of duty, or to find a miracle cure (GMs see page 105 in the *Rippers* book). Cursed Rippers should also remember that just because their lodge mates understand, other Rippers might not. And who can blame them? A wolfman, no matter how good his intentions, is a time bomb waiting to go off, and most feel it's best to save a Ripper that fate and stop them before they have innocent blood on their hands. Harker's Old Worlders and the Slayers are particularly adamant on this stance, and it wouldn't be the first time a harboring a WereRipper has led to interlodge confrontations.

Historical List of Full Moons 1892-1896

1892	1893	1894	1895	1896
January 14	January 2	January 21	January 11	January 30
February 12	February 1	February 20	February 9	February 28
March 13	March 2	March 21	March 11	March 29
April 12	April 1	April 20	April 9	April 27
May 11	April 30	May 19	May 8	May 26
June 10	May 30	June 18	June 7	June 25
July 10	June 29	July 17	July 6	July 24
August 8	July 28	August 16	August 5	August 23
September 6	August 27	September 15	September 4	September 21
October 6	September 25	October 14	October 3	October 21
November 4	October 23	November 13	November 2	November 20
December 4	November 23	December 12	December 2	December 20
	December 23		December 31	

Psionics of the Multiverse

as Collected by Beth'ud, Extradimensional Explorer

by Jacob Thurston

In my time, I have seen many places and uncovered many occult secrets. I have walked through the belly of a god, I have watched a horseless carriage race across the desert, and I have flown over the surface of the battlefields of hell itself. In these many years and across these many realities, I have painstakingly documented the arcane, divine, and otherwise indescribable uses of mystical power. From summoners of demons and animators of the dead to healers of disease and manipulators of minds, I have written volumes about their secret lore.

Now, it is time for me to share.

Mind over Body

In wandering the wastelands of Eadell, I found a group of arcane practitioners with the ability to conform their bodies to their whim. The least experienced could make minor adjustments to themselves, running faster or thickening skin into armor. These younger ones learned from masters that could change into animals or even monsters. They said that the true master Metamorphs could transcend even the material body, becoming beings of pure energy. While I never saw these advanced beings, I was told that they saw me.

The Mind's Eye

While wandering the other moons that share a gas giant planet with Eadell, I found other interesting psions. These great minds knew that I was coming, and knew what my questions would be. The great Clairsentients knew that I wanted to learn as much about them as possible. After agreeing not to share their secrets with my students (even they were unable to see through my obfuscation of the truth), they told me of their powers.

They project a portion of their minds into the ether. From there, they discern things that the unaided eye would never notice. They breach language barriers, they heighten their senses, and they even catch subtle insights into the future. While I was unable to mimic their techniques, I will return and enthrall one of them to accompany me to my school for proper exploitation.

Edges

Background Edges

Arcane Background (Metamorph)

Arcane Skill: Psionics (Smarts)

Starting Power Points: 10

Starting Powers: 3

Metamorphs use their minds to alter their own biological form and function. By this method, they can track by scent, enhance their strength, or move with great speed. Metamorphs have been witnessed growing deadly claws,

healing their own wounds, even shaking off the effects of deadly poisons.

Metamorphs vary from other psionic users in two ways. First, their powers work only on themselves. They can use Armor to thicken their skins, they can use Healing to close their own wounds, and they can use Quickness to move faster, but they cannot bestow these benefits on another character. Second, Metamorphs do not suffer from Brain Burn. A roll of 1 on the Psionics die has no adverse effect.

Trappings: All powers are viewed as alterations of the metamorph's body. Powers like Quickness or Speed make the user appear jittery or twitchy. Boost Trait, when used on Strength, enlarges the metamorph's muscles.

Arcane Background (Clairsentient)

Arcane Skill: Psionics (Smarts)

Starting Power Points: 10

Starting Powers: 2

Clairsentients are at once the most sought after and most feared of all psionic masters. It is difficult to hide from them, even more difficult to lie to them, and nearly impossible to keep a secret from them. Their powers of observation make them excellent researchers, detectives, and bounty hunters.

Clairsentients vary from other psions in two ways. Like Metamorphs, their powers cannot be shared—they must rely on standard forms of communication to let their comrades in on the secrets they plumb. Second, their constant state of sensitivity gives them a constant +1 to Notice rolls. Unlike Metamorphs, Clairsentients are subject to Brain Burn (see *Savage Worlds*, p. 77).

Trappings: Clairsentient powers manifest with subtlety, but they can be noticed by those with acute senses. Usually, the sensory organ being augmented takes on a slight glow. With more potent powers, a third eye open on the psion's forehead.

Combat Edges

Unencumbered Assault

Requirements: Novice, Fighting d6+

Your hero becomes a blur of fists and fangs. When making a melee attack, using only a natural weapon (such as fist or claw) and wearing no armor, your hero gets +2 Fighting.

Disruption Touch

Requirements: Fighting d6+, Smite

Your hero gains more benefit from the Smite Power than others do. The power of the blow makes it harder to dodge. Apply the damage bonus gained from Smite to the Fighting roll as well.

Leadership Edges

Team Dynamics

Requirements: Arcane Background (Clairsentient), Command, Knowledge (Battle Tactics) d6+

Your hero's knowledge of the battlefield is enhanced by her awareness of the ethereal ribbons of fate. Reduce penalties for Cover and Illumination by -1 for each of this hero's followers.

New Powers

Uncanny Metabolism

Rank: Seasoned

Power Points: 3

Range: Self

Duration: 1 hour (1/hour)

Trappings: Eyes cloud over, veins in the neck stand out, sweating with effort.

When this power is in effect, the user gets +2 to resist poisons, +4 on a raise. As a side effect, common intoxicants (like alcohol) have no effect.

Boost Trait (Metamorph)

Rank: Novice

Power Points: 2

Range: Self

Duration: 4 (1/round)

Trappings: Muscles bulge (Strength or Vigor), frontal lobe protrudes (Smarts), jaw is more firmly set (Spirit).

This power allows the user to enhance any of his Attributes or Skills. A successful Psionics roll raises the die type by one step (if the die type is already a d12, this power grants a +1 to rolls for that Trait). On a raise, the increase is two die types (or another +1) and the power's duration is increased by one round. Note: This power has been altered for use with the Metamorph Arcane Background.

Patagia

Rank: Novice

Power Points: 2

Range: Self

Duration: 3 (1/round)

Trappings: Flaps of skin grow under the arms.

This power manifests as skin flaps that grow between the user's arms and torso. Any form of armor or restrictive clothing that covers the torso (not counting armor from the Armor power) hinders this power's use. With a success, the character can fall any distance and not take damage. With a raise, the duration lasts for minutes instead of rounds.

Redundant Systems

Rank: Veteran

Power Points: 5

Range: Self

Duration: 1 hour (1/hour)

Trappings: Torso, head, and neck are slightly larger (but no so much as to make clothing and gear too small).

The caster's organs rearrange themselves for maximum

protection. With a success, Called Shots against this character are made at an additional -2 penalty. With a raise, rolls on the Injury Table cannot lower any Attribute.

Juggernaut

Rank: Seasoned

Power Points: 3

Range: Self

Duration: 3 (1/round)

Trappings: Heavy breathing, growling.

Any time a character using this Power is Shaken, she may make an immediate Spirit roll to remove the Shaken condition. This does not affect incoming damage. Any damage dealt is still dealt as normal, but with a successful Spirit roll the character is simply not Shaken. On a raise, she also gets +2 to all Spirit checks to remove Shaken counters.

Sustenance

Rank: Novice

Power Points: 3

Range: Self

Duration: 1 Day

Trappings: Taut skin.

This subtle power can save lives. The caster can go one full day without eating or drinking. Sustenance is absorbed from the air, the ground, and by photosynthesis. However, this power can only be used up to ten consecutive days. Beyond that limit, it ceases to work until the character has rested and eaten appropriately for three days. With a raise, the current day does not count toward the ten day limit. This power can only be used successfully once per day.

Future Tap

Rank: Heroic

Power Points: 5

Range: Self

Duration: 24 hours

Trappings: Third eye opens on forehead for the duration of the power.

This is one of the most potent uses of psionic power ever witnessed. Using this power involves catching a glimpse of the future, and holding that glimpse in the subconscious mind for later use. Success gives the user two temporary bennies that must be used before any others, and before 24 hours have passed. A raise gives the character an additional benny. These bennies represent the subconscious insight gained by tapping into the future; they may not be used to gain additional experience points at the end of a session.

Heightened Senses

Rank: Novice

Power Points: 3

Range: Self

Duration: 10 Minutes (1/minute)

Trappings: Slightly glowing eyes.

It is hard to hide anything from the user of this power. Heightened awareness of his surroundings grants the psion a +2 on all Investigation, Notice, and Tracking checks. On a

raise, the bonus is +4.

Combat Awareness

Rank: Veteran

Power Points: 3

Range: Self

Duration: 3 (1/round)

Trappings: Third eye open for duration.

Perception of the battle seems to slow down, just a touch. This added time to think grants the user a variety of benefits. All incoming attacks are at a –1 penalty. All attacks made by the hero are at a +1 bonus. Range, Illumination, and Cover penalties are reduced by –1 for the user. With a raise attacks are at +2, while Range, Illumination, and Cover penalties are reduced by –2.

Acceptance

Rank: Novice

Power Points: 1

Range: Self

Duration: 1 hour (1/hour)

Trappings: Bright eyes, a confident look.

Sometimes the clairsentient needs to notice less in order to ignore the macabre effects of fear. This power grants a –5 modifier to rolls on the Fright Table whenever the character is subjected to a horrific event. With a raise, this power costs no Power Points to use and lasts for 2 hours.

Calib's Secret

An adventure for 50 Fathoms

by Ralf Tschulena

This tale should start somewhere in the Free Towns, but which town is not important. The players should have found a magical signet ring with the symbol of Calib, a known hero and mage of the old times, before playing this adventure. Run the adventure at nearly any time during the *50 Fathoms* Plot Point campaign, but it's best played when the characters have had a few combats with zombies and know how to handle themselves in a fight.

Background

Nearly 150 years ago, after an outbreak of Ugak raids, King Amenus sent his legions against the roaming Ugak tribes that pester the border of the Ograpog Kingdom. Tales are still told about horrible things the Ugaks did with their victims. Many of these tales speak of strange idols carved from blood-soaked wood and erected in Ograpog, the skulls of farmer families piled around the foul idols. The tales vary wildly, but in one detail most tales are the same—near these idols, the dead rise. A region plagued by an Ugak horde was struck by walking dead a few weeks later. Without a doubt this was the work of dark gods.

One man who dedicated his life to combating the Ugaks, and especially the undead, was a mage called Calib. His family and neighbors were killed by zombies while he led a posse

against a nearby Ugak war band. The bards of Caribdis still sing of his battles during the subsequent years. In the last years of his adventurous life he tried to create spells and weapons especially to combat undead. But there isn't much known about this time. It's not adventurous enough for bards to remember it, so his further achievements are lost in time.

Recently the greedy mage Zoltar Zaman discovered an old letter of Calib's, in which he corresponded with a Kieran archmage about his new spells and magic weapons. Interested, Zoltar began to hunt information about Calib's last years, and has managed to pinpoint the location of Calib's laboratory. It shouldn't really be a surprise that it was located inside the caves that lie beneath Calib's Rock. Some obscure tales of Calib's life relate how he hid inside these caves, or planned an ambush against the Ugaks. Before the flood it was nearly impossible to reach the cave entrances, high above the ground in the sheer rock face.

Today the cave entrances are at sea level. But the choppy sea, swarms of bloodfish, strong currents and the narrow caves make entering a dangerous venture. Zoltar Zaman managed it, with help of a few hired hands and his magical talents. But he was stopped by the magical door that seals Calib's laboratory. An inscription on the door mentioned a signet ring that would serve as a key, but Zoltar knew of no such ring. He considered blasting through with black powder, but feared there would be a cave in. Defeated, he went back to his studies.

Valuable Loot

One of Zoltar's former employees sees the signet ring—with a symbol identical to the one accompanying the inscription on the magical door—on the finger of a newcomer to town. This newcomer is one of the characters. You should let a character find this ring as loot sometime before running this scenario. Maybe he wears it; maybe he has it appraised by a merchant. Maybe he only tells someone about the ring. But Zoltar Zaman hears about it, and he knows this is the ring he needs to open the door. His funds nearly used up from the last expedition, he decides to steal the ring.

How he tries is up to the GM. It depends in which town the adventure starts, where the characters are living at the moment, how they wear or store the ring, and so on. He could try to steal it from a carousing player, sneak on board the ship, even pretend to be a prospective buyer. His apprentice will help him, and he can probably scratch together enough money to hire one or two (cheap and incompetent) thugs (use Typical Pirate stats, *50 Fathoms* p. 136).

Even if he manages to steal the ring, the characters have ways to search for Zoltar. He is somewhat known in the lower parts of town. If the characters describe his face, they may find someone to tell them the location of Zoltar's home with a Streetwise roll at –2. Should they mention that he is a wizard, have them make the roll with no modifier. The characters may also remember the man who was interested in the ring a few days ago. If they find him, he could lead them to Zoltar, and even tell them about the door to Calib's laboratory. If Zoltar's house is searched the characters might find Zoltar's diary, which contains the tale of his first

expedition and other clues about Calib's lab.

The end effect should be that the players get the ring back and hear about Calib's laboratory. Even if they are only somewhat heroic and adventurous they should decide to explore Calib's laboratory (especially if they hear about magical weapons or spells that could be used against the undead).

Zoltar will, of course, try to follow the characters to Calib's Rock. Maybe as stowaway on the characters' ship, or in a stolen fishing boat. However, it wouldn't derail the adventure if Zoltar were killed or too intimidated by the characters to follow them. Zoltar's further deeds are not mentioned—what he does to harass the players is up to the GM.

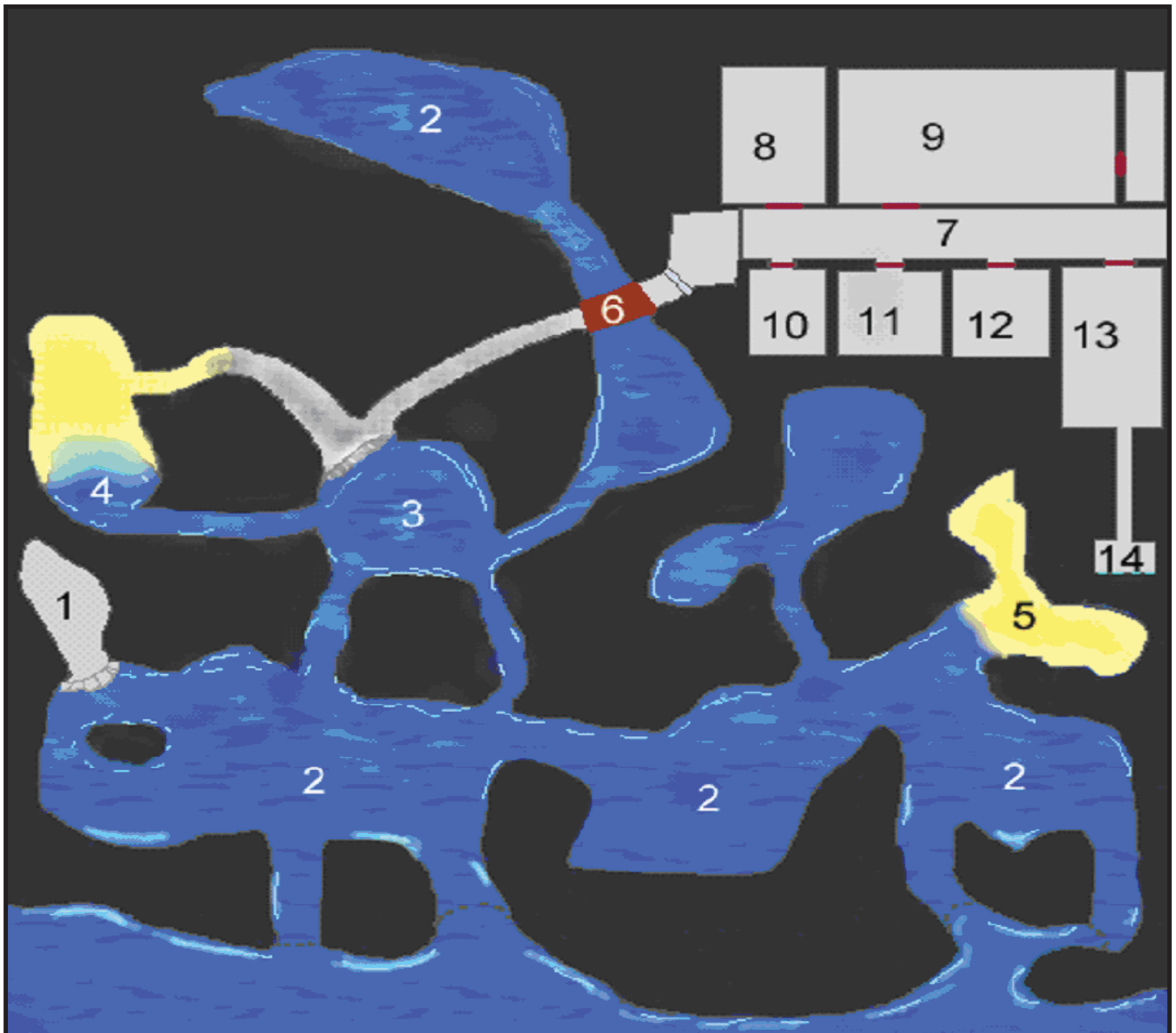
Calib's Rock

When the Party arrives at Calib's Rock they will likely examine the caves. There are many caves, but the records of Zoltar's first expedition are accurate enough to pinpoint three most

likely entrances. The dark gray rock rises nearly 60 yards to the lush green jungle. In the rock face live thousands of sea birds. The raucous calls never stop. The rock face is slippery with guano.

The cave entrances are fairly small, each only a few yards wide and half flooded. This means that entrance is only possible with a small rowboat. Because of the many bloodfish (*50 Fathoms*, p. 125) in these waters, living on dead sea birds and other waste, swimming is not a wise idea.

To enter a tight cave with a rowboat in the choppy water, the coxswain needs to make a Boating roll at -2. Failure means the boat collides with a rock and takes 2d6 damage. Snake eyes means the boat capsizes. If anyone falls into the water, or tries to swim, they make a Swimming roll each round they are near the rock walls. Failure means bumps and bruises, and Fatigue -1. A second failure means the poor guy starts to bleed and attract a swarm of bloodfish. Snake eyes means he starts drowning.



To climb out of the water a character needs to make an Agility or Strength roll (player's choice, at -2 outside of the caves because of the guano). It is possible to climb along the cave walls with a successful Climbing roll; see the Climbing skill to determine how far and fast a character can go while climbing.

The Caves

1. This dry cave is empty. It is a few yards above the water level; to enter it requires a successful Climbing roll.
2. Sea caves. Except bloodfish and maybe a lone shark, there isn't anything in this cave.
3. Sea cave. The entrance to this cave is fairly wide. Though nearly impossible to row in this passage, it's possible to punt the boat along the cave walls. There is a dry passageway, but to reach it a successful Climbing roll is required.
4. This cave has a sand beach dotted with large boulders and rocks. There are footprints from Zoltar's expedition visible along the beach. Some of the boulders are in truth giant crabs (see *50 Fathoms*, p. 126) that attack if anyone tries to reach the shore. They try to capsize the boat with a group Strength roll (Strength d10). Because of the rough water and the stealthy underwater approach the crabs have a +2 on this roll. Adjust the quantity of sea crabs to match the strength of the characters.
5. As #4, but without footprints. Other monsters could be placed here if the GM wishes.
6. On the other side of this beautifully-carved bridge is a large iron door. It shows the same sign as the signet ring: The Symbol of Calib. If the signet is placed in the depression in the middle of the symbol the door swings open. The door is magical and massive, so it would be near-impossible to open it without the key (Toughness 18; Damage Type: Blunt). If your players row under the bridge, they need to roll Notice successfully to see it in the darkness above them. Climbing rolls are necessary to reach the top of the bridge; consult the Climbing skill to see how far characters can go with each roll.
7. Like the rest of the complex, this hallway was created with powerful earth magic. There are some rusty weapons, pictures and other objects of art as decoration on the walls, but most are useless due to age. The items are covered with dust and cobwebs.
8. Master Bedroom. This luxurious bedroom was Calib's. There are silver candle-holders, a silver mirror and a few other items worth a total of 200 pieces of eight (silver coins).
9. Laboratory and library. This is what the characters are looking for. With a search of the library and a successful Notice roll, a character finds a spell that works exactly like the Holy Warrior Edge against undead. If you think this could upset game balance, you might make the spell useless against undead Wild Cards, or change it to a *blast* spell that causes an extra 1d6 damage to undead.

The east side of this room was Calib's laboratory. There are cages, destroyed Ugak idols, and other appropriate items.

With successful Notice rolls, characters find a Blast Stone, a chest containing a snapping undead skull and a sword that does +1 damage against undead.

A strong wooden door leads to a closet with old, reinforced cases. They are fairly decayed. Inside are a few test objects in suspended animation. The former zombies are now skeletons (see *Savage Worlds*, p. 130) that "wake up" a few rounds after someone enters the closet. Their arms smash through the decayed lids to grab at intruders with surprise. To get fully free, the skeletons need to succeed at Strength rolls.

10. Kitchen.

11./12. Guest rooms. Enough items of decoration remain that the characters could collect Loot Booty.

13. Living room. Characters can gather a Pillage Booty in fine dinner service and small art objects. There is a large table with convenient chairs, a desk and a fireplace as well.

14. A narrow stair goes up to a watching loft. From outside, the windows look like holes in the rock. Once this room held an armchair, a side table, a silver tobacco box and a picture of Calib's family. Calib often enjoyed the view over the plains below in the evening. Unfortunately the windows are now destroyed, and sea birds nest in this room. It's possible to exit the window and reach the top of the cliff with a successful Climbing roll.

Finale

After your players have explored the complex, they find that word has gotten back to the Sea Hags, who send angry Octopons (see *50 Fathoms*, p. 134) to loot the place and kill anyone inside it. The Octopons (6-10, depending of the strength of your group) are led by a Warlock.

Before the encounter (best played at sunset), the characters hear a noise from the watching loft, a voice that calls them or something similar. When they enter the watching loft they smell tobacco...in the guano-caked armchair sits a ghostly, transparent, elderly man smoking a pipe: the Ghost of Calib!

"Your enemies approaching," he intones. "The great evils have sent them to destroy my legacy." He whispers, "The enemy is already in the caves. Prepare yourselves!" With that he fades away.

The characters could try to close the iron door, but for dramatic reasons the GM should ensure a large fight on the bridge in order to do so. The heavy door requires a successful Strength roll to close, and the first Octopons should already have arrived.

After this final battle the adventure is over. Perhaps the players try to find out who warned Sea Hags in town, or maybe the Ghost of Calib gives them a clue about this informant that leads to a cabal of the Sea Hags' Octopon servants. Maybe they find a clue in Calib's laboratory that leads them to other interesting places.

But surely they sail happily into the sunset, as all pirates do in the films.

Antagonists

Zoltar Zaman, Ambitious Mage (WC)

Zoltar is a mage with a dark past. He has tried to use his magic talents to get famous and, of course, rich. He is wanted in some towns for his deeds. During the last few years he tried to keep a low profile, and has used the time for research and to plan new schemes. He owns a small building in the lower part of town, where he has a small but good library. His last scheme was the expedition to Calib's laboratory, and the failure left him sorely short of funds. He is mean and ruthless. He is over 40 years old, has a bald pate on his head and wears a moustache.

Attributes: Agility d6, Smarts d8, Spirit d6, Strength d4, Vigor d6

Skills: Fighting d6, Guts d6, Knowledge (Arcana) d10, Notice d4, Persuasion d6, Research d8, Spellcasting d10, Stealth d6, Streetwise d8, Taunt d6

Pace: 6; **Parry:** 5; **Toughness:** 5

Hindrances: Greedy, Mean, Vengeful (minor)

Edges: Elemental Magic (Water, Air), Scholar

Powers: *Armor, boost/lower trait, bolt, fear, fly, invisibility*

Power Points: 20

Gear: Dagger (Str+1)

Orman Opar, Zaman's Apprentice (Extra)

This former street kid has a talent for magic that Zoltar recognized. That the 16-year-old boy with dark hair has no problems with illegal activities is a further boon for Zoltar.

Attributes: Agility d6, Smarts d6, Spirit d6, Strength d4, Vigor d4

Skills: Fighting d6, Guts d4, Spellcasting d6, Stealth d8, Streetwise d6

Pace: 6; **Parry:** 5; **Toughness:** 4

Hindrances: None.

Edges: Elemental Magic (Air), Thief

Powers: *Bolt, fear*

Power Points: 10

Gear: Dagger (Str+1)

The Signet Ring

Calib created many rings for his companions, servants and guests. These allow them to enter his laboratory. The ring in this scenario is slightly magical, and grants the wearer +1 to recover from Shaken if the damage is inflicted by an undead attacker. Most of the rings lay on the ocean floor today.



Greetings from Mars

*A post-apocalyptic setting by Timo Aschenbrenner
Translation by Michael "Noshrok Grimskull" Schau*

The following document was retrieved from a damaged notebook found on an unidentified corpse in the outskirts of Fremantle, Golden Country, on October 17, 2334.

I write these lines in the hopes that those who read them might find them to be an aid to better understand this craphole of a world we are forced to live in today.

February 24, 2334

Sydney, Dreamsland

Even though the Baroden—that's what the Martians call themselves—only started coming to Earth in 2021, their plans for an invasion reached further back. Unbeknownst to humanity, the Baroden had observed our every move for a long time and had set their goal at conquering us for our rich world, because their own resources were already dwindling back then.

We know today that the Baroden were vastly superior to us in biological knowledge and its application to warfare, but were nowhere near as advanced in technological know-how or weapons development. In fact, humanity outshone the Baroden in all things technological, which makes it even more of a mystery how the Baroden managed to come up with the MSSS (or MS³)—the Mars-Subtime-Stream-System, which is some sort of teleporting device. (It is my firm belief that the Baroden were/are not alone on Mars, but I don't have any evidence to support my theory.)

During my research, I found several signs of Baroden activity before the actual invasion (with hindsight it's always easy to find these, since you'll already know what to look out for). One of the earliest "warnings" I found on an old computer, one of those that almost everyone had back in the early twenty-first century. I can tell you it was no small feat rigging up a reliable power source, finding a working monitor and getting that thing to run again, but the data I found made it all worthwhile. I saved a summary of the most important points into a separate file which you can access by clicking here: <http://www.newscientist.com/article.ns?id=dn4514>

Contact to the probe lost...yeah, right! We lost the whole damn probe to the Baroden, that's what happened. Giving them a prime first shot at dissecting it, learning about our technology and understanding our ways of programming and robotic communication—all of which will eventually be of great importance in their invasion.

To further prove my point, I compiled a (not yet complete) list of all the missions we sent to Mars. Have a look for yourself: <http://mars.jpl.nasa.gov/missions/log/>

How many of those "lost missions" can be chalked up to Baroden interference...who knows? But it's a fact that by 2017 a new generation of robots were sent to Mars by a joint venture of all major space agencies. This generation of robots was highly advanced, self-sufficient and capable

of constructing buildings and other technical installations in advance of a manned mission to Mars. And the best part was that these robots could receive new programming and instructions, and even modify themselves for new tasks, after they were already deployed!

For this purpose, every single robot on Mars had an exact counterpart on Earth which was used to test every new program before it was sent—directly from one robot to the other.

This proved to be our downfall, because the connection between the robots worked in both directions!

What really happened next is subject to speculation. Some of the information I recovered from various sources points toward a gradual, but total, breakdown of equipment on all space agency bases involved in the robotic settlement program. Other sources tell of several bomb threats issued, while others still list even more bizarre occurrences.

But whatever truly happened, the North American space agency—NASA—evacuated their base on April 12, 2021, closely followed by all bases involved in the same program across the globe. My guess is that the Baroden found a way to take control of the robots stationed on Earth and that they used them to build the first MS³.

This would certainly explain how on April 14, 2021, the Plague—a bio-engineered virus that mutated or killed any lifeform it came into contact with—erupted around all those evacuated bases.

This day marked the beginning of the end.

And only months later, the first Baroden suddenly arrived on Earth, by way of larger MS³ capable of transporting vast quantities of personnel, equipment, weapons and even vehicles.

March 13, 2334

Sydney, Dreamsland

The war that ensued was like nothing the world had ever seen. All the major nations were already struggling against the Plague, with vast areas turned uninhabitable for humans. In some regions, such as North America, life was only possible in some small areas and within several sealed military installations.

It was from one of these underground strongholds that the plan for a coordinated strike against the Baroden was put forth. The plan was to eliminate the means by which the Baroden reached our planet—the MS³. Since these were located in the most inhospitable areas of the Plague-infested countries, and due to the fact that most armies were either already committed elsewhere or disintegrating under constant outbreaks of Plague, the strike was executed using long-range nuclear weapons.

The targets were hotspots scattered all across the northern hemisphere, and according to the data I managed to recover, most of these were indeed obliterated. But there were also severe consequences...

Communication networks all around the globe went dead

after the strike, preventing any further coordinated actions. I only managed to find fragments of information on what happened in those days after the strike, but from what I found I gather that the Plague virus turned even more aggressive in its aftermath and was spreading in a large, irradiated cloud into areas previously (relatively) unharmed. South America and Africa were quickly engulfed by the cloud, which was still spreading and reaching for Australia, the last stretch of earth that was still moderately inhabitable...

What happened to those nations that got covered in the cloud I cannot truly say, but it stands to reason that almost every living organism in those areas died. I found a few indicators to support this notion, as well as a short piece of video footage that actually shows the effect of the cloud. And whoever made that video also explained that now the Plague that travelled with the cloud also affected the Baroden! Looks like the nuclear fallout caused the virus to mutate and render the previously immune Baroden fair game to their own weapon...

March 27, 2334

Sydney, Dreamsland

I tried to find enough data to give me an accurate picture of the movement of the cloud, but the intel I got was fragmentary at best...I lost track of the cloud somewhere over the Indian Ocean. The latest satellite picture I found shows the cloud expanding and moving towards the northwestern coast of Australia. But for some reason, it never really got there. Whether it was a simple quirk of nature (with wind changes and whatever else), a dissipation of the cloud itself due to some phenomenon I cannot pinpoint or the possibility that the virus either mutated further into something less lethal or was engineered to only last a certain amount of time to begin with, Australia was only mildly affected.

Still, Earth as the people back then knew it, was gone...and there was still a war going on.

Documents from that time are few and far between, so it is anyone's guess as to what happened in the years following the total breakdown. Supposedly, the war raged on for quite some time, but eventually died down to a standstill and finally to peace. It seems that most MS³ were destroyed in the war or shortly after that, but (at least) one of those systems is still intact—even today (more on that later).

True documentation of history restarted as late as 2114, the year of two major events. The first was the signing of a legal treaty between mankind and the Baroden, ensuring peace to this day and splitting Australia into four separate states that became collectively known as "The New World."

The second event was even more stunning. A group of scientists composed of both races, calling themselves (for undocumented reasons) "New Genes To Stay Human," and headed by a man named Ben Chifley, announced to the public that they found a way to ensure a future for this world—and for both races. Combined. Yes, combined—as in combining both races into one! The NGTSH had worked on combining the best of both humans and Baroden into a single race and created a new species—the Syntherians.

Not everyone approved of this “new way,” but there were certainly enough volunteers eager to supply the scientists with genetic material for more Syntherians. And with a solid gene pool laid out for them, this new species grew and prospered alongside its parent races...

April 12, 2334

Sydney, Dreamsland

Separating the New World into smaller states was seen as a way to assure peace, but as time shows, other problems and conflicts cropped up that no one foresaw. While we haven't had a full-on war again, border skirmishes are fairly common, and even today we still face conflicts. Why? Because it's a fact that those with power always try to get even more power. And what is the epitome of power today? The last known MS³, that's what! It is supposedly located in the eastern part of the New World, in United Queensland. The state is run by the Mars Protection Unit (MPU), a conglomeration of scientists, politicians and crime bosses, who set up camp in the fortified town of Brisbane, the capital of United Queensland. The head of the MPU is Psna Umega, a Baroden, who is said to be a genius at both money-handling and technological matters.

Not only does the MPU control both sides of the passageway provided by the MS³, they also employ an army of mercenaries to make sure it stays that way. Those mercenaries call themselves the Gateway Pact and their leader is a Syntherian created from the genetic material of a war criminal from the Earth-Mars war. Her name is Natalie Cole VI, whereby the VI stands for the sixth clone of herself... Yes, clone. You may not have heard about this, but cloning is entirely possible, at least to those with the right equipment or with enough money. Anyway, Cole founded the Pact over two hundred years ago and is still at the top of things. It is rumored that she has a genetic mutation that allows her clones to retain 100% of her memories and experience, making them superior to most anyone else.

Umega and Cole are dangerous on their own, but the way they work together increases their potential by leaps and bounds.

Stay away from them!

Now you might ask why anyone would want that MS³, right? Well, there's rumors that Mars has been made inhabitable for humans and that it is a virtual paradise! Nobody can (or wants to) verify these claims, but it does seem possible.

And the prospect alone has everyone else on their toes, too. There have even been a couple of attempts at breaching the defenses around Brisbane—the most likely location for the MS³—and taking the gate system away from both the MPU and the Pact, but to date all such attempts have failed.

(I've heard rumors about another MS³ in the area of Sydney, but there is little to no evidence to support them. I'll have to investigate further on this..)

May 14, 2334

Sydney, Dreamsland

If you want my opinion on who might be capable of breaching Brisbane, I'd put my money on Darwin Country. It's in the north of the New World and it's a military state. Since the war, this part of the continent regularly suffers from severe rain- and thunderstorms and the occasional twister, resulting in it being partly flooded for months each year. And since the armed forces that were stationed there during the war had lots of equipment to deal with such conditions, they found themselves in a position of power after the war ended. The elected government soon ceded its position to the military and the commander of the armed forces became the chief of state—and it's been that way for over 150 years now.

The present commander (or should I say dictator?) is Don Bennet, a former fighter pilot who has held his current position for 25 years. His second-in-command, and therefore likely heir, is his own unscrupulous son, Don Bennet Jr.

Bennet Sr. maintains close relations with Biosnake, the biggest research company in the fields of biology, chemistry, genetics and biomechanics. It is rumored that Bennet and Biosnake are working on a “fourth species,” the Super Soldier, but the head of Biosnake—Professor Fred Hollows—denies any knowledge of anything remotely like that.

Of course he does...he's not stupid. And the freak weather patterns and mutant gators up there certainly MIGHT be the reason why people keep vanishing around those parts...

And even if one of those missing persons does turn up again, even if highly mutated...well, there's still the irradiated rain, residues of mutated Plague strains and a host of other reasons to explain those incidents away, right?

As if...

May 26, 2334

Sydney, Dreamsland

If I ever get the chance to settle down and lead a quiet and peaceful life, I'd do that over on the western coast, in the Golden Land around Perth. It's governed by a trio of farmers...well, businessmen is more accurate I guess. Their leader is Alexander Peacock, a man with a vision, because he's also the head of the One-Nation-Party that wants to reunite the New World under the old flag of Australia. An Australia where everyone is equal and has the same rights.

That this also includes the right to buy HIS products at HIS prices is only a minor side-effect of course...

But I disgress.

The population of the Golden Land is mostly made up of farmers or people otherwise involved in the production of food. Though they have to work hard, they are treated good and paid well and are thus happy to lead the lives they have (which are typically better than almost anywhere else in the New World).

The food produced here is exported into the other states via heavily-armed convoys, and the major food processing centers are virtual fortresses themselves. The profits gained

from these endeavors are no doubt huge, mostly because Peacock can pretty much ask any price he wants already. Why? Because none of the other states would be foolish enough to attack the Golden Land and simply take what they want, for fear of reprisals from the other states!

But not everything about the Golden Land is golden...

It suffers from pockets of Plague, mutations and other hazards crossing the border from Darwin Country, and it also has had trouble with the local wildlife in recent years. The mutant giant boars in particular pose a major threat as of late and seem to actively target small farms and ranches with their attacks...

June 17, 2334

Sydney, Dreamsland

The fourth state of the New World is Dreamsland, my home, my land of origin, my love...and the place I hate most, too! The local government in Perth, and the sorry excuse for a law enforcement organization, are merely puppets in the hands of the gangs and biodrug-runners. You do know what biodrugs are, don't you? Well, in case you haven't heard, let's just say they are bad news all around. First introduced shortly after the war, they went into the market unnoticed by a government that was busy dealing with a host of other problems...and by the time they did notice, it was already too late! The gangs had gained too much power and had already either bought, bribed, blackmailed or killed any politician and cop they wanted.

Today the gangs reign supreme, and anyone who is a thorn in their side has a tendency to wind up dead.

At the moment, the two most powerful gangs (the Red Spiders and the Shadow Wings) have entered into a violent power struggle, vying for drug markets, territories and other resources. This struggle has erupted into major bloodshed on more than one occasion.

And it is not going to stop soon, because Jasen Miller, the leader of the Red Spiders, has declared that he will fight to the last man if he must...

PUSHER

Say goodnight to the Bad Guy

by Ryan Gaffney

The Operation

It's the 80s. It's Miami. Wealthy drug dealers drive Lamborghinis and Ferraris and run operations the size of international corporations. The campaign begins with the characters minor cogs in the wheels of one such Operation. Unbeknownst to them, their hot-headed boss has made a very powerful enemy of his former supplier from Bolivia, and in a fit of rage war has been declared.

One night while the player characters are out picking up some product the Operation's mansion gets attacked and overrun by the Bolivians. Everyone in the Mansion is slaughtered,

including the characters' scar-faced boss, leaving them alone and in command.

They didn't start this war, but now they are going to finish it or else pack it in and move back to Cuba. They have a trunk full of cocaine in their car (300 grams), they have their personal weapons and equipment, and they have their Balls. Now all they need is a little satisfaction and maybe some sweet, sweet payback.

Character Creation

The following changes apply to character creation in Pusher:

1. The Guts Skill does not exist in this setting. Any reference to Guts is to be rolled using the Spirit attribute instead.
2. Streetwise and Persuasion skills have additional uses.
3. Two new derived stats are introduced in this setting: Balls and Heat.
4. Characters can purchase weapons and equipment from the main rulebook, but cannot begin play with any weapon larger than a SMG. Also, kevlar vests (not flak) cost double the price.
5. The Followers and Sidekick Edges do not have a rank requirement in this setting.
6. There are no Arcane Backgrounds or Weird Edges, except for Danger Sense. Edges and Hindrances may be imported from other settings, as long as they don't involve Arcane Backgrounds or Weird Edges.

Rise of the Phoenix: A New Beginning

The Boss' mansion is swarming with cops and helicopters when the PCs return from their errand (picking up 300 grams of coke). If they attempt to get close to the mansion, let them know that it is the scene of a major crime and they can see SWAT teams manning roadblocks as they approach the large iron front gates. It is a bad idea to go and ask the cops what happened while they are armed and carrying around a trunk of cocaine.

Sneaking In

The characters can sneak back into the Operation's home base, but this is not recommended unless they are supremely confident in their Stealth Skill. None of the cops are considered *alert* but there are over two dozen uniformed policemen wandering around the estate grounds bagging evidence and searching for clues, most talking amongst themselves. Any failed Stealth roll will require a successful Notice roll on the part of the observant police officer to go over and physically inspect the disturbance. If this fails, the sneaky character can continue past the unobservant cop. If the Notice roll succeeds the cop will check it out before he actually calls out for help. If the encounter goes into combat (and the cop is dealt a card) then he will spend a free action to yell for help as soon as he can. Any dead cops discovered on the premises will automatically set the whole compound on full alert, and the SWAT team will begin sweeping the area with K9 units (Notice d8+2).

If the characters sneak in successfully, they can steal the Boss's personal weapon, his "little friend" (an M-16/M203 combo). They can steal any number of uzis, shotguns and AK47s from various corpses around the front foyer of their mansion.

Where to Go?

As soon as they drive any distance from the mansion, the characters will be pulled over by the dirty cops Docken and Scrubbs. This is an automatic encounter. One of them is white, the other is black, and they drive around Miami in their black convertible Ferrari wearing expensive Italian designer suits. The purpose of this pre-planned encounter is to explain how the new derived stats Heat and Balls work (see below), how to pay down the Heat, and why it's bad to kill cops (beyond the obvious reasons). Once they have spoken with Docken and Scrubbs the PCs should find a place to lie low for the night, or else start making moves and get rid of their cocaine.

What to Do

The whole purpose of the campaign is to see how fast and how much cash you can make selling Product before you get killed or busted. Add to this the fact that the Bolivians are in town and have taken over all of the Operation's territory, and you have a setting rife with adventure (if you read "adventure" as "gratuitous gunfights"). The first thing we need to establish is how a deal happens.

In a normal role-playing session, each and every underhanded deal in which the players engage should be a unique experience. With the massive quantities of Product being moved around in *Pusher*, this would quickly lead to boredom. At the same time the deal is where most action and adventure is likely to occur, and it determines how much money you make...and how fast you make it. So we need to establish a format that combines all the posturing and haggling that might otherwise be role-played, and combine it into a few simple rolls.

The Deal

1. Set it up
2. Notice rolls on both sides
3. (Optional) Intimidate if desired
4. Persuasion modified by Heat score
5. Exchange cash/verify product
6. Drive away

1. Set up: GM describes the current location and the set up of the Dealers. Players arrive on the location and set themselves up. Ideally the set up should become a standard operating procedure (SOP) so that all deals are assumed to be set up in a similar manner to cut down on time. Anything outside of the SOP should be explicitly stated at this time (step 1). GMs are encouraged to be sticklers on this issue so that instances of "Oh I meant to say I was wearing my bullet proof vest tonight!" are kept to a minimum. If the character wears a vest, that's his SOP. If he doesn't always wear it, but wants to for this one particular deal, he'd better say so

during the Set Up. At this time one of the players should be established as the Leader (or *Head Honcho* or *Numero Uno* or whatever they want to call him). This player will be the one doing the actual Persuasion and all of the talking.

2. Notice skill rolls are made by everyone involved. Concealed rifles, most military hardware and flak jackets are spotted on a regular success. Concealed weapons of pistol size or less are spotted with a raise on the Notice roll. A result of 1 on the Notice roll (regardless of the Wild Die) results in that character being surprised if anything bad goes down. Dealers make a Group Roll (see *Savage Worlds*, p. 56), and Street Dealers don't ever make Notice rolls.

3. (Optional) Intimidation rolls can be made by either side prior to step 4, the Persuasion roll. The players can each make an Intimidation roll, even if they are not the Leader. Dealers typically have a Spirit of d6. Every success and raise adds a +1 to the Persuasion roll that is made in step 4 to buy the Product. Balls can be spent on this roll. A roll of 1 on the Intimidation die (regardless of the Wild Die) results in everyone going for their guns. The person who rolls a 1 on the Intimidation roll (not the entire group, unlike a Bust on the Notice check, step 2) is considered surprised. Refer to the Heat table to gauge the reaction of the opposition.

4. Persuasion rolls are made, one for each side. Only the Leader (or *Head Honcho* or *Numero Uno*) of the players' group may roll although they may cooperate on the roll (see *Savage Worlds*, p. 56). Street Dealers do not make an opposed check; the player just needs a success. The Persuasion roll is modified negatively by the Heat score and positively by the results of the optional Intimidation roll (step 3). Balls cannot be spent to directly affect the Persuasion roll; it may only be spent indirectly through the optional Intimidation roll (step 3).

5. The Exchange. The Leader may make a Common Knowledge roll to check the product or the cash being exchanged. Gang or gang-related characters get a +2 background bonus to this. (Anyone with an Operation background should be considered gang-related, although players being players...someone might want to play a non-gang member. Good for him, he doesn't get the bonus.)

A single success is all that is needed, but a failure means they need another minute to double check the Product. A result of snake-eyes means they get short changed half the amount of Product or cash, and the mistake will not be discovered until after step 6.

6. Drive Away. Load up the Product or the cash and go home. Find somewhere safe to stash it, or take it to a front and sell it off.

Sour Deal Results (Heat Score)

No heat (0-2): the Dealers will draw weapons and use Intimidation as their first action, but they will not fire until fired upon.

Medium Heat (3-8): They draw weapons, make Intimidation rolls and possibly shoot one of the player characters in the leg as a warning. The Dealers may think the PCs are narcs, or they might be eager to sell them off to the Bolivians. Either

way it looks like a bathroom, some handcuffs and a chainsaw may be in their near future.

Full Heat: “You wanna go to war?!! OK!! I’ll take you to #&% war!!” The opposition opens up with everything they have, aiming to kill. They do not get fancy and they do not take prisoners.

Heat

Heat is a measure of how much danger the cops and rival gangs currently pose to the characters’ Operation. The Heat Score begins at 0 and can be no higher than 9. This number is subtracted from any Streetwise rolls made in the campaign, including Persuasion rolls made during the Deal (see above).

Although Heat is a stat tracked by individual players, only the highest score is applied to the Operation. This means that when one member of the Operation becomes a huge-Heat-score, cop-killer type, it might be better for all concerned if that character were “sleeping with the fishes.”

The highest Heat score of the players is added to daily random encounter rolls (see below) as a positive modifier. The random encounter roll is a 1d10, with a 1 always indicating a random encounter and a 0 always indicating no encounter (a 10-sided die should be read as 0–9, with the 0 actually reading as a zero, not a ten).

The Heat table shows how various events modify characters’ Heat score.

Event	Modifier (apply to all PCs involved)
Deal Goes Sour, whether it was PCs’ fault or not	+2
Particularly nasty bloodshed	+2
Shootout with cops	+5
Killing a cop	+9
Snake-eyes on Streetwise roll	+1
Each Extra Car and backup brought to a Deal or meeting	+1
Each detected incident (see step 2 of the Deal) of bringing heavy hardware to a Deal (i.e., assault rifles and larger)	+1
Each \$100,000 held in unlaundered cash by PCs for more than a week	+1

Deal goes sour

Any time a deal results in guns being drawn, or somebody getting shot or busted by the cops, it draws unwanted attention to the Operation.

Particularly nasty bloodshed

Leaving chopped-up corpses strewn about sends a powerful message to your enemies, and draws massive negative attention from all concerned.

Shootout with cops

Cops don’t like to be shot at, but at least none of them died.

Killing a cop

“You can’t kill a cop!” The Heat score goes up to the maximum of 9. Note: It ain’t a crime if you don’t get caught. Killing a cop and getting rid of the body quietly is a different thing. No witnesses mean no negatives. Gunning down a police captain in an Italian restaurant and walking out in broad daylight, on the other hand, invokes this penalty instantly. Whether the deed is done “quietly” is up to the GM’s discretion.

Snake-Eyes

Rolling snake-eyes on the Streetwise roll (to find a deal, or a front, or a Henchman) means you talked to the wrong people, or in front of the wrong people.

Extra car and/or backup brought

Bringing too much muscle to a Deal sends the wrong message of distrust to your peer group. The Operation must survive on its Balls, not on its guns.

Bringing heavy hardware to a Deal

Being Noticed hauling assault rifles, bulletproof vests or military hardware to a Deal sends the wrong message to the dealers. It can also get you mistaken for a narc. Note: this only applies if the hardware is Noticed.

\$100,000 held by PCs for more than a week

Flunkies and sidekicks have eyes, and desires too. That much money “kicking around” is a big temptation for anyone, especially scumbag drug dealers. If you don’t want your cash to get lifted, you better put it somewhere safe. And that doesn’t mean under the mattress. Leaving money around draws gangsters like flies to honey. Any random encounters (see below) that occur should involve taking that money from careless players.

Paying Down the Heat

The only way for a character to lower her Heat score is to pay off some crooked cops. The players begin the campaign meeting two crooked police detectives: Sonny Docken and Roberto Scrubbs (see above). The cost of paying down the Heat begins at \$1,000 per point, and increases as the characters’ Operation becomes more prominent in the Miami underworld.

Paying down the Heat represents the cops finding a fall guy to bust instead of your Operation, looking the other way, or simply “misplacing” paperwork. It doesn’t really matter what they do, it’s just a simple way to move things along and another way to spend money.

Example: Let’s say the players kill a dealer in the middle of a Deal. No problem, there are plenty more dealers in Miami to work with, but each character’s Heat stat just went up 2 points. This is going to negatively affect their chances of performing deals by making it harder to find Dealers (Streetwise), and also harder to make good deals (Persuasion rolls) once they are set up. It also increases the chances that both cops and gangs have random encounters with them. Solution: Pay

down the Heat.

Killing a cop (and being seen doing so) is very bad for your Heat score, and very expensive in the long term for the Operation. The first time a cop is killed, the character's Heat score goes to 9, the maximum. Now would be a good time to practice humanitarianism. The next time anyone kills a cop, they receive a multiplier of x2 to the cost of paying down the Heat. Each additional dead cop raises the multiplier by one. That is for each dead cop, not for each incident (i.e., three dead cops during one encounter is x4, not x2). The multiplier never goes down, even when the Heat gets paid down. This only applies when the PCs are somehow identified at the crime scene (such as leaving a lot of witnesses, or driving away in their car, or leaving the body in their backyard, etc.). Get the players to keep track of this multiplier on their character sheets, so they can see how many cops they kill before the SWAT team comes and wipes them out.

The Heat can only be paid down once per day without a Streetwise roll. Each additional meeting to pay down the Heat must be arranged with a Streetwise roll. These Streetwise rolls are affected negatively by current Heat as well, so Cop Killers beware!

Balls

The derived statistic Balls is a setting-specific score that begins at 0, as Heat does. It is similar to Status in *Rippers*. You gain more Balls each time you pull off a successful Deal. There is no limit to how big your Balls can be.

Spending Balls lowers your score on a 1-for-1 basis, whether you succeed in your efforts or not. Your Balls can be added to any Test of Will, including resisting these rolls. Balls can also be spent on Streetwise rolls made to find Deals, or to arrange payment to lower your Heat. You cannot directly exchange Balls for money, nor can it be used on Persuasion rolls.

Balls Score Modifiers

Event	Modifier (apply to all PCs involved)
Successful Deal	+1
Shoot Out or Chase Scene	+1
Dead Pig	+1
Limo Deal	+2
Island Deal	+3
Each 10% of weekly income spent on non-business items	+1
Exotic Car purchased	+1
Henchman purchased	+1
Million Earned	+2
Front Owned	+1
Running Away	-1
Incapacitated	-1
Each Dead Henchman	-1

Successful Deal

Each deal improves your reputation and increases your own self confidence.

Shoot Out or Chase Scene

Surviving one of these is reward enough, but it also boosts your reputation where it matters. Note: being arrested doesn't matter, what matters is only surviving the shoot out or chase.

Dead Pig

Killing cops is a quick way to gain a little rep for yourself, but it is very costly in other ways (see Heat, above).

Limo Deal

Once you start dealing with the Dealers in the Limos you are moving your way up the food chain. That feels good and it lets people know you are no small-time punk.

Island Deal

As with Limo deals, these complicated and expensive transactions are not for small fries. Going all the way to a tropical island to make the deal is sure to boost your rep.

Each 10% of weekly income spent on non-business Items

What's the point of being a drug dealer if you can't have your very own tiger chained up in your backyard? Blowing huge wads of cash feels good, especially if the item purchased is useless and makes the other players laugh and cry out loud with envy.

Exotic Car purchased

"This is it. That's what it's all about, Manny."

Henchman purchased

In addition to the special options that Henchmen provide you with, they are also an extension of your Operation, and therefore your reputation.

Each Million Earned

You are a millionaire. Back in the Eighties that really meant something.

Front Owned

Expanding your empire is always a good thing.

Running Away

Running away from a gunfight can save your life, but it doesn't make you look very tough. It may be smart, but it doesn't take Balls.

Incapacitated

Getting hurt so bad you're unconscious is neither smart nor ballsy.

Dead Henchman

Nobody wants to work for a guy when people “get dead” around him all the time.

Dealers

The basics of the deal are discussed above. There are three types of Dealers with whom the players can interact: Street Dealers (who only buy), Limo Dealers (who only sell), and Island Dealers (who only sell large amounts on their home turf).

Street Dealer (buyer only!)

The core mechanic of each Deal is the Persuasion Skill. The PCs’ Boss makes the roll. A failure means the PCs get \$40 a gram. A success means the PCs get \$60 a gram. A raise means the coke goes for \$100 a gram. A roll of a 1 on the Persuasion die (regardless of the result of the Wild Die) means that the Street Dealer may try to take out the PCs (at the GM’s option). Remember to subtract current Heat from the PCs’ Persuasion roll.

A street dealer only buys and never sells (to the PCs anyways, he’s gotta sell it somewhere). A Street Dealer will never have more than \$10,000 on him, and will never buy more than 100 grams at a time (unless the players get a raise on their Streetwise roll, see below). There is a 50/50 chance that he has backup nearby holding on to his cash for him. Street Dealers carry a pistol, their backup has a 2 in 6 chance of having an SMG or sawed-off shotgun hidden on their person. Players will only notice the backup if they succeed on a Notice roll. The backup will run away with the cash if things go sour.

A Street Dealer can be found by making a Streetwise roll minus Heat score. An attempt can be made once every hour that a character actively searches for a dealer. Each raise on this Streetwise roll means the Street Dealer is prepared to purchase an additional 100 grams, and means he has another \$10,000 on him. This may or may not increase the amount of backup he has around him, but he will definitely have at least one man with him.

Sample Street Dealers:

- Yuppies outside a tennis or golf club.
- Dudes in Adidas shorts with white socks and sweat bands on the basketball court.
- Tattooed dishwashers hanging out behind an expensive restaurant.
- Disco-style guys in a Trans-Am in a parking garage.
- Heavy metal headbangers behind a video game arcade.

Limo Dealer (seller, 5–10 kilos)

Limo Dealers supply kilograms of Product (sometimes called “keys”) and they set terms for how much buy money is to be brought by the players. A limo deal is set up by making a Streetwise roll minus Heat score. A success means the Limo Dealer is willing to deal—bring \$30,000 buy money. A raise means they are willing to deal at a price favorable to the

PCs—bring \$20,000 buy money. A failure on the Streetwise roll means nobody is willing to deal with the Operation at the present time. The PCs have to wait a day. A roll of 1 on the Streetwise roll (regardless of the Wild Die) means nobody will touch you because they think you burned someone. You cannot make any deals today, and you add +1 to your Heat score.

Limo Dealers carry between 5 and 10 (1d6+4) kilos on them, but the players do not know this. An opposed Persuasion roll is made versus the Limo Dealer (Persuasion d8). A success on the players’ part gets the maximum amount. If the Limo Dealer wins, he keeps a Kilo for himself for each success and raise he gets. Ties go to the Dealer (–1 from the maximum Kg). The amount of buy money the characters must bring is established with the initial Streetwise roll (see above).

Time to party: Limo Dealers have one armored limousine with them, including two bodyguards with Uzis, and a backup car (Mercedes, Cadillac or van) with 2–4 more gunmen inside armed with shotguns or assault rifles, and pistols. The coke is almost always in this backup vehicle. 1 in 6 Limo Dealers don’t keep the coke with them at all, and will call it in by flashing the high beams of the limo at a third car. Cell phones are still extremely rare and bulky in the 80s, but most Limo Dealers will have a cellular “car phone.”

Island Dealer (seller, 25–30 kilos)

Island Dealers sell pure product, making it easier to cut the product and sell more for less. For every 10kg of Island Dealer product purchased, you can chop it with 1kg of something else. This means for every 10kg of island product you move you get paid for 11kg.

Once the Operation has made enough contacts and gained enough reputation, they can go down to the Cayman Islands or the Florida Keys in either a boat or an airplane. The procedure is the same as for a Limo Deal, except that the buy money is \$250,000 with a success and \$150,000 with a raise. The procedure is the same as a limo deal for failures and snake-eyes.

Island Dealers carry between 25 and 30 (1d6+24) kilos with them.

Time to party: Island Dealers have four Bronco 4x4 trucks with them, each with four gunmen inside armed with shotguns or assault rifles. The coke is always kept in a nearby truck that will be called in by CB once the deal is made.

After making the island deal, the coke has to be brought back to Miami by the players. This is either a speed boat trip, or it’s a quick plane journey under the radar. Either way the PCs must make a Stealth roll opposed by the police (Notice d6). These little boat or plane cruises are a good time to spring any random encounters on the Operation as well.

Random Encounters

There are two types of random encounters in this setting. Roll once for Cop and once for Gang encounters at the start of each day. The random encounter roll is d10, with a 1 always indicating a random encounter, and a 0 always indicating no random encounter (a ten sided dice should be

read as 0–9, with the 0 actually reading as a zero—not a ten). Heat is subtracted from this roll.

Example: a Heat score of 6 means that a roll of 1-7 gets a random encounter. A Heat score of 8 or 9 means anything except a 0 is going to trigger an encounter.

Cop killers are hunted down mercilessly. Increase the Cop random encounters to once every couple hours, or even once every time the PCs set foot outdoors, if they have done something truly horrendous.

Each of these types of encounters can be sprung at any time during the day: before, after or during deals. Random encounters are there to spice things up. If you've played a long stretch of the characters making money with no action, feel free to drop a carload of heavily-armed goons on them.

Gang Encounters

Gangs are always on the prowl for product. Most gang encounters begin with the PCs making Notice rolls. Success means they are not surprised.

Drive By: A van pulls up with its side door open and two gunners with Uzis open up. They fire on full auto and have Steady Hands, and Shooting d6. At least one of them will use Suppressive Fire if they can hit more than one person with a medium burst template. This likely happens as the PCs are going to their car, coming out of their homes, or while dealing with a Street Dealer.

All-Out Assault: One vehicle pulls up out front and one hangs back to come in on the third round. Each vehicle holds 4 gunmen. Each gunman carries a shotgun or an Uzi. They are led by one Wild Card who has the Command and Hold the Line Edges. The Wild Card has a shotgun with slugs in it. This can be sprung on a home, a front, or a warehouse. It could even happen during a deal as either allies or enemies of the dealer.

Assassin: A single Wild Card sneaks in to deal with a single PC personally when they are alone. The Assassin has d8 Stealth, Fighting and Lockpicking. He is equipped with a knife, a pistol with silencer, and a garrote.

Standard Shake Down: A couple South Americans approach, asking “Que pasa?” and there are two more in the alleyway behind them. The first two have pistols, and the other two have SMGs which they have ready and cocked, but behind their legs. They will attempt to Intimidate the player characters (Intimidation d6) and get all their cash and weapons off them. They will make them beg for their lives or else they will kill them.

Car Bomb: A bomb is placed in one of the PCs' cars. If they are lucky they have a driver to go get it for them. Make a Notice roll at –4 to spot the bomb. Any PCs in the vehicle suffer 2d6+2 damage, double that for the vehicle itself (Heavy Weapon damage).

Grenade Attack: Four Extras and a Wild Card walk up and open fire. The Wild Card throws grenades.

Sample Gangs:

- Felix Contrera
- Hector Gomez
- The Diaz Brothers
- Sosa's Gang (The Bolivians)

Cop Encounters

In general it's better to avoid the cops completely. If that is not possible, PCs ought to take the pinch and let the lawyers sort it out. Killing cops increases the Heat score to maximum immediately, and increases the amount of cop random encounter rolls. Killing a cop also increases the base cost of Laundering Money (see below). Getting arrested for killing a cop means the campaign is pretty much over for that character unless they can find a way to escape custody.

A good lawyer will be able to spring them in less than 24 hours for anything less than murder. A lawyer usually demands some pretty hefty cash up front, so expect \$50,000 retainers to be the norm.

Players will always be allowed out on bail if they can prove a place of residence: a driver's license will suffice. Their trial won't start for at least a year so in all likelihood it will never come up during the campaign. The PCs can rack up hundreds of charges as long as they don't kill cops or go on psychopathic rampages, so it's better to go to jail for a couple hours than it is to kill a cop.

Sample Roll Call

Fat Cop: Always part of a duo of cops, usually in a car. Likely to take a bribe.

Dirty Cop: Looks like he has a cold: runny nose, shifty eyes, needs a shave and his uniform needs ironing. Very likely to take a bribe.

Regular Joe: As likely or as unlikely as his partner is to take a bribe, he's just a blue suit.

Gun-Crazy NRA type: This cop definitely has a bigger gun than his partner, and he's likely to grab the shotgun before proceeding anywhere on foot. He is unlikely to take bribes.

Large Female Cop: Pretty much same as the fat cop, less likely to take bribes, not often on the front lines, more of a clerical position (hey, it's the 80s—don't blame me).

Walrus Mustache: Older guy with a bit of a paunch, he's been around. Likely to look the other way or take a bribe, but not for anything truly dirty.

Slick Undercover: This guy must take bribes, he's wearing thousand dollar Armani suits and has a Rolex on his wrist. Trust this one as far as you can throw him.

The Rookie: If anyone is going to get killed, it is this guy. No way in hell will he take a bribe, not even if his partner does.

The Dirty Rookie: this guy's got a bad habit or is just plain dirty. Either way, he is desperate for cash or product.

Ride Along: A patrol car pulls up so the cops can talk to the PCs. Make a Notice roll for the cops to spot any weaponry

or bulletproof vests. If they find anything, and no bribes are initiated, the fuzz takes the players downtown and impounds their vehicle. Better call a lawyer.

Shake Down: Undercover types come to the door in the middle of the night, flash badges and demand entrance. They only do this at a residence or motel, or similarly unguarded place. They bring along a shotgun and blow the hinges off the door if they have to (not likely, but the PCs might be bloodthirsty killers at this point). They come in and shake them down for a percentage of their weekly earnings. Make a d6+2 Investigation roll. If the detectives succeed, they know the Operation's weekly income and demand 10% (or else they are going to have to get mean). This should not be Docken and Scrubbs unless the players have betrayed them somehow; these should be outsider cops from the Miami Police that they haven't met before.

Traffic Stop: A patrol car is stopped across a major intersection and traffic must pull past him and be inspected. He is looking for a couple Cubans in a car (change this if it happens more than once: blacks, whites, Asians, etc.). The cop makes his Notice roll at -2 because he is just trying to move people along—one Cuban looks like another to him. Open guns or bleeding wounds will draw his attention, however.

Bribes

Most cops can be Persuaded to take a bribe if there are no witnesses around, or if they don't catch you doing something red-handed. Concealed weapons charges, or a trunk full of cocaine, can be overlooked for the right price (for example), whereas bloody corpses or still-screaming victims in the middle of the street cannot.

Bribes are accepted on a simple Persuasion check. A roll of 1 on the Persuasion die (regardless of the result of the Wild Die), might result in the cops taking you in for questioning, especially if they think you are a dirtbag coke dealer (which, of course, you are). Consider starting bribes at \$10,000, up or down \$5,000 for each raise. Multiply this for each dead cop the Operation has attributed to them (see Heat score, above).

Cop Chases

Cops have Driving d6. Use the Chase Rules (Savage Worlds, p. 102) and throw in the following things to spice it up a bit. If the pursuer is an Extra and they fail a check, they are automatically out of the chase.

- Drawbridge, must make a Driving roll to jump it as it opens.
- Plate glass window showroom; Driving -2 to make it through and out the other side.
- Front lawn, through a fence and into the backyard; Driving -2 to make it out to the other side.
- Alley full of trash, Driving -2 to negotiate the rubbish at high speed.

Henchmen

A Henchman provides a unique talent for the Operation, until it is removed somehow (Luca Brazzi styles), the campaign ends, or the Operation gets wiped out. These abilities make an Operation more customized, or else simply provide essential services for the up-and-coming gangster (lawyer, bank manager, etc.).

Special Henchmen require GM permission, sometimes in the form of a personal mission for the Henchman in question or the organization they work for. The Armorer henchman, for example, might want his competition knocked off or a shipment jacked.

Types of Henchmen (\$25,000 per)

Bank Manager: Jerry the Banker, Persuasion d10. Persuasion roll to launder dirty money.

Driver: Ace Edge, Driving d8, Lockpicking d6, Shooting d6.

Lawyer: Get out of jail free. Persuasion d10, success is 24 hours, raise is less than 24 hours. Even the best lawyer cannot get you out of murder one charges. Each additional charge costs another \$5,000, or is free in the case of petty crimes (parking, speeding etc.).

Mechanic: Mcgyver Edge, Mr. Fix-It Edge, Repair d8.

Street Doctor: Healer Edge, Healing d10.

Thug or Tuff: d6 in anything that matters, a 9mm or .45 pistol.

Special Henchmen (\$50,000 per, at GM's discretion)

Armorer: 24 hr. delivery, 1-day wait, SMG and lower. Upgrade: +50,000 assault rifles, bulletproof vest, shotguns and grenades. Upgrade: +100,000 military weapons. All his weapons are completely untraceable.

Crooked Detectives: you begin the game knowing one pair of crooked cops already. A crooked cop is the only Henchman that will pay down the heat for you, so it may become necessary to find another under certain circumstances ("You can't kill a cop!").

Assassin: The Assassin has Stealth, Fighting and Lockpicking at d8. He is equipped with a knife, a pistol with silencer, and a garrote.

Laundering Money

Laundering money is a good way to put large amounts of cash in a safe place, namely a bank. A couple hundred thousand is a lot of money to have kicking around the living room. GMs are strongly encouraged to apply random encounters toward removing excess funds from non-security-conscious characters. Cops love a good shakedown and gangs could easily break in while the characters are away.

Laundering money can only be done by means of the Bank Manager Henchman, and the bank is going to retain a certain percentage based on the formula below. Make a Persuasion roll (Bank Manager has d10), minus Heat. Each success and

raise is a 5% base of the laundered take retained by the bank. Add the Heat score to this and then multiply the base by the amount of cops killed. The smallest the base can ever be is 5%.

Laundering Money = (5% per success + Heat) x Dead Cops

Fronts

A Front is a location where an Operation can move large quantities of product. Each Front will buy product at half the regular value (30/40/50) straight up and they will buy large quantities. In some special cases no Persuasion roll is required and the buy price is fixed. The most any front can move is 10 kilos a week. When the Operation starts moving more than 10 keys a week, they will need to find and purchase additional fronts.

Finding a Front requires a Streetwise roll that can be made every day. A raise finds two. A failure means you can't find any that day, and a roll of 1 on the Streetwise die (regardless of the result of the Wild Die) means your Heat score goes up by 1.

Acquiring a Front usually involves taking out someone else who is a shadow partner in the business, or else getting the owner out from under someone's thumb. This may also lower Heat or make special Henchmen available in certain cases.

Sample Fronts

The Operation: The campaign begins with Sosa and his men destroying everything that their scar-faced, hot-headed Boss had worked so hard to build. The one exception to this is the Cuban sandwich shop across the street from the Babylon Club. That is the only front that the Operation begins the game with, and it pays off the least as well (what do you expect, it's free?). They can go there at any time and exchange any amount of coke they want for half the regular price (15/20/25). The advantage to this is moving large amounts in a small amount of time.

Dixie Arms Gun Shop and Gun Emporium (\$450,000): this place is a local hangout for the Ku Klux Klan. The owner, Cletus, plays along with the other klansmen but he has a secret girlfriend who is black and he knows that the boys would lynch him if they found out. If the PCs can kill off all the KKK rednecks who hang around (1d6 tuffs), or alternatively if they can get evidence on him, he will sell his place to them.

Donut Shop (\$100,000): Dirty cops are always hanging out around here—find a way to make them buzz off. Drawing down on them, or killing a bunch of them probably won't do any good, but something like photos of them taking bribes or whatever might work. If no cops get killed, reduce The Operation's Heat score by 2.

El Paradiso Cuban Sandwich Shop (\$200,000): This place is overrun with Columbians. The kitchen staff is all Cuban and so is the owner. They hate the Columbians, but this crew is protected by the Diaz Brothers (who are Cuban). They have 4 cars and 8 guys, all of them Extras. All of them have Uzis and shotguns, but they leave them in the car while half of them go inside.

Lucky Strike Bowling Lanes (\$200,000): This place is under the thumb of some old and washed up Wiseguy. He has two bodyguards who stay with him all night, and he drinks the place dry without ever paying his tab. If the murder cannot be traced back to the bowling alley, or it looks like an accident, reduce the Operation's Heat by 2. Special: the buy price here is fixed at \$45 a gram.

Max's Gym (\$300,000): A gang of lowlives work out and practice martial arts in the basement here. They think they own the place and they never pay their membership fees. They run coke out of the back alley as well. Old Man Curtis wants them out. Special: After a month of working out, any of the thugs or the PCs can get a free +1 step to their Strength die type, but they have to spend at least 5 days a week going to the gym for at least two hours to pump iron.

Sun Ray Motel (\$100,000): There is a Columbian street gang that has taken over the top floor and is selling coke here. There are 6 Extras with a kilo of cocaine and \$45,000 in dirty cash. They all carry shotguns and most of them are blitzed out and fidgety. The owner of this flea-bag motel would like nothing more than to see the gang tossed out on their heads, but he is mortally afraid of them...with good reason.

The Babylon Club (\$1,000,000): This is where Sosa's hitmen have made a nest for themselves. It is very dangerous territory for any members of the Operation to tread upon. The Skull himself is said to protect the joint. They have video surveillance and reinforced iron front gates Special: the buy price here is fixed at \$60 a gram, and they can move 10 kilos a day.

The Skull (Wild Card)

Thief Edge, Climbing d8, Fighting d8, Stealth d12, Shooting d8.

Other Fronts

Hotel bar, seedy bar, casino, Go-Kart track.

Fill-In Missions

If the PCs fall short on cash (or dealing drugs gets boring) they can always make a Streetwise roll to find a Fill-In Mission. As usual, a raise finds one extra mission and a failure means none today, while a roll of 1 on the Streetwise die (regardless of the Wild Die) gains the Operation +1 Heat.

Felix the Bookie

He works at a bookie joint and he hates Bolivians. He has 5 armed Cubans outside his place for the next few weeks until things with the Bolivians cool off. He has a job he needs done—find out how some degenerate gambler type guy was able to win on a certain dog (dog races are big in Miami), and where he got his inside info, because Felix lost a lot of money on that dog. Bring 'em back alive for a \$5,000 reward.

Steal a Ferrari

A connected local gang runs a chop-shop and they know where a Ferrari is parked. Lockpicking skill to open the door, with failure meaning the car alarm goes off. A roll of

1 on the Lockpicking die (regardless of the result on the Wild Die) means the car will not start. Roll an extra Cop random encounter every time this mission comes up, and add +5 temporary Heat if the car alarm goes off (this Heat goes away once the car is safe). \$100,000 payoff in mint condition. Reduce in increments of \$20,000 for every bit of damage done to this fine red convertible.

Take Out Sosa's Crew

These guys are everywhere, and they have nice weapons. They usually hang out in groups of two cars, with 2 AK47s, two sawed-off pump shotguns and .45 pistols. At the Babylon Club, Sosa has over 30 men at all times of the day. The Skull himself is rumored to hang out there as well. Each Sosa crew carries 1–600 grams (1d6) of coke on them in each car.

Looting Bodies

Guns cannot be taken and sold on the street in *Pusher*. It is America in the 80s, and a cheap pistol costs about \$20. Nobody is going to give you two dollars for a hot gun with a bodycount on it, so it makes no sense to carry around a trunkload of gang Uzis just to make \$50. Bodies can be looted for jewelry, watches and cash, however. For ease of play (and also to make it easier to count scalps) just say that every dead body has \$100 bucks worth of loot on it. Searching a body requires a Notice roll, and takes about a half a minute. A raise halves the amount of time it takes, a failure means you find nothing.

Keeping a Tab

While running this campaign I found it easiest to keep a weekly calendar with a running tally of each day's earnings and weekly totals. Along with this, I would write out any notes on what gangs they had tangled with, or Cops killed, or Henchmen gained.

Ammunition and Burritos

Don't bother with keeping track of bullets after a gunfight, and don't keep track of how much it costs to eat unless they want to blow a couple grand on a big night out. The point is that anything less than a couple hundred dollars is not going to matter financially to the Operation; bullets, food and gas prices should simply be ignored. In general, it's best to keep track of Toys, Payoffs and Product.

Economics of the Deal

Selling Product

	Cash per gram	Amount per Deal
Street Level	\$40–100	up to 100g +100 per success
Front	\$30–50	up to 10 kg per week
Free Operation Front	\$15–25	up to 5 kg per week

Buying Product

	Cash per Kg	Amount per Deal	Buy Money
Limo Dealers	\$2–6,000	5–10 kg	\$20–30,000
Island Dealers	\$5–10,000	25–30 kg	\$150–250,000

One kilogram = One thousand grams

Common costs

Automobile (new)	\$10,000
Median household income	\$20,885.00
Gallon of regular gas	\$1.24
House	\$34,795–\$89,800
Apartment	\$335 per month
Mansion	\$1 million dollars
Hotel room (one night)	\$45
Cheap motel (one night)	\$15
Dinner	\$5
Fancy dinner and drinks for one	\$100
A soda pop	\$0.5
A candy bar or bag of chips	\$0.5
Motorola 'cell phone' 10 lbs., car battery size	\$5,000 (includes 1 year of service)
Sony Walkman with Dolby	\$200
RCA VCR	\$400–\$1000

Exotics

Lamborghini	\$85,000
Porsche 944	\$55,000
Ferrari	\$65,000

Afterword

The inspiration for this setting is mostly a mix of *Scarface* and *Miami Vice*. I drew upon my love of *Punisher* comic books, and James Ellroy books such as *L.A. Confidential*. I also found inspiration in video games such as *Grand Theft Auto*, and television shows like *The Sopranos* and Hollywood movies like *Goodfellas*—basically, any popular fiction in any medium where the bad guys are cooler than the good guys.

Everyone loves to quote Tony Montana.

Credits and Suggested Reading

- *Shark Bytes*, Vol. 1, Issue 1. "We're Going to Need a Bigger Boat" (additional weapons and equipment) and "A Hierarchy of Villainy" (for the idea and fast fun and furious mooks—why stat them out entirely? They are dead or in the dust in a couple rounds anyways).
- *Shark Bytes*, Vol. 1, Issue 2. "Bleeding Edge Ammunition" and "We're Going to Need a Bigger Boat."
- *Shark Nibbles* #1 (Jan. '05), "With the Roll of a Dice" (how to garrote).
- *Modern Martial Arts*, by Clint Black (available from 12 to Midnight).
- got wavs? <http://www.gotwavs.com/Movies/Scarface.html>

Adventure Cards

by Michael Schau



CHARGE!!

"Carry the fight to the enemy!"

Your character and all allies within 5" of him gain an additional d6 to their running Pace this round when moving towards the enemy.



CRASH!!!

"Speed ain't everything..."

Play this card after an opponent misses his Driving roll. His vehicle is immediately Wrecked and everyone on board suffers Collision Damage.



FIRE!!!

BLAM! BLAM! BLAM! BLAM! BLAM!

Play this card at the start of any combat. During this combat you'll never have to reload your weapons and you won't use up any ammo, no matter how many rounds you fire.



GOTCHA!

"Who's laughing now?"

Play this card right after a successful attack. The attack now counts as a Called Shot to the head, inflicting +4 points of damage and ignoring all armor.



KA-BOOM!

"Did I do that?"

Play this card to suffer no damage from an explosion. Your character does not change positions, but he still manages to escape the explosion unharmed.



RELAXATION

"I already feel ... BONK! ... much... BONK! ... better... BONK!"

Remove all Fatigue from your character.



UNEXPECTED HELP

"Anyone called a doctor?"

Play this card in any situation to gain help in your current predicament. Depending on the situation, help may arrive in the form of a friendly librarian pointing you in the right direction, a full-sized military convoy passing by, or whatever else the GM deems appropriate.



WE NEED GUNS!

"Lots of guns! And ammunition!"

Play this card while buying equipment to pay only 75% of the listed price. This discount is good for your entire purchase.