

A Supplement for *TORG: ROLEPLAYING THE POSSIBILITY WARS*™

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TORG

FULL MOON DRAW



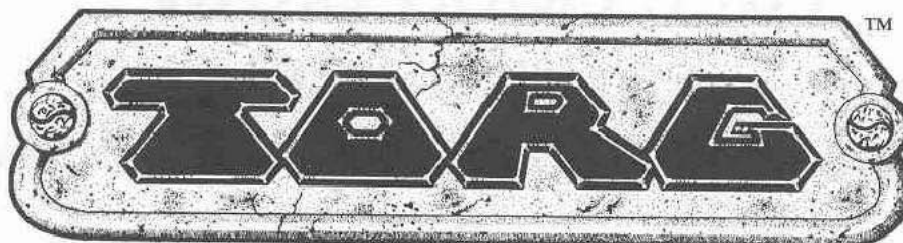
Adventures in the Six Realms

FULL MOON DRAW and Other Tales

By Greg Farshtey, Nigel Findley, James Long, Lou Prosperi, and Stewart Wieck

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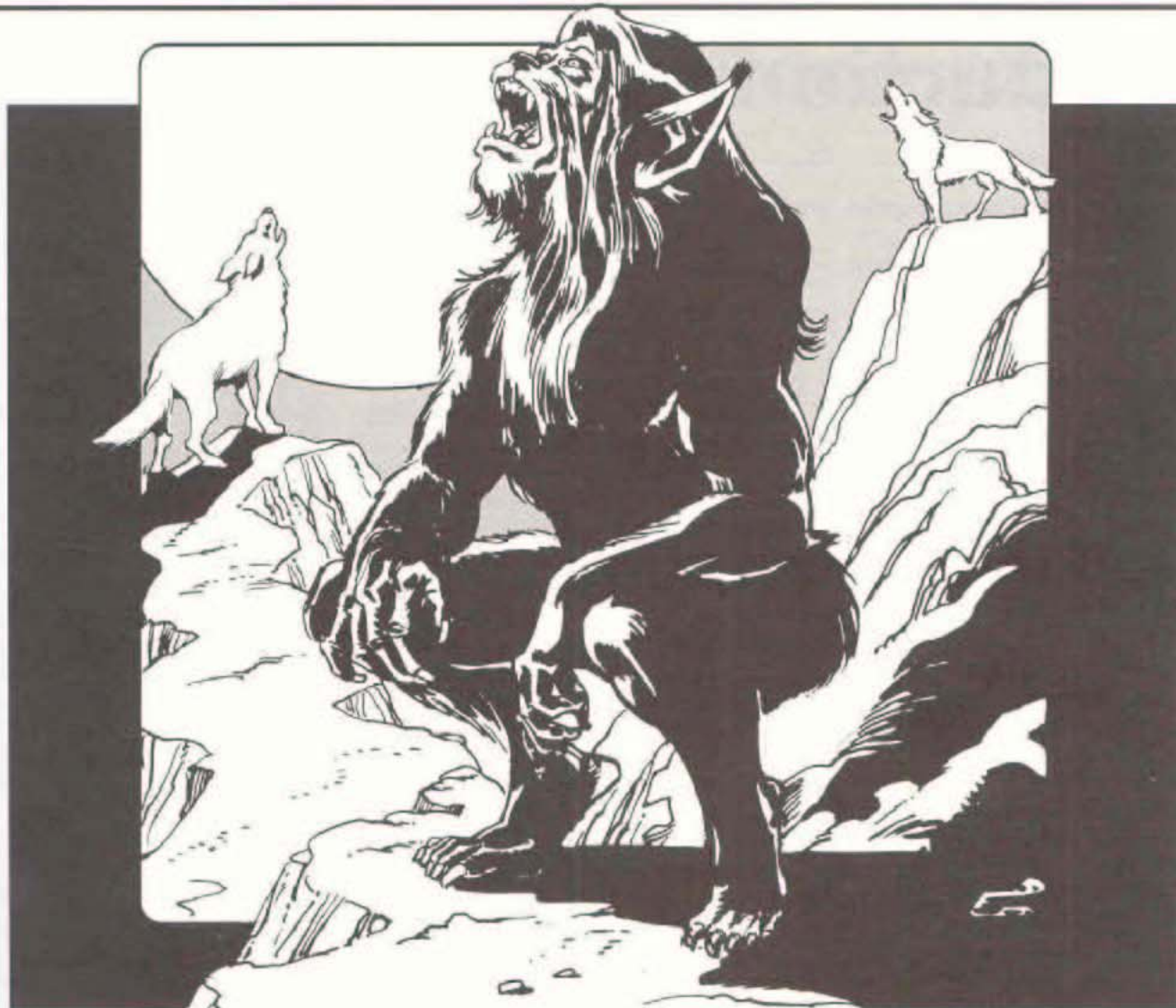
Roleplaying the Possibility Wars™

Full Moon Draw and Other Tales

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Introduction



he Beast glanced up at the moon. He was hungry, but there would be time enough to feed later. The streets of Singapore were teeming with people, all potential prey, and he looked forward to the taste of their warm, sweet blood. Still, there were other matters that commanded his attention at present.

He reached a clawed hand out and picked up his deck. He heard the cards call to him, promising the answers to all his questions if he would merely expose their pasteboard faces. Their eyes could see into other realms, and he would soon know the progress of the war in every corner of this accursed cosm.

He turned the first card — the High Priest, miter on his head, staff in his hand, rove-eye and an arm filled with wires and circuit boards. The Beast could see that the High Priest had been troubled of late, but now felt certain that wrongs done to him would soon be made right. The Beast saw blood and death and a town in flames, and bared his fangs in a ghastly mockery of a grin.

The Beast turned the second card, and beheld the Hermit. He sat in a plush office high in a glass tower, the spider in the center of a web, aware of the movement of every gossamer strand. The Hermit sought domination over the mind and, through that, the body, and rebelled at being laid next to the High Priest, for the spirit mattered to him not at all. His plans were progressing, the Beast noted with interest.

The third card was the Sun, not the one Core Earthers called "Sol," but the artificial construct made by Dr. Mobius. The message was difficult to decipher, but the Beast found the answer in the heavens. The planets and stars the Nile fools attached such importance to were coming into alignment, allowing their power to be used by anyone with sufficient daring.

The Beast emitted a low growl as he revealed the fourth face, the Fool. He

did not recognize the face of the man pictured there, but his clothes marked him as a denizen of Ardinay's realm. He was walking with eyes wide open along a ledge, a killing drop to either side, trying to maintain his balance while dragging a chest of gold behind him. The Beast paused, intrigued, and then moved on.

The fifth card in his spread was, not unexpectedly, the Tower. A great castle of stone and mortar aflame and crumbling, the jungle encroaching from all sides, strange beasts in every shadow. The Beast recognized the signs of Baruk Kaah — the dead things of this world would fall before the might of his edeinos legions, chaos would be replaced by the order of Lanala and Rec Pakken.

The Beast's feral eyes gleamed as he slipped the final card from the deck. It was Death, but not the skeletal form with a scythe the humans feared, or even the Gaunt Man, whose image had inexplicably faded from the deck some months ago. No, the image was that of a wolf who walked like a man, the full moon suspended behind him, his brethren assembled, froth dripping from their jaws.

The Beast ran the tips of his claws across the spread, well satisfied with the outcome. The forces at work here were certainly well beyond the capacity of Storm Knights to handle — indeed, any who tried to stem this tide of blood would be fortunate to escape with his immortal soul intact.

In the distance, the Beast could hear a woman singing, no doubt to keep her spirits up as she walked through one of the city's many dark places. It was an ethereal sound, seeming to float in the air above the creature's head. He crouched in the window of his tower and watched her hurry down the road, thinking all the while that when he was done with her, he would sing his own song to the bone-white moon above.

The Luck of the Draw

Full Moon Draw is a supplement for *Torg: Roleplaying the Possibility Wars*. You must have the *Torg Rulebook* to run the adventures contained in this book.

Each entry consists of a mini-adventure, including gamemaster information, descriptions and statistics for villains and other major non-player characters, and a detailed map of a crucial site in the adventure.

Each of the *Torg* realms — Orrorsh, Nippon, the Nile Empire, the Cyberpapacy, the Living Land and Aysle — is represented by an adventure in this collection. These adventures can be run by themselves, or easily integrated into an existing campaign.

In addition, the adventures in this book can be used with other fantasy roleplaying systems.

Important Note

The material in this book is intended to be read by the gamemaster only. If a player reads this book, he will ruin the fun for himself and everyone else in the group.

The gamemaster should read an adventure thoroughly before attempting to run it. This will allow the gamemaster to familiarize herself with sites, foes, and major encounters that may take place, and better prepare her to handle any unexpected behavior by the players. The entries in this book do not have to be played in the order in which they appear.



Full Moon Draw

Prologue

Anna did her best to comfort the crying child, all the while trying to shut out the howls of the wolves. She had never heard such a dreadful sound, as if all the devils in Hell had been loosed upon the earth.

"Hush, child," she whispered to the babe. "It's only the wolves, and they'll not hurt us. They never leave their mountains, and Father has taken his gun and gone with the men to make sure all is well."

She wished that Ethan would return. The incessant cries of the wolves reminded her too much of the banshees she had heard of in her youth, whose call always meant death. Her mind told her that the beasts were only reacting to the presence of prey, but her heart longed for the reassuring presence of her husband.

That was when she heard the gunshots, and men shouting, and then growls and screams intermingled in what would be Altshire's dirge. Instinctively, she tightened her hold on her child and reached for the pistol Ethan had left for her. It was already loaded, he had said, she had merely to point it and shoot if anyone — or anything — tried to break into the house.

She put the squalling baby down in its cradle, then stood facing the door, the gun shaking in her outstretched hand. Soon she heard scratching and snarling on all sides of the house, and then the shutters on the window exploded. She pulled the trigger and heard an animal yelp in pain even as the recoil slammed her into the wall. Her last sights in this life were a bleeding gray wolf quivering in its death throes, and a huge, man-like beast whose claws reached out for her ...

The Major Beat

"Full Moon Draw" is a one-act adventure set in the horrific reality of Orrorsh. This is a realm of dark horrors and great corruption, where none are safe from the devices of the technodemon Thratchen. "Full Moon Draw" can be played as either a stand-alone adventure or as a part of an ongoing Orrorsh campaign.

The Storm Knights are resting after a particularly strenuous mission in a Victorian inn on the island of Borneo. There they meet an aged gypsy named Kerim Bey, who offers to read their fortune in his Tarot deck. What he reveals is startling — a great evil is stalking the area, and it poses a dire threat to nearby villages and the very souls of the Storm Knights themselves. The only way to avert tragedy, he says, is for the Knights to challenge and defeat the creature, a werewolf named Valniar.

The Knights set out on the hunt, coming to a village that has been devastated by a wolf pack under the command of Valniar. They encounter the ghost of one of the victims, who provides them with a clue to the human identity of the werewolf. Other clues present point them toward the site of his next attack.

The Knights travel on, trailed by Kerim Bey, who is, in truth, a vampyre in the employ of the demonic being that once counted Valniar among his slaves. Bey's task is to slay the rebellious werewolf, and he has chosen to use Storm Knights as his pawns in the matter. In the village, the Knights find Valniar about to summon his wolf pack, and learn the truth about Bey. The Knights must decide whether to save the town and aid the demon, or strike a blow against a greater evil at the potential cost of their souls.



Adventure Background

Within both the realm and cosm of Orrorsh, there are many different types of monsters that stalk the land in search of human prey. These dreadful creatures are the tools of powerful demonic entities known as Nightmares. They use their ghoulish slaves to terrorize and kill, allowing the Orrorshan Darkness Device to drain possibility energy from the victims.

But this flow of possibilities depends on a balance being kept between those slain by the monsters and those left alive, but in terror. When a creature is overcome by bloodlust and begins to slay so many people that the flow is lessened, the Nightmare responsible must destroy his slave.

One such renegade is Valniar, a werewolf with occult knowledge that allows him to summon wolves to do his bidding. His master, Toral, has dispatched the vampyre Kerim Bey to stop him, and Bey plans to use Storm Knights to do the bloody deed.

Valniar has one weakness: due to a curse placed on him by one of his victims, his actions are governed by the cards of the Tarot deck. This makes it possible to predict how he will enact the ritual needed to call his wolf brethren, and provides Kerim Bey with a means of indirectly providing the Knights with information.

SCENE ONE: The Future is Now

The Situation

Standard. The Storm Knights are taking a well-deserved rest in the village of Semitau (renamed "Worthshire" by the Victorians) at the foot of the Muller Mountains in Borneo. As the adventure begins, the Knights are in a smoke-filled tavern planning their next journey.

Read aloud or paraphrase:

Your travels have brought you to the town of Worthshire, a small village conquered and remodeled by the Victorians in the image of their native cities. The people are friendly, if a bit arrogant when the subject turns to the Asians they are "saving" by being here.

You sit nursing a mug of ale, trying to drive from your mind the sights you have seen since arriving in Orrorsh. The very fabric of reality in this realm seems to be imbued with horrors more vivid than any you have come across before in your travels. Monsters roam the night, and it seems as if this realm's High Lord, the Gaunt Man, and his regent, Thratchen, thrive on the terror of innocents.

Tonight, the tavern is alive with rumors — all contact has been lost with the nearby town of Altshire, and parties sent to investigate have never returned. The fear is that the village may have fallen, meaning Worthshire could be next. The military is doing what it can to prepare, but authorities refuse to send any more men to Altshire to determine the truth about the situation there.

The Action

The village of Altshire was recently devastated by Valniar and the wolf pack he summoned through ritual magic. Should any of the Storm Knights inquire, Altshire is not far from Worthshire, about sixty miles to the southwest. No one has any solid information about what has happened there, but they can provide the Knights with various wild guesses (the entire town is populated by the undead, etc.)

Once the Knights have asked a few questions about Altshire, an aged gypsy at a corner table rises and comes over to them. Read aloud or paraphrase:

The man approaching you could be 60 or 600, but despite his obvious age, he moves with the grace of a youth. His skin is pale, as if he spends a great deal of time indoors, and his voice is soft as he speaks to you.

"Good sirs, I am a humble practitioner of the art of the Tarot. I can see

you have many questions — perhaps the cards may provide the answer."

He introduces himself as Kerim Bey and takes a seat by the Knights. He will refuse to accept a drink, explaining that his mind must be clear to do a reading. Any Knight who performs a *detect magic* spell or miracle will pick up traces of the essence *Death*, although they will be faint, the Nightmare having taken steps to mask his servant's nature.

Kerim Bey

DEXTERITY 11

Acrobatics 19, dodge 17, maneuver 16, running 16, stealth 19, unarmed combat 19

STRENGTH 16

Climbing 18

TOUGHNESS 18

PERCEPTION 12

Alteration magic 17, divination magic 16, find 15, language 16, scholar (occult lore) 17, trick 17

MIND 15

Test 22, willpower 25

CHARISMA 15

Charm 27, persuasion 24

SPIRIT 10

Faith 12, intimidation 18, reality 18

Possibilities: 12

Arcane Knowledges: entity 6

Spells: polymorphism (bat, wolf, mist)

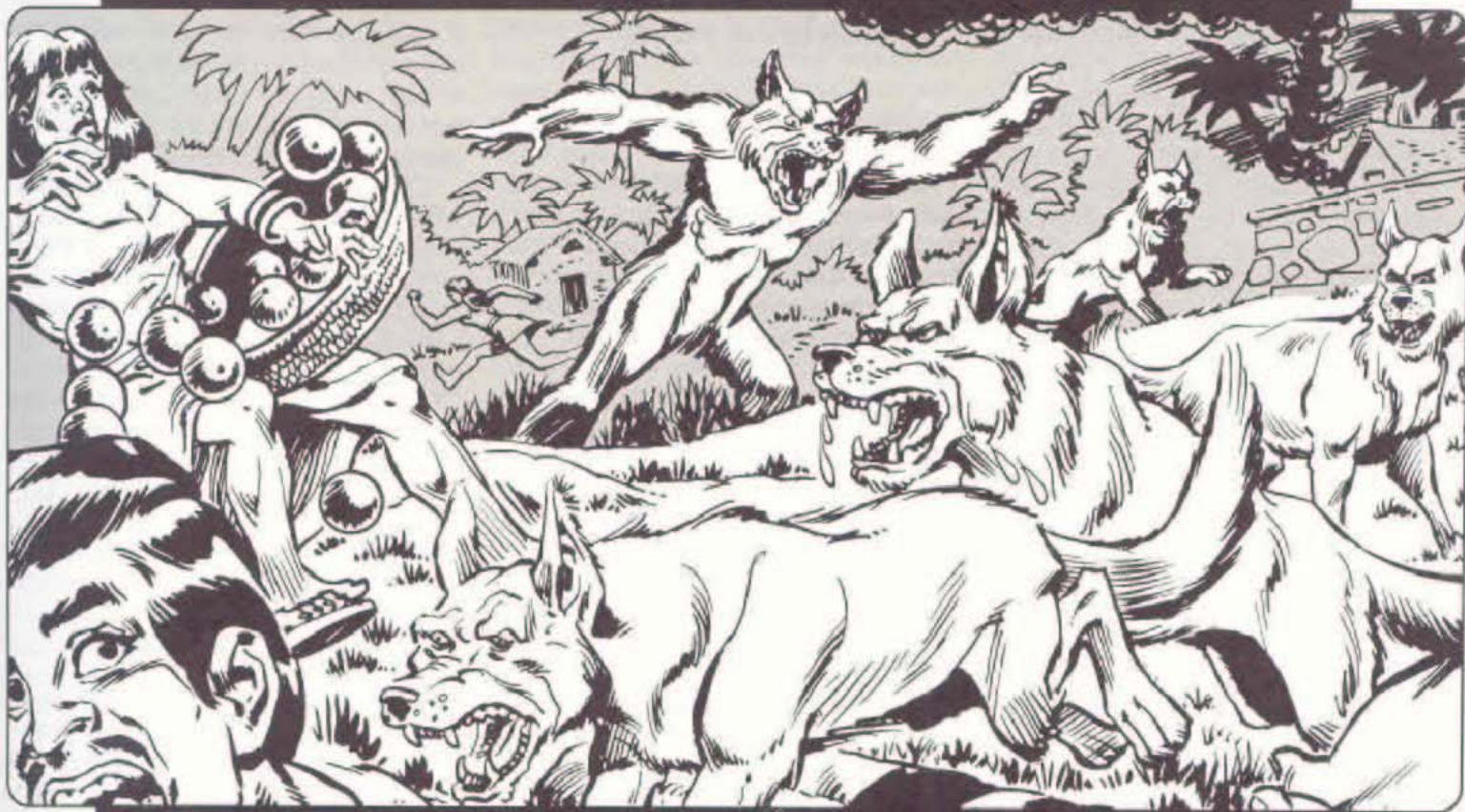
Natural Tools: fangs, damage value STR+1/17 or Spiritual damage 17

Note: Vampyres are resistant to physical attack, taking only shock damage from non-magical attacks. The exception to this is a wooden stake plunged through the creature's heart — this does normal damage, and if a wound is inflicted, it will continue to cause a wound a round until the vampyre turns to ash.

For further information on vampyres, see pages 18-19 of the *Torg World Book* or page 63 of *The Forever City*.

Description: Tall, pale and wizened, Kerim Bey is an elderly gypsy fortune teller who was made a vampyre by a jealous rival for power in the cosm of Orrorsh. For the purposes of this mission, he wears false teeth to hide his fangs and will take great pains not to reveal that he is undead.





The Reading

Kerim Bey bids the Knights to be quiet, and then lays out five cards in a semi-circular pattern. After a few moments, he says, "Yes, yes, the darkness is very close. I fear that none of us are safe."

During the course of the reading, Bey will provide the Knights with the following information:

- "Altshire is no more. I see much blood ... men, women, children twisted and torn ... something foul and unnatural has done this."

- "I see eyes, a hundred eyes, glowing red, fangs gleaming in the moonlight. They have tasted flesh, and will do so again."

- "I see an evil, part man, part beast. He is twice-cursed, and filled with rage. He exists only to kill — his mark is everywhere in Altshire."

- "I see the Tarot, their images mingled with that of the Beast. He is tied to the cards and they are tied to

him, for his sorcery depends upon them."

- "He is not sated. He will strike again. He will rend and kill, and he will imperil your souls. Yes, you are to be his prey ... he is fierce, unstoppable ... you fight valiantly, but fall, and he feasts upon your hearts."

At this point, Bey collapses for a few moments. When he revives, he will explain to the Knights that the cards show only shadows of what might be. Now that they know of the existence of the Beast, they can surely destroy him before he does them. He has left his traces in Altshire, and it is to there they must go to learn more of him.

Bey will not provide any more information, no matter how much the Knights press. It is not that he has no more to give, but he does not wish the Knights to suspect how involved he is with Valniar or his reasons for wanting him destroyed. He will advise them to leave immediately, and tell them that he will meet them in Altshire, as

he can read the Beast's signs with ease and will be able to ensure they do not follow the wrong path.

Flags

If a *Suspicion* card is played, one of the Knights does not trust Bey at all, and will be reluctant to take his counsel or allow him on the journey to Altshire. This Knight will be violently against the idea of aiding Bey and Toral in the climactic scene.

If a *Romance* card is played, Bey will be attracted to a female Storm Knight. He will act to protect her whenever possible during the adventure, planning to drain her blood and make her one of the undead after Valniar is slain.

Variables

If the Knights refuse to let Bey tell their fortunes, he will ask again, politely. If they still refuse, he will warn



them that they are placing themselves in dire peril by ignoring him. Finally, he will tell them that someone dear to them (a loved one, an ally from a previous adventure, etc.) is about to fall victim to the same force that destroyed Altshire. This is a lie, of course, but should pique the Knights' interest.

If the Knights balk at the idea of Bey meeting them in Altshire, he will seemingly agree with them, but will go there anyway and be present for Scene Two.

If the Knights should attack Bey, he will flee from them, and once out of their sight, turn to mist and disappear. He will contrive to get his "warning" to them some other way, possibly by slipping a note under their door or some such device.

Cut to "Scene Two: Mark of the Wolf."

SCENE TWO: Mark of the Wolf

The Situation

Standard. The Knights arrive at the devastated village of Altshire. Amidst the ruins, they discover clues about the identity of their foe and his future plans, and are attacked by the ghost of one his victims.

Read aloud or paraphrase:

You have heard and seen many frightening things in your time in Orrorsh, but nothing could have prepared you for the sight that meets your eyes in Altshire. What was once a thriving village is now devastated ruins and piles of corpses.

The air reeks of death. On the street before you lie the bodies of the Victorian soldiers sent to investigate Altshire, having apparently been frightened to death. There is no sign of their horses. Dried blood stains the walls of all the buildings in the village square, where the body count seems to be the highest. Even the church was victim, its stained-glass windows shattered into thousands of worthless shards, its doors splin-

tered into kindling. As you view this hellish scene, you realize that the gypsy was right—the being that did this could well slay you all.

The Action

Altshire was destroyed by Valnir and his wolf pack almost a month ago, on the date of the last full moon. On a *Perception* total of 8, the Knights notice paw prints all over the village streets, resembling those of a dog or wolf. On a *Superior* or *Spectacular* success, the Knights notice a second set of prints, shaped roughly like a human foot, yet with markings that suggest claws.

If the Storm Knights examine any of the bodies, a *medicine* total of 10 reveals that the wounds on the bodies were caused by teeth and claws, with some of them having apparently been made by an animal a great deal larger than the rest.

If the Knights search the village for clues, a *find* total of 9 reveals a journal lying beside a man's body. The corpse is sprawled across the church steps, and there are strands of long, grayish hair clutched in his hand. The name embossed in gold on the cover is "Victoria Wells." The last few entries read as follows:

"April 5—An intriguing gentleman arrived in the village today. His name is Vincent Norton, and I do believe he is the most attractive, mysterious man I have ever seen.

"April 7—Vincent asked to call on me today, and though Uncle was reluctant, I persuaded him to give his consent. Vincent seems like such a powerful man, yet he acts as if he is afraid of something. I am sure he harbors some secret, and I pray he will confide in me soon.

"April 10—"I believe that Vincent has sincere feelings for me, but there is a side of him that I almost fear. He told me he had to spend the afternoon in the mountains, and when I asked him if I could accompany him, he grew very agitated. I thought for a moment he would strike me. When he returned that night, I saw that he had been gathering plants with strange blue and yellow blossoms on them.

"April 16—My fears concerning Vincent are growing. As we walked in

the garden last evening, he spoke of love. But when the moon rose, he excused himself, almost in a panic. When I spoke to him about it today, he claimed a sudden illness. He has asked to visit me again tonight, and says he has something to ask me. Could he be planning to ask for my hand?"

On the next page of the journal, a single word is scrawled in blood: "Vincent."

The pockets of the man who lay beside the journal contain papers identifying him as Jeffrey Wells, and a picture of a pretty young girl, signed, "To Uncle, with love, Victoria." In his hand, he holds a newspaper clipping. The headline reads "Horrible Murder. Young Woman Found Dead in Garden. Fiance Suspected."

Cut to "Spectre of Deceit."

Spectre of Deceit

When the Knights have gathered all the evidence they can from Jeffrey Wells' body, they are suddenly attacked by the spirit of Victoria Wells.

The ghost is bound to the earth because of the violent manner in which she died at the hands of one she loved and (for the most part) trusted. She is determined to have her revenge on Vincent/Valnir, but could not follow him beyond the borders of Altshire, and that has left her enraged. She mistakenly believes the Knights are "resurrection men" who steal dead bodies for dissection in medical schools in the cosm of Orrorsh. Her fearsome apparition was responsible for the deaths of the Victorian soldiers sent to Altshire.

Victoria is unable to make a physical attack, nor can she be damaged by physical means (although she is vulnerable to magic and miracles). She will attempt to scare the Knights out of Altshire. If the Knights took note of the picture in Jeffrey Wells' pocket, they recognize the ghost as being that of Victoria Wells on a *Perception* total of 7.

Ghost of Victoria Wells

DEXTERITY 3

Stealth 22

STRENGTH 1

TOUGHNESS 11



PERCEPTION 11

Find 20, tracking 13, trick 13

MIND 10

Test 11

CHARISMA 15

Taunt 16

SPIRIT 15

Intimidation 23, reality 17

Possibilities: 2

Description: The spirit form of a young woman, clad in a flowing gown. Since the manner of her death was responsible for her inability to pass from this plane, her ghost bears the wounds of her body. Her throat has been ripped open, and one arm has been almost completely torn off her body.

Victoria will use her *intimidation* and *taunt* skills to try and frighten the Knights into fleeing the village. The Knights have two options, destroy her or attempt to persuade her that they share a common enemy and are here to help.

If they do the former, cut to "Variables." If they do the latter, Victoria's ghost confirms that she was killed by Vincent, who was actually a werewolf named Valniar. Before he slew her, he described himself as "twice-cursed," and explained that a werewolf must always kill those he loves. He did not identify the second curse. On the third night of the full moon, the day of her funeral, she saw him bury the blue and yellow blossoms he had collected and shortly after that, a pack of wolves descended from the mountains and joined him in ravaging the town.

She will also tell the Knights that she believes Valniar will kill again in two days. She will lead them to a spot near the southern border of the town and advise them to look for clues there, then she will disappear.

The Curse of Valniar

Left alone by the ghost, have the Knights generate *find* totals. On a 9, they spot four torn Tarot cards, a wedding invitation and a bundle of blue and yellow blossoms like those described by Victoria in her journal.

On a *Perception* or *scholar* (botany) total of 10, the Knights can identify the flowers as wolfsbane. The bundles are

bound with catgut. A *scholar* (realm lore) total of 9 will reveal that wolfsbane is associated in legend with werewolves, primarily because it blooms only in the moonlight. A werewolf who has been made so by the bite of another can only be cured by ingesting wolfsbane blossoms. In addition, if wolfsbane is buried in a place with the blossoms pointed toward the moon, wolves can be summoned to that spot from the surrounding area.

Note that, to everyone but a werewolf, wolfsbane is poisonous. Ingesting the blossoms or inhaling their scent does damage value 7.

The invitation relates to the wedding of Richard Tudor and Juliet Meadows, to be held in the village of Kent in two days. It was taken by Valniar from one of his Altshire victims.

When the Tarot cards are examined, they are seen to be the Five of Rods, the Tower, the Lovers and the Queen of Swords. Read the following or paraphrase:

Suddenly, Kerim Bey is at your side. You did not hear him approach, and he apologizes for startling you. He looks at the cards you hold and shakes his head.

"This is the curse of Valniar," he says. "The cards determine his fate, and thus the fate of many others. You have before you all the information you need to stop him before my prophecy comes true, good friends."

Kerim Bey will provide the following information to the Knights:

- Months ago, Valniar was cursed by a gypsy soothsayer — from then on, his ability to summon the pack, the duration and violence of his killing sprees, even his transformations from wolf to man, were governed by the cards. The aged man showed Valniar a card, the Ten of Pentacles — but the werewolf scoffed and killed the gypsy.

Yet when he arrived at the next town he wished to destroy, Valniar discovered that he could not summon the pack. Enraged, he attacked the town, but felt compelled to flee after slaying ten people. Then, with the moon still high, he inexplicably turned back into a man. Suddenly, he knew that the gypsy had been right, and his

fate was no longer his own to determine.

- The four cards in the ritual signify the following: how many bundles of wolfsbane Valniar must bury to draw the wolves to a particular site; how many victims he can claim in any one attack; who must be corrupted for the ritual to work, and in what manner.

Have the Knights generate four *evidence analysis* totals for the cards with a difficulty number of 9. Success will reveal that the Five of Rods means Valniar must bury five bundles of wolfsbane at the site of his next attack; the Tower means ruin and destruction for all, meaning that Valniar and his pack will slay an entire village; a pair of Lovers must be corrupted to ensure the success of the ritual; and the Queen of Swords means it will be the woman who will be the target of the werewolf's efforts.

This information should give the Knights a good starting point for their investigation in Kent (which the wedding invitation indicates is the most likely target of Valniar's next assault). Kerim Bey will advise that they proceed to Kent immediately, as they will be able to reach it by mid-afternoon of the day before the wedding, if they hurry.

After running the "Event" below, cut to "Scene Three: Till Death Us Do Part."

Variables

If the Storm Knights battled and destroyed the ghost of Victoria Wells, Kerim Bey will mysteriously appear beside them, claiming to have found something that may be important. He will lead them to the cards, invitation and wolfsbane, and tell them the tale of Valniar.

Event

While journeying from Altshire to Kent, the Knights are attacked by nine members of Valniar's wolf pack. The wolves have been driven mad by the smell of blood and death that hangs in the air, and will fight until slain.

The wolves automatically get the initiative in the first round of combat.



Mountain Wolves (9)**DEXTERITY 11**

Dodge 13, long jumping 12, maneuver 12, running 12, stealth 13, unarmed combat 14

STRENGTH 9

Climbing 10

TOUGHNESS 9**PERCEPTION 8**

Tracking 10, trick (12)

MIND 6

Test 9

CHARISMA 5

Charm (20), persuasion (28), taunt (9)

SPIRIT 5

Intimidation 10

Possibilities: none

Natural Tools: claws, damage value STR+2/11; teeth, damage value STR+3/12

ter how many of their number are killed.

Once the Knights have slain all of the wolves, an *evidence analysis* total of 9 will reveal that the wolves' fur matches the strands of hair found clutched in the hands of the Altshire victim. These wolves are quite probably from the pack that destroyed the town.

SCENE THREE: Till Death Us Do Part

The Situation

Standard. The Storm Knights arrive in the village of Kent on the eve of the Tudor-Meadows wedding, to find themselves faced with the twin mysteries of Valniar's human identity and the strange behavior of the bride.

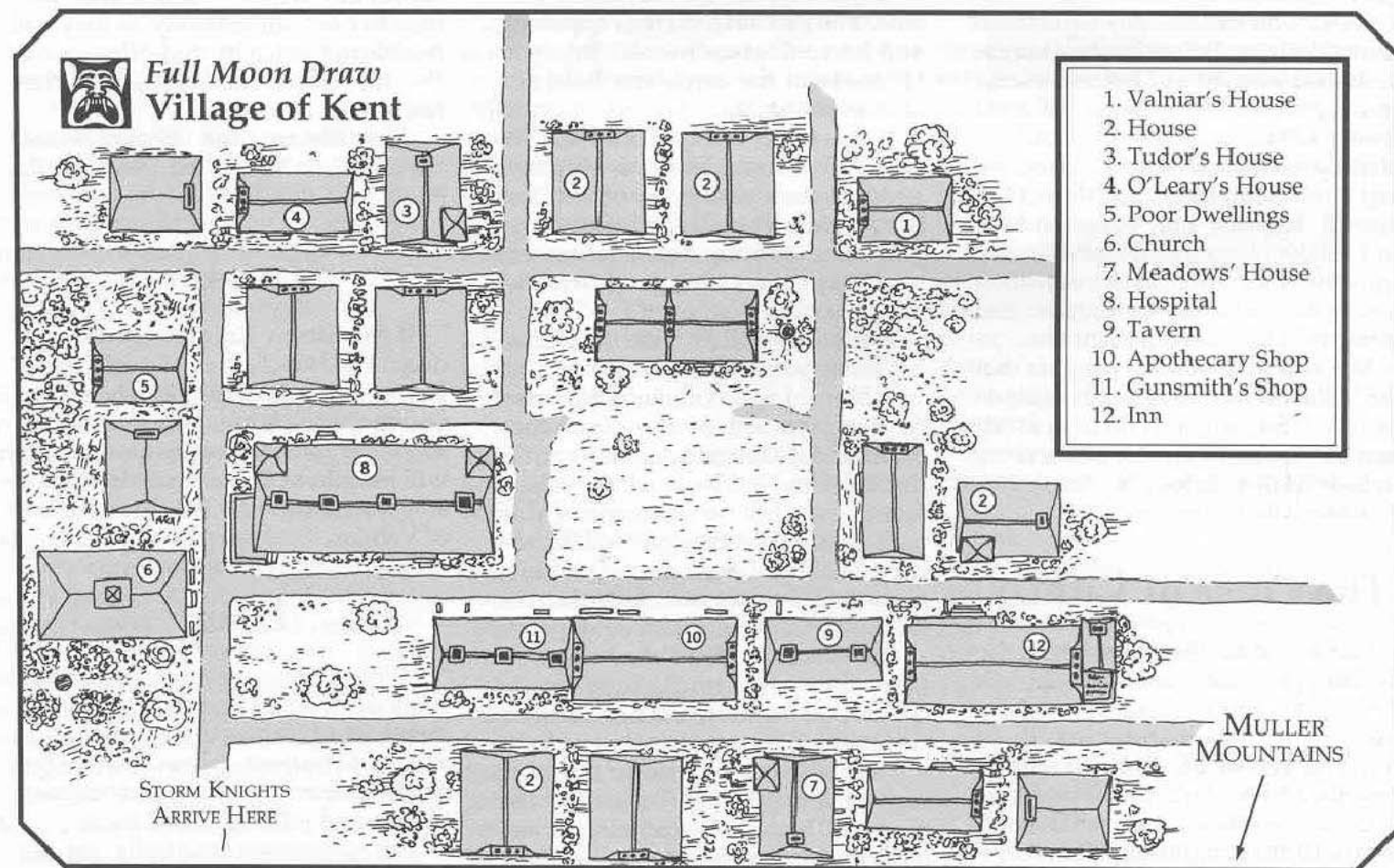
Read aloud or paraphrase:

Despite the horrors on its doorstep, Kent seems to be a prosperous town. The people are uniformly polite to you, (although they do give hard stares to the members of your party who look more unusual). Everywhere you go, the talk is about the upcoming wedding, which only serves to remind you of the Lovers on the Tarot card you saw in Altshire. If Bey was telling the truth about the ritual, the bride-to-be is in grave danger.

The Action

If the Knights wish to speak immediately with Juliet Meadows, anyone they meet in the village will be happy to give them directions. When they arrive at her home, the butler will refuse to let them enter.

On a *persuasion* total of 10, the butler will tell them that Juliet has been locked inside her room all day and is



refusing to see any visitors. Her parents are dismissing this as standard pre-wedding nerves, but the butler is convinced there is more to it than that. She has been sneaking out of the house in the evening for the past few weeks, and though he hesitates to even think it, he fears she may be involved with another man. As for her parents, they are too involved in preparations for the ceremony to see anyone at present.

The Knights will have slightly better luck at the groom's home. Richard Tudor is a generally affable young man, who will be very interested in the story of the Altshire killings. He has, of course, heard rumors, and will agree that precautions should be taken to ensure that the same thing does not happen in Kent.

He will refuse, however, to entertain any suggestions that his beloved Juliet could be involved in a black magic ritual, and if the possibility that she is involved with another man should be brought up, he will grow angry and order the Knights out of his home.

If the Knights visit a local inn or tavern, the talk will be divided between the wedding and the strange doings at Nagle's farm the evening before. Inquiries will reveal that several sheep were found dead, torn to pieces as if by a large wolf. As the night they were killed was the first night of the full moon, there is naturally some fear that there are werewolves about.

There are only two strangers in town, according to the locals, both of whom arrived in the last month. One, Jonathan O'Leary, purchased the manor house next to the Tudors, but seems uninterested in taking care of it. In fact, no one can recall ever seeing him since he moved to the village.

The second, Henry Reed, is a young, active man who also purchased a home in Kent recently. He seems to love the outdoors and spends a great deal of time hiking in the mountains. He, too, keeps to himself, and is probably the only person in town who has not been invited to the Tudor wedding.

Kerim Bey Returns

By the time the Knights have gathered all this information, it will be

early evening, the second night of the full moon. If the Knights have failed to see the pattern up to this point, Kerim Bey will appear to remind them of the following:

- According to Victoria Wells' journal, the werewolf will have planted the wolfsbane on the first night of the full moon, and will slay she whom he has corrupted on this night. If he can be prevented from killing her, the ritual cannot proceed as planned.

- Valniar will have planted five bundles of wolfsbane somewhere in Kent, in a semi-circular pattern facing the moon. If all five bundles are uprooted and burned, the werewolf will not succeed in summoning the pack.

- The only way to kill a werewolf is by piercing its heart with a weapon made of silver.

Racing the Moon

The Knights now have three options: they can unearth the wolfsbane, try to save Juliet Meadows, or try to hunt down Valniar. You will find the results of each action below.

When the Wolfsbane Blooms

The bundles of wolfsbane are buried all over town, with the apex of the semi-circle in the village square. *Find* totals of 11, or successful *detect magic* spells, will reveal where the wolfsbane is hidden — note that it will probably be impossible for the Knights to dig the plants up in the morning, because the town will be roused (due to the events that will occur this night). It will only take a few minutes of digging to uncover them, as they are not buried very deeply.

Once the Knights have found two or three bundles, cut to "The Bride in Black."

The Bride in Black

If the Knights go to Juliet Meadows' home to attempt to warn her of her peril, the butler will inform them that she is not in her room, and the family is frantic with worry. On a *tracking* total of 9, the Knights can follow her footprints in the soft earth all the way to the jungle on the outskirts of the vil-

lage. As they reach the edge of the jungle, her scream pierces the air.

She is only a few yards away from them, but the jungle growth is thick (*Toughness* of 8). If the Knights take too long to reach her, they will find her dead, and see Valniar hovering over her, blood dripping from his claws. At the sight of the Knights, he will run off into the jungle.

If the Knights get there before Valniar has killed her, he will flee. Juliet will be in a state of shock from having witnessed the werewolf's transformation, and will be unable to tell them the werewolf's human identity.

Tracking the Beast

If the Storm Knights choose to try to track down the werewolf, they can travel to the homes of the two prime suspects, O'Leary and Reed, or they can start by visiting Nagle's field. Before they do this, however, they had best be sure they possess the silver weapon (or bullets) needed to slay the creature. These can be obtained either through trade at the inn or at the local gunsmith's shop.

The sheep still lie where they fell on the farmer's land, savagely mutilated. The prints around the bodies are unmistakably those of a werewolf, and a *tracking* total of 10 will allow the Storm Knights to follow them. They lead to the grounds of the O'Leary estate, where they disappear.

If the Knights choose to investigate the manor, they will see it appears dark and abandoned. The doors and windows are locked (*lock picking* difficulty of 8). When the Knights get inside, read or paraphrase the following:

The manor house looks as if it has not been lived in for years. Cobwebs hang everywhere, dust coats the furniture, and the only sound is the skittering of rats.

On *evidence analysis* totals of 9, the Knights will notice that the candles in the main parlor were lit not more than a week ago. Allow them to search the building as much as they wish to — the only things to be found are some occult books in the upstairs bedroom.



In the same room, a *find* total of 10 will reveal a pentagram scrawled in blood on the floor.

If the Knights should choose to search the basement, they will hear a shuffling sound behind them. (If they are planning to leave without searching that level, have them hear the noise from down there before they exit.)

The source of the noise is O'Leary, an Orrorshan sorcerer whose attempt to conjure a demon shortly after he moved to Kent backfired when he left one of the key arcane phrases out of the ritual. The demon, angered, used its powers to turn O'Leary into a zuvembie, and he has been hiding in his home since then. When he sees the Knights, he will attack them in mindless rage.

Jonathan O'Leary (zuvembie)

DEXTERITY 8

Dodge 9, unarmed combat 10

STRENGTH 20

Climbing 22 (speed value 8), lifting 23

TOUGHNESS 20

PERCEPTION 1

Trick (25)

MIND 1

Test (25)

CHARISMA 3

SPIRIT 10

Intimidation 11

Possibilities: none

Note: Zuvembies continue to pursue a goal until they are completely destroyed, which can be done through physical attack. They are not affected by *fatigue* results.

If the Knights try to flee the house, the zuvembie will follow them. They can easily outdistance him, but he is a potential menace to the population of Kent, and really should be dealt with.

If the Storm Knights go to Reed's house, they will find the windows locked (*lock picking* difficulty of 9) but the door unlatched. A *detect magic* spell will reveal traces of the *folk* knowledge around the doorway. The first Knight who touches the doorknob will be assaulted by a *madness* spell Valniar focused into the handle. It is a weaker version of the spell than is standard (see page 16 of the *Torg World Book*) with a maximum duration of one day. Thus, if a Knight is affected, he will be

in his right mind again by Scene Four.

When the Knights enter the building, read or paraphrase the following:

The furnishings inside are comfortable. There is no sign of the house's occupant, but there is an almost overwhelming feeling of evil, as if dark furies have become a part of the very wood and stone that comprises the building.

On a *find* total of 9, the Knights find a packet of letters from Juliet Meadows addressed to Reed. Their contents indicate that Reed and Meadows were romantically involved, and as she was pledged to another at the time, this could represent her "corruption" as required by Valniar's ritual.

A *find* total of 10 will draw the Knights attention to yellow and blue petals scattered on the floor of the parlor. If they have already dug up some of the wolfsbane packets, they will recognize the petals as being from that plant. If not, a *Perception* or *scholar (botany)* total of 8 will provide that information. Finally, a *find* total of 9 will uncover a diagram of the wolfsbane placement, with an "X" marked in the village square. (Note that the wolfsbane pattern is not included on the map on page 10, to allow gamemasters to make it easier or harder for the Knights to find the bundles, depending on how much difficulty the Knights have had with the adventure thus far.)

Nothing else of importance can be found in Reed's house, but the Knights should now have sufficient evidence to be certain he is Valniar. They can, if they choose to, wait for him to return, but he will not. Following Meadows' murder, he fled into the jungle and will remain in hiding until the moon rises the next evening, when Kent is targeted for destruction.

Flags

If a *Connection* card is played, one of the Knights is an old friend of the gunsmith, and can obtain the silver bullets needed at a greatly reduced price.

If a *Mistaken Identity* card is played, the people of Kent will suspect that the

Knights were responsible for what happened to Juliet, and their attitudes toward the party will be uniformly hostile.

Variables

If the Knights do not discover the diagram showing where Valniar will be at moonrise the next evening, Kerim Bey can ensure that they arrive there in time by feigning an attack on them in his wolf form, and then leading them to the village square.

If the Knights have saved Juliet Meadows or succeeded in pulling up all the wolfsbane, Valniar will be unable to complete his ritual to summon the wolf pack. However, he will still be able to mount an attack on the town himself, and could easily slaughter most, if not all, of the population if the Knights do not stop him.

Cut to "Scene Four: Tooth and Claw."

SCENE FOUR: Tooth and Claw

The Situation

Dramatic. The Storm Knights confront Valniar and learn the truth about Kerim Bey, finding themselves caught between vampyre and werewolf with thousands of lives at stake.

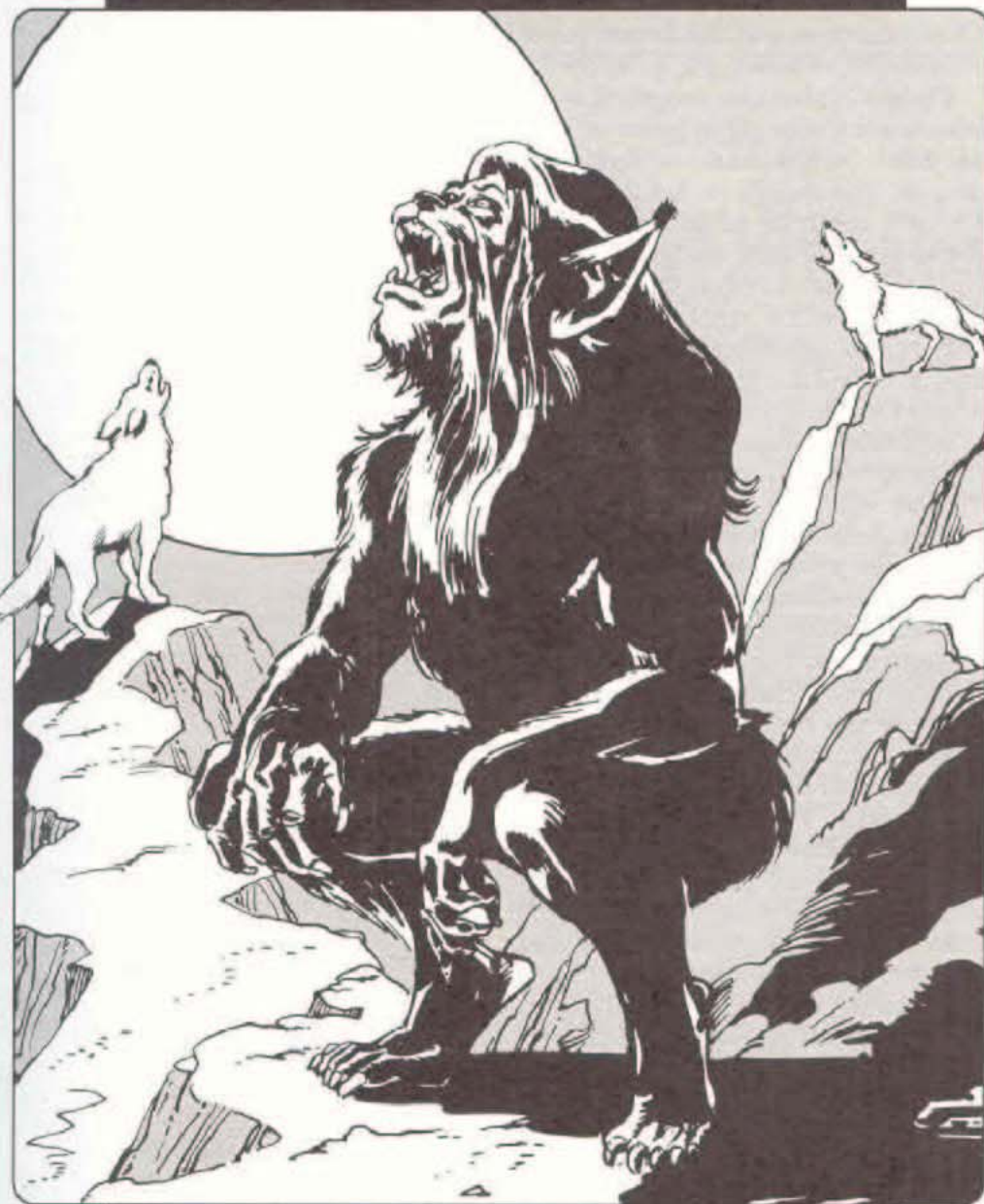
Read aloud or paraphrase:

Your efforts to find the werewolf in his human identity have met with frustration, and now nightfall is only a few moments away. Very soon now, the moon will rise, and the Beast will begin his destruction of Kent. You must be in time to stop him.

The Action

This scene can take place in one of two ways. If Valniar's ritual can still take place, or he is unaware that the Knights have ruined it, he will be at the village square at moonrise to attempt to summon the pack. If he is





the jungle, cloaking the ritual site. In the distance, the baying of wolves can be heard. Every shadow seems to have a life of its own, dancing a macabre waltz in the alleys of the town.

Have the Knights generate *Perception* totals. On an 11, they hear a soft rustle in the grass behind them, then Valniar is in their midst (if they fail the roll, the werewolf automatically has initiative in the first round of combat).

Read aloud or paraphrase:

Suddenly, the Beast is before you, eyes gleaming red, saliva dripping from his jaws, claws raking the air. He emits a guttural growl in your direction, and then says harshly, "You are too late, Stormers. This village is mine!"

Valniar (wolf form)

DEXTERITY 10

Dodge 12, long jumping 11, maneuver 12, running 11, stealth 12, unarmed combat 12

STRENGTH 14

Climbing 15

TOUGHNESS 15

PERCEPTION 10

Find 11, tracking 11

MIND 8

Survival 9, test 10

CHARISMA 8

Charm 9, persuasion 9, taunt 9

SPIRIT 10

Intimidation 12, reality 11, shape shift 13

Possibilities: two per Storm Knight
Arcane Knowledges: folk 4, living forces 5

Spells: madness, summon wolves

Natural Tools: claws, damage value STR+2/16; teeth, damage value STR+3/17

Note: resistant to physical attacks; takes shock damage only from non-magical, non-silver weapons.

Description: Valniar was a creation of Toral, a Nightmare demon, and so has higher *Mind* and *Charisma* attributes values than the standard werewolf. He served Toral faithfully until the gypsy's curse was levied upon him, at which point he lost control over how many lives he claimed in his rampages. Eventually, the increasingly high body count attracted the demon's attention.

able to complete the ritual, the pack will arrive 10 rounds after combat begins and begin attacking the townspeople. He requires five rounds to complete the ritual. If he is interrupted before he can finish, or it does not work due to prior intervention by the Knights, the pack will remain in the mountains.

If Valniar is aware that the ritual will fail due to the actions of the Knights, he will track them down, planning to kill them before he starts his rampage in the town.

The Knights will more than likely

want to get to the square before moonrise to prepare a trap for the werewolf. Do not allow them to reach there more than a few minutes before Valniar — perhaps a mob of villagers chases them, or Victorian soldiers stop them for questioning in the Meadows incident.

When they reach the square, it will be empty. Whether events have led to the Storm Knights remaining the hunters or becoming the hunted, read or paraphrase the following:

As the moon begins its slow ascent in the sky, an eerie fog rolls in from



Valniar is a determined foe, who will fight with utter rage and desperation when he realizes Kerim Bey is behind the Knights' actions. If the Knights have a silver weapon, Valniar will try to strike on the run and stay out of range as much as possible.

The Lesser Evil

After the first round of combat, Kerim Bey will appear to either aid the Knights or taunt Valniar, depending on who has taken damage. Read aloud or paraphrase:

The chill mist begins to congeal into the form of a man, and with horror, you realize it is Kerim Bey! The sharp fangs you see in his mouth leave no doubt that he is a vampyre, but judging from the cruel smile he is directing at your opponent, no friend of the werewolf.

"So, Valniar, we meet at last," Bey says. "The Nightmare demon we both serve demands your death. You have claimed more than your share of victims, and the Darkness Device is not pleased. But I chose not to soil my hands on an ... animal like you. Enlisting these fools was an excellent idea, was it not?"

"Go ahead, Stormers. Slay this beast who kills for the pure pleasure of it, save this village, and know that by doing so, you aid the Gaunt Man in his quest to become Torg."

Valniar's gaze locks with that of the vampyre, his eyes blazing with hatred. "Do your worst, gypsy," he snarls. "Neither you nor these pitiful weaklings can keep me from feasting tonight!"

The Knights essentially have four options: they can fight Valniar, fight Kerim Bey, fight both, or fight neither. The advantages and disadvantages of each course of action are as follows:

Fight Valniar: The werewolf is the immediate threat to Kent, and though his death would please a Nightmare demon, that cannot be helped. If the Knights continue to battle Valniar, Kerim Bey will stand aside and watch. Once the battle is over, the vampyre will comment on what fine undead the Knights would make, then turn to mist and vanish. He may reappear in future Orrorsh adventures.

Fight Kerim Bey: If the Knights fight the vampyre and ignore the werewolf, Valniar will take advantage of this and escape to begin wreaking havoc in the village. Even if the Knights down the vampyre, it will be too late to stop Valniar's killing spree.

Fight Both: The Knights may find themselves outclassed if they attempt to challenge both monsters. If they win, all is well, but if they lose, the outcome will be roughly the same as listed under "Fight Neither."

Fight Neither: If the Knights rebel at being used and refuse to fight, Bey and Valniar will start to battle. A duel between two such powerful creatures will doubtless result in a great loss of life among the citizenry of Kent, something the Knights were supposed to prevent. In addition, the Knights will get branded cowards by any survivors.

Note that, if Valniar has been able to successfully complete his ritual, the wolf pack will also have to be dealt with (40 wolves who will spread rapidly throughout the town and attack anything that moves). Killing Valniar,

however, would break the spell and the wolves would wander back to their mountain home.

Aftermath

If the Knights are successful in slaying Valniar and thus preventing him from killing the townspeople, they can show his beastly form to the Kent villagers and prove he was the menace they faced. (Due to the gypsy curse, Valniar will not change to human form when killed.)

If the Knights are unable to prevent innocents from being slain, but do stop Valniar, they will be thanked but asked to leave, as some will believe they brought the trouble with them.

If the Knights cannot stop the werewolf (and are still alive), they will be blamed for the deaths and forced to flee the village. Their standing with the Victorian authorities will decline.

Awards

If the Knights stop Valniar and his ritual without any innocent lives being lost, they receive 14 Possibilities. (If they should stop Kerim Bey also, award them 16 Possibilities.)

If the Knights stop the werewolf, but not before his wolf pack kills some villagers, they receive 10 Possibilities.

If the Knights are unable to kill Valniar, but drive him off and save the village, they receive six Possibilities.

If the Knights do not save the village (either by failing to defeat Valniar or refusing to fight him), they receive no Possibilities.



Stone Cold Dead

Prologue

Maureen O'Heaney walked quickly through the chill spring rain, seething with anger. It had been a bad week, what with Home Guardsmen straggling into town looking beaten and dejected, and then Colin's death...

She did not try to suppress the shudder that rose in her. In her years as a police officer, she had seen more than a few corpses, but never one like that of her old friend and superior. The body had been placed in the basement — somehow it didn't seem a fit candidate for the morgue, and a mason would be needed for the autopsy. And his face ... she shut her eyes tightly, trying to block out the image, but failed.

And now they tell me to forget about succeeding him, she thought bitterly. You're a lovely girl, Maureen, young and alive, and one day you'll make a fine wife and mother. But ye cannot expect experienced men to follow the likes of ye, not with the troubles Cahir is facing ...

That was what she had been told, over and over until she thought she would scream. But O'Heaneys did not give up so easily — Colin had discovered something, maybe something that would explain the strange tales that had been flying through the village of late. And if he died because he learned the truth, by God, she would learn it too and avenge him.

That was when she heard the noise. A slight rustle, that's all it was, like the limbs of a tree scraping against a window on a windy night. It was coming from the alley up ahead, and with every muscle tensed, Maureen drew her gun and advanced.

As she turned the corner, she thought she heard something moving in the darkness, but could see nothing. She called out, but no one answered, so she steeled herself and thrust her lantern forward.

In the morning, they would find Maureen, lantern burnt out, gun unfired, a scream of horror frozen on

her lips. Now she would be young and lovely forever ... but alive? No, she could never again be called that.

The Major Beat

The Storm Knights arrive in Cahir, meeting Mayor McDermott at the local pub, the *Black Lion*. There he briefs them on the string of mysterious murders in the town, and they can question other villagers about the bizarre events. McDermott suggests that the gorgons may be living in tunnels beneath the village, and the Knights must search to find the entrance to the creatures' domain.

Once they find a way into the tunnels, they must fight their way to the gorgons and slay the three horrid sisters. After defeating the gorgons, they find chests of gold — but before they can escape with the treasure, an explosion traps them in the tunnels.

Freeing themselves from the tomb, they track down their would-be killer: Mayor McDermott. He unleashes a huge giant and attacks with his own sorcerous skills in an attempt to destroy the Storm Knights.

Adventure Background

The village of Cahir, in Ireland's "Golden Vale," was once known only for the friendliness of its people and the beauty of its scenery. But now, in the wake of the Possibility Wars, it has become a place of unimaginable terror. High officials, including the mayor's stopaide, have been murdered, their bodies turned to stone, their faces locked in expressions of crazed fear.

With the public in a panic, Mayor Tom McDermott has contacted a band of Storm Knights and pleaded for their help in saving his village from disaster.



SCENE ONE: The Black Lion

The Situation

Standard. The Knights arrive at the *Black Lion* pub to meet with Mayor Tom McDermott and other villagers, and attempt to ascertain the nature of their foe.

Read aloud or paraphrase:

The *Black Lion* is a charming, rustic-looking inn, a silhouette of the king of beasts adorning its sign. It is easy to picture crowds of people singing rousing songs over mugs of hot ale in this place, but it seems those times are gone for good.

The atmosphere inside is grim. Men and women, Core Earth natives and Ayslish immigrants, sit side by side, drinking in silence. An air of mourning hangs over the place, and what little conversation is made contains a trace of fear.

Across the room, you see Mayor Tom McDermott beckoning you to join him.

The Action

Mayor McDermott is a middle-aged man, who gives the impression of being a lifelong bureaucrat who would have been much happier dealing with unpaved roads and yearly budgets. In truth, he is far more than that — a sorcerer who has allied himself with the Dark Forces, and plans to betray both them and the Knights for his own personal gain.

Mayor Tom McDermott

DEXTERITY 9

Dodge 10, melee weapons 10, unarmed combat 10

STRENGTH 9

TOUGHNESS 9

PERCEPTION 11

Alteration magic 14, find 12, trick 12

MIND 10

Apportation magic 11, conjuration magic 11, test 11

CHARISMA 10

Charm 11, persuasion 11, taunt 11

SPIRIT 8

Corruption 15, intimidation 9, reality 9

Possibilities: two per Storm Knight
Arcane Knowledges: *inanimate forces*

3, dark 2, fire 2, earth 2, living forces 2

Spells: lightning, altered fireball, stone tunnel, charm person, earth shield, mage dark

Equipment: dagger, damage value STR+3/12; rapier, damage value STR+5/14

Description: Short, sandy hair, ready smile, the manner of a career politician.

McDermott will be very effusive in welcoming the Knights, and offer to answer any questions they might have. He will provide the Knights with the following information:

- The killings began three weeks ago. The first victim was McDermott's top aide, James Townsend, who was found in his driveway. He had apparently been in the act of turning around, as if responding to the calling of his name, when he was instantaneously turned to stone. In the days since, the police chief, Colin Crowley, his lieutenant, Maureen O'Heaney, and the president of the bank, Sean Casey, have all met their ends in similar fashions.

- This is the first sign of any hostile force in Cahir since the invasion began. Most of the Aysle natives in the village have been benevolent in nature.

- McDermott is convinced that gorgons, like the ones in mythology, are responsible for the deaths. He also believes that the gorgons might be hiding in the town itself. A network of tunnels exists in the sandstone beneath the town, carved during the Middle Ages as a possible escape route in case of invasion. Most of the current buildings' basements were dug out of that sandstone, so the tunnels could have been joined to one of those cellars, giving the creatures easy access.

There are others in the pub who the Knights can question if they so desire. All the Cahir residents have attributes of 8, and here is a summary of the information they can provide:

A Home Guardsman: Yes, he's en-

countered gorgons in the Galtys, and barely lived to tell about it. But they prefer to stay in dark places, and he's never heard of them actually coming into a village. There would have to be a powerful reason for them to keep coming back to Cahir.

The Barmaid: All of the victims — well, except perhaps for Mr. Casey — were well-liked in the town. The only gossip about any of them was that Crowley and O'Heaney were supposedly sweet on each other, and Casey had been having money troubles some time ago.

The Dwarves: These killings were definitely the work of gorgons — they've seen their work before in the Aysle cosm, and will be leaving Cahir soon, as they do not wish to see it again.

If the Knights ask about the tunnels, none of the townspeople have ever heard of them, although they concede their cellars were dug from sandstone.

Event

During one of the Knights' interviews with pub patrons, an obnoxious drunk attempts to interrupt them. If this occurs during their talk with McDermott, he reacts angrily to the man, then asks the Knights' forgiveness, explaining he is under stress.

If the Knights let the drunk speak, he tells them he was a friend of Jim Townsend, and saw him the night he died. Jim was in his cups and was boasting that he had information that would blow the town wide open. But at the same time, he didn't look happy about it — rather, he looked like he'd just lost his best friend.

Flags

If a *Personal Stake* card is played, one of the Storm Knights was a friend of Colin Crowley, perhaps having met him during an earlier investigation in the area. The Knight will be extremely upset at his death and determined to bring his killer to justice.

If a *Romance* card is played, a male Storm Knight falls in love with the *Black Lion* barmaid, and becomes con-



cerned that she may be the next victim. He will be reluctant to leave her unprotected.

Variables

If the Storm Knights choose not to get involved in the investigation, McDermott will act extremely disappointed. Have the gorgons attack the Knights before they can leave town — this should sufficiently anger them that they will agree to stay and investigate.

If the Knights wish to view the bodies of the victims, let them. The bodies are being kept in the basement of the police station, with sheets draped over them. All four victims have expressions of shock and fear on their faces — Casey had raised his hands as if to ward off an attack. They appear to have been turned into granite statues. Any attempts to detect magic in connection with the bodies will reveal traces of the *enchanted* kindred

knowledge, a result of the power used to transform the bodies.

On a successful *Perception* or *evidence analysis* total of 10, one of the Knights notices a small piece of white cloth caught in the fingers of Maureen O'Heaney. The cloth is white and coarse.

If a Storm Knight has the *scholar* (*Aysle realm lore*) skill and generates a total of 8, he knows the following information about gorgons. If none of the Knights have that skill, they can go to the local library and find these facts:

- Gorgons are female creatures with the ability to turn their victims to stone merely by looking into their eyes. Gorgons commonly travel in threes, congregating in dark places and preferring to avoid bodies of water (should they see their own reflection, they suffer the same fate as their victims).

- The telltale characteristics of a gorgon are red eyes, a greenish tinge to the skin, and a nest of writhing snakes in place of hair. They are physi-

cally powerful, but their preferred method of attack is with their gaze.

- According to legend, if a gorgon is slain (by beheading it or somehow reflecting its gaze back at it), all its victims will be returned to flesh, none the worse for wear.

Cut to "Scene Two: The Search Begins."

SCENE TWO: The Search Begins

The Situation

Standard. The Storm Knights search for the hidden entrance to the tunnels, the lair of the gorgons. After uncovering a number of clues to the truth about Cahir's ordeal, they are drawn back to the *Black Lion* by the barmaid's scream.



The Action

Though Cahir is not a large town, it is still too big for the Knights to search every basement. The Knights must find a way to narrow down the area to be investigated.

Map of Murder

If the Knights check the town records, they will find no chart detailing the structure of the tunnels. They can, however, view a map of the town. On a *Perception* or *evidence analysis* total of 9, the Knights notice that all of the attacks took place in a four-block area. Included in that area are City Hall, the mayor's residence, the *Black Lion* and the local branch of the Bank of Ireland. Any one of these might hide the entrance they seek.

House to House

There are a number of ways the Knights can go about finding the tunnel entrance:

- A Knight who has *science (engineering)* or the *Nile engineering* skill can attempt to generate a skill total of 12. If he succeeds, he notices that the *Black Lion* pub appears to have sunken a few inches into the earth on its right side, as if its foundation had in some way been undermined. If the Knight attempts to discover this using a straight *Mind* roll, increase the difficulty number to 14.

If the Knights found the piece of white cloth clutched by Maureen O'Heaney, and one of them possesses *divination magic*, they can attempt a *tracker* spell to find the entrance. If successfully cast, the spell will lead them to the basement of the *Black Lion*.

- They can conduct a house-to-house search of the area, in which case Mayor McDermott will provide them with a letter of introduction to the townsfolk asking for their cooperation in the investigation. Most of the people are fear-stricken by the strange events occurring in Cahir, and they will be wary of strangers. Their attitudes toward the Knights will be *hostile*. If the Knights show them the letter from the Mayor, their attitudes will become *friendly* in most cases, *neutral*

in a few others (gamemaster's discretion).

There are four key buildings in the area to search. Here is what the Knights will find in each:

A. City Hall. There is no sign of a tunnel entrance in the basement, but James Townsend's office holds an interesting clue. On a *find* total of 9, the Knights spot his date book, and discover that the page dealing with the day he died has been torn out, and is nowhere to be found. No other personal effects can be found — if they ask McDermott, he will explain that Townsend's possessions were all sent back to relatives in London.

B. The Bank of Ireland. The Knights again find no entrance to the tunnels in the bank's basement, but they can discover interesting facts in the account books. A *Perception* or *evidence analysis* total of 10 reveals to the Knights that the bank was in financial trouble. Casey had apparently been embezzling funds, and his checking account showed a number of large payments to an unidentified party. The last check was written a month before the banker's death.

C. The Black Lion. If the Knights go to search the basement of this building, they hear the barmaid scream just as they arrive.

Cut to "Scene Three: A Bloody End."

D. The Mayor's House. McDermott will tell the Knights that they are welcome to search his home, but assure them they will find nothing there. If the Knights still desire to search the house, McDermott will not attempt to stop them — but before they can enter, a woman's scream will ring out from the direction of the *Black Lion*.

Cut to "Scene Three: A Bloody End."

Variables

If the Knights are completely at a loss in their search, have McDermott suggest searches of the bank, City Hall, and the pub. While he knows that what they seek is in the *Black Lion*, he also knows it would look suspicious if he sent them right to the spot.

SCENE THREE: A Bloody End

The Situation

Standard. The Storm Knights' return to the *Black Lion* to investigate the scream they heard. They discover that the barmaid has been killed by a manticore, and that the entrance they have been seeking is in the pub's basement.

The Action

As the Knights enter the pub, describe the scene:

The Black Lions' patrons are on their feet, gazing with trepidation at the door that leads down to the basement. Suddenly, it is flung open, and the Home Guardsman stumbles into the room, looking badly mauled. He has no chance to speak before falling unconscious at your feet.

The pub keeper informs the Knights that the barmaid had gone down to the cellar to check that the cask of ale were still in place, for a great crash had been heard. Shortly after that, they heard her scream. Things being how they are in Cahir, only the Home Guardsman had the courage to go down and investigate.

Whether or not they already know the tunnel entrance is in the basement, the Knights should be willing to confront whatever danger lurks below. Play this scene for all it's worth — the stairs are old and creaky, and if the Knights don't have a light source, it's pitch black until they reach the bottom and can light a torch (the candle the barmaid carried was extinguished when she was attacked). As they go down the steps, a terrified rat suddenly skitters across the floor. When they reach the basement, read aloud or paraphrase:

The sight you see is a harrowing one, even for battle-hardened adventurers. The barmaid lies in a crumpled heap on the floor, bathing in a pool of her own blood. Her throat has been



torn out, and her mouth is frozen in its final scream. A stack of crates has fallen to the ground, exposing the entrance to a dark tunnel, and crouched in the doorway is the girl's killer: a mantichore.

If one of the Knights has generated a *scholar* (realm lore) total of 8, he knows the following about mantichores:

- The creature is a hybrid, having the body of a lion, the tail of a scorpion, and the face of a man. Mantichores generally hunt alone, rather than in packs. The mantichore's mouth is filled with razor-sharp teeth, and it has dangerously sharp claws and can fire poisoned stingers from its tail.

Whether or not the Knights make a hostile move toward it, the mantichore will attack by firing its stingers. While it is an excellent close-in fighter, the creature prefers to keep its distance and rely on its missile attack to down an enemy. If cornered, though, it will use its teeth and claws to good advantage. The crates and ale casks that fill the basement provide medium cover for both the Storm Knights and the mantichore. In addition, the mantichore will spend as much of the battle as possible *partially* concealed from the Knights.

Mantichore

DEXTERITY 10

Maneuver 12, missile weapons (tail stingers) 14, running 11, unarmed combat 13

STRENGTH 15

Climbing 16

TOUGHNESS 14

PERCEPTION 9

Tracking 11, trick 10

MIND 7

Test 9

CHARISMA 4

Taunt (9)

SPIRIT 6

Intimidation 10

Possibilities: none

Natural Tools: stingers, damage value 23, range 3-10/100/300; claws, damage value STR+2/17; teeth, damage value STR+3/18

When the battle is over, the Knights can inspect the area around the entrance. On a successful *Perception* total

of 9, the Knights notice footprints in the dust leading up to the crates. The crates had served to conceal the opening, but someone shoved them over.

Flags

If the *Romance* card was played earlier and one of the Knights had fallen in love with the barmaid, he is now crazed with grief at her death. He will fly into a rage when attacking the mantichore, gaining a +1 bonus to all *Dexterity*-related skills. In addition, he will not be affected by "fatigue" results.

SCENE FOUR: The Labyrinth

The Situation.

Standard. The Storm Knights explore the sandstone tunnels, encountering a number of perils before finally confronting the gorgons in battle.

The Action

When running the search, keep in mind the condition of the Storm Knights. If they were badly wounded by the mantichore, this should be a relatively easy operation. You can use any or all of the events listed below during the course of their trek, but remember that they still must fight the gorgons and will need their strength.

If any of the Knights possess the *detect magic* spell or miracle and achieve a *Good* success or better when casting it, they will learn that the tunnels were constructed using sorcery.

For the locations of the various events in the tunnels, consult the map on page 20.

Tunnel Events

A. The Stalker in the Shadows — This is the only tunnel event that must happen. At some point during their search, have the Knights make *Perception* checks. If they generate a total of 10, they hear a soft sound behind

them — they are being followed. Nothing can be seen in the darkness, and if a Knight waits to ambush the stalker, he will never appear. If the Knights go back to search for him, there will be no sign of anyone.

B. Ghouls — Three of these gruesome, undead creatures have made a home in the tunnels, and resent anyone else intruding. If they spot the Storm Knights, they will almost certainly attack. If the Storm Knights are being beaten by the ghouls, lightning bolts will suddenly fly out of the darkness and reduce the ghouls to ashes.

Ghouls

See page 32 of the *Torg World Book*.

C. Skeletons — The Knights see two skeletons wearing armor lurking in the shadows up ahead. They can brace themselves for battle, but the skeletons are not animated, just the remains of some of the ghouls' earlier victims.

D. The Stalker Disappears — By the time the Knights reach this portion of the tunnels, their pursuer/protector will be gone. They will be on their own from now on.

E. Shield — A small, highly polished shield (TOU+4/18) is resting against a rock (if the Knights are carrying a light source, they will see a reflection off the shield's surface). The Knights can use the shield against the gorgons, and indeed, it has been left there for them to find and use for just that purpose.

At this point, cut to "If Looks Could Kill ..."

Variables

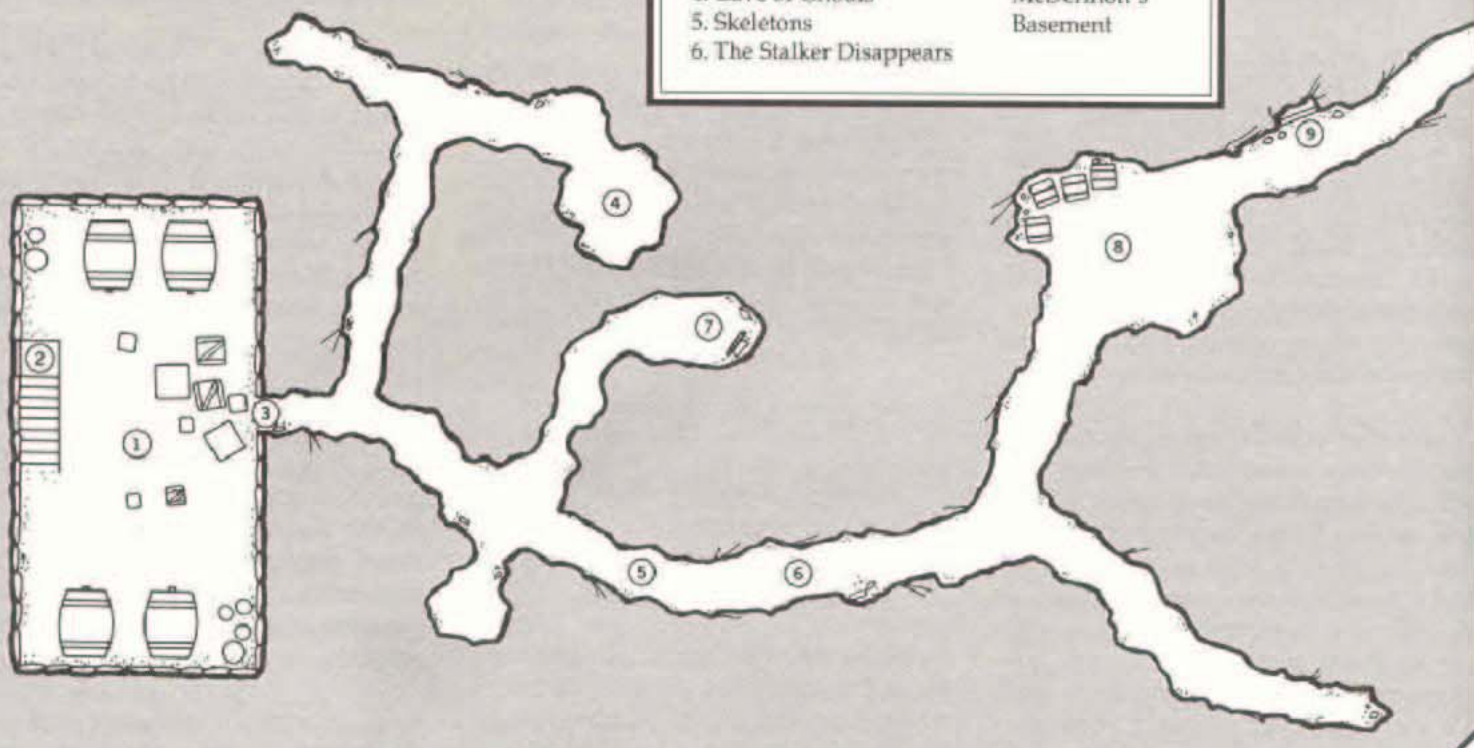
If the Knights do not wish to explore the tunnels, they may entertain the option of blocking or destroying the entrance. Mayor McDermott and the townspeople should try to discourage them from doing this by pointing out that a) it is doubtful any barricade would keep the gorgons trapped inside; b) there is no guarantee that there isn't another exit from





Stone Cold Dead The Tunnels

- | | |
|---------------------------|-------------------------------------|
| 1. Black Lion Basement | 7. The Shield |
| 2. Stairs to Pub | 8. Cave of Gorgons |
| 3. Entrance to Tunnels | 9. Entrance to McDermott's Basement |
| 4. Cave of Ghouls | |
| 5. Skeletons | |
| 6. The Stalker Disappears | |



the tunnels the creatures could use; and c) destroying the entrance would mean wrecking the pub overhead, something the town as a whole would frown upon.

If the Knights attempt to turn back once in the tunnels, the gorgons will attack them, and the running battle can travel back to their cavern.

If Looks Could Kill ...

The gorgons have made their home inside a huge cavern hewn out of the sandstone. There are three of them, sitting on the stone floor gnawing on the bones of a small Draconis Terra, and they are not expecting an attack (Knights automatically get the initiative in the first round of combat).

Once attacked, the gorgons will try to use their gaze attack against the Knights, rather than participating in hand-to-hand combat. Their most effective maneuver is to stand back to back, forming a sort of triangle, which makes it impossible for anyone to at-

tack one of them from any direction without risking coming under the gaze of another.

Above all, the Knights must avoid the stare of the gorgons, which can make combat difficult. If attempting to make a *melee weapons*, *missile weapons*, or *fire combat* attack on the gorgons while averting one's eyes from them, the Knight suffers a -3 penalty to the relevant skill, as it is far more difficult to hit under those circumstances. There are two possible ways to kill the gorgons — reflect their gaze back at them, turning them to stone, or decapitate them. Attempting to cut off a gorgon's head while the creature is still conscious requires a *vital blow* attack.

Gorgons

DEXTERITY 8

Dodge 9, stealth 9, unarmed combat 9

STRENGTH 12

TOUGHNESS 11

PERCEPTION 12

Languages 13, trick 15

MIND 11

Test 14, willpower 15

CHARISMA 7

Charm 11, persuasion (12), taunt (9)

SPIRIT 5

Intimidation 12

Possibilities: none

Natural Tools: the gorgon's attack uses its willpower as the effect value, with a difficulty number of the target's *Perception*. If the target is actively avoiding the gorgon's gaze, it must get a "setback" or a "player's call" result on a *trick* to make the attack. The attack is considered a "one-on-many," adding +2 to the difficulty of the *trick* attempt and +4 to the difficulty of the actual attack (see the Multi-Action Chart on page 45 of the *Torg Rulebook*). Each wound level causes the target's body to solidify further, and reduces all *Dexterity*-related skills by -2. After three wounds have been taken, the victim is completely turned to stone, and can be returned to flesh only if the gorgon is slain. A fourth wound



will have no additional effect on the target. If the target takes less than three wounds from the gorgon's attack, his DEX will return to normal in 24 hours.

Once the Knights have defeated one of the three gorgons, it should be easier to kill the other two. The gorgons will fight on until destroyed. If the Knights are having too easy a time of it, perhaps the manticore appears to defend its owners.

Variables

If the Knights do not attack immediately, they can gain information by listening to the gorgons' conversation. They are impatient to get back to their "fun," but the human who has been telling them whom to kill has been quiet of late. Still, his gold is real, and if he makes them wait too much longer, perhaps they'll kill him.

If the Knights want to follow the gorgons to a rendezvous with their mysterious ally, have the creatures notice them and attack.

Gold of the Gorgons

Once the battle is over, the Knights can take stock of the cavern. A narrow tunnel extends out of the cavern and into another section of the maze. Lining the back wall of the cave are four chests, all locked, and all obviously full of something. The locks can be jimmied open (*lock picking* difficulty of 8) or shot off. Inside the chests are bars of gold, 100 in each box. This was given to the gorgons as payment for the deaths in Cahir, although the Knights will not know this unless they eavesdropped on the gorgons.

The only other thing of note is that the robe of one of the gorgons has a piece torn from it, the piece of cloth that was found clutched in Maureen O'Heaney's hands.

Note that if all three gorgons have been killed, their victims in the village should return to normal in 24 hours.

The Knights can, if they wish, attempt to haul some of the gold out of the tunnels. But before they get halfway back to the basement of the *Black*

Lion, they hear peals of insane laughter echoing through the tunnels, and a few moments later, a tremendous roar. The tunnels shake violently, and each Knight will have to generate a *Dexterity* total of 9 to keep his feet. Dust and rock falls from the ceiling all around, and the darkness up ahead seems thicker than ever.

Someone has set off an explosion up ahead, and the Knights are trapped in the tunnels!

Cut to "Scene Five: Out From Under."

SCENE FIVE Out From Under

The Situation.

Standard. Trapped in the tunnels beneath Cahir, the Storm Knights must find a way to escape before their air runs out. Once they are free of their sandstone tomb, they learn the identity of the gorgons' mysterious master, the driving force behind the Cahir killings.

The Action

The Knights should not have suffered any physical damage from the explosion, but may be a bit confused, especially if they missed the earlier clues and thought the gorgons were the only menace. Read aloud or paraphrase:

The air is filled with dust, and your ears are ringing from the sound of the explosion. The way ahead is clogged with rubble, and you realize with horror that a blast that powerful must have utterly destroyed the *Black Lion*.

You now know that you cannot go back the way you came. Your only hope for salvation lies ahead.

The Knights have no way of knowing how much air they have left (roughly 36 hours worth). They have three options that can be pursued as a means of escaping the tunnels:

- They can use magic (the *stone tunnel* spell, for instance) to create an exit. This could let them out virtually anywhere in the village. If they do this, cut to "Revelation."

- The Knights can generate a *Mind* or *engineering* total of 10 to discover the point at which the tunnel ceiling is closest to the surface, and attempt to dig. While the stone can be worked with tools or melee weapons, this method will take a very long time and use up a great deal of oxygen.

- The Knights can search the remainder of the tunnels for an exit. The second doorway was concealed, but the force of the explosion jarred it slightly, so finding it now requires a *Perception* or *find* total of 9.

If the Knights do find the exit, they will discover that they are in Mayor McDermott's basement. Cut to "Revelation."

Revelation

Whether or not the Storm Knights find themselves in Mayor McDermott's basement upon escaping from the tunnels, they still have no proof of who tried to kill them, and whether or not it was the same person who was evidently in league with the gorgons. They will have to gather evidence in Cahir to discover the identity of the true menace to the village.

If the Storm Knights are in McDermott's house, they will find no evidence of his presence, nor anything that might connect him to the explosion. There is, however, a straw mat on the floor of the basement that is well over seven feet in length, whose purpose is not immediately apparent. If the Storm Knights wish to stay in the cellar and wait for McDermott to return, have them hear cries for help coming from the site of the explosion and let them go help the rescue workers. When the Storm Knights go out into the streets of Cahir, read the following aloud:

A pall of smoke and grit hangs over the village square. Ambulances and fire engines, some motorized, some horse-drawn, are gathered around the pile of splinters that was once the *Black Lion*. The last few



blazes have been put out, and rescue workers are combing the rubble for survivors.

If the Storm Knights question one of the firemen, he will tell them that the building just went up without any warning. The cause hasn't been determined yet, but it didn't have the look of a boiler explosion, more like a dynamite blast. No survivors have been found, but the Home Guardsman and Mayor McDermott had both left the building just moments prior to the explosion.

The Home Guardsman is easy to find, being among the crowd surveying the disaster. He says he had left because he was due to go back on duty in a few hours, and needed to get some rest after the manticore's attack. The next thing he knew, he had been knocked flat by the pub exploding. McDermott had told him that the Knights must have been killed in the blast, and he was going to collect the bodies of the gorgons' victims and give them a decent burial.

The Guardsman will also mention that there's only one place to obtain dynamite in Cahir, and that's in the troll-operated quarry on the edge of the village.

If the Knights go to the quarry, they will find it closed. If they go to the police station, they will find that McDermott beat them there and has the stone bodies, and had stated he was returning home. When the Knights go to McDermott's house, cut to "Scene Six: The Final Conflict."

SCENE SIX: The Final Conflict

The Situation

Dramatic. The Storm Knights battle Mayor McDermott and his giant henchman to prevent him from smashing the statues of the gorgons' victims, and learn the truth behind the attacks in Cahir.

The Action

When the Storm Knights reach McDermott's home, they will spot his car and the tarps with which he covered the statues on his way back from the police station. Believing the Knights to be dead, he has not bothered to post his giant ally as a guard.

The house itself is empty, but the door to the basement is open. There is a torch burning down in the cellar, and voices echoing in the distance. If the

Storm Knights did not already know there is an entrance to the tunnels in McDermott's basement, they will learn it now.

The secret door to the tunnels is open, and McDermott can be heard speaking to someone. When they reach the chamber of the gorgons, read or paraphrase the following:

In one corner of the massive cavern, the bodies of the gorgons have been unceremoniously dumped. Against



Anatomy of a Corruption

When Tom McDermott was first elected mayor of Cahir, long before the outbreak of the Possibility Wars, he seemed as if he truly wished the best for the village. He worked hard at his post, attended all the appropriate civic functions, and was extremely popular among the people.

What no one in Cahir knew was that McDermott had a deep and abiding interest in the black arts. He longed to learn sorcery, and gain wealth and influence through magical means. His inability to do so led him to despise his life in Cahir.

When the the Aysle axioms swept over much of Ireland, McDermott discovered that his dream could come true. He developed the ability to create magical effects, and began making grandiose plans for how he would use his powers to benefit himself. But his control of mystical energy was shaky at best, and his mind too undisciplined to cast any strong spells. He needed training, and that required both a skilled teacher and money.

The Dark Forces offered him both. Being so close to the border of the Core Earth pure zone, Cahir was of strategic importance to both sides in the war. Agents of Uthorion bribed McDermott, offering to teach him how to use his magical skills and pay him in gold to act as their spy. He readily agreed, and proved an apt pupil and an excellent informer. The Dark Forces were pleased, and he was told that he would be given control of all of southern Ireland when the war was over.

But then disaster struck. While

composing a message one night to his contact in Uthorion's army, he was interrupted by his assistant, Jim Townsend. An intelligent man, Townsend had noticed how much better McDermott was now living, and had suspected that he was the recipient of ill-gotten gains from some source. Snatching the message from McDermott's hand, Townsend stated that now he had his proof and would expose his superior and see him arrested.

The Mayor was in a panic. Exposure would mean arrest, disgrace, and possibly execution, at the hands of either Ardinay's or Uthorion's agents. Townsend had to be silenced, but using sorcery to do so would signal his contacts that something was wrong. So McDermott hiked into the Galtys and struck a deal with a trio of gorgons: he would give them gold, which they could trade for many things, if they would use their talents to dispose of someone for him.

They agreed, and he led them to the tunnels under Cahir he had already constructed magically as a place to hide his gold. The gorgons took up residence there, and killed Townsend.

But things continued to unravel. First Colin Crowley and then Maureen O'Heaney began to suspect that the gorgons had killed Townsend for some reason not immediately apparent. If they somehow made a connection between McDermott and the gorgons, he would be ruined, so they had to die as well.

At about this time, McDermott began to fear that he would lose control of the

gorgons. He told his contact in the Dark Forces that his life had been threatened, and was assigned Marduk as a bodyguard. He laid a mat in his basement and thus converted it into living quarters for the giant.

The payments to the gorgons had begun to drain McDermott's treasury, and the creatures were growing restless. He needed a new source of cash, and so began blackmailing Sean Casey, who he knew was embezzling from the bank. Finally, Casey refused to make any more payments, and McDermott had him slain.

The gorgons were beginning to become a hindrance now, and people were talking about leaving the village. McDermott hit on the idea of summoning Storm Knights and having them kill the gorgons, then murdering the Knights himself and taking back all the gold he had paid out.

While the Knights were searching for the tunnel entrance, he used the passages to travel to the Black Lion and upset the crates, drawing the manticores there and leading the Knights to the access they needed. He shadowed them through the passages, aiding them when necessary, and when they reached the gorgons' cavern, he busied himself with rigging the explosives to trap them inside the tunnel. He planned to return later and get his gold, and destroy the statues of the creatures' victims once and for all. Then he could return to business as usual in Cahir with all potential threats to him eliminated and the Dark Forces none the wiser.



the far wall are the statues of the Cahir residents who had been turned to stone, and leaning beside them is a sledgehammer.

In the center of the room, with their backs to the Knights, are McDermott and a giant, both inspecting the contents of the chests of gold. If the Knights had managed to drag the chests into the tunnels prior to the explosion, the giant, Maduk, has brought them back into the gorgons' chamber.

Make a *Perception* roll for McDermott against a difficulty number of the lowest *stealth* or *Mind* value of the assembled Storm Knights. On a *Good* success or better, McDermott senses their presence and they lose the element of surprise.

If McDermott spots them, he will express shock that they are still alive and relate to them the information in the sidebar, "Anatomy of a Corruption." If combat begins immediately and McDermott is slain, the Storm Knights can discover that information in a journal in McDermott's office or somewhere in his home before they leave Cahir.

McDermott will rely on his sorcery and his giant's battle skills to hold the Knights at bay. If the Storm Knights are defeating the giant and defying his black arts, McDermott will grab the sledgehammer and threaten to smash the statues if the Storm Knights do not surrender.

The giant, Maduk, will bear the brunt of the battle at the start. If the Storm Knights defeat McDermott before the giant, Maduk will attempt to flee.

Maduk the Giant

DEXTERITY 9

Maneuver 10, melee weapons 12, unarmed combat 11

STRENGTH 18 (13)

Lifting 19

TOUGHNESS 15 (11)

PERCEPTION 9

Divination magic 10, find 10, trick 10

MIND 8

Survival 9, test 9

CHARISMA 8

Charm 9, persuasion 9

SPIRIT 8

Corruption 9, reality 9

Possibilities: two per Storm Knight

Arcane Knowledges: air 3

Equipment: giant armor, TOU+4/19; giant war-club, damage value STR+4/22

Variables

Either the Knights or McDermott can attempt to use the heads of the gorgons to turn enemies into stone, since the gaze attack is still effective even after the creatures are dead.

If the Storm Knights are defeated or

surrender, McDermott will attempt to use his sorcery to disable them, and then destroy the statues anyway, unless the Knights can stop him.

Aftermath

If the Storm Knights defeat McDermott and the giant and the statues are not smashed, the victims will return to normal in one day. The grateful villagers of Cahir will allow the Knights to take the gold that was in the gorgons' cavern as payment for their services.

If the Storm Knights are victorious but the statues are destroyed, the people will not offer them the gold. Ardinay will agree, however, to send a fresh unit of Home Guardsmen to make it more secure.

Awards

If the Storm Knights save the gorgons victims and defeat McDermott, award each character 12 Possibilities.

If the Storm Knights stopped McDermott but did not save the gorgons' victims, award each character six Possibilities.

If the Knights are unable to accomplish either feat, they receive no Possibilities for the adventure.



Divine Wind

Prologue

The woman in the white lab coat smiled as she ran a sharp fingernail down the side of her "patient's" face. "It's time for your medicine, Eiji," she purred.

The man on the bed strained against his bonds and screamed as the woman released the contents of her hypodermic into his arm. In a moment, his breathing had become shallow, his eyes glassy, and the part of his mind that urged him to escape from this place at all costs had been silenced.

"That's better," the woman said. "After all, we don't want you in a bad temper when the doctor comes, now, do we? Do you remember everything I told you yesterday?"

The man nodded slowly, as if in a hypnotic trance. "Yes ... taken everything I've ever had ... stolen from me ... they must pay ..."

"That's right, Eiji. They're thieves and worse — they ruined you, took your job, your home, your reputation. They were responsible for the pain you've been through this last week. And who saved you from the pain?"

The man fought an internal battle, and lost. "You did ..."

"Yes, I saved you so you could have your revenge. You have nothing left to live for, Eiji, except vengeance on the men who wronged you. Tell me — what do you want to do?"

The collapse of his will to resist was a joy for her to see. The hatred that sprang to life in his eyes meant that his mind and soul were hers at last.

"Kill them ... yes, I want to kill them all!" he shouted, and the only sound he could hear was her laughter.

The next thing he was aware of was the blaring of car horns and a crush of people. He looked down and saw that he was wearing his best suit, and carrying his briefcase. No, that wasn't his briefcase, it was a brand new leather one — had he purchased one on the

Saitama trip and simply forgotten it?

It bothered him that he couldn't be sure of the answer to that question, or of just how he had spent the past week. When he met someone he knew on the street and they asked him where he had been, he automatically said, "Fishing." But he had no memories of a boat, or the water, and he hadn't brought any trophies back with him.

Then his doubts disappeared. Up ahead loomed the Allied Technologies building — that was where his enemies congregated. Oh, they had pretended to be concerned about his interests, but all the time they were robbing his company blind. Now he was penniless, a ruin, and they were living in style. That was an injustice he would correct very soon now.

The Major Beat

The Storm Knights have been invited to a secret meeting of Rauru Block members at the offices of Allied Technologies in Tokyo. Shortly after the meeting begins, a Block member wanders into the room, looking as if he is in a trance. He walks to the meeting table, carrying his briefcase ...

Without warning, an explosion rips through the room, killing some top executives and wounding many more. A reconstruction of events shows that the Rauru Block member who was late carried a powerful *plastique* charge into the room in his briefcase, and triggered it (killing himself instantly, of course). Although the carnage is horrible, the Storm Knights escape unscathed.

With a little research, the Storm Knights learn that this is not an isolated incident; several other such "kamikaze attacks" have occurred, although this is the first directed against the Rauru Block itself. Further research digs up an interesting "coincidence": all of the suicide bombers have had dealings with a company called



Toranaga Chemical, a firm linked to Kanawa.

The Knights discover that Toranaga has facilities located throughout the realm, including a Special Projects Lab in Saitama, just outside of Tokyo. This research center boasts the services of noted neurophysiologist Dr. Toshikazu Yoshi.

The Storm Knights infiltrate the Special Projects Lab, avoiding or overcoming security guards. Once inside, they discover that Dr. Yoshi has developed a new form of electro-chemical brainwashing that can convert *anyone* into a kamikaze assassin. They confront Yoshi and his lab assistant, Masako Wada, along with a squad of their mind-slaves and Nippon goshogun, in the climatic final battle.

To succeed, the Storm Knights must destroy or acquire Dr. Yoshi's equipment and lab notes, and rescue an "experimental subject" that Wada has imprisoned for future research. If the Storm Knights fail, 3327 will have a powerful new weapon to use against his opponents throughout the realm.

Adventure Background

This adventure takes place in the realm of Nippon Tech. The Storm Knights are assumed either to be residents of Nippon, or to have found their way here on their own. (Perhaps their last adventure left them stranded, or maybe they simply haven't bothered to return home yet.)

In any case, the Storm Knights have met up with members of the Rauru Block, and have been accepted by this group as *ex officio* members (again, perhaps as a result of their last adventure). The Block is currently planning a major operation intended to block the Kanawa Corporation's acquisition of an independent research lab that has been supplying the Block and its allies with technologically advanced weapons. The planning is still in its early stages, but the Storm Knights have been invited to participate, and provide what input they can.

The Storm Knights aren't the only ones who have learned about the

Rauru Block's current plans. Spies have reported the news back to 3327, who has authorized one of his mega-corporation's undersubsidiaries, Toranaga Chemical, to proceed with a project of their own, one which could effectively destroy the Block and any other group that opposes the High Lord ...

SCENE ONE: Meeting Adjourned

The Situation

Standard. The Storm Knights attend a Rauru Block meeting, only to have it interrupted by a suicide bomber who had once been the most loyal of Block members.

Read aloud or paraphrase:

In your time in Japan, you have found the recent changes here highly disturbing. Just a few years ago, this was a dynamic country, alive and vibrant with energy and creativity, an exciting place to spend time. But now?

Now it's a bleak culture, consumed by mega-corporate greed and shot through with suspicion and treachery. The classes are moving farther apart, crime is on the rise, and everywhere you turn you see a Kanawa Corporation holding.

But in the midst of all this gloom, you are heartened to see that there are some still clinging to the ideals of honor and integrity that are so much a part of Japanese tradition. And at their head stands the group of executives known as the "Rauru Block."

It is therefore with considerable pride that you find yourself sitting in on this meeting of the Block, although the absence of the Executive Directors is a disappointment. You are still unsure what prompted the invitation — whether it was a result of your last exploit or simply due to your steadily-growing reputation.

The Action

The meeting is taking place after business hours in Allied Technology's large auditorium. Half of the 200 seats are filled, mostly with executives from Japanese firms, although there are a few Chinese and Taiwanese chief executive officers present as well. As guests, rather than full-fledged members, the Storm Knights have been seated in the back row so they can observe as well as participate. The chairman for this session, Allied's vice-president of product development, Shomu Ganjin, sits at a long table on the auditorium's stage, along with other high-ranking Block members.

The Knights are introduced to an enthusiastic response, and the meeting gets underway. Roughly 10 minutes after the start of business, a rear door opens and a man in a three-piece suit, looking haggard and drunk, stumbles down the aisle toward the stage. He is carrying an expensive leather briefcase in his hand.

If the Storm Knights generate *Perception* totals of 9, they notice that the latecomer's eyes are glazed, as if he were drugged. On a total of 11, they spot a small bare spot on the side of his head where his hair had been shaved. If the Knights, or anyone else, approaches the man, he clutches the briefcase to his chest and runs for the stage.

And that's when all hell breaks loose. A mighty explosion rips through the auditorium, killing both the bomber and the Block members seated at the meeting table, as well as most of those seated in the first three rows of seats. Farther away from the blast, people are injured rather than killed outright: concussion and overpressure effects, plus punctures, contusions and abrasions from flying debris. By the time the shock wave reaches the back of the auditorium where the Knights are sitting, it has decreased sufficiently in power to the point where it only deafens them temporarily and gives them splitting headaches (no game effects, but nice role-playing "tags").

Read aloud or paraphrase:

The room is in chaos. Fire alarms are sounding throughout the building, the wounded are screaming in





pain, a river of blood is pouring from the stage to collect in puddles on the floor. In the front of the room, wounded executives are covered with the remains of those unfortunate enough to be seated in front of them.

If any of the Storm Knights have the *medicine* skill or the *healing* miracle, they can attempt to treat the wounded until rescue workers arrive. See the relevant entries in the *Torg Rulebook* to determine difficulty numbers for the treatments.

Once the Knights have the situation under control, cut to "Scene Two: Q & A."

Variables

If the Storm Knights attempted to stop the bomber or shouted a warning at any point prior to the explosion, the people in the second and third rows of seats had time to take cover, and there are far fewer wounded.

SCENE TWO: Q & A

The Situation

Standard. The Storm Knights question the survivors about the latecomer and his possible motives for bombing the meeting. Through additional research, they find a link between the incident and Toranaga's Special Projects Lab.

Read aloud or paraphrase:

Finally, a moment to catch your breath as the white-clad paramedics move through the chaos, treating the wounded and carrying away those who will need their help no more. The smoke has cleared, but the smells of blood and smoke are still in your nostrils. The ringing in your ears is fading, but your body still feels tender and bruised, as though you'd lost

a difference of opinion with several big guys with baseball bats.

You look around the auditorium. There are others such as you, relatively unscathed and staring with shell-shocked eyes at what's left of their colleagues. One of them wanders up to you and says in a stunned voice, "I don't understand, I just don't understand. Why would Eiji do it?"

The Action

The man addressing the Storm Knights is Kita Yamaguchi, a young Japanese man in his late 20s. He is a mid-level manager for a company that managed to resist a takeover attempt by Kanawa, and was invited to join the Rauru Block because of what the experience taught him about Kanawa's corporate strengths and weaknesses. Kita was a friend of the "bomber," Eiji Morita, and can answer some of the



Knights' questions about the man.

The following sub-sections contain the information that can be provided by the survivors. Each sub-section begins with the name or identity of the person who provides the information.

Kita is a very useful gamemaster character in that he can guide the Knights through the investigation if they are having a tough time of it. If the Storm Knights are totally at sea, he can suggest a new angle, or get them in contact with a character who can tell them what they need to know.

Kita Yamaguchi

DEXTERITY 9

Dodge 10

STRENGTH 9

TOUGHNESS 9

PERCEPTION 10

Find 11, language 11, scholar (high finance) 12, trick 11

MIND 11

Business 14, test 12, willpower 12

CHARISMA 10

Charm 11, persuasion 11, taunt 11

SPIRIT 8

Intimidation 9, reality 9

Possibilities: 1

Description: Young and eager, Kita is a dedicated *sarariman* (corporate employee), dressed in a standard business suit slightly too expensive for his salary.

Yamaguchi can provide the following information:

- Eiji Morita was one of Kita's best friends in the Block. They had met through business, when both worked for the same firm. Morita was higher on the mega-corporate ladder, so their contact was limited. Then Kita was invited to join the Block, and found Morita was also was a member. The two became close friends.

Kita remembers Morita as one of the most sane, controlled, logical men he had ever met, totally dedicated to the goals of the Rauru Block. He has no idea why he would have committed such a murderous act — but it seems to him that he has read about similar incidents in the recent past, which the press have dubbed "kamikaze bombings," though he can't remember any details.

- Eiji had seemed perfectly normal the last time Kita had seen him. He

was being sent on a business trip to a chemical firm in Saitama, a standard plant tour. It was only supposed to last for three days, but he was gone a week, and then returned to commit mass murder. He had called Kita only once during that week, to say that he had decided to extend his visit and do some fishing. Strangely enough, Eiji had always voiced a dislike of fishing before.

A member of the Rauru Block's Operations Arm can provide the following information:

- There have been three other "kamikaze bombings." The first was two months ago at a Tokyo karate club, when a long-time member detonated a bomb that killed 35 of his friends.

The second was three weeks ago, at an independent firm's corporate picnic. The wife of the CEO had a bomb in her basket, and killed the entire board. The company has since gone into bankruptcy.

The last was earlier this week. A teacher at a corporate day-care center set off a bomb in her backpack, killing 72 children.

Flags

If a *Personal Stake* card is played, one of the Knights was acquainted with Eiji Morita and is certain he was somehow forced to commit the act he did.

If a *Mistaken Identity* card is played, one of the Rauru Block members present will be convinced that a Storm Knight is actually an employee of a Kanawa subsidiary. He will spread this rumor, making it more difficult for that Knight to get information.

If a *Connection* card is played, one of the Storm Knights is a friend of Kazuo Kojima, head of the Rauru Block's Operations Arm. The Knights can go straight to Shodan Metals and acquire all the information available regarding the various bombers' connections with Toranaga Chemical.

Digging Deeper

The Storm Knights cannot obtain any further information from the survivors of the bombing. However, a

Perception or *evidence analysis* total of 9 will reveal that the explosive used was a form of *plastique*.

If the Knights wish to visit the scenes of the other bombings, they discover the following:

The Karate Club: The building has been shuttered, the business closed down. A sign instructs anyone seeking the owner to inquire at the bar next door.

The owner, an aging man named Aito, has been drinking, but is coherent enough to tell the Knights he has no idea why his place was bombed. The culprit hadn't been at the club for at least two weeks prior to the incident. He worked as a low-level manager for some company in Saitama.

The Company Picnic: None of the corporate officers survived the explosion, and the police are still investigating. One officer will tell the Knights that the bomber was known for doing charitable work, and also worked as an office temp. Her last assignment had been as a receptionist at Toranaga Chemical in Saitama.

The Day-Care Center: The owners are planning to rebuild, but are being crushed by lawsuits filed by bereaved parents. The teacher had formerly worked for Toranaga Chemicals' day-care center, but had been laid off due to budget cuts. Her employer at Toranaga, a young woman whose name they can't recall, had phoned and gotten her this position.

If the Knights wish to obtain information on Toranaga Chemical, they can contact the Rauru Block or visit a library and inspect the microfilm records of *Tokyo Shimbun* articles. Either way, they learn the following:

- Toranaga Chemical was recently purchased by Hiyatsu Raw Materials, which is in turn owned by Omi Electronics. If researching in a library, a *find* total of 10 reveals that Omi is owned by the Kanawa Corporation.

- Toranaga makes chemicals for industry, and has also begun investing in the hydroponics field of late.

- Toranaga's biggest coup was the hiring of Dr. Toshikazu Yoshi a year ago to head their Saitama Special



Projects Lab. But there is no record of any further announcements regarding him or the lab in recent months.

- Yoshi himself is a well-known neurophysiologist, famous for his researches into the neurological basis of thought and free will. He had been one of the most outspoken opponents of the ruthless business tactics promoted by the Kanawa Corporation — but after he was hired by Toranaga, he stopped speaking out. Because of this, very few of his colleagues speak his name with respect these days.

- News accounts of the bombings indicate they all were done with *plastique*, the same type used by Morita.

Once the Knights have gathered enough evidence to point to Toranaga Chemical, there is nothing left for them to do in Tokyo. The obvious next step is to travel to Saitama and check out the Special Projects Lab — if the Knights don't think of this on their own, a Rauru Block operative could suggest it, and will even provide train tickets to Saitama. The earliest train leaves in one hour from Matsuyama Station in Tokyo. Cut to "Scene Three: Deadly Reception."

Variables

If the Storm Knights choose not to pursue the investigation of the bombing, they will be scorned as men without honor. It will be extremely difficult for them to obtain any aid from the Rauru Block in the future.

If they ask Kita for aid in the more dangerous aspects of the investigation, he will refuse, saying he's just a marketing manager, not a hero. The members of the Operations Arm are too busy strengthening security around Rauru executives to be of any direct aid. The Knights are on their own.

If the Knights wish to use a different means of transportation to reach Saitama (a rented car, perhaps) Rauru Block agents could point out that this will take too long, and the rental agreement would be a paper trail Kanawa Corporation could follow. If the Knights decide to take a later train, it does not materially affect the adventure — simply run Scene Three whenever they arrive at the station.

SCENE THREE: Deadly Reception

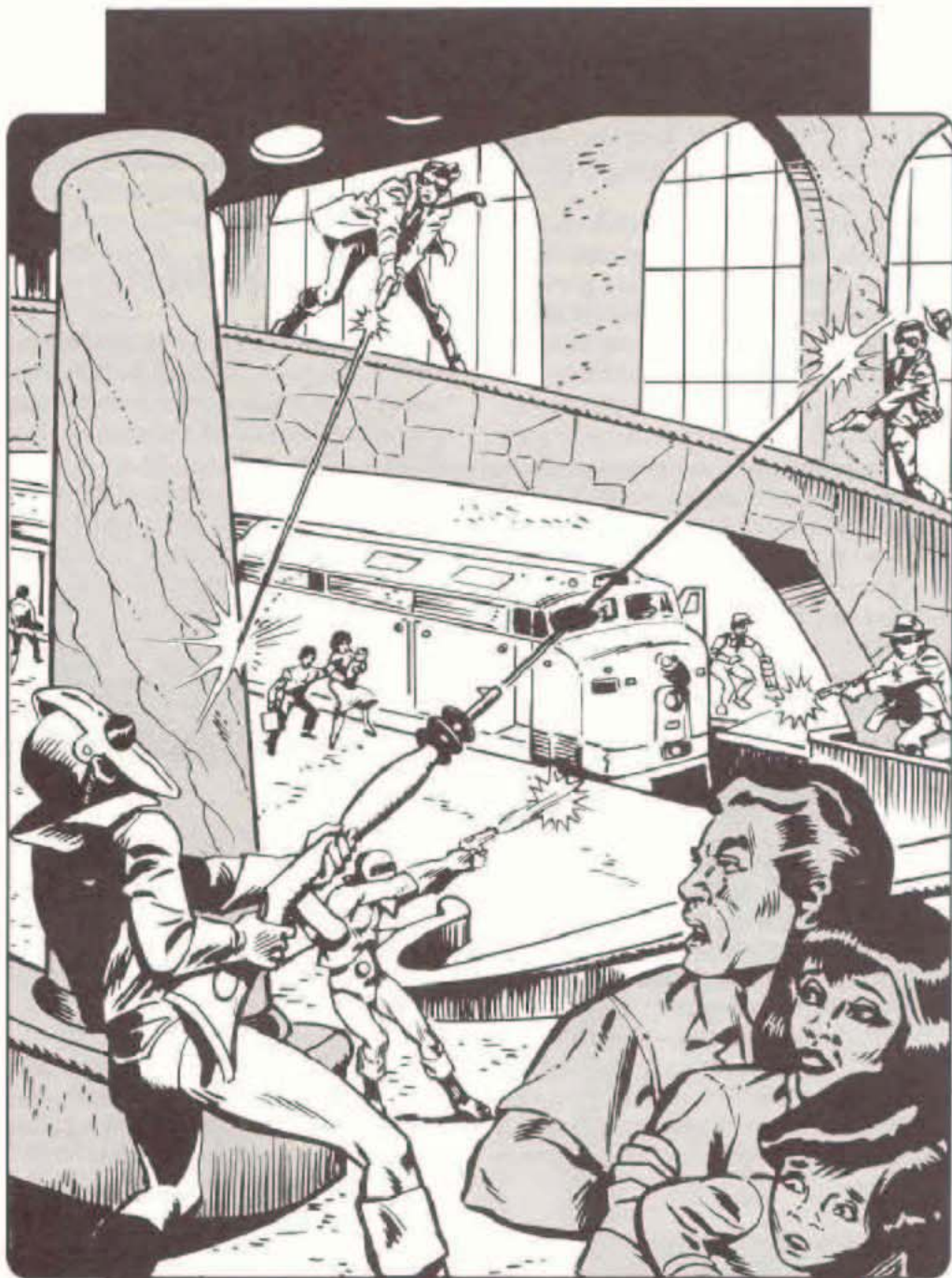
The Situation

Standard. The Storm Knights arrive at Matsuyama Station to board a "bullet train" to Saitama, only to find Yakuza assassins waiting for them.

Read aloud or paraphrase:

The train station is crowded, and filled with the aromas of boxed meals sold on the platforms for hungry commuters. Uniformed men wearing white gloves stand beside the trains, pushing the last few passengers into the packed cars. Up ahead you see the *shinkansen* express that will take you to Saitama.

Have each Knight generate a *Perception* total against a difficulty number of 10. On a *Minimal* to *Good* suc-



cess, the Knight notices three men in dark suits moving through the crowd in the general direction of his party. On a *Superior* or *Spectacular* result, he also notices that one of the men has tattooed hands. If he does notice this, and generates a *scholar* (realm lore) total of 9, he recognizes the design as that worn by Yakuza soldiers in the Haragawa family.

The gangsters have been instructed to take the Knights without drawing undue attention to themselves (no gunplay in the crowd, etc.) But if it appears as if the Knights are going to escape, the gangsters will open fire and try to bring them down. This will leave the Storm Knights with the double problems of keeping themselves safe and protecting innocents from the gunfire.

The Yakuza assassins are dedicated professionals, and if they are being beaten, they will grab hostages from the crowd and try and force the Knights out into the open. The Knights' best avenue of escape is to fight their way over to the train, which will leave on schedule. The Yakuza will not pursue the Knights on to the train, since even if the murders were successfully completed, it would be virtually impossible to escape from the crowd inside the cars.

If one of the Yakuza assassins should be captured by the Storm Knights, he will reveal the following information:

- The Yakuza were tipped to the time of the Knights' departure by an informant planted within the Rauru Block, whose identity he does not know.

- The staff at the Special Projects Lab have not been warned of the Knights' intention to visit. It was felt that the Yakuza could handle the matter, and it was not necessary for the lab work to be interrupted.

- As far as he knows, there were no plans to have assassins planted at the Saitama station. His instructions were that no undue attention was to be drawn to the town or the Toranaga facility.

Once the Knights have disposed of the Yakuza gangsters, they can safely board the train and proceed to Saitama.

Cut to "Scene Four: Unwelcome Guests."

Yakuza Assassins (3)

DEXTERITY 10

Dodge 11, fire combat 13, maneuver 11, stealth 11, unarmed combat 11

STRENGTH 9

TOUGHNESS 10

PERCEPTION 10

Find 11, tracking 11, trick 11

MIND 9

Test 10

CHARISMA 10

Charm 11, persuasion 11, taunt 11

SPIRIT 8

Intimidation 9, reality 9

Possibilities: 2

Equipment: 13mm Chunyokai, damage value 18, ammo 9, range 3-10/40/50

Variables

If the Knights should be defeated by the Yakuza, they will be taken to a nearby warehouse and interrogated regarding how much they know about Project Divine Wind. At some point during the investigation, a Yakuza member who is secretly a Rauru Block informant will create a distraction, allowing the Knights to make their escape and get to Saitama.

SCENE FOUR: Unwelcome Guests

The Situation

Standard. The Storm Knights travel to Saitama and attempt to infiltrate the Toranaga Special Projects Lab.

Read aloud or paraphrase:

You hardly noticed the train ride (about 20 minutes by *shinkansen* bullet train). As you leave the station, you look around at Saitama.

According to everything you had been told, it should be a small university town. Now, though, it seems to be dominated by corporate facilities, many of them bearing the stylized 'K' logo of Kanawa Corporation.

The Action

Refer to the map of the Special Projects Lab on page 31 when reading the following descriptions.

The lab is a single-story building, apparently designed according to the "World War II blockhouse" school of architecture. Built entirely out of ferroconcrete, it has no windows and only two doors: one normal-sized, the other a large garage-style door at the rear loading dock.

The building is surrounded by a three-meter-high chain-link fence. The fence is wired to an alarm (as the Knights will probably guess). Touching the fence triggers a bell inside the lab, and five armed guards will leave the building to investigate. (See below for information on the guards.)

There is a single gate leading into the compound, large enough to admit a truck. The gate is locked. Mounted beside the gate is a computer terminal with a miniature video camera attached to it. The terminal controls the computerized lock on the gate. A Storm Knight with the *science* skill can try to operate the terminal and open the gate. The difficulty for this is 12.

(Characters from the Cyberpapacy who have the *cyberdeck operation* skill and who possess appropriate hardware to jack into the terminal have a much better chance of success. For them, the difficulty number is 7.)

If the Storm Knight fails to tap into the system, he will activate a system alarm, alerting the guards inside the building and turning on the video camera, giving the guards a good look at whoever's trying to break into their lab. Five guards will immediately come to investigate, while the others will be ready for trouble. If the Knight succeeds, the gate swings open and the heroes are free to approach the building.

If the Knights come up with cunning plans for getting over, under or through the fence, let them try ... but remember the genre appropriate to Nippon. Swashbuckling, *Indiana Jones* stuff isn't appropriate here, and so should fail; instead, the Knights should be thinking in terms of espionage and techno-thrillers, with some ninja adventurism thrown in for good measure.



Knights who know a little bit about Toranaga and who understand well how Nippon corporations work might try to bluff the guards by contacting them through the terminal at the gate, and then convincing them that the Knights are actually corporate officials on a scheduled visit (which the guards are apparently too incompetent to know about ...) This is totally appropriate to the genre, so you should give the Knights a good chance of getting away with it ... but *only* if they roleplay it right!

Toranaga Guards (8)

DEXTERITY 11

Dodge 12, fire combat 14, maneuver 12, melee weapons 12, unarmed combat 12

STRENGTH 10

TOUGHNESS 10

PERCEPTION 9

Find 10, trick 10

MIND 9

Test 10

CHARISMA 9

Charm 10, persuasion 10, taunt 10

SPIRIT 8

Intimidation 10, reality 9

Possibilities: 1

Equipment: Kyoto Police RKD, armor value TOU+7/17; SC Kyogo 144 SMG, damage value 18, ammo 15, range 3-15/40/150

Personality: Loyal to Toranaga, will take significant risks to discharge their duty, but are unlikely to sacrifice their own lives

Into the Lab

Both the front door and rear loading door are secured with electronic locks. These locks are controlled by the same video-equipped terminal as the gate. The chances of defeating these locks and the consequences of failure are as detailed in the preceding section. Again, perhaps the best way for the Knights to gain entry is to dupe the guards.

Apart from the lab itself, the inside of the building resembles any corporate office complex. The walls are in-

stitutional off-white, the hard-wear carpet an uninspired grey. All rooms and corridors are brightly lit by fluorescent tubes. Unless otherwise specified, doors are all closed but unlocked. The walls and doors are largely modular, meaning they are made of very light material. A wall or door provides only *soft cover* (although it offers *high concealment*).

Reception Area: A receptionist's desk is to the right of the main door; a couch (presumably for visitors) is to the left. A fully-armed and armored Toranaga guard sits at the reception desk. Mounted above the desk are closed-circuit monitors. If anyone sets off a system alarm through any one of the electronic locks, this is where the video images appear.

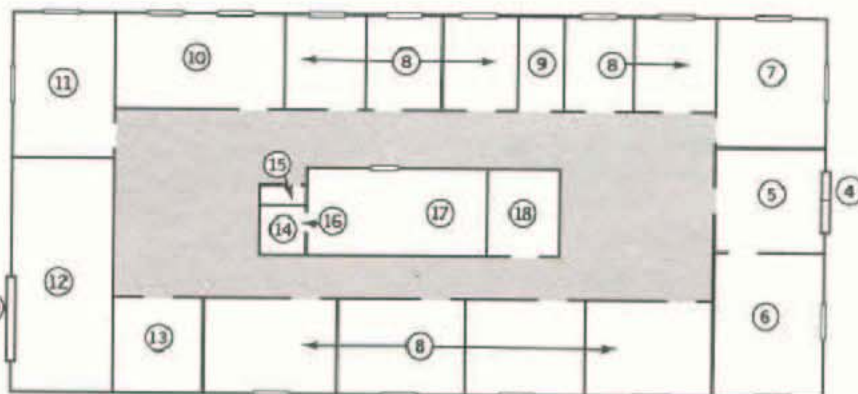
Guard Room: Seven Toranaga guards sit around the room. Normally, their armor and heavy weapons hang in lockers along the walls, leaving the guards only their pistols. The guards will probably be playing cards, reading, watching the video screen, etc. If



Divine Wind

Toranaga Special Projects Lab

toranaga



1. Chain-link Fence (3m high)
2. Main Gate
3. Video Camera
4. Entrance
5. Reception Area
6. Guard Room
7. Storage Room
8. Corporate Offices
9. Lounge
10. Wada's Office
11. Yoshi's Office
12. Loading Bay
13. Printer Room
14. Secret Storage Room
15. Bathroom
16. Concealed Entrance
17. Yoshi's Lab
18. Lab Storage Room
19. Loading Bay Entrance

the guards have been alerted somehow, they are fully armed and armored and waiting for trouble.

Corporate Offices: These six rooms are typical cubbyholes for mid-level managers. Each has a desk, chair and minicomputer. The computers are all connected to a network, but are limited in their access to inconsequential financial figures, etc. (If a Knight has appropriate skills such as *scholar* (computers) or *science*, he can browse through these files. A skill total of 7 is required to hack through the intrusion countermeasures, but it won't be worth his time. For a character with *cyberdeck operation* and the appropriate interface hardware, the difficulty drops to 4.)

Dr. Yoshi's Office: The nameplate on the door reads "Dr. Toshikazu Yoshi, Project Head." The door is locked with a simple electronic lock. The office looks as though a grenade went off inside it: papers everywhere, covering the desk and the computer terminal. These papers are Dr. Yoshi's lab notes, describing his electro-chemical brainwashing technique, and discussing the ongoing successes of "Project Divine Wind" (the entire brainwashing program). None of the papers make mention of the suicide bomber "field tests" (Yoshi doesn't know about them; they were handled secretly by Masako Wada.)

Yoshi's computer allows access to most of the project files, duplicating Yoshi's scribbled notes. Penetrating the intrusion countermeasures on this computer is the same as for those in the corporate offices, discussed above.

Masako Wada's Office: The nameplate on the door reads "Masako Wada, Lab Assistant." Although lab assistant is a rather lowly title, the office is as large as Yoshi's. It is scrupulously neat, with no papers anywhere. The computer is a full access terminal, with much more serious intrusion countermeasures (difficulty 13, 10 for a character with *cyberdeck operation* and appropriate hardware).

Wada's personal files contain the real "dirt" that the Knights are after: descriptions of the "field tests" of Project Divine Wind, and evidence that

Wada is actually an employee of the Kanawa Corporation, "seconded" to Toranaga for this project.

Printer Room: This room contains three high-speed laser printers that are connected to the network. Storm Knights who have penetrated the computer intrusion countermeasures can print out any files to which they have gained access.

Office Supplies Storage Room: Shelves around the walls contain standard office supplies: pads, pens, staplers, diskettes, etc.

Lab Storage Room: Shelves contain a wide variety of high-tech gizmos (spare parts for Yoshi's devices) and tiny ampules filled with various mind-altering drugs (mainly advanced analogues of sodium pentothal).

Coffee Room: A stark room containing coffee machines and a small fridge for employees to store their lunches, etc.

Loading Bay: A large, concrete-floored room, this area is empty unless a delivery is being made. The door to the outside is a large metal "up-and-over" affair. Packing cases are stacked everywhere; most are empty, while some contain innocuous equipment (office chairs, in/out baskets, broken phones, a microcomputer or two, laser printer toner cartridges, diskettes, etc.)

Yoshi's Lab: The double doors are steel (providing *hard cover*). They are secured by a simple electronic lock. Inside, the lab resembles a mad scientist's workshop (which, after all, is what it is). Electronic devices line the walls. In the center of the room is an operating table, modified by the addition of metal patient restraints. An unconscious "experimental subject" is secured to the table; electrodes are attached to her head.

Both Yoshi and Wada are present, working on the equipment.

Secret Workroom: The door to this room is concealed (*find* difficulty of 11), and can only be opened by pressing a button on a tiny remote-control device in Wada's pocket. The walls are lined with chairs. Four of the chairs are occupied by unarmed and unarmored Toranaga guards. Although their eyes

are open, they are apparently unaware of anything going on around them. They are being watched over by four Nippon second-planting gospog.

These "comatose" guards are part of Wada's extensions to Yoshi's work. Unbeknownst to the good doctor, she has used his techniques to indoctrinate these guards to obey her every order. They will do whatever she tells them, even if obeying her orders means their death. They will respond only to Wada's voice. These guards can be returned to normal through a *healing* miracle, or through the administration of a suitable antidote. No such antidote exists in the lab, but determined Knights might be able to fabricate one (*science* (*chemistry*) difficulty of 15). A guard returned to normal will remember nothing of what has happened, and will respond to circumstances in the same way as any normal Toranaga guard.

Cut to "Scene Four: Confrontation."

Variables

If the Knights ended up in a fight with the security guards and it spilled into the building, Yoshi and Wada have heard the noise and realized intruders are in the complex. Yoshi will be occupied gathering his notes and Wada will have summoned her drugged guards to protect her.

If the Knights disposed of the guards outside, Yoshi and Wada will be unaware of their presence.

Flags

If a *Nemesis* card is played, one of the Storm Knights recognizes Dr. Yoshi as a man he has crossed paths with before (perhaps in connection with one of Yoshi's rather unorthodox experiments in the years prior to the outbreak of the Possibility Wars).

If a *Romance* card is played by a male Storm Knight, he is deeply attracted to Wada and will be reluctant to believe she could be behind the "Divine Wind" madness. If she manages to successfully *persuade* this Knight of her innocence, he may actually fight against his comrades to defend her.



SCENE FOUR: Confrontation

The Situation

Dramatic. The Knights confront Dr. Yoshi and Masako Wada in their lab, battling brainwashed guards and Nippon gospog to save an innocent and bring the fiendish project to an end.

The Action

When the heroes burst into the lab, Wada will immediately recognize the danger they represent. She will play the "techno-nerd" role outlined in her character description, hoping that they'll concentrate on Yoshi long enough for her to do something fatal to them.

Yoshi responds as though the heroes were just any numbskulled intruders into his lab: he orders them out. Yoshi will fight only if physically attacked or threatened, and will surrender if the only alternative is his death. Although he is possibility-rated, Yoshi will only use this ability when he's in definite mortal danger.

Wada will fight only if she has no options, and then to the death. She will try to lull the Knights into a false sense of security, using *charm* and *persuasion* to convince them that she is an innocent dupe who knows nothing about Yoshi's theories and experiments. If this fails, she will loose her mind-slaves and their gospog guardians, attempting to make her escape in the confusion. Under Wada's orders, the guards will use whatever "weapons of opportunity" they can lay hands on, and will fight until incapacitated or killed.

If Wada is unable to escape, she will threaten the life of the "patient," the

daughter of an important Diet member.

Dr. Toshikazu Yoshi

DEXTERITY 9

STRENGTH 8

TOUGHNESS 9

PERCEPTION 10

Evidence analysis 11, find 11, scholar (chemistry) 11, trick 11

MIND 12

Medicine 14, science (neurophysiology) 15, test 13, willpower 13

CHARISMA 9

Charm 10, persuasion 10, taunt 10

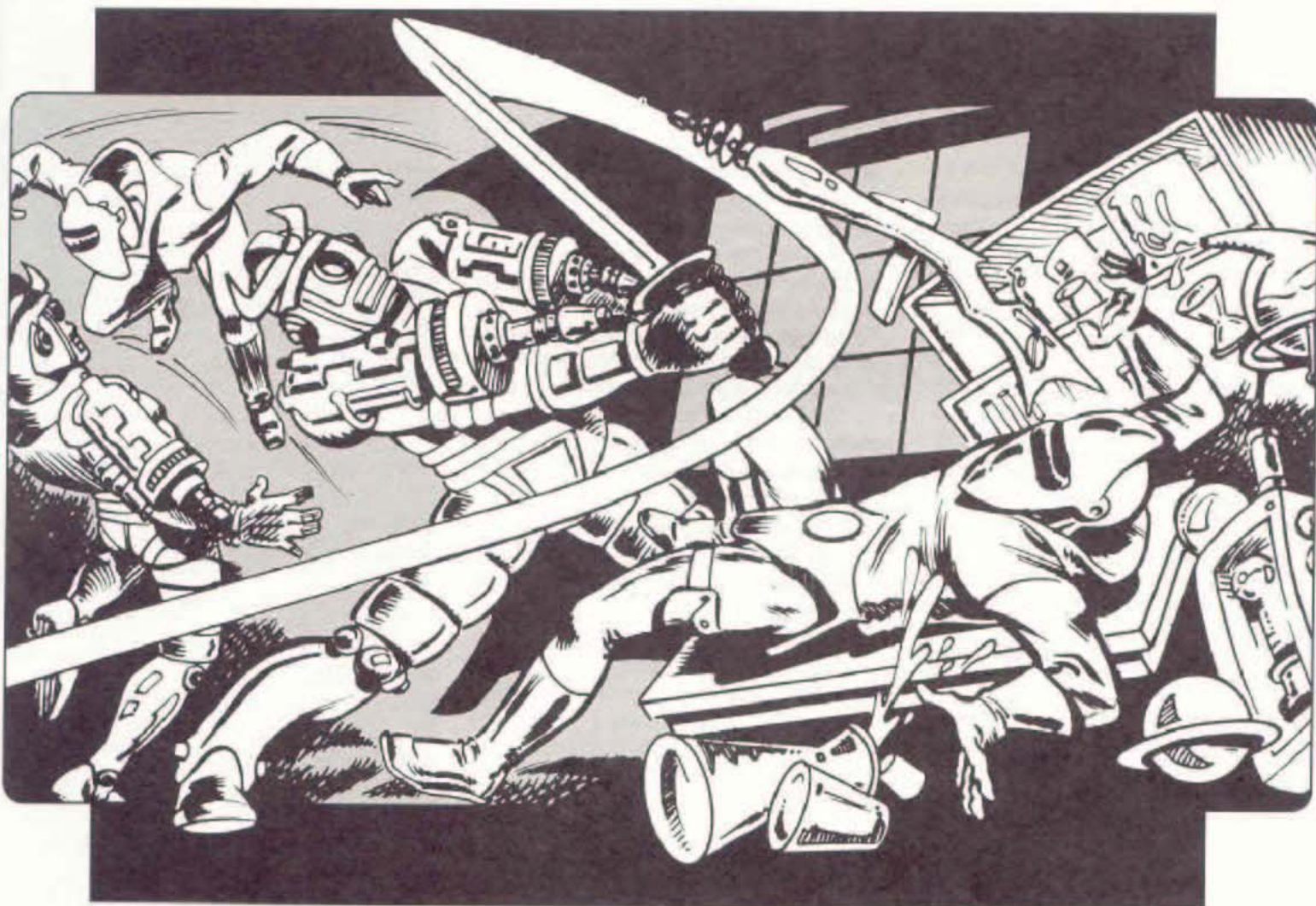
SPIRIT 9

Intimidation 10, reality 10

Possibilities: 5

Equipment: pen, pocket calculator

Description: A 60-year-old Oriental with thinning white hair, wearing a white lab coat and thick glasses. Obsessed with his work, and generally unaware of (and uninterested in) anything else. Not easily conned or frightened due to his single-mindedness.



Masako Wada**DEXTERITY 9**

Dodge 10, unarmed combat 10

STRENGTH 8**TOUGHNESS 8****PERCEPTION 10**

Find 11, scholar (chemistry) 11, trick 11

MIND 11

Medicine 12, science 12, test 12

CHARISMA 12

Charm 15, persuasion 13, taunt 13

SPIRIT 8

Intimidation 10, reality 9

Possibilities: two per Storm Knight**Equipment:** ZIIP77z pistol, damage value 16, ammo 12, range 3-10/25/40; spring-loaded stiletto, damage value STR+6/14; remote control unit (see above).**Description:** In her early 30s, Wada is a very attractive woman with long, dark hair, and wears a white lab coat. She wears thick glasses, but these are merely a disguise: the lenses are plain glass. She is very shrewd and cunning, and will pretend to be a "techno-nerd," totally naive about the world outside her lab, and will pretend an incapacitating fear of weapons. She is very difficult to con or frighten.**Enslaved Guards (4)****DEXTERITY 11**

Dodge 12, fire combat 14, maneuver 12, melee weapons 12, unarmed combat 12

STRENGTH 10**TOUGHNESS 10****PERCEPTION 6**

Find 8, tracking 8, trick (11)

MIND 6

Test (14)

CHARISMA 5

Charm (20), persuasion (20), taunt (20)

SPIRIT 7

Intimidation (19), reality 9

Possibilities: 1**Equipment:** None**Description:** Will obey any order given by Wada. Unless under orders, they return to "comatose" state.**Note:** The above statistics refer to the guards in their brainwashed state. If they are cured, their statistics revert to those presented for the Toranaga guards above.**Second-Planting Gospog (4)****DEXTERITY 8**

Energy weapons 9, fire combat 9, melee weapons 9, missile weapons 9, unarmed combat 9

STRENGTH 8

Climbing 9

TOUGHNESS 8**PERCEPTION 8**

Find 11, tracking 9

MIND 8

Willpower 11

CHARISMA 7**SPIRIT 7****Equipment:** Kyoto armor, TOU+7/15; shimsi sword, damage value STR+5/13; SC Kyogo 144, damage value 18, ammo 15, range 3-15/40/150, one mounted on each arm.

Aftermath

As the Knights will probably guess, their activities in the lab complex will eventually attract unwanted attention. Fifteen minutes after the first shot was fired, five Toranaga cars (speed value 160/100/13, passengers 4, *Toughness* 16) will arrive, each containing four Toranaga guards. It would definitely be in the Knights' best interests to be out of the facility before they arrive.The latest victim of Wada's experiment is not too far gone, having only been in her tender care for a day or so. A *first aid* total of 8 will bring her around, and her father will no doubt be very happy to have her back, which should facilitate getting cooperation

in the future from those Diet members who remain uninfluenced by Kanawa.

As the heroes might have concluded from their research on Dr. Yoshi, he was once a staunch opponent of Kanawa, but was seduced by the power and money of 3327. Persuading him to return to the side of those opposing Kanawa would be a great boon.

The equipment around the lab is too large and cumbersome to move. However, Yoshi's lab notes and print-outs of Wada's files will be all that the Knights need to learn about the electrochemical brainwashing technique, so that Rauru Block scientists can work on means to counter any future operations of this sort. But without Yoshi, Wada and the notes, it is doubtful Toranaga will be able to duplicate the process.

If the Knights consider using Yoshi's technology themselves, point out to them that using drugs and electroshock to turn someone into a mindless puppet is about as far from heroic behavior as one can get.

Awards

If the Storm Knights are able to stop Yoshi and Wada; convince Yoshi to aid the Rauru Block; save the test subject; and destroy all remnants of the experiment, award them 12 Possibilities.

If the Knights are able to do all of the above, except bring Yoshi back to the side of Kanawa's opponents, award them 10 Possibilities.

If Yoshi or Wada escape, or the Knights are unable to save the Diet member's daughter, award them six Possibilities.

If Yoshi or Wada escape with their notes on the experiment, the Knights receive no Possibilities.



The Cathari Treasure

Prologue

As the final Church assault was launched, a single young Cathari soldier turned away from the battlement and ran to the courtyard where his religious leaders awaited him. He had broken his sword repelling the last attack and his leather armor had been reduced to little more than stained strips of hide over the past weeks of fighting. He clutched his last remaining weapon, a bloodied woodsman's ax, and prepared to deliver his report to the strangely serene Cathari leaders. He could not wait to return to the fighting and kill more of the diabolical heretics.

"There is no need to report, Christophe. The end is near, as we can all so plainly see. For you, however, this is only the beginning."

Christophe looked into the watery eyes of his priest. A soldier's death, he thought without remorse. It was all he had ever wanted, but there were so many things he still wanted to do. Sixteen seemed like too few years to accomplish all the things God required.

"Take this packet. It contains the treasure of the Cathari, the sum of all our beliefs. Protect it with your life and see it safely to a new land where our people can grow strong again. We are finished for now, but our time will come again."

Christophe was confused and it clearly showed on his young face. The ax fell from his numb fingers. "How can you choose me, Father? I have not received the consolation. I have chosen a soldier's life. Let me die here in this citadel with you. Surely, there is another more worthy than I."

"Perhaps that is true, young soldier, but none remain with your skills and your passion. God has told me you are the one."

"Flee the fortress, Christophe, and climb down the mountain. Across Pere Fellison's fields you will find a small band of our people. They are all that remain who are fit to travel. They have

been told to wait for your leadership, but time is slipping by. We will hold out as long as possible to give you the chance to escape. Take this and go."

Christophe reached up to take the offered package. The sheaf of papers had been carefully wrapped in oiled cloth and tied with leather cord to protect it from the elements. "Take my sword also," the cleric said. "You will need it more than I."

With a sigh of resignation, Christophe reached for the sword. Without thought he tested the weight and balance, discovering it was perfectly fitted for his tall frame. "I will not fail you or God, Father. This I swear."

"I know, young warrior. I know."

With little more than a whisper of air, the front door of the Abbey St. Germaine was opened and closed. Had there been anyone on the main floor of the ancient structure, they would have scarcely noticed the giant of a man who entered. He moved silently toward a scarcely-used side door, stopping long enough to dip two fingers into the font of Holy Water as he passed. Without conscious thought, he crossed himself and looked directly into the small mirror set in the door frame. The security system analyzed his retina pattern and unlocked the door in the time it took the man to adjust the heavy cross he wore around his bull neck. Ducking slightly, he pushed the door open and began the trip down the short flight of stairs.

Moments later, the man stood in front of a similar door. This time he knocked once and waited for the portal to be opened. It was not polite to enter the Abbey Sanctorum uninvited, even if he was one of the highest ranking members of the Inquisition in this God-forsaken town and his visit was expected. This meeting was called in haste and the location was less than ideal, which served to rouse his curiosity.



The door swung open to reveal the stark white interior of the jackpriest's sanctorum. The smiling priest stepped aside to allow the man entrance. "Bishop Allain awaits your presence in the crypt, your Grace," he said. If the priest was nervous about the Bishop's unexpected presence, he did not show it.

Fifty-three paces and a handful of turns later, the Inquisitor again knocked on a door. It swung open on his first forceful blow and continued to open with the next three strikes.

"Enter, Christian. I have been expecting you."

It was cool and damp inside the crypt. The overhead lighting had been dialed down to its lowest level, forcing the Inquisitor's rove-eye to spin wildly to gather information on the room and its single occupant. Bishop Allain was seated on a pile of bones, calmly tapping on the ancient skull of a monk with a browned femur. As usual, the bishop seemed more at home with the dead than with the living.

"Your servant, your Grace," the Inquisitor said.

"God be with you, my son. I require you special talents for a short assignment, Christian. Something you should enjoy quite a bit."

"God is my life, your Grace."

"God and the Cyberpope, my son."

"Of course, your Grace."

"We recently crushed a rebellion in the town of Albi, as you well know. Although all evidence indicates that the heretics have been suppressed, I want to be sure. You are to go to Albi and make sure for me. Do you understand, Christian? Absolutely sure."

"I understand, your Grace."

"Good, Christian. We have heard reports that there are Stormers carrying blasphemous papers to the village and hoping to encourage resistance to Cyberpope Malraux. You will, of course, deal with any heretics you discover in the appropriate manner."

"Yes, your Grace. I will deal with any heretics I discover." For the first time in a long while, Christian Del Rio smiled — and the bishop knew the rebellion, if it did still exist, would soon be little more than a fading memory.

The Major Beat

The Cathari Treasure is a one-act adventure set in the Cyberpapacy. The Storm Knights are hired to make contact with rebels in the village of Albi and deliver a package of papers relating to the original Cathari heresy. The documents are intended to be a rallying point for those still fighting against Malraux's rule in that small village.

The Knights are transported to a deserted beach on the coast of France, where they make contact with their guide, Solange Ducos, who is in reality a Nile spy. But before they can begin the journey to Albi, they are attacked by the first of the Cyberpope's guardians, a cygoyle named Jaquier.

Aware now that the Inquisition knows of their mission, the party hurries to make it to the village in time. The Inquisition is waiting for them, however, and they walk into an ambush. Grand Inquisitor Christian Del Rio, who has been assigned to exterminate any remaining rebels in Albi, is determined to claim the Cathari documents for himself, as well as enjoy the pleasure of capturing Ducos and torturing information about her compatriots out of her.

With or without the documents, Del Rio has discovered enough about the heretics to be able to plan an assault against them. The Storm Knights must stop the Inquisition and deliver the documents to keep the rebellion in Albi alive.

Adventure Background

The story of the Cathari Treasure actually begins more than six centuries ago. The Cathari were a religious sect in France who believed that everything to do with the world of matter was evil, and everything to do with the world of the spirit was good. They did not believe in the sanctity of the Church, feeling that nothing so rooted in the material could be good, and they branded the Pope an agent of the Devil.

When the sect grew larger and more powerful, the Church reacted with force. As the Cathari were based in the village of Albi, the crusade which was launched against them came to be known as the "Albigensian Crusade." In 1209, a huge army marched against the heretics and slaughtered thousands of them.

The crusade would last another 35 years. Finally, in 1244, the few remaining Cathari took refuge in the mountaintop citadel known as Montsegur. They held off the Church forces for almost a year, but finally realized that all was lost. All of those who renounced their faith in the Cathari heresy were allowed to surrender — those who refused were dragged down the mountain and burned alive. The days of the Cathari disappeared in a pillar of fire and a cloud of smoke.

But what the armies of the Pope did not realize was that, as they saw the end approaching, the Cathari took precautions to ensure that their ideas would live on. They dispatched a youth down the side of the mountain in the dead of night and bade him join with others of his faith and lead the sect to prominence again. He carried with him the "Cathari treasure" — letters written by the sect's elders, detailing the beliefs of the group, their history, and their refusal to bow down before authority even though resistance would cost them their lives.

The boy who would grow up to be the warrior named Christophe, the Cathari's last hope, was an orphan who was raised by the sect in Albi. As the town ward, Christophe grew into an intelligent and spiritual young man, and eventually received training as a yeoman, which seemed to fit his aggressive spirit. Christophe was in the midst of much of the fighting during the Albigensian Crusades and distinguished himself in the course of several battles with Church forces. After the final battle, he and his band settled in northwestern France, in what is now Normandy.

The Cathari survivors were never able to revive their sect, however. Despite years of effort, they proved to



be dismal failures in recruiting new believers. Soon their numbers began to dwindle and, within six generations, the Cathari had died out. Christophe's letters were hidden away and eventually forgotten. They went unseen and unread until shortly before the Possibility Wars began.

Calvin Denard, a descendant of Christophe's, received the letters as part of an inheritance and took them to Rome for examination. Although he was not a particularly religious man, he was an avid scholar and he suspected the papers might have significant historical value. While in Rome, however, the Magna Verita cosm crashed into France. The papers had at that point been given only a cursory examination by Church historians, and events in France drew the Vatican's full attention, so that their true import was never discovered.

Obsessed with the documents and the Cathari legend, Calvin began searching for information in Albi. There he found that the heresy lived again in this post-invasion world, as rebels condemned the Cyberpope's church as a thing of the Devil and produced a temporary crash of the GodNet around the town.

Returning to his home in England (which was now inexplicably filled with dragons and elves), Calvin had a dream in which Christophe returned to destroy the Cyberpope and restore the glory of France. Calvin awoke knowing what he must do—he would give the Cathari letters to the Albi rebels to show them the tradition they were a part of, and provide them with a standard to rally around.

But the Cyberpapacy, and indeed the English Channel itself, have grown too dangerous for a common man to travel through. Calvin's only recourse was to hire a band of Storm Knights to deliver the documents, making use of a small fishing boat to cross the waters to France. There they are to rendezvous with a young female rebel who will escort them into Albi. Then, after almost seven centuries, Christophe's mission will at last be accomplished.

SCENE ONE: Making Contact

The Situation

Standard. The Storm Knights land on the beach at St.-Jean-de-Luz and meet rebel and spy Solange Ducos. Their exchange of greetings is interrupted by a cygoyle out for blood.

Read aloud or paraphrase:

The French coastline is blanketed by a thick fog, and you can feel the dawn's chill cut right through your clothes. There is no sign of the woman you are supposed to meet—just sand and surf as far as the eye can see, which isn't saying very much in this weather.

The Action

The darkness and fog provide *medium cover* to anyone on the beach. The sandy strip ends at rocky cliffs, with a single footpath leading up the steep slope. The Knights may wish to check their gear to make sure it wasn't damaged by the salt spray during their voyage. Have them generate *Perception* totals—a 9 will spot any damage (gamemaster's discretion). Failure may mean that equipment problems have been overlooked, and malfunctions may occur later in the adventure.

Let the Knights stand around on the beach until they start thinking about setting off on their own. Then a flashlight beams cuts through the darkness and illuminates their faces, followed by the sight of a lithe young woman running down the footpath.

The woman approaches the group and shines the light on her own face. Despite the grim expression on her features, she is breathtakingly beautiful. She identifies herself as Solange Ducos of Albi and tells the Knights that she was detained by an Inquisition patrol in Auch, and so they are behind schedule. She has heard rumors that Christian Del Rio, Malraux's most feared Inquisitor, is in the area as well, so they must depart at once.

Solange Ducos

DEXTERITY 10

Dodge 11, fire combat 11, unarmed combat 11

STRENGTH 8

TOUGHNESS 9

PERCEPTION 9

Find 10, language 10, trick 10

MIND 10

Artist (actress) 12, test 11

CHARISMA 12

Charm 15, persuasion 13, taunt 13

SPIRIT 8

Intimidation 9, reality 9

Possibilities: 10

Equipment: denim jacket, jeans, Uzi in shoulder holster (damage value 17, ammo 11, range 3-15/40/100), ammunition, passport, low-light goggles, flashlight, franc card with 100,000 on account, "weird science" two-way radio (disguised to look like a normal watch)

Description: Solange is an accomplished actress and performer. She can appear devastatingly beautiful or horribly repulsive, depending on what the role requires. Her skills have resulted in her becoming a valued member of the Albi rebellion.

Solange is actually a follower of Dr. Mobius. She was recruited by Nile agents in France, and has been keeping an eye on Jean Malraux's activities ever since his arrival from Magna Verita. She normally makes contact with her superiors in the Nile Empire on a daily basis, but circumstances have forced her to maintain radio silence for the last several days.

Unfortunately for Solange, her cover was blown more than a week ago when she was overheard while communicating her report to Teth-Net. The rebel leaders have decided Solange's capture would go a long way toward convincing the Inquisition that the uprising is history. The fact that the Storm Knights will be captured also is regrettable, the rebels feel, but it is a sacrifice they feel must be made if their attempt to "play dead" is to succeed.

If the Knights attempt to question Solange, she will put them off, saying there will be time enough for that later. Her truck is parked on the ridge overlooking the beach, and she wants to get moving before it gets light.



The Wings of Death

If the Storm Knights generate *Perception* totals of 9, they hear a faint, metallic sound and feel the rush of air. Whether or not they go to investigate the sound, the first rays of sunlight pierce the fog and provide a glimpse of a large shape disappearing behind one of the dunes.

Then the fog swirls in again. No sound or movement comes from the dunes. If the Knights generate *Perception* or *find* totals of 10, they notice that the sand appears disturbed near where they saw the thing. Overhead the clouds begin to break, and Solange urges the Knights to forget about searching for what was probably a bird and come with her. As the Knights are about to go with her or press their search, the creature suddenly emerges out of the sand behind them and attacks.

The creature is Jacquier, a cygoyle. His job is to patrol a small section of the French coast and kill any heretics

who attempt to escape the Cyberpacy by sea. He dislikes the job as there is little chance for action when patrolling a largely deserted section of the countryside.

He was recently informed that a band of Storm Knights and a woman would be meeting in his area, however, and he should be on his guard against them. His instructions are to kill the Knights and take a packet of letters they carry, but leave the woman alive for the Inquisition. After they are done questioning Solange, he will be allowed to have his fun with whatever's left of her.

When he saw the Knights arrive, he burrowed into the sand and came up behind them to gain the advantage of surprise.

Jacquier

DEXTERITY 12

Dodge 14, flight 13, energy weapons 14, fire combat 13, stealth 14, unarmed combat 13

STRENGTH 15

TOUGHNESS 15

PERCEPTION 12

Find 13, trick 14

MIND 11

Test 13, willpower 13

CHARISMA 8

Taunt 11

SPIRIT 14

Faith 15, intimidation 16, reality 15

Possibilities: one per Storm Knight.

Natural Tools: wings, speed value 12; claws, damage value STR+3/18

Equipment: IntDermalPlate, armor value TOU+8/23; Avro PR II.V wrist gun, damage value 19, ammo 20, range 3-40/41-100/101-150; ShockKnucks damage value STR+3/18; low-light eye.

Description: Jacquier is a formidable opponent, not only because of his strength and weaponry, but because he is the cygoyle equivalent of a psychopath with a high level of bloodlust. This has gained him a reputation as somewhat unreliable in situations where subtlety is needed, and Del Rio knows he is taking a chance expecting him to leave Ducos alive.

Jacquier is extremely arrogant when



it comes to his fighting ability, primarily because all of his opponents up to now have been Ords, and none have been able to do any damage to him. He has no real experience with pain, and so he will be somewhat reckless in combat.

Jacquier will toy with the Knights at first, relying on taunts and intimidation to try and frighten his prey. Among his taunts will be that the Knights are doomed, because if he does not kill them, Del Rio will be waiting in Albi to tear out their hearts. When combat begins, he will not attack the same person in consecutive rounds unless he takes damage, at which point he will fly into a rage and focus his attack on the Storm Knight who hurt him.

The cygoyle will not attack Ducos, but will attempt to keep her from escaping from the beach. If Jacquier is being beaten, he will grow frustrated and try to take to the air and escape.

Variables

If Jacquier manages to get away, he will not report the outcome of the battle to the Inquisition out of shame. He cannot tolerate the thought that anyone managed to defeat him. He will burn for revenge, and after resting for a few hours, will start tracking the Knights. He will catch up to them in time for the climactic battle in Albi.

If the Storm Knights are defeated, Jacquier will grab Ducos and the documents and fly off. He will deliver both to Del Rio, and Ducos will not be present for any of Scene Two. The Storm Knights can attempt to rescue her and their packet from the Inquisitor's clutches in Scene Three.

Flags

If a *Romance* card is played, one of the Storm Knights falls in love with Ducos, and will be determined to save her, whether she is kidnapped by Jacquier or by the Inquisitors in Scene Two.

If a *Nemesis* card is played, one of the Storm Knights has encountered Jacquier before, though not in battle.

Perhaps some Ord friends of his were massacred by the cygoyle, and the Knight was too late to save them. He will want to take on Jacquier alone, and if the creature escapes, will consider tracking him down and killing him more important than the rest of their mission.

When the battle with Jacquier is over, the Storm Knights can (with or without Solange Ducos) make it to her truck and get on their way. If Solange was captured in this scene, the ambush in Scene Two can still occur as written, save for the fact that Solange will not be involved. If the Storm Knights are attempting to trail Jacquier, they can do so successfully on a tracking total of 9, as he is tearing limbs off trees as he flies. His trail will lead them to Salies and the ambush.

Cut to "Scene Two: Ambush!"

SCENE TWO: Ambush!

The Situation

Standard. The Storm Knights begin their journey to Albi. They should be on their guard now, but will be unaware that they are walking into an Inquisition trap.

Read aloud or paraphrase:

The mood in the truck is grim as your journey begins. There can be little doubt that the cygoyle had been waiting for you in St.-Jean-de-Luz and the secrecy of your mission has been compromised. This mail run may not end up being as easy as it first appeared.

The Action

Solange's truck (see statistics below) seats three in the front, and the remainder of the party will have to ride in the back. Weapons should be kept out of sight in the event an Inquisition patrol is encountered, and the Storm Knights may want to consider traveling only at night, particularly if some of their number would be

extremely conspicuous in the Cyberpapacy (edeinos, for instance).

During the trip, Solange will discreetly question the Storm Knights about their battles against the High Lords, particularly Malraux and Mobius. She will attempt to *charm* any Storm Knights who ride in the cab of the truck with her during the long trip. All initial attitudes will start at *neutral*, but Solange will attempt to get at least one Storm Knight's attitude to *friendly*, even if she has to push her luck.

If successful with her *charm* attempts, Solange will attempt to *persuade* the Storm Knights to give her further information they might have about the Cyberpope or any of the other High Lords. Her questions, however, will be very casual and if the Storm Knights seem to be growing suspicious, she will stop questioning them and change the subject. She will reveal little, if anything, about the Cathari rebellion or her part in the uprising.

Ford Pickup Truck

Tech 23, speed value 160/100/13, passengers 3 (+4 in the bed), Toughness 17

Slaughter in Salies

Read aloud or paraphrase:

After several hours of riding through the Pyrenees, you approach the town of Salies. It is here you are to meet an advance scout for the Cathari, who has instructions to verify your identities and the existence of the documents before allowing you to pass on to Albi.

When the truck is close enough to the town that the lights of the houses can be seen, a man will step out into the road. Solange will stop the truck and get out to talk to the man, who is her fellow Cathari agent. He smiles at Solange and the two exchange brief words in French. Storm Knights who generate *language* totals of 9 can translate: "Solange, are these all of them?" "Yes, these are all." "Good, Solange, very good."

If Solange and the documents were



captured in Scene One, the man will address the Knights in French or broken English and ask where she is, and how they could allow her to be captured. He will appear to be very upset about the whole matter, and will express doubts about whether he wishes to pass them on to Albi under the circumstances.

During the brief exchange, have the Storm Knights generate *Perception* totals. On a 12, the Knights notice that the man seems to be edging ever so slightly away from them, and the shadows seem to be thickening to the left and right.

Suddenly, the area is alive with members of the Inquisition. The

Cathari agent (who is secretly in Del Rio's employ) dives into the dirt as a flash grenade goes off. Storm Knights who made their *Perception* check can take a single action before the grenade goes off, but there is not enough time to do more before the Inquisitors attack.

As the ambush takes place at night, the effects of the flash grenade are potentially devastating. Any Knight whose eyes were not in some way protected from the glare will be blinded for nine rounds. The difficulty numbers of any *Perception* or *Dexterity*-related skill uses which require clear eyesight are increased by +12. Keep in mind that some magic spells and miracles do not require sight to cast, although those which must hit their targets to be effective (such as a *fireball* spell) will suffer the same penalty to their difficulty numbers.

The grenade will do no permanent physical damage to the Knights, but those affected will take two points of shock due to sudden disorientation.

There are five cyberpriests among the ambushers and four Salies residents who have been well paid by the Inquisition for their help. They will take advantage of the Knights' confusion to subdue them and seize Solange and the documents.

Cyberpriests (5)

See page 35 of the *Torg World Book*.

Possibilities: one per Storm Knight

Salies Villagers (4)

DEXTERITY 9

Dodge 10, melee weapons 13, stealth 10, unarmed combat 10

STRENGTH 8

TOUGHNESS 8

PERCEPTION 8

Land vehicles 9, tracking 9, trick 9

MIND 7

Test 8

CHARISMA 8

Charm 9, persuasion 9, taunt 9

SPIRIT 8

Intimidation 9

Possibilities: none

Equipment: club, damage value STR+3/11

Description: Essentially lowlifes, who would fight for either side for enough money and liquor. The cyberpriests brought them along to



cover a retreat, if one becomes necessary.

Whether or not the Storm Knights are victorious in this battle, the cyberpriests will get away with Ducos (though they will get the Cathari letters only if they defeat the Knights.)

If the Knights drive the Inquisitors off, they can follow them in Ducos' truck. But during the battle, one of the Salies villagers has done some sabotage to the vehicle, which the Knights will not realize until they are careening down a Pyrenees peak. Cut to "The Long and Winding Road."

If the Knights are defeated, the cyberpriests will decide that it might be wiser if their deaths were made to look like the result of a robbery, rather than an Inquisition assassination. With the sabotage to the truck having already been done, the cyberpriests will take the Knights' weapons and scatter them on the hillside, then tie them up in the cab of the truck and start it up. Cut to "The Long and Winding Road."

The Long and Winding Road

If the Knights are bound in the back of the truck, they have two options: leap from the truck as it speeds down the mountain road to certain disaster, or attempt to get into the cab and stop the truck. Jumping from the cab will do damage value 16 in the first three rounds after the Knights trip starts. After that, the road gets steeper and the truck is moving faster, so increase the damage value by +1 per two rounds.

Getting out of the ropes which bind them requires a *Dexterity* total of 9. If the Knights are not bound when they jump, they can lessen the damage done by the fall by generating a *Dexterity* or *acrobatics* total of 10. If they accomplish this, they will not take more than damage value 14 no matter the round in which they leap.

Making it to the cab from the back of the truck requires an *acrobatics* total of 9. Whether they start out in the cab or climb in from the back, they will discover that the gear shift has been cut through and breaks off in their hands — the truck is stuck in "Drive."

The brakes have also been cut, and the pedal goes all the way to the floor when tried.

Leaping from the cab has the same effects noted above. The Knights' other option is to stay in the truck and attempt to steer it into Salies and bring it to rest in a field. This will require a *land vehicles* total of 15 — if the Knights are thus able to prevent the truck from crashing into any of the buildings in the town and injuring someone, award them an extra two possibilities at the end of the adventure.

If the Storm Knights had their equipment taken from them and scattered on the hillside, they will have to go back up and retrieve it. Have each Knight generate a *find* total of 7 to recover their gear.

If the truck crashed with gear inside it, that equipment is lost, except for the Cathari packet. In that case, the bundle of letters flew out of the truck on the trip down and can be found along the side of the road.

Salies

When the Storm Knights reach the town of Salies, read aloud or paraphrase:

The town is quiet. There is no sign of the cyberpriests or their assistants, nor of Solange. Their interest in the documents you were entrusted with hints that the old letters may be more important than you suspected, and the rebellion at Albi may have done more serious damage to Malraux's realm than anyone realized. The one thing that is certain is that the Inquisitors have a head start on you in the race to Albi.

The Knights can obtain useful goods and information in Salies. Replacements for destroyed equipment, a vehicle for the last leg of the journey, and medical treatment can all be had here.

If Solange was kidnapped in this scene, she was seen with the cyberpriests as they drove through town on the road to Albi — if not, the Inquisitors were overhead saying that Del Rio and Ducos would be waiting in "the heretics' village." They also mentioned something about a place

called the "Cafe American," the connection was unclear.

Once the Knights are on their way again, cut to "Scene Three: Del Rio's Crusade."

Flags

If a *Connection* card is played, one of the Knights knows someone in Salies, who will give them food, if they need it, and loan them an auto. This will allow them to get after the Inquisitors that much faster, and with less outlay of money.

SCENE FOUR: Del Rio's Crusade

The Situation

Dramatic. The Storm Knights arrive at Albi, only to find their destination, the Cafe American, under siege by the Inquisition. Inside the building are the leaders of the Albi rebellion, the men and women to whom the Knights were to deliver the Cathari letters. And somewhere in the darkness is Solange Ducos, in the grip of Christian Del Rio, a servant of the Cyberpope who will gladly break her body to "save her soul."

Read aloud or paraphrase:

Albi is, by all appearances, a town defeated. The only business that seems to be doing well this evening is the funeral home. Across the way are the shells of burnt-out houses, destroyed in the initial attempt by Malraux's forces to crush the rebellion weeks ago.

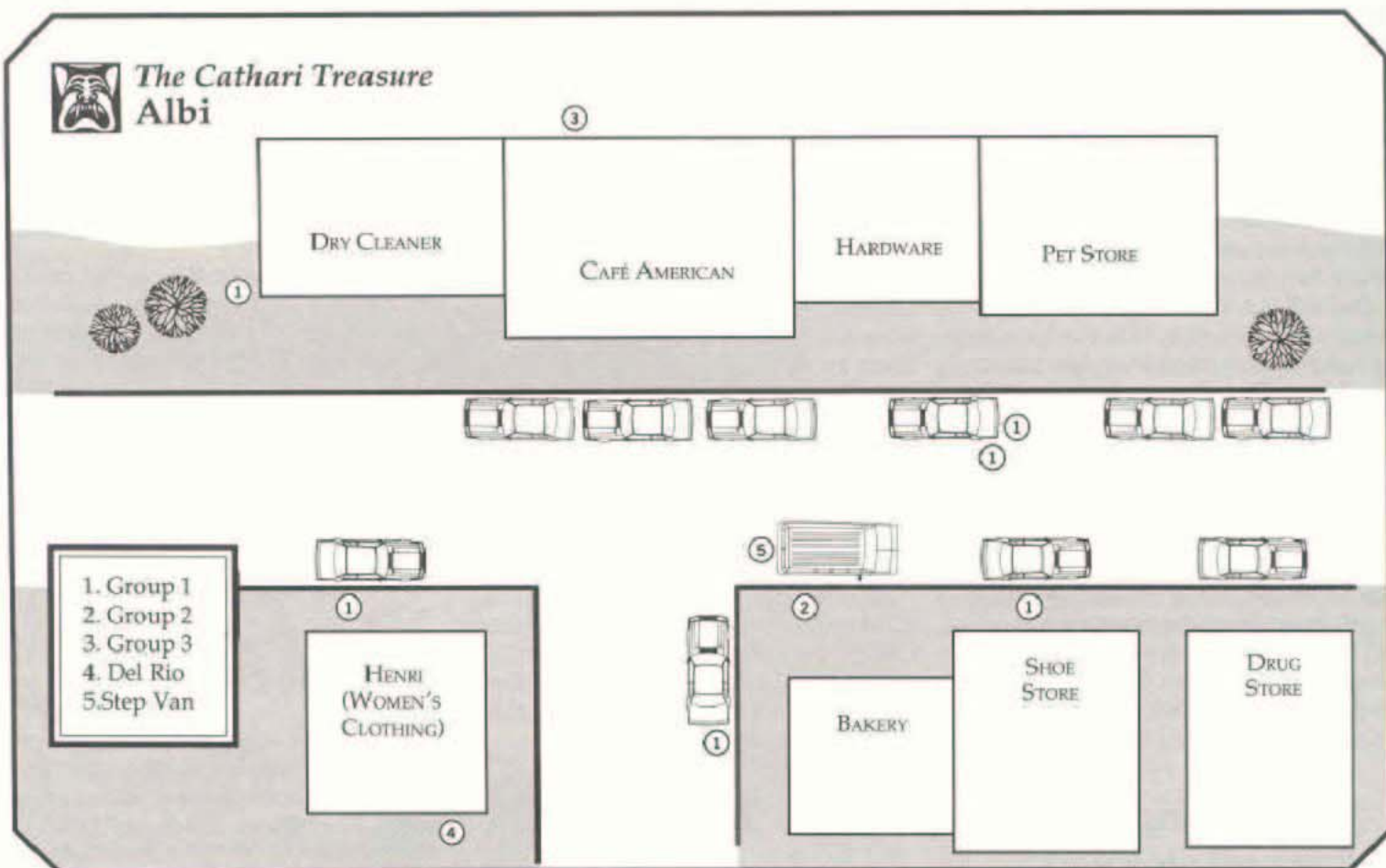
Surprisingly, no guards were posted outside of the town — perhaps the cyberpriests believe you to be dead. From the end of the boulevard, you can see a number of autos parked, and the shadows that cluster around them are some of the same ones who attacked you on the mountainside.

Despite the late hour, the cafe is still open. The Knights do not need to generate *Perception* totals to see that the





The Cathari Treasure Albi



area around the rebels' headquarters is alive with Inquisitors, poised for the kill.

The Action

As the Storm Knights arrive in Albi, the last of the Inquisition attack squads is moving into place. There are three squads in Albi, all under the command of Del Rio. Each squad has seven men in it, three cyberpriests and four lay Inquisitors without cyber enhancements.

The members of the first squad have taken up positions behind various automobiles on the street in front of the Cafe American. The second squad is massed behind a step-truck parked across the road from the cafe, preparing to charge through the front door. A third squad is in the alley behind the cafe, to cut off any possible avenue of escape for the heretics. Del Rio is stationed about a block away from the cafe, accompanied by the bound form of Solange Ducos.

The members of the rebellion are unaware of their danger. Their lone perimeter guard was murdered by the Inquisition, and they have been meeting for so many hours that fatigue has made them careless. There is no way for the Knights to get a warning to the rebels, as the Inquisitors cut all phone lines in the town shortly after entering Albi.

The Storm Knights' only hope of saving the rebels is to stop the Inquisitors. Emphasize the need for stealth as the Knights move about the town, and ask for frequent rolls. If the Knights are spotted by an Inquisitor, they will have to kill him quickly before he can shout a warning, or find themselves in the middle of a firefight.

Strategically, the Knights have two options:

- They can charge the Inquisition positions, trying to spark a pitched battle that will serve as a warning to the rebels and possibly allow them to escape. This plan has several drawbacks, among them the fact that the

Knights will be outnumbered, and it is doubtful the rebels would be able to escape anyway.

- The Knights could quietly lessen the odds against them by taking out the Inquisitors one by one. Again, stealth is of the utmost importance, and the Knights should be aware of the fact that using firearms to dispatch their foes would surely alert Del Rio and the others to their presence.

No matter how successful the Knights are, at some point the remaining Inquisitors will launch their assault. The Knights can attempt to draw their fire and give the rebels a chance to get out in the open and attack. If the battle is going poorly for the Knights, the rebels will attempt to give them a respite by closing ranks and firing on the cyberpriests.

If the Knights are doing well, Del Rio himself will get involved. He will confront the Knights on the street, threatening to kill Ducos (and, if he has them, burn the letters). The rebels, of course, will not care what becomes



of Ducos, but the Knights may, not knowing she is a Nile agent. The Knights will have to find some way to distract Del Rio, so that one can grab Ducos away from him and the rest can attack.

If Del Rio and the cyberpriests are killed, the lay Inquisitors will break and run. A victory for the Knights would deal a severe blow to the Cyberpope's crusade in the region, and the story of their victory might well embolden Resistance forces elsewhere.

If the Knights are defeated, the Albi rebellion will be crushed, and it will be a long time before a popular front will arise that will dare to raise its fist to Malraux.

Christian Del Rio

DEXTERITY 9

Dodge 10, fire combat 10, stealth 10, unarmed combat 10

STRENGTH 10

TOUGHNESS 10

PERCEPTION 10

Cyberdeck operation 11, find 11

MIND 9

Test 10

CHARISMA 9

Charm 10, persuasion 10, taunt 10

SPIRIT 10

Faith (Cyberchurch) 11, focus 11, intimidation 13, reality 11

Possibilities: 15

Equipment: IntDermal plate, armor value TOU+6/16 (body); BiV arm, STR+5/15; kreelar tendons; rove eye; ShockKnucks (on human arm) damage value STR+3/13; NeuraCal; Avro PR II.V, damage value 19, ammo 20, range 3-40/41-100/101-150

Cyber Value: 21

Miracle: Net Damnation

Description: Del Rio is absolutely amoral. He has no remorse about the killing and suffering he has caused in his brief, but spectacular, career in the Inquisition. He does not believe in God, but is loyal to the Cyberpope, because he sees Malraux's church as an avenue to power and a chance to be paid for acts of torture and murder.

Del Rio's major flaw is a lack of patience. Subjects he is interrogating often perish before they are able to

provide any information. He has been reprimanded for this several times by his cyberbishop, but as his superiors also fear him, he has not been excommunicated as yet.

Cyberpriests (9)

See page 35 of the *Torg World Book*

Possibilities: one per Storm Knight

Description: These members of the Inquisition have been given to Del Rio as lieutenants. They will follow his orders to the letter and do the best they can to make his mission successful, knowing full well their careers will rise or fall with his fortunes.

Lay Inquisitors (12)

DEXTERITY 9

Dodge 10, fire combat 12, melee weapons 10, stealth 10, unarmed combat 10

STRENGTH 9

TOUGHNESS 8

PERCEPTION 7

Find 8, trick 8

MIND 7

Test 8

CHARISMA 8

Charm 9, persuasion 9, taunt 10

SPIRIT 8

Faith (Cyberchurch) 10, intimidation 9

Possibilities: none

Equipment: IriMesh Armor, TOU+3/11; club, damage value STR+3/12; Uzi, damage value 17, ammo 11, range 3-15/40/100

Albi Rebels (10)

DEXTERITY 9

Dodge 10, fire combat 10, stealth 10, unarmed combat 10

STRENGTH 9

TOUGHNESS 9

PERCEPTION 10

Cyberdeck operation 11, find 11, trick 11

MIND 10

Test 11

CHARISMA 9

Charm 10, persuasion 10, taunt 10

SPIRIT 10

Faith (Cathari) 13, intimidation 11, reality 11

Possibilities: 1

Equipment: IRCOM Custom Vee cyberdecks; 9mm Beretta, damage

value 15, ammo 9, range 3-10/25/40; M-16, damage value 20, ammo 10, range 3-40/250/400

Description: The Albi rebels have embraced their own version of the Cathari heresy, branding the Cyberpope's church as evil because of its reliance on material objects, and Malraux himself as an agent of the Devil. They are as fanatical in their way as the cyberpriests, and their only concession to the material is their use of cyberdecks, which aided them in temporarily crashing the GodNet around Albi.

Event

If he survived Scene One, Jacquier will have been hounding the Knights' every step. He will appear just as the Storm Knights have made their move against the Inquisition. Once they have committed to their attack and Del Rio knows the Knights escaped his trap on the mountainside, Jacquier will land behind them and begin exacting his revenge.

This time the cygoyle is determined to make the Knights suffer. He will attack every round until either the Storm Knights are dead or he is killed.

Flags

If a *Nemesis* card is played, Del Rio escapes and will return to plague the Knights in a future adventure. He will be unable to hamper the efforts of the Albi rebels to relocate in the immediate future, however, as he will have been disgraced in the eyes of his cyberbishop and will not be trusted with important missions for some time.

If a *Suspicion* card is played, the rebels will not trust the Knights, no matter what the outcome of the battle. They will accuse them of having led the Inquisition to Albi (a foolish charge, since Del Rio already knew they were there). They will accept the Cathari letters, but will tell the Knights that they are not welcome to stay in Albi to recover from the battle.



The Cathari Treasure

(The following is an excerpt of a letter smuggled out of the fortress of Montsegur in 1244. Its author was a leader of the Cathari sect which flourished in the 13th century. He is believed to have been burned to death shortly after this letter was completed.)

To whomsoever reads these words, the final penned by Pere Andrault;

There are those who will look back on this day and cry out, "Why did thee go unto death? Better to live and so let thy faith survive, than to have thy lips forever stilled by the flame and the sword." I will not question their wisdom, for there are those among our own number this last night who voice such thoughts, and who will walk from Montsegur on the morrow. Such will not be my fate — I have seen the pyre being erected upon which my aged flesh will be consumed by the fire.

But I meet this end unafraid, and I ask — will my ideas cease

to be when my lungs no longer fill with air? Will my words be forgotten when my heart no longer beats? When I have at last cast off the shackles of this mortal shell, this prison that limits every aspect of my being, will the lines that flow from this pen simply fade, never to be seen again?

No, indeed — men can be killed, but ideas cannot. An idea will not die unless all men rise up and say they wish it to, and often even that will not lay it to rest. A thought cannot be caged, a belief cannot be tied to a stake and set alight. We are no more than the vessels for these words, destined to carry them with us until we are granted the blessed peace of death.

Death is not the end of what we Cathari fought for, it is the beginning. Across the land, people will lift their eyes from the ground and ask, "What did those mendicants believe in with such fervor that they would die by the sword rather than surrender their truths?" And they will seek out

these documents we have so carefully inscribed with all that made us as we are, and understand.

For as many years as there are blades of grass on a hillside, there have been men who hold to certain beliefs, and demand that all see the world as they do, be it right or wrong. Those who resist them will have their lands stolen, their homes burned, their lives imperiled and their souls condemned to a fearsome Hell. But the man who quakes with fear at this, who casts aside knowledge in exchange for safety, lives already in an Inferno of his own design.

To any who hold this parchment in their hands, I say, let not fear, nor hatred, nor a desire to cling to that which is transitory by nature cause thee to profess belief in that which thou knowest to be lies. Stand and shout your truths, live by them and die for them, if need be. Only then shalt thee truly be free.

— Pere Andrault
Montsegur, 1244

Aftermath

If the Storm Knights were successful in their mission, they will have gained valuable allies in the Albi rebels. The heretics will use the Cathari letters as a model for a treatise of their own attacking the Cyberpope, which will be circulated throughout France. This will serve as a rallying point for various religious groups opposed to Malraux's rule.

If the Knights saved Solange Ducos, she will admit to them that she was working for Mobius, but pledge that she will serve that High Lord no more after seeing firsthand the brutality of the Possibility Wars. Although the Albi rebels will not take her back, she will serve the cause of the Resistance as an independent agent, and can be a source of information for the Knights in future adventures.

Awards

If the Storm Knights rescued Solange and the rebels and delivered the letters, award each character 12 Possibilities. Add an additional two if the Knights prevented the truck from crashing into the village of Salies.

If the Knights saved the rebels, but lost the packet of documents, award them six Possibilities. If the Knights lost the letters and were unable to stop the Inquisition from slaughtering the heretics, they receive no Possibilities.



Fire Over Khartoum

Prologue

Though the tour of the lower levels of his facility was bound to be fruitless and only frustrate his guest further, Alak-Begam was hopeful that he might be rewarded for his diligence and attention to duty. Maybe he would receive the merit-based bonus that all City Managers had a chance to earn.

However, his job was garbage and he could not name the last manager to actually receive the bonus. He sighed. He hated his job, but he did his work well.

Lesser Dean Salim Hassan was an odd visitor and Alak-Begam consented to give the tour partially for this reason. Of course, he couldn't have denied the Lesser Dean. Alak-Begam did not want to hear from Rama-Tet about the poor treatment of his mathematicians. He would lose more than the chance at a bonus.

The City Director of Waste Management took a chain of keys from his belt to open yet another rusted door. It had probably not been opened since the invasion began. And who knew how long it had remained closed before Pharaoh Mobius conquered Khartoum? They were deep beneath the city; sounds of traffic and civilization had long since fallen away.

Salim Hassan entered the room first. It was dark, so Alak-Begam fumbled near the doorway for a light switch. Failing to locate one, he thumbed the control on his large flashlight. A wide beam of light illuminated the filthy chamber. The equipment inside was obviously inoperable and had been out of use for several years.

When Alak-Begam swung the beam around the room to illuminate every nook and cranny, a brilliant flash of red caught his eye. He pulled the beam back to that spot, but he couldn't see what had caused the scintillation because Salim Hassan was to the spot in an instant.

"The Pharaoh be praised!" shouted the Lesser Dean. His hands were

cupped together and he raised them over his head in triumph.

Alak-Begam was confused, but his mind was working quickly. Whatever the Lesser Dean had come seeking he had obviously found.

Breathing heavily, Salim Hassan settled down a bit and explained to Alak-Begam, "The Fire Opal of Khartoum." He extended his cupped hands toward the City Director of Waste Management. A brilliant red opal sparkled under the beam of the flashlight.

Alak-Begam looked into the eyes of the Lesser Dean. He cursed the bonus under his breath and plowed the heavy flashlight into the side of Salim Hassan's head.

He knelt down beside the dead Lesser Dean and took the opal. As soon as he touched it, he felt a wondrous feeling of power slide through him. But there was no time for that now. He had a meeting, and to have any chance of succeeding at his plans, he must maintain appearances.

The Major Beat

In this single act *Torg* adventure, the Storm Knights are on the trail of the Fire Opal of Khartoum, a mystical artifact of great power (see page 34 of *The Nile Sourcebook* for a reference to this item). Khartoum's City Director of Waste Management, Alak-Begam, gains possession of the opal, but his inexperience with such power keeps him from using the device to its full potential. Just as the Storm Knights are about to interrogate Alak-Begam regarding a murder, a Nile villain named Shadowman steals the opal for his boss, the criminal mastermind Solomon Beguin. Learning that the opal is involved and is in sinister hands, the Storm Knights are forced to raid Beguin's industrial plant to capture the opal and prevent the master criminal from taking over the city of Khartoum and forcing Mobius to grant him power in the Empire.





Adventure Background

The disappearance of Lesser Dean Hassan attracted little attention — barely a paragraph in the *Khartoum Chronicle*. Alak-Begam experimented with the power of the Fire Opal a time or two, and now feels ready for his first major coup — the enslavement of an overgovernor to his will.

There was only one loose end to be tied up, that of disposing of Hassan's

body. But when he returned to the murder scene, he found the body gone. Fearful lest he be discovered, he fled.

The corpse was discovered and moved by the radical Sisters of the Serpent, a deadly religious cult that operates within the Nile Empire. Knowing of Hassan's interest in the Fire Opal and spying upon Alak-Begam's return to the scene, the Sisters concluded that the bureaucrat had the gem. Rather than involve themselves directly, the Sisters hit upon an ingenious plan — hire Storm Knights

to grab Hassan's killer, and then steal the opal from them.

To that end, one of their number disguised herself as a simple baker's daughter named Leisha Ramatee, and contacted a group of Storm Knights. Her story was that a foul odor had permeated her father's shop, driving customers away and ruining his business. She has little money, but would gladly pay what she has if the noble Knights would discover the source of the stench and remove it, for the authorities have been no help. In fact, she adds, a little man even threatened her life if she should make too great a fuss about the smell of decay that now permeates everything.

She gave the Knights the address of the site where the Sisters have planted the body, along with evidence pointing to Alak-Begam. Once the opal is in Knight hands, they are confident they can steal it at their leisure.

Unfortunately for their plans, someone else has plans for the Fire Opal — very dangerous plans.

SCENE ONE: "Murder!" She Said

The Situation

Standard. The Storm Knights arrive the next morning at the address that Leisha provided, seeking the source of the mysterious stench. What they find is a corpse and the beginnings of a deadly adventure.

Read aloud or paraphrase:

Travel through Khartoum has never been so easy. It's too early for even the most dedicated workers, so the streets are clear. You have no problem finding the address that Ramatee provided, and when you arrive you find her father's small bakery shop. A variety of pastries fill the window displays. But even outside you can faintly smell the odor of decay. Then you see the storm grate. You lean closer and can tell the vile stench is definitely coming from the sewer below.



The Action

In order to continue their investigation, the Storm Knights must enter the sewer. A reasonable point of entry is the storm grate. Up to three people may pull on it at once. A *lifting* total of 15 is required to pull it loose. Use the Summing Efforts for a Single Action rules on page 47 of the *Torg Rulebook*. The coordination difficulty is 6. The Storm Knights may also decide to investigate the bakery shop, especially after they have examined the body.

Bakery Shop

There are two doors, front and back, on this building and both are locked. The locks may be picked (*lock picking* difficulty of 14 — the Knights will be surprised how difficult the locks on such a simple shop are) or the doors themselves may be forced open (*Strength* total of 13 to accomplish this). Only one Knight may force a door at a time. As a last resort, the windows may be broken, but even they are reinforced (*Toughness* of 10). Repeated pounding on the doors, or the breaking of the windows, may bring a shocktrooper patrol, even this early in the morning.

If the Storm Knights do break in, they find the place completely deserted except for the window displays. This fact **cannot** be determined by looking in from outside the shop, because the displays fill the windows.

The Sewer

It is a 10 foot drop from the street to the bottom of the sewer. Knights may try to jump to one side of the sewer tunnel where they can land on concrete padding, or they can simply drop straight into the fetid muck. If they chose the former, they must generate an *acrobatics* total of 10 or slip and fall into the water anyway.

If any Storm Knights jump or fall into the water, they must swim to one of the concrete paths on either side. A *swimming* total of 10 is required or the Knights take damage value 8 (only read shock points and K/O results — though one wound per round is sustained after the character is unconscious) and be carried by the slow but

strong current. If they fail another *swimming* roll they will take damage value 8 per round until pulled out. Catching up to the drowning character by running along the slippery walkways requires a *running* total of 10 and grabbing the character requires a *Dexterity* total of 10. Pulling the character out of the water requires a *lifting* total of 9 (10, if the character is unconscious).

The Dead Man

About 15 feet away from the storm grate opening is the body of Lesser Dean Salim Hassan. The Storm Knights are likely to look for the entrance into the bakery shop that Ramatee mentioned, but there is no such thing. In fact, this whole situation is a sham. The Sisters of the Serpent found Hassan's body and moved it here. They made the knife (see below) and plunged it into the body. They do not care too much if the Storm Knights discover this ruse as they expect that they will continue their investigation anyway, but they would rather the Storm Knights never knew.

Investigation of the body can yield several clues. These are:

- The knife blade has these words engraved upon it: "Congrats on the Directorship" on one side and "Trash is My Life" on the other.

- A Knight with *medicine* skill who generates a total of 10 will be able to determine that the Lesser Dean has been dead for two days. An 11 will reveal that the cause of death was a blow to the head, and the knife was stuck in the body after he was dead.

- An *evidence analysis* total of 10 reveals that the body has been moved. There is no way the Lesser Dean could have fallen into the position in which he now rests. Also, there are no signs of a struggle.

Variables

If the Storm Knights wait until later in the day to investigate the address provided by Ramatee, opening the storm grate may attract a shocktrooper patrol. The Storm Knights may be able to *charm* or *persuade* their way out of

the mess, but they will most likely be taken to the nearest headquarters for questioning. They can only leave the headquarters after paying a fine of 10 gold royals each.

If the Storm Knights do not investigate by 2 p.m. the next afternoon, frequent pedestrian complaints will cause the police to investigate. By that time, however, the Sisters of the Serpent will have removed the body (only if they can do it without being seen).

If the Storm Knights decide to investigate the matter no further after discovering that it's a set-up, then assume that Solomon Beguin's plan is successful. They had better be out of Khartoum when Set next aligns.

Flags

If a *Personal Stake* card is played, one of the Knights had enjoyed Hassan's services as an informant in the past, and will be angry at losing so valuable a source of information.

Interlude

The Storm Knights may or may not know that the murder scene in the sewer was bogus. It doesn't matter. Even if they know, they will be unable to find Leisha, who has long since returned to her temple. However, they still have a clue to follow, even if they feel it was planted. Subsequent investigation in a library or hall of records will reveal that the City Director of Waste Management is a man named Alak-Begam.

Before moving to Scene Two, they must have this information. It is likely that the Storm Knights will contact Alak-Begam's office for an appointment. Alak-Begam's secretary (she's *neutral* toward all callers) will answer and explain that he is not in the office today and he is not accepting appointments. If the Knight can prolong the conversation, the secretary will reveal that he has not been in for the last several days due to an illness in the family.

With a successful *persuasion* total of 9, the Knight can convince the secretary to tell him that Alak-Begam will probably attend the charity Masquer-



ade Ball tomorrow night. On a *Superior* or *Spectacular* success, she will also reveal that he is going dressed as a mummy.

Checking local newspapers reveals details of the Masquerade Ball. It is a high society event, but an invitation is not required. Those attending are expected to make a charitable donation to the local Horus Houses. Costumes are required, and several important Khartoum officials are expected to attend. There is a rumor that Overgovernor Natatiri herself may attend (she won't, but Alak-Begam hopes she will).

If the Storm Knights learn about the Charity Masquerade Ball and decide to attend, cut to "Scene Two: Masquerade." If they simply wait in hopes of contacting Alak-Begam sometime after the Ball, cut to Scene Three. In the latter case, they may read in the *Khartoum Chronicle* about the trouble at the Masquerade Ball.

SCENE TWO: Masquerade

The Situation

Standard. As this scene opens, the Storm Knights are entering the charity Masquerade Ball. Entering only requires a donation of at least 30 gold royals (foreign money will not be accepted). A crowd of about 200 guests has gathered.

Read aloud or paraphrase:

After gladly making a donation to benefit the needy of Khartoum, you walk down a wonderfully decorated hallway to a huge, luxurious ballroom. Banners and colorful paper ribbons hang everywhere. The music is inviting and the collection of costumes is delightful. More than 100 people are already mingling and conversing.

The Action

The Storm Knights are free (and encouraged) to mingle among the guests. However, they are likely to be

more interested in the task of finding Alak-Begam. Unfortunately, there are about a dozen people dressed as mummies. Their only option is to talk with every one of them. Knights must generate *persuasion* totals of 8 in each conversation before the person will discuss their "real" selves. All of the mummies are *neutral* save for Alak-Begam, who is *hostile*.

Talking with Alak-Begam

Alak-Begam can be *persuaded* into revealing who he is, but if any questions go further than that, he will react by using the Fire Opal to control the mind of his inquisitor. If he is successful, Alak-Begam forces the Knight to continue to mingle at the party, forget his business, and give himself over to fun until the party is over. Take the appropriate player into another room and explain that only partying interests him at present.

Fellow Storm Knights will doubtlessly be perplexed. If they try to "snap him out of it," give the character one of his "shake off" attempts if he is due any.

Alak-Begam

DEXTERITY 8

Dodge 9, maneuver 9, melee weapons 9, stealth 9

STRENGTH 8

TOUGHNESS 8

PERCEPTION 11

Evidence analysis 12, find 12, scholar (trash management) 14, trick 12

MIND 11

Test 12, willpower 12

CHARISMA 10

Charm 11, persuade 11, taunt 11

SPIRIT 10

Intimidation 11, reality 11

Inclination: Evil

Possibilities: 2

Equipment: Fire Opal (until mid-way through Scene Two)

Description: A native of Core Earth Egypt, Alak-Begam is short but stocky. His cheeks are flabby and jostle whenever he talks.

Events

• **The Dance** — After the Storm Knights have been at the party for about an hour, a young woman dressed as an Egyptian princess organizes a dance. Partners are matched at random, though a Knight who generates a *maneuver* total of 11 may be matched with a partner of his choice. Play of a *Connection* card may mean that the character recognizes the "Egyptian princess" as a past associate and can convince her to create a match of choice.

• **Robbery** — Just as the dancing is winding down, the lights in the ballroom and hallway will suddenly go black. There are screams of confusion in the darkness and the Storm Knights are jostled around as people move about chaotically.

The blackout is cover for Shadowman. He learned that Alak-Begam planned to attend the party and makes an attempt now to steal the Fire Opal from him. See Scene Three for information on how Shadowman figures into the overall story.

Using his special goggles and his power of *darkness* so he will be practically invisible in the darkened room, Shadowman strips off his Phoenician pirate masquerade costume (his Shadowman attire is underneath) and maneuvers through the crowd to Alak-Begam. He will be within a few paces when his timing mechanism cuts off power to the building. The blackout will last for 12 rounds.

Shadowman is able to grab the Fire Opal from Alak-Begam with a *prestidigitation* total of 10 (or 12, if a Knight is holding on to him). Alak-Begam will immediately notice that the item has been taken (any Knight holding him will also realize that something was taken) and he will forget himself and scream, "The Fire Opal!" Any Storm Knights previously controlled by Alak-Begam will regain their right mind at this point.

By this time, Shadowman will have made his escape, vanishing into the night.

Scottie Grant, a.k.a. "Shadowman"

DEXTERITY 11

Acrobatics 12, dodge 15, fire combat 15, lock picking 12, prestidigitation 12, stealth 17, unarmed combat 12



STRENGTH 9

Climbing 10

TOUGHNESS 9**PERCEPTION 10**

Find 11, scholar (security systems)

11, trick 11

MIND 9

Artist (ballet) 10

CHARISMA 10**SPIRIT 8**

Intimidation 9, reality 9

Inclination: Evil**Possibilities:** 11

Powers: *Darkness* (Power Flaw, stymie flaw, triggering condition = if bathed in a large amount of light, i.e. a spotlight or a half-dozen flashlights), and three Super Skills (*dodge* — Power Flaw, roll again vulnerability, triggering condition = whenever Shadowman suffers a light-based attack, i.e. lasers; *fire combat* and *stealth*)

Equipment: K08 pistol, damage value 15, ammo 8, range 3-10/25/60; backpack (contains rope with grappling hook, gas mask, lock picking equipment, crowbar, and extra ammunition); "weird science" gizmo (goggles that grant normal sight in darkness, no penalty to *Perception* or *Dexterity*-related skill values when operating in the dark)

Description: An excellent ballet dancer and sometime jewel thief, Grant was on a dance tour in Egypt when the Possibility Wars began. In the new crime-ridden environment, Grant was able to put his talents to use. He soon realized that others appreciated his skills as well and he now accepts missions from anyone who can pay the asking price. He is a trim and athletic man. His full-body costume is completely black and he has a penchant for wearing black even when "off duty."

Flags

If a *True Identity* card is played, someone at the party recognizes the character as a Storm Knight who has opposed Dr. Mobius in the past. This may mean trouble, or it could mean gaining an ally, depending on who is doing the recognizing.

If a *Mistaken Identity* card is played, some minor official erroneously takes the Knight for a friend from his office.

He may discuss something of great importance (it could serve to set up a future adventure) before realizing his mistake. It's unlikely he will take the matter to the authorities and risk arrest for divulging secrets.

If a *villain setback* appears, Shadowman's escape is delayed for a few rounds and shocktroopers arrive with their flashlights just in time to illuminate the thief as he slips out the window. The Storm Knights will notice that Shadowman slumps and staggers a bit when the beams shine directly on him. The beams also seem able to penetrate the strange darkness that surrounds him.

Variables

If the Storm Knights somehow manage to stop Shadowman's escape (they absolutely cannot prevent him from lifting the Fire Opal from Alak-Begam), then they find that he does not have anything of value on him. He passed it to an accomplice at the party before he tried to flee. Shocktroopers will demand to take custody of him, and he will later escape from them.

If one of the Storm Knights grabs or otherwise "hinders" Alak-Begam during the robbery, the grieving official will assume that the Knight was in league with Shadowman and become an enemy of the Storm Knights. However, if he saw them attempt to halt Shadowman's escape, he is *neutral* toward them.

If the Storm Knights wish to talk to Alak-Begam after the theft, he will refuse, and will go to the shocktroopers for protection if the Knights persist.

Cut to "Scene Three: Horus House Chaos."

SCENE THREE: Horus House Chaos

The Situation

Standard. This scene takes place on the day after the Masquerade Ball. Hoping to convey the appearance of normality, Alak-Begam returns to his office. His secretary will admit only

those with an appointment to see him. When the Storm Knights are shown into the office, read aloud or paraphrase:

Inside the large, cluttered office you find Alak-Begam. He looks very tired and unhappy and is reclining in a large desk chair. His eyes gaze hollowly out the window behind his desk. He barely notices your entry.

The Action

The exact flow of the discussion with Alak-Begam is up to you, but be sure to note his disposition toward the Storm Knights (see "Variables" in Scene Two). See "Flags" below for one idea of when to interrupt the conversation.

If successfully *persuaded* or *intimidated*, Alak-Begam will eventually reveal everything that he knows. He does not know that Solomon Beguin is behind Shadowman's theft of the Fire Opal, but the Storm Knights may get a lead to this effect after they ask when he first used the powers of the Fire Opal. Alak-Begam will think for a moment and respond with surety, "It was right after my meeting with Mr. Beguin." He can elaborate as to the identity of Beguin.

The truth is that Solomon Beguin read Alak-Begam's mind during their meeting about industrial waste disposal and learned about the Fire Opal. Unwilling to arouse suspicions by kidnapping Alak-Begam, Beguin instead hired Shadowman to steal the artifact from the Director. Shadowman was unable to find Alak-Begam prior to the Masquerade Party.

Alak-Begam will eventually admit to the following sequence of events. However, he will alter or omit as many of the incriminating details as possible (i.e. he didn't kill the Lesser Dean, he simply found the Fire Opal in the sewer tunnels.)

- After gaining possession of the opal, he tested its mind control powers on a taxi driver and forced the man to crash into a building.

- When approached and questioned by other mathematicians who were apparently also looking for the opal, he used *mind control* to send them away



with no further interest in seeking it.

•He went to the Masquerade Ball hoping to gain control of the mind of Overgovernor Natatiri. But she did not appear, and then the artifact was stolen from him during the blackout.

The Fire Opal

The Knights can obtain the following information regarding the Fire Opal and its powers either from Alak-Begam, through research at a library, or by generating a *scholar* (realm lore) total of 9:

•A little larger than a walnut, the Fire Opal is so named because of its marvelous red coloring. The opal is a powerful magical artifact that dates back to ancient Egypt and the reign of Pharaoh Ikhnaton, as well as being a Nile eternity shard.

Ikhnaton, or Amenhotep IV, was a religious reformer who outlawed Egyptian polytheism and instituted monotheism in the name of Aton, a sun god similar to Ra. Ikhnaton accepted the Fire Opal as a sign from Aton. After Ikhnaton's death, the Fire Opal was buried with him. It was later stolen from his tomb when a later pharaoh tried to eradicate all evidence of the existence of Ikhnaton. The mysterious gemstone vanished.

•With the coming of the Nile axiom wash, the Fire Opal's powers of mental domination were vastly increased. It confers the pulp power of *mind control*, but at much greater strength than could be purchased by a Nile character. One possibility must be spent to attune a new user to the Fire Opal.

Fire Opal

Value: MIN+15

Range: sight or voice to establish control, unlimited thereafter

Tech Rating: 29

•The possessor of the Fire Opal may attempt to dominate any number of people, providing control is established one target at a time (see below for details of attempting large group control). Control is permanent unless cancelled by the opal's owner, shaken off by the target or the gemstone changes hands.

However, a victim still has the opportunity to "shake off" the effects. Five attempts may be made as with the pulp power — however, for every level of *mind control* success above *Average* achieved using the opal's powers, reduce the number of possible "shake off" attempts by one. To free himself from the opal's influence, a character must generate a *Mind* total against a difficulty number of the the dominator's *mind control* total.

One attempt may be made per day until the character has either broken free or runs out of "shake off" attempts.

•Additionally, the Fire Opal may be used as part of a powerful magical ritual to attempt to take control of entire populations at one time. Treat this effort as a spell with these specifications:

Ritual of Dominance

Skill: *alteration*

Difficulty: 25

Number of Planets: 3, but see below

Influence: Isis, Osiris, Nut, Anubis, Set

Description: This ritual may only be performed when the planet Set is naturally in alignment (see the Planetary Cycles option rules on page 86 of *The Nile Sourcebook*). Therefore, the ritual may only be performed once every 73 days.

The value of the result of the *alteration* ritual indicates the measure of the population (must be within 100 miles) that is immediately dominated by the power of the Fire Opal. "Shake off" rules still apply, and each controlled person is allowed three attempts.

Once a population has been dominated in this fashion, the owner of the Fire Opal may issue commands via a sort of collective mind. Those controlled may be allowed to continue business as usual, or they can be called to come to a complete stop. The only way to graduate these two extremes is to issue specific commands (e.g. "Continue as normal, but leave 50 percent of your income at the nearest gin joint, and do not steal the money left by others. All gin joint owners must arrange to deliver this money to King Tut Street ...")

Only people of Evil inclination can utilize the horrible powers of the Fire Opal, but anyone can learn a synonymous folk knowledge by studying it.

Event

At a crucial point of Alak-Begam's story, his secretary will buzz him and tell him that he has a call. Alak-Begam will excuse himself for a moment and take the call. The conversation lasts only a moment, and the only thing that Alak-Begam says is, "Alak-Begam here," when he first picks up the receiver.

The call is from Solomon Beguin. The industrialist is trying to cover his tracks and so involves Alak-Begam in an experimental use of the powers of the Fire Opal. He attempts to take control of Alak-Begam's mind over the phone, and is successful.

After taking the call, Alak-Begam will stand up and leave the office. He will not respond to any questions. If someone stands in his way, Alak-Begam will try to walk around him. If there is no way around, he will attempt to force his way past.

If restrained, Alak-Begam will struggle to escape for the next half hour or until exhausted or unconscious. After the half hour has elapsed, or whenever Alak-Begam next awakens, he will leap to his feet and attempt to jump out the fifth story window of his office (be sure to give him a chance to "shake off" the *mind control*). If he succeeds in killing himself, cut to "Variables" for what happens next.

If the Storm Knights allow Alak-Begam to walk out of the building and follow him, cut to "At the Horus House."

At the Horus House

Alak-Begam leads the Knights to a nearby Horus House. Immediately after contacting Alak-Begam, Solomon Beguin entered this Horus House and mentally dominated everyone, except an employee/observer who he earlier planted among the down-and-out people, inside. They have all been instructed to wait until Alak-Begam



enters and then kill him. Unless the Storm Knights stop them, they will do just that.

Beguín has since departed. There are 10 patrons, three Horus House employees, and the Horus House administrator in the building. They will throw cans of food and attack with kitchen implements. All of the people present in the Horus House have attributes of 8 across the board and are not possibility-rated. The patrons will defend themselves against the Storm Knights, but they are primarily interested in attacking Alak-Begam.

Solomon Beguín's plant will remain in the back of the pack, especially if the Knights are defending the City Director. If a Knight generates a *Perception* total of 10, the plant's charade will be obvious. He's a fair actor, but his heart just isn't in it.

If Alak-Begam is saved, allow him to "shake off" the *mind control* so he can tell the rest of his story to the Storm Knights.

Flags

Have Alak-Begam receive Beguín's phone call as soon as the Storm Knights are about to discover a very important piece of information, i.e. that he first tried the power of the Fire Opal after returning from a meeting with Solomon Beguín of Emco Industries.

If an *Idea* card is played, a Knight might check the Alak-Begam's desk calendar. The last entry is a meeting three days ago with Emco Industries president Solomon Beguín.

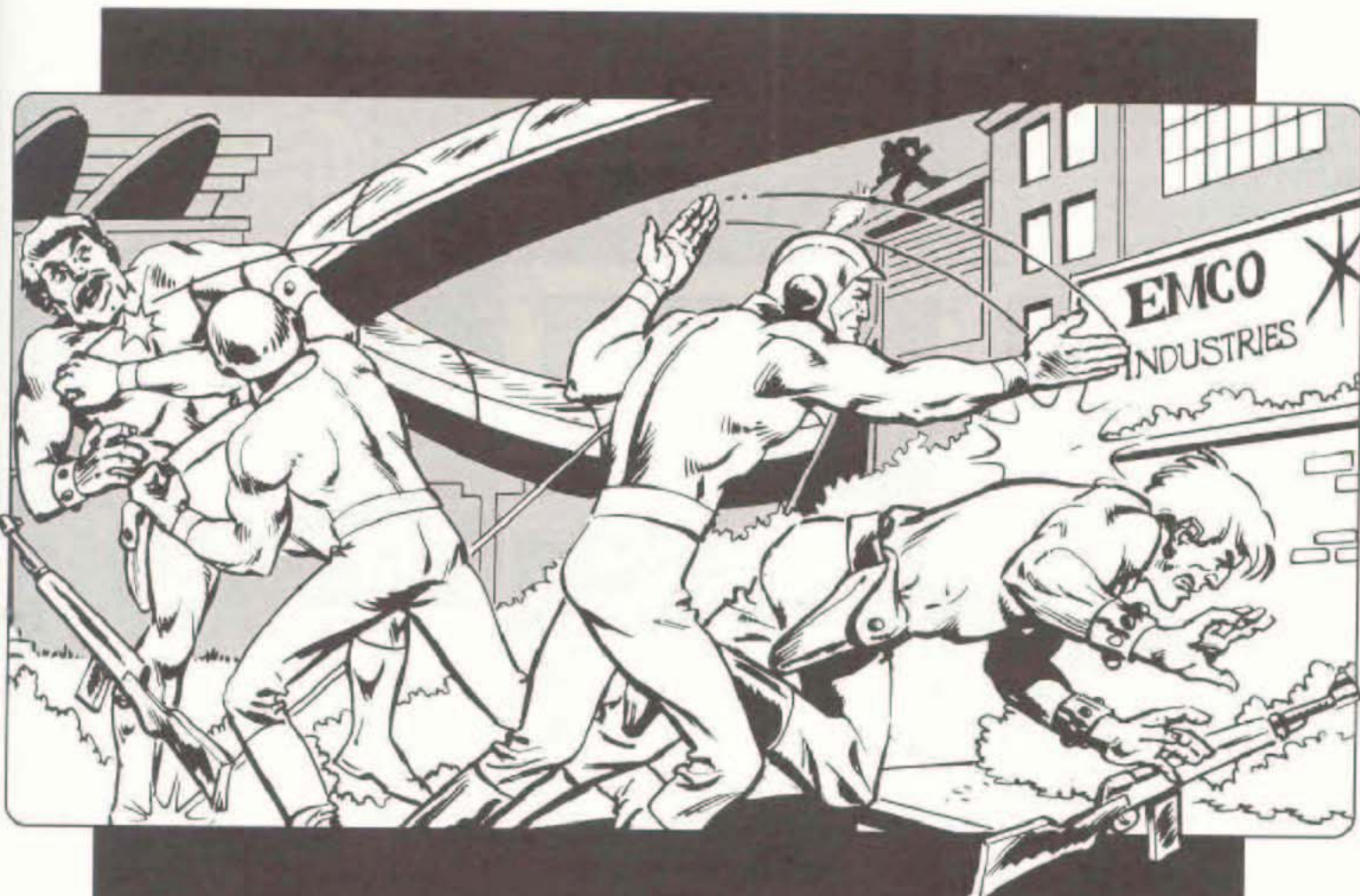
Variables

One of the Storm Knights may insist on answering the phone when it rings in Alak-Begam's office. If so, Solomon Beguín will use *mind control* on that character and command him to pass the phone to Alak-Begam. Both will then be commanded to walk to the Horus House.

If the Storm Knights are absolutely unable to convince Alak-Begam to relate any information to them, or he is killed in the Horus House incident before he can tell them the whole story, have a survivor at the Horus House shake off Beguín's domination and say, "Where'd Beguín go? I'd hoped that he'd get caught in this mess." It turns out that this particular charity case was driven out of business by Beguín. He remembers seeing Beguín enter the building shortly before the chaos broke out.

If Alak-Begam succeeds in killing himself at his office, his secretary walks in saying, "Here's that waste disposal report from your meeting with Mr. Beguín a few days ago ..."

By now, the Storm Knights should have a fairly good idea that Solomon Beguín of Emco Industries is somehow involved with the theft of the Fire Opal. Their next logical course of action is to investigate the grounds of his



plant in Omdurman (part of Khartoum).

Cut to "Scene Four: Assault on Emco."

SCENE FOUR: Assault on Emco

The Situation

Standard. This scene opens with the Storm Knights outside the fenced perimeter of Emco Industries late in the evening. Read aloud or paraphrase:

Emco Industries was easy enough to find. Though the company has facilities throughout Egypt, the plant in Omdurman is relatively small. From your position of cover across the street, you see the 3.5 meter high security fence that surrounds the plant and you see two guards on duty in the small office beside the main entrance.

If there is a mathematician among the Knights, read:

The air is brisk and it chills you on this night when Set moves into alignment.

The Action

This is a relatively straightforward scene. The Storm Knights must get into the Emco Industries complex, by force or through stealth. They may speak with the guards at the gate, but they are under strict orders from Beguin not to admit anyone.

In addition to the normal security, Solomon Beguin has hired a small task force of mercenaries to guard the plant this night of Set's alignment so that he may complete his ritual without interruption. Of course, Beguin has no idea that a group of Storm Knights are on his trail. There are a total of 10 guards and mercenaries currently on the grounds of the complex.

The Storm Knights will have to generate *stealth* totals every time they move from one location to another. Use the lowest *stealth* total among the Knights as the difficulty number of the guards' *Perception* checks when attempting to spot the intruders.

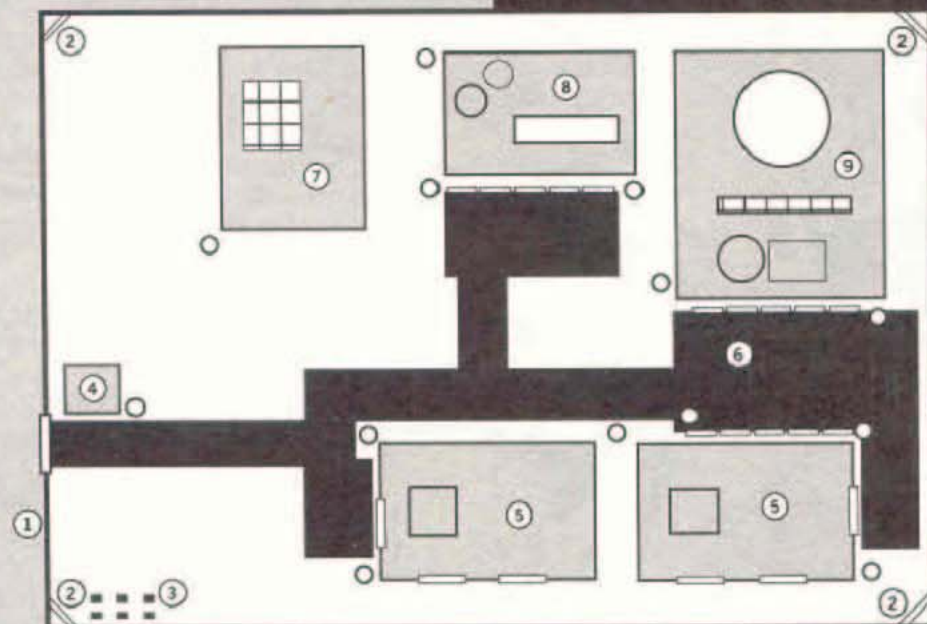
Emco Industries Locations

1. Security Fence. This wire-mesh fence is 3.5 meters high. The top of the fence is laced with barbed wire to prevent interlopers from scaling it.

2. Mirrors. In each of the four corners of the fence is bolted what appears to be a sign reading "Property of Emco Industries, No Trespassing." In actuality, the signs are very special mirrors developed using "weird science." The mirrors are used to reflect a small burst of invisible laser light around the perimeter of the grounds. Pulses are fired five times per second. The timing of the device is such that each consecutive mirrors "knows" when the next laser pulse should reach it. If the pulse is not received (i.e., it was



Fire Over Khartoum
Emco Industries



1. Security Fence
2. Mirrors
3. Pulse Generator
4. Guard Building
5. Product Warehouse
6. Parking Lot
7. Administration Building
8. Inventory Warehouse
9. Production Plant
- Street Lights

EMCO
Industries



blocked by someone moving across its path), then an alarm sounds and the plant's security squad is alerted.

The mirror by the Pulse Generator absorbs the laser instead of reflecting it. Another pulse is fired as soon as the southeastern mirror absorbs a shot.

3. Pulse Generator. Almost entirely recessed into the ground below the southeastern mirror is the Pulse Generator. It fires the laser pulse that reflects around the perimeter.

4. Guard Building. Two security guards are usually on duty here. Solomon Beguin assumes that if there are two on duty, then at least one will be awake at all times. They will both be alert the night the Storm Knights attempt to enter the grounds of the plant.

When the guards open the gate, they are trained to first stick out a small mirror that deflects the perimeter laser straight into the sky. This also causes the a new pulse to be fired. In this way, the alarm will not sound when a vehicle pulls into Emco Industries.

5. Product Warehouses. These large warehouses hold the goods produced by Emco Industries. Each warehouse has three loading bays.

6. Parking Lot. Heavy vehicles (trucks, forklifts, etc.) are parked here when they are not in use. A few vehicles will be here the night of the ritual.

7. Administration Building. This area houses all of the white-collar employees of Emco Industries. The managers, etc. all have offices here. This is a two-story building. Solomon Beguin has a small office on the top floor. When the plant was first constructed, the basement of this building was used as an inventory warehouse. That area has since been closed off, but may still be reached by using a service elevator on the first level. A unique key (carried by Beguin) is required to unlock the control panel in this elevator, but a Knight may bypass the electronic lock with a *Mind* or *science* total of 11. If the Storm Knights take the elevator down to the old warehouse, cut immediately to Scene Five.

8. Inventory Warehouse. The raw materials necessary to manufacture electronic goods are stored in here for use in the production plant.

9. Production Plant. This large area is filled with criss-crossing assembly lines. A small cafeteria, restrooms, and a time clock room are also in here.

Events

If the Storm Knights are detected while entering the grounds (by sight or alarm), the mercenaries that Solomon Beguin hired will open fire. They are stationed on the ground and atop the various buildings of the plant.

Guards/Mercenaries (10)

DEXTERITY 10

Dodge 11, fire combat 13, maneuver 11, melee weapons 11, unarmed combat 11

STRENGTH 10

TOUGHNESS 10

PERCEPTION 10

Find 11, tracking 11, trick 11

MIND 8

Test 9

CHARISMA 10

Charm 11, persuasion 11, taunt 11

SPIRIT 8

Intimidation 10, reality 9

Inclination: Evil

Possibilities: 1

Equipment: bullet-proof vest, armor value TOU+6/16; KK81 semi-automatic rifle, damage value 19, ammo 24, range 3-40/400/1k

Variables

If the Storm Knights decide to visit Emco Industries during the daytime — maybe right after they get the tip from Alak-Begam — they will be unable to secure an appointment with Beguin and will not even be allowed on the grounds of the plant. Beguin shut down all the machinery today and only the administrative staff is working.

This scene ends as soon as the Storm Knights reach the warehouse level of the administration building. Cut to "Scene Five: The Ritual."

SCENE FIVE: The Ritual

The Situation

Dramatic. This is the climactic scene of the entire adventure. The pace should be fast and furious as the Storm Knights work to protect their minds from domination and their bodies from accurately-fired bullets. They must stop Solomon Beguin from completing his devastating ritual which would allow him to mentally dominate the entire population of Khartoum.

Read aloud or paraphrase:

The ride down in the elevator is shaky and noisy, but after a moment it comes to a stop. The doors creak open and suddenly that little noise seems too loud. After the doors part enough for you to look out, you find that you were right. At the far end of the large, dark room stands a giant of a man holding a fiery red opal and surrounded by glowing candles. He lifts his head from his work, sees you by the light of the elevator and laughs.

The Action

You should flip the first card immediately after reading the text above. Use your *gamemaster fiat* power to make sure that the villains have the initiative early in the fight. The dim glow of the candles provides *partial* concealment to everyone in the room.

Shadowman is also in this room and he will attempt to protect Beguin from attack. Initially, Shadowman is in the rafters along the ceiling of the old warehouse, but he will drop to the floor to fight. He will use his extraordinary *fire combat* skill to attack the Storm Knights. A combination of the dark room, Shadowman's *darkness* power, and his super *dodge* skill will make him tough to stop.

If the Storm Knights try to use the cover of darkness to fire at Beguin, then Shadowman will turn the lights on during his the next round. Beguin had very dim lights installed in the basement so he would be able to see but



Shadowman would not be seriously affected by the lights.

Solomon Beguin's first priority will be to cast a *ward off good* spell. This ward will be effective everywhere in the basement warehouse. Thereafter, Beguin will use the one-on-one *mind control* powers of the Fire Opal to attempt to dominate the Storm Knights and set them fighting each other.

If the Knights have the use of an *Opponent Fails* card to keep the Fire Opal's powers at bay, Shadowman will signal for any remaining guards to come to the scene and attack the Knights.

At some point during the struggle, Beguin, in true pulp villain style, will explain his plan to the Knights. Read aloud or paraphrase:

Beguin's smile is an evil one. "You fools thought you could best me — but soon I will rule not only your minds, but those of all Khartoum! This place and all its people will be mine to command, and then the mighty Dr. Mobius will have to bow before me and offer a share of his power. If he refuses, I will set this city against him, and rule the Empire he has built!"

As soon as half the Storm Knights are under his control, he will return his attention to performing the ritual. In order to complete the ritual, Beguin must be able to act uninterrupted for five consecutive rounds. He is only interrupted if he is knocked down, knocked out, or takes a wound. The expenditure of possibility points to avoid injury does mean he can continue uninterrupted.

Flags

If a Storm Knight with the *mathematics* skill plays a *Martyr* card, then he can sacrifice his life to ruin the alignment of the planets that Beguin establishes by completing the ritual. By expending his life energy, the Knight alters the outcome of Beguin's work. The backlash from this powerful spell will kill anyone who interferes, i.e. Beguin and the Storm Knight mathematician.

Variables

If a guard should escape to warn Beguin of the Knights' attack he will be prepared with a *ward off good* spell when he confronts the Storm Knights. Shadowman will also have had time to turn on the dim lights.

If Solomon Beguin successfully completes the ritual, then the fate of the Storm Knights is determined by whether or not they can "shake off" the effects of the mind control. The expenditure of a possibility would give the character an immediate opportunity to try and free himself.

Solomon Beguin

DEXTERITY 9

Dodge 10, maneuver 10

STRENGTH 9

TOUGHNESS 9

PERCEPTION 10

Alteration magic 12, evidence analysis 11, find 11, mathematics 13, scholar (master criminal) 12, trick 11

MIND 15

CHARISMA 9

Charm 10, persuasion 10

SPIRIT 8

Intimidation 9, reality 9

Inclination: Evil

Possibilities: 15

Powers: Super Attribute (MIN+3 — Power Flaw, shock flaw, triggering condition = high-pitched sounds), and Mind Reading, value MIN+5

Spells: *contemplation* (cast every morning, normally to help a Mind Reading roll, but on the day of the ritual will be used to add a roll to that total), and *ward off good* (see pages 89-91 of *The Nile Sourcebook*)

Equipment: Fire Opal

Description: Beguin is a huge man, close to 2.5 meters tall and weighing 600 pounds. Originally from Terra, he is a megalomaniac who turned a small family inheritance into a mighty industrial fortune, thanks to his mind-

reading abilities and his ruthless nature. He tries to act like a blue-blooded gentleman, but is a brute at heart and cannot hide his sadistic love of dominating others.

Aftermath

If Beguin is able to successfully complete his ritual, Khartoum will fall under his control. Any surviving Storm Knights will have to shake off his control or become his personal slaves. How long Beguin will be able to maintain control is another matter — both Dr. Mobius and the Sisters of the Serpent will have an interest in assassinating him and getting their hands on the Fire Opal. In the chaos that would ensue from such a three-way battle, it is possible that the opal could once again be lost.

If the Storm Knights defeat Beguin, Shadowman will attempt to grab the opal. He will be unable to complete the ritual (not having the required magic skill), but could attune it to himself to make use of its power.

If the Storm Knights gain possession of the opal, they will be unable to use it as long as their inclination is Good. They can, however, take it somewhere where Mobius would be unable to get his hands on it. It is likely that the Sisters of the Serpent would be trailing them, and would make an attempt to steal the stone.

Awards

If the Storm Knights stop Beguin and recover the opal, award them 12 Possibilities.

If the Knights defeat Beguin but Shadowman escapes with the opal, award them six Possibilities.

If the Knights fail to stop Beguin and Khartoum falls under his control, they do not receive any Possibilities.



Breaking New Ground

Prologue

Barr Kat sat quietly, listening to the beating of his heart, the only sound that broke the silence in the cave. His prayers had been answered, answered by Rec Pakken, the Darkness Device of Baruk Kaah, Saar of the Edeinos and High Lord of Takta Ker. Soon the gospog would be harvested, and then the march could begin, the march that would expand the domain of Baruk Kaah.

But before that could happen, he had to lead his restan into the land of the dead to plant a new stelae, the artifacts which held within them both the power of Rec Pakken and the soul of Lanala, goddess of Keta Kalles. Tonight the edeinos would raid the encampment of the dead and carry away sacrifices to Rec Pakken, that it might bless the stelae with the essence of Lanala.

Baar Kat picked up his ceremonial dagger, that which had been given to him by Rec Pakken, and prepared for the evening to come ...

The Major Beat

"Breaking New Ground" is a one-act adventure set in the primitive reality of the Living Land. The adventure takes place in the Eastern Land, specifically, the region of Ohio, Kentucky and Tennessee, parts of which have been altered into the Living Land, and parts which remain Core Earth dominant. As much of the adventure involves travel through the Living Land, it is recommended that the gamemaster have access to a copy of *The Living Land Sourcebook* while preparing to run this adventure. "Breaking New Ground" can be used as a stand-alone adventure, or as part of a continuing campaign set either

within the Living Land, or in the expansive setting of the Possibility Wars.

While stopping over in the resistance community of Liberty, Ohio, the Storm Knights encounter a realm runner, who warns of ravagons some ten miles to the southeast. As he finishes recounting the assault, a group of edeinos warriors suddenly attack the camp.

After driving the edeinos back, the Storm Knights learn that four resistance community residents are missing. Reggie Wyckoff, the leader of Liberty, asks the Storm Knights to raid the edeinos camp and rescue the captives.

When they arrive at the camp, the Knights learn that the captives are being readied for a ceremonial ritual used in the creation of stelae. They also discover the existence of a large, heavily guarded gospog field. Finally, their raid yields the information that a restan has recently departed for the Edgar Evins Rustic State Park in Tennessee, with the aim of planting a new stelae there.

The Storm Knights must pursue the restan through the Living Land to prevent them from accomplishing their goal. Once they reach the burial site, they must challenge the restan and uproot the stelae if they do not wish to see another section of the country fall to the invaders' reality.

Adventure Background

In the initial weeks of the invasion, Baruk Kaah used all of his existing stelae to create the boundaries of what is now the Living Land. His realm could grow no larger until he could produce more stelae. For this reason, he gave a group of gotaks the task of creating more stelae, which would later



be energized by his Darkness Device, to serve as new boundaries for his primitive realm.

He also charged these gotaks with the task of maintaining the gospog field located near the area which would soon fall under Takta Ker axioms. These gospog would serve as expendable troops in the march across the newly acquired territory. The gotaks have been stationed at a gospog field 10 miles from the Liberty, Ohio resistance community. It is from there that these priests of the dead, led by Barr Kat, expect to obtain the human sacrifices to Rec Pakken needed to create Living Land stelae.

SCENE ONE: Liberty, Ohio

The Situation

Standard. The Storm Knights arrive at the resistance community of Liberty, Ohio, just in time to counter an edeinos attack.

Read aloud or paraphrase:

You sit at a table across from Reggie Wyckoff, the leader of the Liberty resistance community. Since your arrival this afternoon, you've learned a great deal about what it means to live within the boundaries of Baruk Kaah's primitive reality. The Deep Mist which surrounds the encampment and pervades all of the Living Land gives you the feeling of being someplace else, someplace you'd rather not be.

The Action

* The Storm Knights arrived at Liberty four hours ago, and are just finishing their evening meal. Among the people seated at the table are Reggie Wyckoff, Raymond Huntington, leader of a smaller resistance group out of Lancaster that has recently come to Liberty, and Amanda Mercer, a very attractive woman who seems none too impressed with the Storm Knights. During and after the meal, the people seated at the table inform the Storm

Knights of some of the recent events which have happened in this area of the Living Land. These include:

- With the help of the Uk Trakka tribe, the members of Liberty have located two stelae, but have no idea how to remove them.

- To the southeast, there have been rumors of edeinos activity. Realm runners passing through have reported sighting several hunting parties, but thus far no one has been attacked.

If you are running a Living Land campaign, this scene provides an opportunity to give the players clues regarding possible future events in the campaign. Feel free to add whatever news and events you feel appropriate.

Event

At some point during the dinner conversation, a realm runner bursts into the room. Read aloud or paraphrase:

As you finish the meal before you, the door of the airtight dining hall opens to reveal a ragged looking man, nearly on the verge of collapse. Reggie Wyckoff jumps up from his seat, shouting "Tim, my God, what's happened to you?"

The ragged looking man is Tim Samuels, a realm runner who frequents Liberty on his treks across the Living Land. Samuels is suffering from serious wounds which he received during an assault on his rig by a trio of ravagons. Once his wounds have been tended to, Samuels explains what happened to him:

"About ten miles to the southeast, they came outta nowhere. Three ravagons. Big ones, too. They swooped down and began to tear my rig to shreds. I just managed to shake 'em when my truck began to lose it. I had to leave the rig about three miles down the way, and hoof it from there. If I were you Reggie, I'd send some scouts to see where they came from before they and whatever friends they may have decide to drop by for a visit!"

As Tim finishes his story, a guard bursts into the dining hall shouting, "We're under attack! Edeinos in the compound!"

Edeinos Assault

The group that is attacking the camp is comprised of 15 Edeinos warriors, 11 on the ground and four in the air atop lakten. Among the ground troops are three gotaks, who have performed the miracles *increased toughness* and *see through mist* on all of the edeinos present (see pages 23-25 of the *Torg World Book*). The purpose of this attack is to obtain humans to be used as sacrifices to Rec Pakken in the ritual which creates stelae. Each of the four mounted edeinos have been ordered to grab one human and return to the tribe's camp. Once that has been accomplished, the remaining edeinos will retreat into the forest and make their way back to their camp.

Edeinos Warriors (12)

See page 34 of the *Torg Adventure Book*.

Possibilities: 2

Equipment: hrocktspears, damage value STR+3/12, range 5/10/15

Edeinos Gotaks (3)

DEXTERITY 10

Dodge 11, missile weapons 11

STRENGTH 10

TOUGHNESS 10

PERCEPTION 8

Language 9, tracking 9, trick 9

MIND 9

Survival 10, test 11, willpower 10

CHARISMA 8

Taunt 9

SPIRIT 11

Faith (Keta Kalles/Baruk Kaah) 12, focus 14, intimidation 12, reality 12

Possibilities: one per Storm Knight

Natural Tools: claws, damage value STR+4/14; teeth, damage value STR+2/12; tail, damage value STR+1/11

Equipment: hrockt spear, damage value STR+3/13

Miracles: *cause pain, increased toughness, heightened sight, see through mist, intense fear*





Lakten (4)

See page 25 of the *Torg World Book*

In the first round of combat, each of the edeinos ground troops will throw a hrockt spear at either a Storm Knight or a resistance member, but no Storm Knight will be targeted more than once per round for the duration of the fight. Each edeinos carries two hrocktspears. After both have been used, a warrior will attack whoever remains standing using their *unarmed combat* skill.

The gotaks will begin by casting *cause pain* on their targets. If the need arises, they will then use *intense fear* to cause any remaining targets to flee in terror.

At the end of every other round of combat, one of the airborne edeinos will have successfully grabbed a victim. This means that by the end of the eighth round, the edeinos will have captured four humans and will turn and head for the forest. If one of the airborne edeinos should happen to be

killed before it can capture its victim, a team of two edeinos ground troops will grab the victim instead.

There are 20 members of the Liberty community who are capable of fighting the edeinos.

Reggie Wyckoff

DEXTERITY 12

Beast riding 13, dodge 13, fire combat 15, unarmed combat 13

STRENGTH 9

TOUGHNESS 10

PERCEPTION 8

Find 9, tracking 9

MIND 8

Survival 10

CHARISMA 8

SPIRIT 11

Faith (Lutheran) 13, intimidation 13, reality 13

Possibilities: 9

Equipment: .45 Colt Auto, damage value 16, ammo 7, range 3-10/15/40; Savage 77E, damage value 18, ammo 5, range 3-15/40/60

Description: Wyckoff's most obvious trait is his stubbornness — he refused to leave his home after the invasion, and set up a farming community in an isolated spot. Since that time, he has befriended members of the Uk Trakka edeinos tribe and protected them from Core Earthers out for revenge, all the while guarding his people from Spartans and Baruk Kaah's edeinos.

Standard Liberty Resident

DEXTERITY 8

Beast riding 9, dodge 9, fire combat 9, melee weapons 10, unarmed combat 9

STRENGTH 9

TOUGHNESS 9

PERCEPTION 8

Find 9, first aid 9, tracking 9

MIND 8

Survival 11, test 9

CHARISMA 7

Charm 8, persuasion 8

SPIRIT 7

Intimidation 8



Possibility Potential: some (55)

Equipment: .45 Colt Auto, damage value 16, ammo 7, range 3-10/15/40; club, damage value STR+3/12; spear, damage value STR+4/13, range 3-5/25/40

While running this scene, remember that the Deep Mist prevents the Storm Knights from seeing objects more than 10 meters away with any degree of clarity. At ranges greater than 10 meters, all attacks are made as though the target has *medium* concealment (+5 to the difficulty of hitting a target). Attacks made at more than twice that range (20 meters) are resolved as if the target enjoyed *high* concealment (+10 to the difficulty of hitting).

Attempting to hit an airborne edeinos adds +3 to the difficulty number of the relevant *Dexterity*-based skill.

After the edeinos have either retreated or have been defeated, the Storm Knights discover that four Liberty residents are missing, including Amanda Mercer. Wyckoff will inform them that he saw one of the mounted edeinos swoop down and grab her, but he was unable to bring down the rider for fear of hitting Amanda. Wyckoff will suggest that there may be a connection with the attack on Samuels, and the realm runner will agree to lead the Knights to where he was assaulted.

Flags

If a *hero setback* appears during the fight, the three ravagons who attacked Samuels earlier arrive and help cover the edeinos' retreat. If this happens, Samuels will notice them and identify them as the ones who attacked his rig.

If a *Romance* card is played, a male Storm Knight falls for Amanda Mercer, or a female Storm Knight falls for Tim Samuels.

If a *Nemesis* card is played, a Storm Knight will have encountered one of the three edeinos gotaks in the past, and have reason to hate him intensely.

Variables

If it looks as though the Storm Knights will be able to defeat the edeinos before they can capture the four victims, have the ravagons arrive as described in the "Flags" section above.

If the Storm Knights refuse to try and rescue the victims, they will no longer be welcome in Liberty. Word of their cowardice will spread throughout the Living Land and the Core Earth United States, and they will find it extremely difficult to obtain supplies or information in those regions from now on.

Cut to "Scene Two: Rescue!"

SCENE TWO: Rescue!

The Situation

Standard. The Storm Knights have traveled from Liberty to the edeinos camp where the captured Liberty residents are being held. (If you wish, you can use some of the guidelines in Scene Three and the *Living Land Sourcebook* to run the journey, but ideally this scene should simply begin with the Knights at the camp.

Read aloud or paraphrase:

Your trip through the Living Land took a good four hours, and it is now close to midnight. Deep inside you worry about what may have been done to the captives in all this time. As you near the spot where Samuels' rig was attacked by the ravagons, you hear the sounds of edeinos chanting. You draw nearer and notice the light of torches up ahead. The Deep Mist prevents any further reconnaissance from this distance. You'll have to move closer if you want to find your compatriots.

The Action

The edeinos camp is populated by approximately 300 edeinos, 20 stalengers, 10 benthe, and 50 human Jakatts, and is also home to a large

gospog field (first planting). It is doubtful that the Knights could successfully carry out a frontal assault on the camp. They will have to rely on stealth and speed to rescue the captives, and they have one advantage—the great majority of the camp's inhabitants are involved in a ritual expressing their gratitude to Lanala for the successful capture of the dead ones.

During their reconnaissance of the camp, the Storm Knights will discover that the entire perimeter is "mined" with pain sacks (damage value 12). To notice the pain sacks requires a *find* or *Perception* total of 10. If any of the Storm Knights should trigger a pain sack, the entire camp will be alerted to their presence and a large group of edeinos (20 or so) will investigate.

(The Knights may set off the sacks as a distraction—while the edeinos search for an intruder near the perimeter, the party could sneak in and rescue the captives.)

Scouting around the camp requires *stealth* totals of 10, with failure resulting in that Storm Knight causing enough noise that a small group of edeinos will investigate the disturbance. Searching the area (see the map on page 59) will reveal the location of the captives as well as that of the gospog field. The humans are being held on the far side of the camp, where they are guarded by six edeinos and two benthe. The humans are also bound by vines (*Toughness* 8).

On a *Perception* total of 9, the Knights will notice that the three ravagons who attacked Samuels (and possibly Liberty as well) are watching the edeinos' ceremony with seeming impatience.

Event

On a *Perception* total of 10, the Knights notice a small group of edeinos standing apart from the rest of the tribe. The ritual of sacrifice is beginning, with the first victim a realm runner captured by the ravagons (a fate Samuels barely escaped).

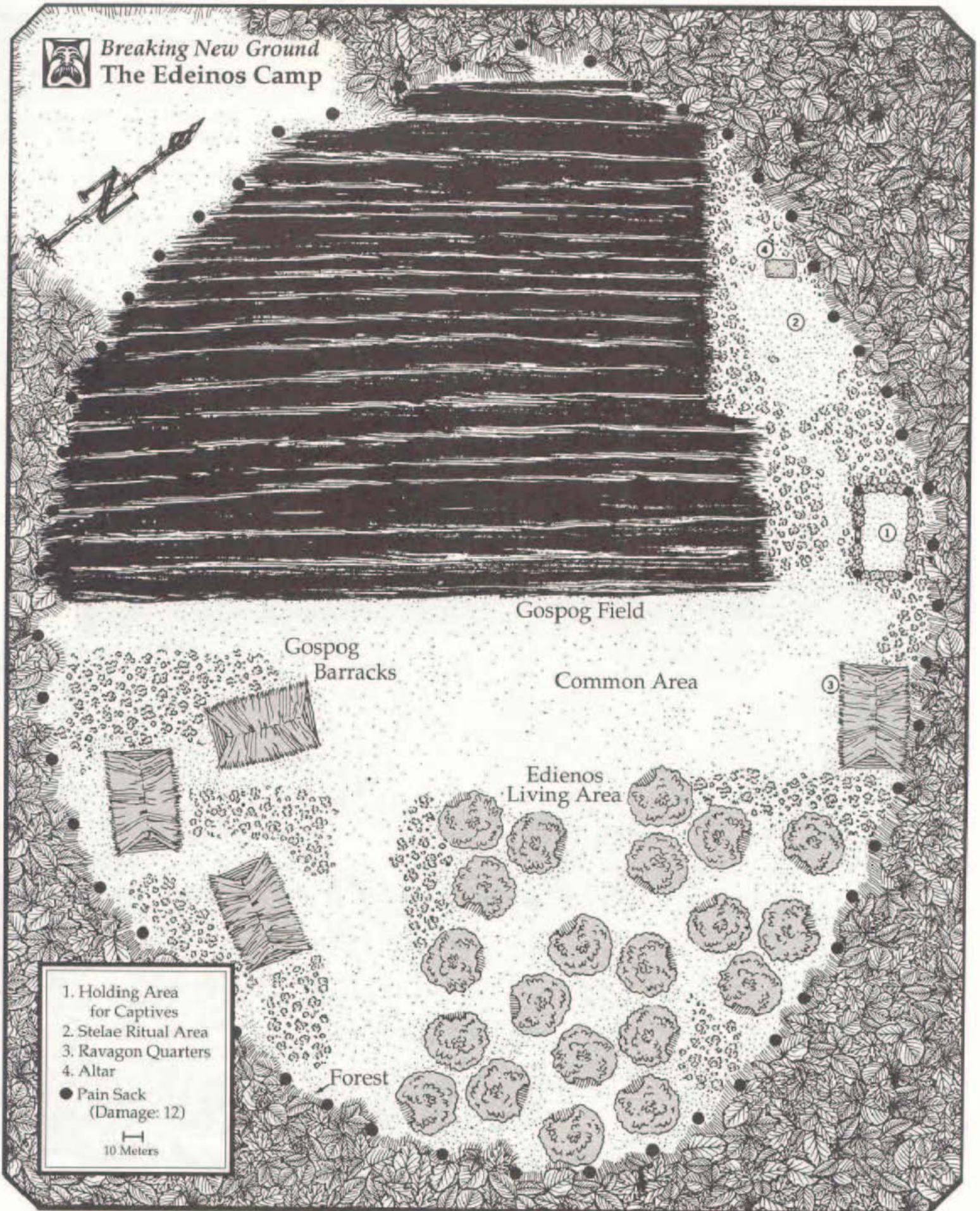
Read aloud or paraphrase:

Through the Deep Mist you can see the silhouette of an edeinos standing at an altar and wielding a dagger. Bound to the altar is a hu-





Breaking New Ground The Edeinos Camp



man, and as you watch in horror, the edeinos utters a few words and plunges the knife into the struggling figure.

While this is happening, any Knight who generates a *language* total of 12 can translate the gotak's phrase to mean, "To the glory of Baruk Kaah, and the power of Rec Pakken!"

Liberty Restored

After the Storm Knights have found the captives and made their way to the holding area, they must free the humans, hopefully without alerting the edeinos tribe.

The Knights will have to approach the captives, free them from their bonds and then escape. Before this can be accomplished, the edeinos must be eliminated as quickly and as quietly as possible. The edeinos guards are not possibility-rated. If any of them manage to escape from the Knights, they

will shout a warning to the rest of the tribe.

Due to the soothing effects of the benthe, the captives will not be in any hurry to leave the camp and will in fact resist efforts to rescue them. The only viable method of convincing them to leave is through *persuasion*, specifically a total of 12 for each captive. If any of the prisoners remains unconvinced of the wisdom of leaving, the Knights can render him unconscious and carry him out. They will have six rounds to convince the prisoners to leave before the gotaks arrive to get the next victim for sacrifice.

In the event that the Storm Knights are discovered, they will be attacked by groups of edeinos, each made up of 15 warriors. The groups will attack at intervals of two minutes (every 12 combat rounds). The Knights must attempt to escape into the forest — once in the woods, *stealth* totals of 11 will be required to keep the edeinos from spotting them (unconscious prisoners do not have to generate to-

tals. Assume conscious resistance community members have *stealth* at 10). The Knights may also use the torches in the edeinos camp to set the woods ablaze and cover their escape.

After successfully evading the pursuing edeinos, the Storm Knights will have no difficulty returning to Liberty. Once there, the rescued humans will recover from the benthe's manipulations and one of them will tell the Knights that she overheard a gotak giving orders to a small group of edeinos, stalengers and benthe. He was telling them to travel southwest for 20 days until they reached the "burial site." Then the gotak handed them a sack that looked very much like the stelae resistance community members have discovered in the past.

If a Knight generates a *scholar* (realm lore) total of 10, he will realize that the small group must have been a restan, one of the units in Baruk Kaah's army charged with planting new stelae. If none of the Knights do possess the required skill, a member of the Uk



Trakka tribe can inform them of this.

On a *find* total of 8, the Knights discover that the gotak's directions, matched against a map of the area, indicate that the restan's destination is Edgar Evins Rustic State Park in Tennessee. If the Knights wish to prevent the planting of the stelae, it is to there they must go.

Variables

If the Storm Knights were unable to rescue the captives, they will be sacrificed to Rec Pakken. The Knights can return to Liberty, where they will learn that a restan group was spotted departing the edeinos camp. The Knights can attempt to capture one of the edeinos from the camp and intimidate him into revealing the restan's destination.

Cut to "Scene Three: Journey Into Fear."

SCENE THREE: Journey Into Fear

The Situation

Standard. The Storm Knights travel through the primitive reality of the Living Land in a race against time to stop the restan from planting a new stelae in Tennessee. Along the way they encounter many of the perils that are part and parcel of this bizarre realm.

Read aloud or paraphrase:

You said your goodbyes to the residents of Liberty mere days ago, but already it feels like years since you last saw them. The jungle that makes up much of the Living Land seems to have closed in around you, and the only sounds to be heard are your footfalls in the soft earth, the labored breathing of your comrades in the hot, sticky air, and now and then the far-away screech of a bargon.

The Action

This scene consists entirely of the Knights' trek through the Living Land

and ends when they reach Edgar Evins State Park. Of the events listed below, only the ravagon attack need be run—the others are optional.

The Storm Knights should have no vehicles in which to travel. If any of them possess a vehicle, it can have been damaged in the attack on Liberty, and there was not sufficient time to repair it before the Knights had to set out.

Before the Knights left Liberty, they had the chance to stock up on supplies for the trip and recover from any damage they took in Scenes One and Two. On foot, the trip will involve five days travel through the Living Land and another 15 through Core Earth. Feel free to compress time if the players are getting bored, and use the events below to keep things moving. (Once the Knights arrive in Core Earth, they can stop and acquire a vehicle if they wish to.)

It will be easier traveling for the edeinos, who are able to navigate easily through the Deep Mist and ignore many of the dangers of the jungle. Make sure that the restan arrives at the burial site slightly before the Knights do.

The following events can occur while the Knights are traveling through the Living Land:

• **Getting Lost**—Between the Deep Mist and the fact that compasses do not work in the Living Land, it is extremely easy for the Knights to become lost on their journey. To find their way, the Knights must make *direction sense* rolls (*direction sense*, a *Perception*-based skill, can be used unskilled, but a -3 is applied to *Perception* when this is done). No matter how often they get lost, though, make sure that the Knights arrive at the burial site in time to witness the planting ceremony.

For further information on *direction sense* and its uses, see pages 66-67 of *The Living Land Sourcebook*.

• **Uk Trakka**—The Knights are likely to cross the paths of some members of the Uk Trakka tribe. If the Knights identify themselves as friends of the Liberty community, the Uk Trakka will welcome them and offer them food. If the Knights are lost, the Uk Trakka can get them back on the

right path (they will have seen the restan pass by, but did not challenge them). If the Knights are not lost, the Uk Trakka can tell them about seeing the restan already, although they cannot say how long it has been since they went by, since edeinos do not have a grasp of the concept of time.

• **Survival**—The strange properties of the Deep Mist cause equipment to corrode, food not stored in airtight containers to rot, and various other problems. All of this can combine to make a trip through the Living Land a nightmare, and should provide an undercurrent of tension for the journey.

For details on survival in the Living Land, see pages 67-68 of *The Living Land Sourcebook*.

• **Losing Equipment**—The conditions in the Living Land also make it very easy to lose equipment. Any time the Knights are in combat or in which rounds are being counted, have them generate a *Mind* total. If the result is 12 or above, the Knight notices that he is about to lose a piece of equipment, and can use his next action to retrieve it. If the Knights fail the check, they may lose equipment and not notice it is missing until they next need to use it (gamemaster's discretion).

• **Spartan Squad**—The Knights may come upon a squad of the Delphi Council's Spartans, the paramilitary outfit charged with shutting down resistance communities and bringing their members back into the Living Land. They will express no interest in helping the Knights on their mission, but will question them about resistance communities in the area, and warn them about helping people to stay in the conquered areas. Ominously, they will state that those who aid and abet resistance communities are aiding the enemy as well.

• **Dead Storyteller**—Rounding a bend in the jungle, the Knights come upon a gruesome sight: a human corpse, its throat cut, hanging upside down from a tree limb. The Knights can search if they wish to, but the edeinos who did this are long gone. The Knights recognize the corpse as that of a realm runner who had made a reputation as a storyteller. Baruk Kaah has dispatched special edeinos units with orders to slay storytellers to



hamper the reclamation of the people (see page 104 of the *Torg Rulebook*).

• **Creature Encounters** — Many creatures inhabit the Living Land. Most of these are carnivorous and have exceedingly nasty dispositions, and may well pose a danger to the Knights.

For every five hours that the Knights are traveling through the Living Land, make a roll. If the result is between 11 and 20, the Knights encounter a creature or creatures.

For each possible encounter, roll on the following table (Note: all of the creatures on the table below can be found on page 25 of the *Torg World Book* or in *Infiniverse Campaign Game* issue #1.) For purposes of card play, consider each encounter with a creature to be a scene, allowing the players to discard and refill their hands at the end of each encounter. All creature encounters are Standard (unless you are in a particularly bad mood).

Creature Encounter Table

Roll	Creature
1-3	No Encounter
4-6	Bargon
7-10	Tresir
11-14	Aviax (6)
15-17	Sashar (2)
18-20	Beleterox (2)

• **Reality Storm** — When the Knights reach Core Earth, they will notice that their equipment works more consistently and the Deep Mist has faded away. However, they still must challenge a minor reality storm (Strength 7) that swirls along the realm's border. Have each Knight generate a reality total against a difficulty number of 7. If the Knight is successful, he passes through the storm unaffected. If he fails, consult the Storm Results Table on page 40 of the *Torg Rulebook*, comparing the amount by which he failed to the effects listed. (The only effects which apply in this case are those that involve the loss of possibilities — ignore all others).

The remainder of the journey through Core Earth should be uneventful, and once you have run the event below, cut to "Scene Four: The Battle for Reality."

Event

When the Knights reach the Kentucky-Tennessee border (a Core Earth dominant zone), have them generate *Perception* totals. On a 9, the Knights realize that they are being followed by two of the ravagons from the edeinos camp. Immediately after they recognize this, the ravagons launch their attack.

The ravagons' assault is meant to delay the Storm Knights, not necessarily kill them. Their only interest is in seeing that the restan succeed and the stela is planted. If the Knights manage to inflict serious damage on one or both of the ravagons (two wounds or above), both creatures retreat.

Ravagons (2)

See page 90 of the *Torg Rulebook*.

Possibilities: 5

Cut to "Scene Four: The Battle for Reality."

SCENE FOUR: The Battle for Reality

The Situation

Dramatic. Having reached their destination, the Knights follow the tracks of the restan through Edgar Evins State Park to the burial site. They arrive just in time to witness the final moments of the burial ceremony. Now the Knights must battle the restan and a raging reality storm to save another section of Core Earth from falling into the clutches of High Lord Baruk Kaah.

Read aloud or paraphrase:

Edgar Evins State Park is a place of quiet serenity — it is hard to believe that it could be the site of the bloodshed that must follow if you are to

stop the restan. You gather your courage and press on through the forest.

Unless the ravagons were slain in Scene Three, the members of the restan are aware that the Storm Knights are following them. But they are so supremely confident of the power of Lanala that fills them that they have not bothered to cover their trail. If the Knights generate *tracking* or *Perception* totals of 8, they can easily follow the path the restan has walked.

After a few minutes, the Knights round a bend and see the restan at last. But they are too late to stop them.

Read aloud or paraphrase:

As you look on, one of the edeinos plunges his stone dagger deep into the ground where the stela has been planted. He raises the dagger, blood now dripping from it, and shouts in edeinos, "To the Glory of Baruk Kaah, and the Power of Rec Pakken!"

As soon as he utters these words, the effects of the clashing realities begin to take their toll on the surrounding area. Large rolling clouds gather and lightning and thunder fill the skies all around. The nearby forest begins to transform into the jungles of the Living Land. Coniferous trees slowly take on a more tropical look, as pine needles and cones assume the shape of palm leaves and tropical fruit. Even animals begin to change their shape, small squirrels and chipmunks wriggling in agony as their forms change into those of creatures of the Living Land. Sign posts that once marked this spot as a picnic area shift in shape, becoming small rock configurations bearing little or no resemblance to anything you've ever seen before.

The effects almost completely mesmerize you, for you have never seen reality shift before your eyes. You look all around you, astonished by what you see, when the tableau is broken by the gotak pointing toward you and shouting a command to his warriors — a command to kill.



The Action

The Knights' goal is clear: they must destroy the stelae before the area is completely lost to Living Land axioms. They have two options: slaughter the restan and then uproot the stelae and destroy it, or invoke a reality storm against the stelae and attempt to destroy it in that manner. Both methods are difficult and dangerous, with the latter infinitely more so.

If the Knights choose to take on the restan first, they will be fighting the two ravagons (if they survived Scene Three), four edeinos, including the gotak Barr Kat, a stalenger and a benthe. The edeinos warriors and Barr Kat have the same statistics as their counterparts in Scene One.

The edeinos will use the same tactics as in Scene One (throw both hrockt spears and then engage in unarmed combat), as will the gotak (invoke *cause pain* and *intense fear*). The benthe will use its pheromone manipulation, and the stalenger will attack from above while hidden in a nearby tree. The ravagons will stay to the rear to prevent one of the Knights from approaching the stelae immediately, concentrating on any Storm Knights who approach the stelae.

Stalenger

DEXTERITY 8

Dodge 11, flight 12, stealth 11, unarmed combat (tentacles) 12

STRENGTH 8

TOUGHNESS 8

PERCEPTION 9

Find 12, tracking 11

MIND 8

Artist 10, survival 10

CHARISMA 7

SPIRIT 8

Faith (Keta Kalles) 11, focus 12, reality 10

Possibilities: 5

Natural Tools: tentacles, damage value STR+4/12; flying pump, speed value 11

Benthe

DEXTERITY 7

Beast riding 10, stealth 9

STRENGTH 7

TOUGHNESS 12

PERCEPTION 17

Evidence analysis 19, find 18,

tracking 15, trick 19

MIND 14

Test 16, willpower 17

CHARISMA 11

SPIRIT 11

Faith (Keta Kalles) 13, focus 12, reality 13

Possibilities: 4

Natural Tools: pheromone manipulation

Note: A benthe attacks by making a *Perception* check against a difficulty number of its target's *Perception*. The level of success determines to what extent the benthe is able to manipulate the target's emotions.

Benthe Pheromone Manipulation Chart

Level of Success	Effect on Target
Minimal to Average	Slight emotions
Good	Strong emotions that stop the target's actions
Superior	The target will act upon the emotion created.
Spectacular	The target will act against his will, even at the price of his own life.

If Rec Pakken perceives that the stelae is being threatened, it will allow the stelae to transfer one of its skills to a defender. It will give either Barr Kat or one of the ravagons its *intimidation* skill (value of 41).

The Reality Storm

The reality storm that has engulfed the area is a particularly nasty one, having a *Strength* of 18. Aside from the heavy rain and lightning and thunder, the storm also has some other side effects. Because the storm involves a conflict between Core Earth and the Living Land, characters from other cosms will feel the effects of the storm affect their ability to create contradictions. Any character NOT from either the Living Land or Core Earth, who uses a tool that has an axiom that

exceeds his own, creates a *four-case* contradiction. This is because the axioms of the cosms are in flux and are strongly suppressing any contradictions from those of other cosms. Characters who create reality bubbles are immune to this effect.

Other Storm Effects

Aside from the above, the storm may also affect the characters within it. The gamemaster should roll a die each round: on a roll of 1-10, one of the villains may be affected, on a roll of 11-20, one of the Storm Knights may be affected.

To determine whether or not a character is affected, the gamemaster should generate a *reality* total for the storm versus a difficulty number of 21. If the roll succeeds, the level of success determines what effects (if any) occur, according to the following table. The gamemaster should feel free to improvise any other effects he feels would be appropriate to the scene.

Level of Success	Possible Results
Minimal	No Effect
Average	Character is Flurried or Up for one round.
Good	Character is Sty-mied or Fatigued for one round.
Superior	Character gains 1-4 possibilities.
Spectacular	Character is attacked (damage value 18)

Characters from Core Earth and the Living Land

The storm will continue until the stelae is destroyed, and characters from the two conflicting cosms may be transformed by it. Any time that a *setback* result occurs, one character from the appropriate side might be transformed by the storm. The character (chosen by the gamemaster) should then generate a *reality* total against a difficulty number of the strength of the storm (18). If the character succeeds, he has reaffirmed his own real-



ity, and does not transform. Each character need only resist the storm once. If the character fails, he is transformed to the other reality.

Example: During the storm, a *villain setback* comes up. The gamemaster chooses one of the edeinos to be the one affected. The gamemaster rolls for the edeinos and fails. The edeinos is transformed into a denizen of Core Earth. For purposes of this scene, the ravagons are considered to be from the Living Land.

Destroying the Stelae

If the Knights defeat the restan, they can then attempt to uproot the stelae. This requires Dramatic Skill Resolution, with the following steps:

A. As the stelae is newly-planted, it is only connected to two others. The initial step toward destroying it is to sever the link with the first stelae, which requires generating a *reality* skill total against a difficulty number of 14.

B. Step A is repeated on the second stelae link.

C. With the stelae now isolated, the Storm Knight can attempt to blast the artifact. This also requires a *reality* total of 14 or more.

As soon as the Knights accomplish Step A, the *Strength* of the reality storm raging around them will increase to 20.

Living Land Stelae

DEXTERITY 0
STRENGTH 0
TOUGHNESS 9
PERCEPTION 0
MIND 0
SPIRIT 0
Reality 14

Additional Skills: Rec Pakken can allow the stelae to transfer its *intimidation* skill (41) to one of the restan members.

Possibilities: 5

Invoking a Storm

The Knights' second option is to invoke a reality storm against the stelae. If the stelae loses, it will shatter. The storm can be invoked automatically, and will perform the first two steps of the Dramatic Skill Resolution listed above on its own. The Knight will then have one opportunity to destroy the stelae — however, since the Darkness Device will be alerted to the situation by the violence of the storm invoked, the difficulty number of shattering the stelae will be increased to 20. The Knight will get one opportunity to beat that number using his *reality* skill — if he fails, he is transformed by the storm.

Invoking a reality storm should be a last resort for the Knights, to be used only if the battle is going against them. It is far easier to down the restan and then use Dramatic Skill Resolution to destroy the stelae.

Aftermath

If the Knights manage to destroy the stelae, they will have dealt Baruk Kaah's plans for Tennessee a serious setback. Whether or not they managed to rescue the Liberty residents from the edeinos, their act will make them heroes in resistance communities all over the Living Land. (If Amanda and her companions were killed by the edeinos, however, the Knights may not be welcome back in Liberty for a while.)

Successfully completing this task will attract the attention of both Baruk Kaah and the Delphi Council. Kaah will vow revenge, and if the Knights should leave the Living Land for another realm, they may find the High Lord there has been forewarned about them by the Saar of the Edeinos. If they

choose to remain in the Living Land or the Core Earth United States, they can count on being the targets of edeinos tribes loyal to the High Lord.

The Delphi Council will have high praise for the Knights' work, and will invite them to work more closely with the government. The Council will be willing to provide almost unlimited funding for their operations, but will insist on dictating which missions they accept.

If the Knights fail to destroy the stelae, the Living Land will have claimed another portion of the United States. Baruk Kaah's plans may grow more ambitious in the months to come as a result of this victory. The Knights (if they survived) will now know the location of a stelae for future reference, but it is doubtful that the Delphi Council will be willing to back any of their expeditions, given the disastrous outcome of this one. The Knights will probably still be welcome in resistance communities, but many of the residents may not feel that this particular team can be relied upon for the really tough jobs.

Awards

If the Storm Knights were able to save the Liberty residents and destroy the stelae, award them 14 possibilities at the end of the adventure.

If the Knights were able to destroy the stelae but not prevent the sacrifice of the four Liberty residents, award them eight possibilities.

If the Knights were able to save the Liberty residents but not destroy the stelae, award them three possibilities.

If the Knights were unable to accomplish either task, they do not receive any possibilities for the adventure.



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