



Lectures On The Wych – pt2

Part 2 of house rules for Rogue Psykers in Inquisitor.

By Ben Hulston

INTRODUCTION

In the second and final part in this series of articles, I will highlight some scenarios specifically aimed at including rogue psykers, some new equipment for use in the apprehension of psykers, and some new special abilities for characters facing off against psychic horrors.

"The witch is a wily foe, with a great number of allies you may not know about. Daemons, vagabonds, criminals, terrorists, even other traitorous members of His most holy Inquisition... Always approach the chase with caution, zeal and faith."

*Inquisitor Ratzsinger, 'Lectures on the Witch',
Conclave of Groeningen IV, 947.M40*

SCENARIOS

Scenario 1 – Capture the Psyker

A rogue psyker is on the run. Hot on his heels are the authorities - a blustering, pious Inquisitor with justice on his mind. Little do they both know another force hides in the shadows with an envious eye on the talented runaway...

Suggested Sides

Side 1 – The rogue psyker - NPC controlled by the GM. His main motivation is to get off the board as quickly as possible.

Side 2 – The pious inquisitor - Think witch hunting psychopath! The inquisitor should be accompanied by suitable allies, such as Arbites officers, Enforcers, Stormtroopers or sanctioned psykers. His goal is to capture, or if necessary kill, the rogue psyker.

Side 3 – Here is where you can really mix things up. Suggested player characters would include any radical Inquisitor of a Thorian or Horusian bent, a Chaos Magus and accomplices, a Xanthite in need of a quality host body for his daemoniac project. The goal of this side is to capture the psyker. If this means using force, then so be it...

GM/Scenery Advice

Attempt to keep the game play fast and furious to keep up the feeling of the chase. Ensure the psyker has a reasonable chance of escape. Side 3 may negotiate with the psyker to attempt to get it to cooperate and follow them off the board; take an appropriate test in willpower, with a suitable modifier depending on how desperate and "shot-up" the psyker is and how persuasive the player is.

The board should be fairly large, and be populated with a large amount of scenery, to allow the chase to burst from building to building. This will also allow Side 3 to sneak through the scenario, striking at the opportune time.

It is suggested the psyker starts in the middle of the board, with the other two sides entering from opposite ends of the board.

Scenario 2 – Black Ship Breakout!

A group of psykers, being escorted by a group of Inquisitorial Storm troopers destined for orbit and the Black Ship waiting there, are the target for an attempted jail break...

Suggested Sides

Side 1 – The Enforcement squad - A squad of tough, grizzled Storm troopers. They should be lead by someone with suitable authority; an Inquisitor isn't out of the question.

Side 2 – The captured psykers - They should be subdued and quiet. Once the violence begins to kick off, they will perk up and become more aware. The GM should control the psykers - the GM may choose how the psykers react to the attempted jailbreak.

Side 3 – Again, this side can be anything the player can think of. However, a suggestion would be a group of rogue psykers, wanting to free their gifted brethren!

GM/Scenery Notes

This scenario should start with a bang; the louder the better! Assuming Side 1 will be starting in a vehicle, equipping at least one member of Side 3 with a rocket launcher, or lining the road with explosives/mines would be prudent. Although, they need not start in a vehicle - a strangely deserted space port would be equally fitting for the scenario.

Sides 1 and 2 should begin in the centre of the board and should be surrounded by side 3.

The captured psykers will all make an individual decision as to whether they will be joining forces with their rescuers. However, for each psyker that turns, it is suggested a positive bonus is given as to whether the next will turn, with a negative modifier used when a psyker decides not to join the rescuers.

Scenario 3 – Black Ship Rebellion!

On board one of the Black Ships, something dark is brewing. A group of recently captured psykers have no intention of going back to Holy Terra for processing and have begun to cause a ruckus. But is there something darker at play?

Side 1 – The ship authorities – This side should consist of several Inquisitorial Stormtroopers, and any other suitable figures of authority, such as an Inquisitor. Their only goal is to put down the rebellion... However they see fit.

Side 2 – The psykers – They've been freed of their shackles, and they're out for blood! However, what they are not aware of is that their heroic, charismatic, enigmatic leader is, in fact, host to a daemon orchestrating all of this carnage for its own amusement!

GM/Scenery Notes

The players should each take one or two of the characters on Side 1. Initially, they should start either on their own or at most in a pair, at different points across the board.

It is suggested that the board is a maze of corridors and lifts, connected to cells. The guards may move freely through any doors. The GM may decide with doors have been forced open in the first parts of the rebellion. Any psyker wishing to bash open must face off against the following profile.



A door has AV 10; 20 damage must be done to the door before it will buckle. At this point, visibility through the door is possible. The door will now have AV 5, and require a further 20 damage to permanently open it.

A psyker may also crack open a door, using the security panel beside the door. The psyker must pass 5 consecutive sagacity tests, at difficulty 80 to open a door.

The guards will all be armed with all manner of tracking equipment – motion trackers, bio scanners and psi-trackers. Additionally, they will all be linked into the ship's own tracking devices in the area. This can be represented by the blips on the board.

The psykers will be NPCs, controlled by the GM. They will move as blips on the board when they are not in line of sight of any of the player characters; think 'Aliens'. The game should be kept well paced and claustrophobic - some of the blips may be rats, or psykers not wishing any trouble. Again, this is at the GM's discretion. All psykers not wishing any trouble must be returned to the nearest cell by the player.

NEW EQUIPMENT

"Chase them, capture them, kill them; it matters not which you choose for they are naught but treacherous wretches... These are the tools with which you may corral the wych, though your greatest ally is your faith in the God-Emperor!"

***Inquisitor Ratzsinger, 'Lectures on the Witch',
Conclave of Groeningen IV, 947.M40***

Containment Collars

"Handcuffs for psykers. They're great, they are, keeps 'em quiet, docile like. None of that wyching stuff. And, between you an' me, they're e'en better when it's a pretty 'un, know what I mean?"

Used by law agencies, bounty hunters and of course the Black Ships, containment collars come in a variety of different forms and varying degrees of rarity. A collar consists of a thick neck-brace with two handcuffs coming off.

A collar may be applied to a prone or stunned target - it takes two successive combat actions against the prone target to apply the collar. The target may attempt to dodge or parry; if parry is chosen, the target need only roll under half the attackers attack roll to prompt a counter attack.

It takes only one action to apply a collar to a stunned target, with no need to roll for success.

A collar may be removed by acquiring the key from whoever put the character in the null collar, or by forcefully removing it.

Treat the collar as having AV 4 and can take 15 points of damage before it is disabled.

It is a small target, and attacking the collar is a risky action. If the risky action is failed, then the attack is resolved at the person wearing the collar, with the hit automatically hitting the head of the detainee.

All collars have a leash. If the leash is used, the detainee must use all of their actions following the person using the leash, remaining within 2 yards of character holding the leash. The use of a leash requires one hand, and any actions taken while holding a leash count as joint actions.

Shock Collar (Common)

This collar incorporates an ingenious piece of engineering, allowing it to deliver an electric shock to any disobedient criminal it currently contains. It is generally triggered by remote control, a keyword or a proximity sensor.

The collar follows all the rules for removing a collar, both with a key and by force. The collar also follows all the rules for leashing.

If the collar is triggered, treat the psyker as being hit by a shock weapon. The device can be triggered in only one of three ways – via remote, keyword or proximity sensor. The method of activation must be decided before the game.

It takes one action to activate the device using either the remote or keyword, though the neck collar must be within 10 yards to trigger. The proximity sensor is triggered when the psyker moves more than 10 yards away from the remote.

Explosive Collar (Common)

The collar is wired with a small explosive device to dissuade the psyker from running away from the guard.

The collar follows all the rules for removing a collar, both with a key and by force. The collar also follows all the rules for leashing.

The device operates exactly the same way as the Shock Collar. However, instead of shocking the detainee, it explodes the small charge. Treat the explosion as having Area 0.5, Blast 3 Dam 2D6. It always hits the head of the prisoner.

Numb Collar (Exotic)

The central neck-brace is filled with small vials and circle of needles going into the flesh of the psyker. They inject small amounts of sedatives to keep the prisoner sedated.

The collar follows all the rules for removing a collar, both with a key and by force. The collar also follows all the rules for leashing.

This collar halves both the Willpower and Initiative of the character in the collar. Additionally, it reduces their Speed to one.

Null Collar (Legendary)

This type of collar is rare indeed – imbued with the same dust as in psyk-out grenades, it is the perfect suppression tool for dealing with troublesome wyches.

The collar follows all the rules for removing a collar, both with a key and by force. The collar also follows all the rules for leashing.

The psyker may make no attempt to use any psychic powers, nor nullify any psychic powers. In addition, any psychic power used against the psyker automatically fails.

Shock-Net (Rare)

"You wanna ground a wych, real easy like? Use a shock net. Massive overload to the nervous system – POW! They go down, and they stay down. Thank the Emperor for these things, I say."

A shock-net can be fired from a bolas launcher, or thrown. It is a thin, wiry net made of conductive metal. Around the edges of the net are heavy metal balls, filled with small shock generators and a motion sensor. As it is fired or thrown, the net spreads, the shock matrix activates and hopefully the victim is entangled.

The shock-net shares the same profile as the bolas launcher, or thrown bolas, depending on how it is used.

When a shock net hits the target, there is a 75% they will become entangled and fall prone. D3+1 locations count as being tangled. In addition, treat them as being hit by a shock weapon on each location. Any attempt to remove the net without it being deactivated by the person who fired it will result in a 50% chance the character tangled being shocked again, as well as any character attempting to remove the net. Each shock adds D6 to the victim's injury total.

Neuro-haywire Grenades (Legendary)

"Only ever seen Ratzsinger use one of em - reduced the wych to a drooling, useless shell of a thing. Damned lucky he did or else it would have fried all of us. I'll ne'er forget what that wych did to Demmnos..."

Neuroshred grenades use similar technology to that of the terrifying Neural Shredder - however, they only contain enough energy for one burst of the horrifying power.

Neuroshred grenades are used exactly as described in the Inquisitor rulebook, following the rules for grenades. They have Area: 3, Blast:3. Work out each hit as if the target had been hit by a Neural Shredder.

Bio-haywire Grenades (Rare)

"Now these I like. Messes with your nervous pathways, slows you down, makes 'em struggle to move their limbs for a while. Great to keep 'em quiet while you clap a collar on 'em."

Utilising technology designed to disrupt nervous transmission to the limbs, it slows its victims making them easier to catch and contain.

Bio-haywire grenades are used exactly as described in the Inquisitor rulebook, following the rules for grenades. They have Area: 3, Blast: 3; with each hit, the character must pass a toughness test or be knocked prone and stunned for D3 turns. The character hit by the blast automatically loses D3 Speed for D3 turns, to a minimum of 1.

Warp Disruptor (Legendary)

"What fevered mind made this thing, I'll never know. I'll tell you this much - it makes me feel weird, it does, chills me to the bone. But to see what it does to them psykers... Makes me feel a little bit sorry for 'em... Well almost!"

A warp disruptor is a small globe, generally tied to a thick silver chain around the neck of devout Inquisitors. An anti-psyker device, it helps protect against psychic attacks, but makes the wearer feel decidedly ill at ease. It is not known where these globes can be acquired, or who made them, though speculation firmly points the finger at a source close to or within the Culexus assassin temple.

The globe provides the wearer with protection against all psyker attacks. Any psyker wishing to use a psychic power against the bearer must halve their willpower. Any psychic test failed when targeting the character carrying the Warp Disruptor will double any lost Willpower results from 'psychic overload' or 'risky action' penalties.

Additionally, any character wearing a Warp Disruptor will lose any of the following abilities, if the character possesses them - Nerves of Steel, Force of Will, Heroic and Leader.

Litanies of Spite (Exotic)

"Would I have them tattooed onto me? God-Emp'rer save my soul no! Hear it's as painful as sin! But, they're a mighty good investment if you can take the pain..."

Inscribed into the flesh of the willing, though sometimes unwilling, character, the Litanies of Spite are written in psycho-reactive ink; the Litanies themselves are baleful condemnations of the witch.

Any psyker wishing to target a character with Litanies of Spite must re-roll their willpower test to cast the power.

Black Charter (Exotic)

"The Black Charter... Say's you're workin' for the Black Ships. Says you can do whatever you like in the pursuit of wyches. Psyker themse'ves, they're terrified of people with one. 'Snot a surprise, given it's written in wych-blood..."

The Black Charter is given to bounty hunters and trackers who are in the employ of the Inquisition and more specifically serving on the Black Ships. They are contracts written in the blood of psykers ensuring the loyalty and fanaticism of the bounty hunter; in return, they get Inquisitional protection should they run in with the law.

Psychic characters treat characters that are bearing a Black Charter as if they had the ability "Fearsome". Inquisitors ignore this effect.

Inscribed Carapace Armour (Rare)

"Used mos'ly by Stormtroopers on Black Ships, this stuff is what you want when huntin' down psykers. Between you 'n' me, when I say mos'ly, I mean there's a great black market for this stuff..."

Specially produced for use by Stormtroopers on Black Ships, this carapace armour offers some protection against psychic powers. While not offering the same protection as Hexagrammic wards, the added protection is welcome.

Inscribed Carapace Armour follows all the rules for Carapace Armour found in the Inquisitor rulebook. Additionally, any psychic power targeting a character wearing the armour doubles all range penalties.

Combat Stimm – 'Fend

Dispenser types – Inhaler, Injector

"Abb... That's the stuff. Stops wyches creepin' around upstairs and the like. Bit addictive, mind, but s'always the way, right?"

This highly addictive stimulant has similar properties to another psycho-reactive drug, Spook. Unlike Spook, it bolsters the user's innate resistance to being affected by psychic powers, but erodes their willpower and sanity as they begin to crave its effects.

The user gains D6 forcefield protection against any psychic power that does direct damage, and adds D10 difficulty to any power that does no direct damage, such as Puppet Master, that is targeted at the user. This effect lasts for D3+2 turns.

The user must immediately subtract D10 from sagacity and willpower, and at the end of the game pass a toughness test or the loss is permanent.

Gas/Toxin – Wither

"This stuff is a bit special. Shoot a psyker fulla this stuff, and watch their powers start exploding back in their face! Real speciality stuff, though... I've heard rumours this stuff brings out the devil in them sometimes..."

A powerful chemical agent designed to cripple psykers, it ruins any sense of control they have over themselves, making using psychic powers all the harder and more unpredictable.

The psyker loses D10 willpower. In addition, until they can pass a toughness test, they count as having the talent "Unstable".

NEW SPECIAL ABILITIES

Witch-hound

"He can smell them, I swear it."

Be it through luck, experience or some inspired gut feelings, this character is regularly able to track and detect psychic characters far more success than normal. The character gains a +20 bonus to all awareness tests involving psykers.

Iron Will

"They step into his mind, but with faith he fends them off time and time again."

Through sheer force of mind, the character is able to fend off attempts to possess his mind. The character may re-roll any willpower test they are required to take to fend off psychic attacks.

Word of the Emperor – Litany of Spite

"Foul witch, thy magicks be condemned to the hells from which they are spawned, in the name of He-On-Terra!"

The Litany of Spite is a holy canticle, recited to destroy the concentration of any psyker within earshot. Any psyker who is within hearing range must re-roll any willpower test they take.

Athlete

"He can chase down anyone, over any distance, anywhere."

The character excels at running, possessing excellent natural balance, astounding speed and endless stamina; all useful when chasing down a keen to escape witch. All running and sprinting actions are at +1 yard, and never counts either running or sprinting as a risky action, even over difficult terrain.

Takedown

"If she hits you, you're going down."

An expert in the art of subduing troublesome opponents, a character with this special ability knows how to use a blunt weapon effectively on any part of the body to take an opponent down. The target, after receiving a hit that does damage from a character with this talent, must take a toughness test or go prone.

SAMPLE CHARACTERS

It seems customary to include at least one sample character in any Inquisitor article, and so presented here are Inquisitor Ratzsinger and his loyal Soulhound, 'Sniffer' Tobiasson.

Inquisitor Daniel Ratzsinger

"I will find you, wych, you cannot hide. The eyes of the Emperor see all, the arm of the Inquisition reaches everywhere, and the judgement of He-On-Terra will fall upon you."

Daniel Ratzsinger started life as a young initiate into the Ecclesiarchy. His humble roots, in the backwaters of Danserigg, gave him an upbringing in hardline, orthodox Imperial doctrine, and his zealous piety meant he advanced quickly through the Ecclesiarchy.

Time and time again the fiery young priest would prove his value to his superiors, his ability to whip crowds into frenzy with his words ensuring that the cardinals above him could keep the populace of Danserigg under control.

Political machinations meant he was never allowed to progress within the church - used as a pawn in constantly shifting Ecclesiarchal politics, the young man was exploited by his seniors to keep their rivals suppressed by sheer weight of popular opinion.

This stagnation of leadership, and abuse of power, caught the eye of a passing Istvaanian Inquisitor, who took it upon himself to test all of these with the potential to lead the Ecclesiarchy in the area by sponsoring the rival faction of priests.

Quickly the situation degenerated into violence as assassination attempts brought the conflict out into the open. Supporters of both factions, whipped into religious hysteria, fought running battles within the Ecclesiarchy quarter.

At the head of his factions cause, Daniel's oratory skills and natural athletic ability came to the fore. But even he could not swing the battle, and the situation very quickly got out of hand.

The Inquisitor, realising very quickly he had done more harm than good spotted the talented young man and kidnapped him immediately.

Daniel was subjected to a series of trials in which to prove his worth. Let loose aboard a nightmarish trap filled ship, Daniel was subjected to a bombardment of horror by a choir of psykers, attacked by frenzied madmen and his faith tested with promises of wealth and power from dark whispers. Daniel held firm, his zealous faith keeping him going in the darkness of the Istvaanian's crazed ship of horrors.

Impressed with the young man's resilience and ability to perform in conflict, the Inquisitor took him as an interrogator.

They formed only a loose bond as mentor and pupil, Daniel never really agreeing with the methods of the Inquisitor, but out of faith and belief in the plans of the God-Emperor he trained as hard as he could.

An adept pupil, his progress was always going to be impeded due to his conflict of opinions with his current mentor. A chance encounter with an Inquisitorial Black Ship gave Daniel ample opportunity to further his studies under another, and acquiescing to his wishes his master let him free.

His new Inquisitorial master was a hardline monodominant, by the name of Drexel. In Drexel, Daniel found an inspiration and kindred spirit. He served the rest of his apprenticeship under Drexel on the Black Ship.

His first encounter with psychic power had left him with a deep, seething hatred for witches. He suffered still with nightmares and flashbacks of the horror he suffered in his initiation into the Inquisition. He had the Litany of Spite tattooed onto his back to prove his piety and hatred for psykers, as well as to help protect him against psychic intrusion.

His appointment as a full Inquisitor and his induction into the Ordo Hereticus pleased him greatly; he took charge of a Black Ship and began his personal crusade to rid the Imperium of unsanctioned psykers.

At the beginning of his third century of Inquisitorial duty, Inquisitor Ratzsinger is as active as he was in his youth. Ever distrustful of witches, he is now considered one of the leading authorities within the Inquisition on battling rogue psykers. He regularly takes on seconded interrogators from other Inquisitors, and when he can he gives lectures to other Inquisitors on the dread menace of rogue psykers.



Daniel is left handed

	WS	BS	S	T	I	Wp	Sg	Nv	Ld
Ratzsinger	68	72	73	66	59	89	69	83	92

Equipment: Autopistol (one reload); Shock Maul; Flak armour on Chest; Abdomen and Groin; Litanies of Spite; 1 x Neuro-haywire grenade; 1 x Bio-haywire grenade

Special Abilities: Word of the Emperor - Litany of Spite; Leader; Iron Will; True Grit; Heroic

Jayde 'Sniffer' Tobiasson

"It'sa job, y'know? An', an' this is jus' between you, me an' Him above, I enjoy it far more than I should."

Jayde Tobiasson is a so called "Soulhound" - a bounty hunter who specialises in the persuit and capture of rogue psykers.

Jayde does not speak much of his past or his youth, merely stating they were brutal and unhappy.

His rise to bounty hunting infamy was spectacularly swift - after taking on a few low paying, low risk jobs chasing thieves, thugs and vermin, Jayde decided he needed a proper challenge.

The planet he was on was currently being visited by a passing Black Ship, and with relish Jayde applied for and was given a Black Charter.

The ensuing chases and battles enthralled him - the added unpredictability of hunting dangerous psykers and the pyrotechnics that regularly erupted all around him. He proved himself time and time again, earning a reputation for the tracking and capture of witches that few others could match.

After eight years serving aboard the Emperor's Beneficence, Jayde was taken by Daniel Ratzsinger to lead and train his own band of soulhands, working from Ratzsinger's ship, the Lumin Dei.

The two struck up a friendship and an efficient working understanding, Jayde's natural affinity for sniffing out witches complimenting the passionate, athletic Ratzsinger.

While Jayde now spends most of his time working with interrogators, other bounty hunters and the Inquisitorial stormtroopers on the Lumin Dei, whenever Ratzsinger leads a sortie himself Jayde will be right behind him.

Jayde is right handed

	WS	BS	S	T	I	Wp	Sg	Nv	Ld
Jayde Tobiasson	59	79	53	58	71	72	52	78	71

Equipment: Fend inhaler with 10 doses; Bolas Launcher with three Shock Nets; Inscribed Carapace Armour on Chest; Abdomen; Groin, left and right Arms; Autopistol (one reload); Black Charter; knife coated in Stun; knife coated in Wither; 3 throwing knives coated in Stun; Shock Maul

Special Abilities: Witch-hound; Hipshooting; Blademaster; Takedown

CONCLUSION

The scenarios listed are only a flavour of what is possible when using rogue psykers as a central theme in your games of Inquisitor. The equipment and new talents will help you track down and capture those dangerous witches. Hopefully, these two articles will have inspired you to go and play more games of Inquisitor!

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Ben indulges his various passions rather more frequently than he should while attempting to complete his education at Loughborough University. He can be found ranting and raving on the Conclave and is generally rated as a nuisance by the other, more decent folk who grace the forum.

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