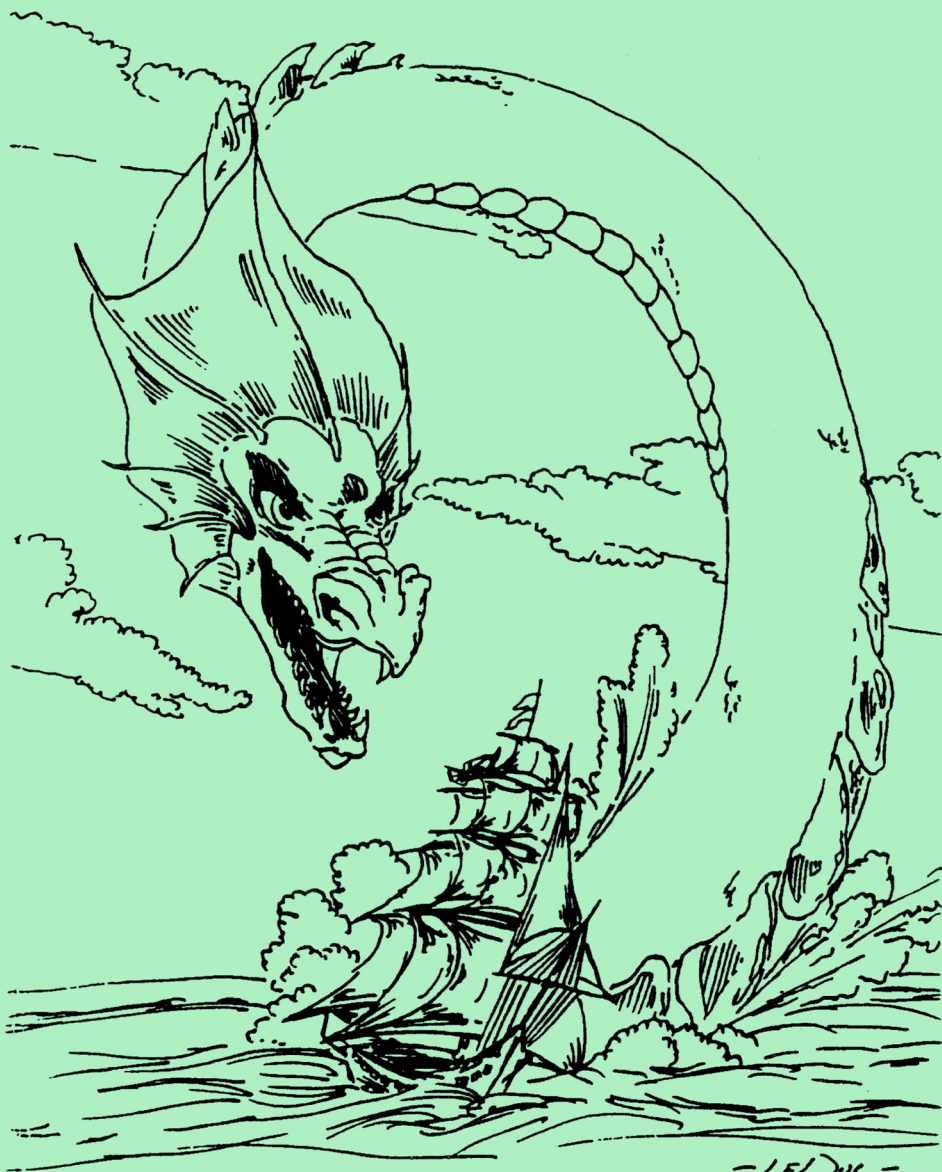


# *NorthCoast Roleplaying*

(or Gaming From Behind the Redwood Curtain!)

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- LEL JUL 1989

## *Editors Opener*

Well we are fast approaching our first complete year of print. This is a landmark since I have never been sure that we would make it. The same problems that plagued me on day one still plague me: Since NCRP does not pay its writers, I have always thought that this is fair excuse to explain why it comes out so irregularly, but it's not. I have since found that even the magazines that pay (and pay well) have trouble getting enough articles to print. Oh well, this too is another problem for the scientists and not me.

The point I wanted to discuss this issue is **THE DEATH OF THE GAMING INDUSTRY!!!** I have begun working at a hobby shop that sells games and I have been put on the phone to do orders for games. The distributors are warning that the gaming industry is dying, and the death is far from painless. They are saying that most games don't sell or can't sell for some reason or another. Well let me tell you from this end that I just can't believe this. We, locally, are seeing a huge upswing in gaming. The Fantasy Gamer's Guild (a local group of gamers at Humboldt State University) has never had as many attending members as it has this year. And the size keeps growing! But I guess then the question is is this phenomenon just localised?

Pacificon, a San Francisco Bay Area convention this year, expected around 400 people to show up for its annual running. Heresay that I have gotten suggested that some 4,000 people showed up and that the con-sponsored games were filled (completely, which to my knowledge never happens at conventions) some three weeks before the convention. And Pacificon charges you to enter at the door and to pay for every con-sponsored game you are in (up to \$3 per game!) So what's going on?? Are people from all over just converging on California to game, or is there something else going on?

I travel every once in awhile and have made it out to Montana. I thought, *hmm, maybe if gaming is dying, I will see it here.* In Kalispell, Montana, there is a gaming shop which is, to my knowledge, the only shop that specializes in games in a 60 mile+ radius around it. I thought if anyone would feel the death then this shop certainly would. After talking with the manager, I realised the shop was far from dying. In fact, the only thing that was dying were a few games that have been losing sales for ages (and are out of print.) So what's really going on?

My feeling is that what's going on is that games are not selling as well so the industry is telling the distributors (who in turn warn us) that sales are down and games are dying. Maybe people read my last editorial? This could explain this apparent drop. Many game systems simply are not selling, but for every old standard that has died, at least one new game has shown up in its place. AD&D still is holding strong, but the original three hard-bound books are not selling nearly as well as things like the Manual of Planes and the Dragonlance books. Aftermath and Morrow Project are fairly well dead, but Twilight: 2000 appears to be the most played game of the year (taking the previous two games' genre and twisting it a bit.) Only time will tell for sure if gaming is dying, but for now you can accept the fact that gaming is far from dead. You can also tell anyone you meet that says gaming is dead that you know someone behind the Redwood Curtain who would certainly counter that statement.

The winner of our letter contest was Tony Lee. Tony was the only person to write me and tell me anything. Thanks Tony! And the rest of you, don't let another contest pass you by. I ran the last one to see what you liked and disliked about NCRP. Right now I put into NCRP the articles I like, but this may not jibe with your tastes. Let me know what you want to see. I can always use a new piece for AD&D or Twilight: 2000. So give your writing a chance.

As always, I would love to hear anything you have to say, positive, negative, or having nothing to do with NCRP (I just love mail, *heh heh*). So give your writing arm a work-out and tell me what you think of NCRP. What do we need to add, change, modify, mutate (happy Rich?) or whatever.

*Bamy Oss*

## ***The NGNALOI (nig-na-loy)***

An alien race by Ian Herriott

### **Physical Description:**

The Ngnaloi appear at first sight to be wingless, white bats with immense ears. Indeed they live a life much like bats in many ways. They are small and compact beings standing .7 meters high and weighing 25 kilograms.

At first, their most striking feature is their huge ears, each one about the size of it's chest, but this fact pales when one realizes that they have no eyes, not even the uselessly small eyes of bats. Since the Ngnaloi, and almost all life on their planet, evolved in the vast cave complexes, sight organs were never developed. Instead, the Ngnaloi use a "sixth" sense. The hairs on their bodies are actually sense organs, doing little to keep them warm. They detect air movements caused by people, animals, or wind, and changes in air pressure that come from larger or smaller caverns and depth.

Along with this "sixth" sense they rely on echo-location to see objects and people. They emit high frequency sounds from a special set of vocal cords and catch the sound-reflections with their huge ears. The sound-reflections not only tell them how far away something is but also give them a vision of the shape; the closer the object, the more defined the contour-reflections, much like sight. In addition to these senses they have excellent touch and smell and fairly acute taste.

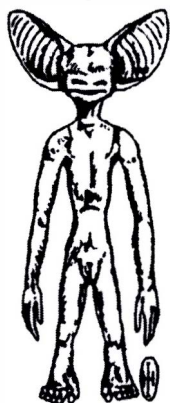
Their bodies are well adapted to a cave-dwelling existence. They are thin and compact allowing easy passage through narrow tunnels. Their arms are as long as a human's and they have a strange shoulder arrangement allowing for a higher or lower reach. They have an extra joint and bone in every finger giving them a wider grip and therefore a tighter hold. Also, their feet are like an ape's with "finger" and a "thumb" that can grip objects as well as one of their hands.

There is no visible difference between a male and female Ngnaloi. They are built the same way, and even the protective pouches for their sex organs look alike. They just look the same, humans can't tell them apart.

### **Society:**

The Ngnaloi society is loose and varied. The smallest unit is the individual. The freedom of the individual is the most important thing to Ngnaloi. Groupings of individual Ngnaloi that share similar jobs, philosophies, or religious convictions is the next level. These groups are known as Guild Families and an individual can be a member of many at the same time. The Cave is the next Ngnaloi affiliation. A Ngnaloi's Cave is the sub-complex of small caves and caverns that it lives in. There is a leader chosen by all the citizens of the Cave and a nursery where all the children are brought up together. This ensures the individuality of the children because they are not compared to their parents. The final level of Ngnaloi society is the Complex. This is the entire complex of caves, caverns, and connecting tunnels in a closed circuit. Each Complex speaks a distinct dialect, but immediate neighbors can usually understand each other.

There is no prejudice against members of another Complex and only a slight feeling of superiority (Patriotism) which is also felt by the other. Conflicts are seldom, and frowned upon. Most Ngnaloi know of only a few complexes other than their own since surface travel is difficult if not impossible because of their racial fear: Agoraphobia (the fear of wide open space). So, living in peace with their neighbors is very important.



Ngnaloi normally wear no clothing but in extreme cold or other harsh conditions they use a toga-like robe (called a Vitsu) leaving as much skin as possible open to the air, that will still protect them a little. Decorations on clothing and in dwellings is lacking in human standards but different textures are incorporated to the best effect.

The Ngnaloi languages are rich with a great variety of sounds and have a song-like quality when spoken by a fluent speaker. Musicians and orators are common. Their songs evoke intense emotions, even in non-speakers, and Ngnaloi speakers could be the most charismatic orators and leaders in the galaxy (except for their size and lack of eyes).

#### Government:

The major governments of the Ngnaloi are those of the entire Complex. There is no supreme ruler of a complex but instead, a council of the individual Cave Leaders who are spokespersons for the citizens of their Caves.

Since individuality is important to the Ngnaloi, a central government doesn't hold very much power over its citizens' actions. However, laws are still made and obeyed because they uphold the rights of the individual. Their doctrines sound quite familiar to humans: "a person is innocent until proven guilty by the judgement of his or her impartial peers." They are not identical to our constitution but their doctrines state the same truths.

Council meetings from two or more Complexes have been called when matters in one Complex overlap those of another, but there is no inter-Complex government, like the United Nations of our day, in existence.

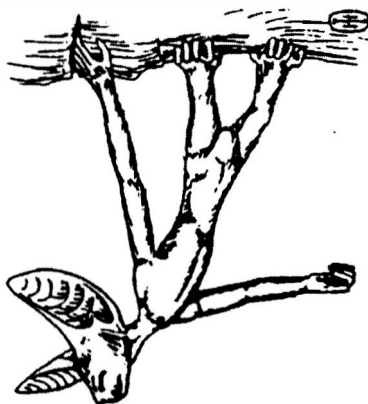
#### The Planetary Home of the Ngnaloi: Gvisha

Gvisha has a stable but wide orbit around its primary. Its tilt on its axis is about the same as that of the Earth and its orbit is about as wide as Mars'. Its atmosphere and atmospheric pressure are both weak. Moisture in the air is scant and standing water does not exist. However, humans have built a settlement here and live fairly comfortably. A constant, frigid wind blows across the surface sucking away the moisture that it finds.

The surface of Gvisha is mostly flat plains covered by a brittle grass. The plains are occasionally broken by long dead volcanoes or an ancient range of low mountains. Gvisha's surface is quite stable and plate movements are unheard of in the living memory of its inhabitants. Most of the water on Gvisha is trapped in its huge ice caps and deep permafrost which covers every inch of topsoil from pole to pole.

As one travels down through the permafrost, to the cracks and fissures of the Dead Zone, into the Transition Zone, and on to the Life Zone one meets hundreds of thousands of caves and tunnels and increased atmospheric pressure. This allows the air to retain more warmth, and liquid water to flow through the complexes. Plants and animals exist in the Life Zone and part of the Transition Zone where water is a liquid.

Water movement in Gvisha's subterranean has nothing to do with the surface. Water seeps through the rock until it is heated by what's left of the mantle and core. It then travels up chutes as steam where it breaks into caves known as Steam-caves. This brings heat to the caves and once the steam condenses it flows as liquid water down through the complexes until it reaches one of the strange, huge sea caverns: larger than any cave on Earth. It may continue on to another sea cavern or pod there and seep slowly down to renew the cycle.



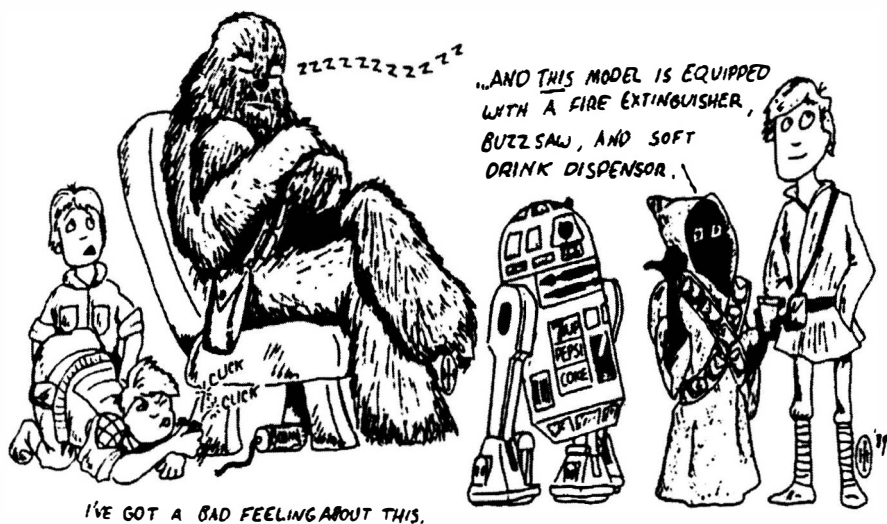
## *Adventure Ideas on Gvisha with the Ngnaloi* With help from Barry Osner

This is a great place to send characters for a 'New World' exploration adventure. In this idea they could either be visiting Gvisha in a cursory look at planets in Gvisha's system and find that it is non-hostile and class M (just barely); or characters could have heard of life on Gvisha and have gone there to explore it. The Ngnaloi will be hard to find, but any curious Ngnaloi that venture to the surface (few and far between) will check out the human (character's) settlement or landing site. Ngnaloi are basically inoffensive and harmless creatures; possibly even funny if you play your cards right. Characters should be made to feel horrible if they harm even one accidentally.

In some campaigns, characters need to find supplies of odd minerals that don't exist at present on Earth such as Dylithium crystals. Another way to approach Gvisha is to have characters searching for such a mythical mineral and find that Gvisha is a hot-bed for finding the mineral. Because of the odd cave-systems and steam works in the caves (the Sea caves especially), it would make sense to have the mineral available here. This is probably the fastest way for characters to meet the Ngnaloi.



The idea of taking a Ngnaloi out of the cave and off-planet is nearly preposterous. Their racial fear of wide open spaces would keep them incapacitated most of the time, and when they weren't catatonic, they would be looking for a cramped place to hide with four 'safe' walls and a roof and a floor. Remember their sensory perception is by air currents. Consider what ship vent systems would do to them. Enjoy yourself with the Ngnaloi. Allow them to be comedy relief in your game, especially if the characters are followed down to or are following an enemy to Gvisha.



## ***Car Wars Variant - The Taxi Cab***

**By Jess O'Brien**

In the world of 2038 AD, getting somewhere is often difficult. Your car can get wasted, or stolen, or perhaps you're sick of the hassles of driving. Well, if you've got the bucks, a taxi is a safe bet. If you live in the right area, all you have to do is call in and a well armed, well driven vehicle arrives ready to transport you to your destination. All drivers are trained professionals who can get you where you're going - safely. You can pile your luggage in the quant trunk and off you go.

A taxi campaign can be a fun diversion from the usual arena to arena headroom. As taxis take important people to important places, there is great opportunity for adventure. Characters are taxi drivers, charged with delivering their precious cargo quickly and efficiently. Some customers will obviously be the standard nobody unusual, but they can pretty much be ignored by using a monthly salary to simulate them. A lot of the time, however, interesting people will board, providing many adventures, perhaps leading to the financing of an autodeuling career. Subplots between customers, or between fellow drivers can be easily developed. Most campaigns of this style work best as two person ones; one referee and one player. However, it is easily possible to work a multi-player campaign - it just takes more work on the referee's part.

As mentioned before, taxis take important people to important places. In most areas, the idea of a taxi service just hasn't caught on. But, where they have (in about a dozen major cities), they charge anywhere from \$20 to \$50 a ride. This high charge is due to very high inflation since eighty-nine, the damage sustained en route, etc. The referee should set a monthly salary for drivers to suit their campaign. A few of the companies have set up a driver training course including gunning, driving, and hand weapon training. It also includes rudimentary standard procedure, manners, ethnics, frisking passengers, etc. Most drivers receive some sort of insurance to cover the costs of ammo, power plant charges, fires, damage to armor, and the like. This is determined entirely by the referee. Another option is for drivers to be equipped with two-way radios to get help from off-duty drivers nearby. This helps to involve other players and can encourage sub-plots with NPCs. If you want, there can be established a quota for the drivers. This can result in PCs "recruiting" customers with a smooth sales pitch, fast talk or at gunpoint.

Mandatory for a taxi is the taxi screen. Almost always, it is installed with an intercom system. Details for these new items are given later. It is also encouraged by the management to install additional weaponry and defenses to the stock model assigned every driver. Almost always, these additions come out of the PC's pocket.

Listed here are a few adventure ideas for a taxi campaign that the referee should tuck to their tux:

1. A customer boards. You recognize her as an important city official fighting for the rights of your favorite interest group: Taxi drivers/Autodeulists/pet owners/clones/ etc. Unfortunately, she is on the hit list of a cycle gang/pedestrian group/professional assassin/mother-in-law/ etc. and the dangerous party is waiting just around the corner.
2. An unusual looking man hops on board. He has a long, scraggly blond beard. His only luggage is a large suitcase. As you pull away, he opens his suitcase to reveal a large, armed bomb. "Take me to Mexico," he shouts, "or I blow us both away!"
3. A local cycle gang is hard up for cash and your taxi seems like an easy hit. About 3 or 4 \$5,000 - \$10,000 cycles should make a challenge depending on the money spent on the taxi(s) involved.
4. The advertising department of your taxi company decides that entering the local arena with a taxi would be great publicity. If you win big enough, then you may continue your autodeuling career under the company logo. Note that losing can result in being terminated.
5. The rival taxi company decides that the competition is getting too hot and makes an all out attack on your building. Best for a multi-player bout.

6. Passenger racks up \$500 worth of fares in a joy ride. At an intersection, he leaps out and runs into an alley far too narrow for your vehicle. You grab your hand weapons, lock up the car instantly, and dash off in pursuit— into the bad side of town...

7. The opposing taxi company is muscling in on your territory. They have severely hurt one driver and blown up three cars, damaging both reputation and profits. You've been assigned by the boss to come up with a daring retaliation.

8. A customer drops a hint about a valuable wreck/garage sale/free meal/informal deal/rival driver/other goal located just outside of town. Faking that you're doing overtime, you drive outside of town to investigate. Unfortunately this is nothing but a trap set by the rival taxi company planning to thrash your car, pop the tires, and beat you up. However, if you manage to come out on top, then the salvage will certainly be worth the risk.

[From the Editor: Always consider how much fun you as gamester can have giving the cabbie a fare that hops in and says "Follow that Car!!"]

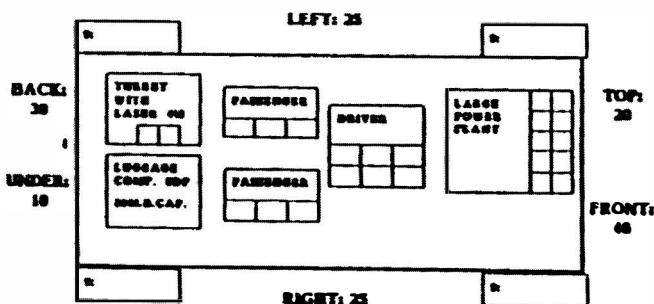
### NEW ACCESSORIES

**Intercomer:** \$200, weight or space negligible. Speakers allow drivers to converse with passengers in back seat(s).

**Taxi Screen:** A sheet of vehicular-grade armor separating people in front seats of a vehicle from the back seats. Can contain 20 points of armor. Cost/Weight: \$7/3 lbs per point. Can be FP, LR, LRFP, ML, or LRML. The taxi screen, regardless of amount of armor placed, takes one space.

Since the most fun part of Car Wars is designing your own vehicles, doing just that is suggested. However, presented is a sample vehicle. Note, however, that this vehicle is weak on defense.

### SAMPLE TAXI



Size - heavy	Driver -
Chassis - heavy	Vehicle -
Suspension - heavy	Cost - \$21,000
HC - 3	Spaces Remaining: 7
ACC - 5	Tires - Heavy Duty
Weight - 5,900 (5,200 maximum)	
<p>Equipped with: Slanted armor (all locations), a bi-rail single weapon computer for the laser in turret, two point tool across, an intercom, a long distance radio, a loggase compartment (6 spaces into 400 lb. capacity), a laser in a normal turret, a machine pistol and a suit of body armor.</p>	

Hi, it's your ol' pal Hairy again and once again The HOBBY HOUSE at 2911 F st in Eureka has got a slew of new stuff. Since last we spoke, they've acquired a stock of the long awaited Space: 1889 from G'DW. This new game is the RPG for the earlier released 'Sky Galleons of Mars'. From a new company called Waterford Press, their first game 'High Colonies' is now available. This is a grittier science fiction RPG with a feel similar to the movie 'Outland'. And Cyberpunk is in. In addition, they have begun carrying more magazines including Challenge (36 is in) , Battletechnology, White Dwarf, Dungeon, White Wolf, and Space Gamer. Also added to their already long list of hobbies carried 'in-shop' are comics. The Hobby House has added a small line of new comics. In fact, the Hobby House is expanding all the time with a new selection of darts. We also plan to start carrying Baseball Cards.



In fact, if there is stuff they don't carry, tell 'em, that's the only way they are going to be able to carry what you want to buy. They will gladly do special orders for stuff you can't get anywhere else (with a slight downpayment). Give 'em a call at 445-0310 or go in personally and see 'em. And this month, tell 'em 'The Terminator' sent ya' for a destructive 10% discount on your purchase. So what are you waiting for?

LE DUC -



## SHADOW OVER STOCKTON

An adventure for *Cihulu Now* by Craig Sheeley

### Catch of the Day:

The news is not wide-spread; it's the sort of thing most papers and media scoff at. Still, it's worth a thirty-second item on the national news, and photos can be found buried in the back pages of newspapers, with comments from obscure scientists who have only seen the photos and no more. A man-sized, frog-like thing has been caught by a fisherman in Missouri. The tabloid papers have latched onto the story and are running headlines screaming: "FISH-MAN CAUGHT! REVEALS SECRETS OF MISSOURI'S UNDERWATER KINGDOM!" The characters are likely to see it differently. The creature hung by its feet is frog-faced, vacant-eyed, shark-toothed, slimy-skinned;

The catch is undoubtedly a *Deep One*.

### Getting involved

The party may become involved out of curiosity, alarm, assignment from employers ("I want proof! This could break the bio-science industry wide open!"), or be sent by the savants who combat these ancient horrors to find more information.

The place is Stockton, Missouri. The dateline on the photograph is September 27, 1988. Getting there is easy, by road. Airline travel is best accomplished by staging in through Kansas City, or St. Louis and flying to Springfield, then taking a rental car to Stockton.

On the way in, the party's vehicle(s) will be stopped by two patrol cars of the Highway Patrol. The officers will flank the party and act very cautiously, two of them covering the vehicle(s) with shotguns as the other two approach, their hands on their revolvers. They will be polite but edgy, and the PCs are advised against making hasty moves, or the whole adventure stops here! Vehicles will be thoroughly searched. Occult items will draw mutters and dark looks from the patrolmen; loaded weapons will earn the characters a journey to the local jail, where they'll be held for questioning! (Takes a day; unless there was violence, the PCs will be grudgingly released.) Any illegal drugs found (assuming one of the PCs was carrying them) will end the adventure right here as the party will be jailed for illegal possession. You see, the patrol is looking for drugs...

### Stockton, Missouri

(See map opposite page.)

### Rooms for the night

Every hotel, motel and hostelry the PCs stop at is full to the gills with fishermen. It seems that the Trout Master corporation has sponsored a contest to see if any more of the "fish-men" can be caught, with a \$25,000 prize going to the largest catch. The only hotel with rooms left is the Carp-Port Motel on the east shore next to the dam, a creepy collection of run-down motel cottages in fish motif. The proprietor, Cloyd Pisca, is happy to oblige the party at \$25 per cottage per night.

### Cloyd Pisca:

STR: 9 DEX: 11 INT: 8 CON: 12 APP: 9 EDU: 4 SIZ: 7 SAN: 45 POW: 13

Skills: Sneak 50%, Manage Motel 40%, Listen 40%

Cloyd is a small, greasy, friendly guy. He likes to tell fish stories and relate the local tall tales. He is curious about everything and nosy as well, snooping around.

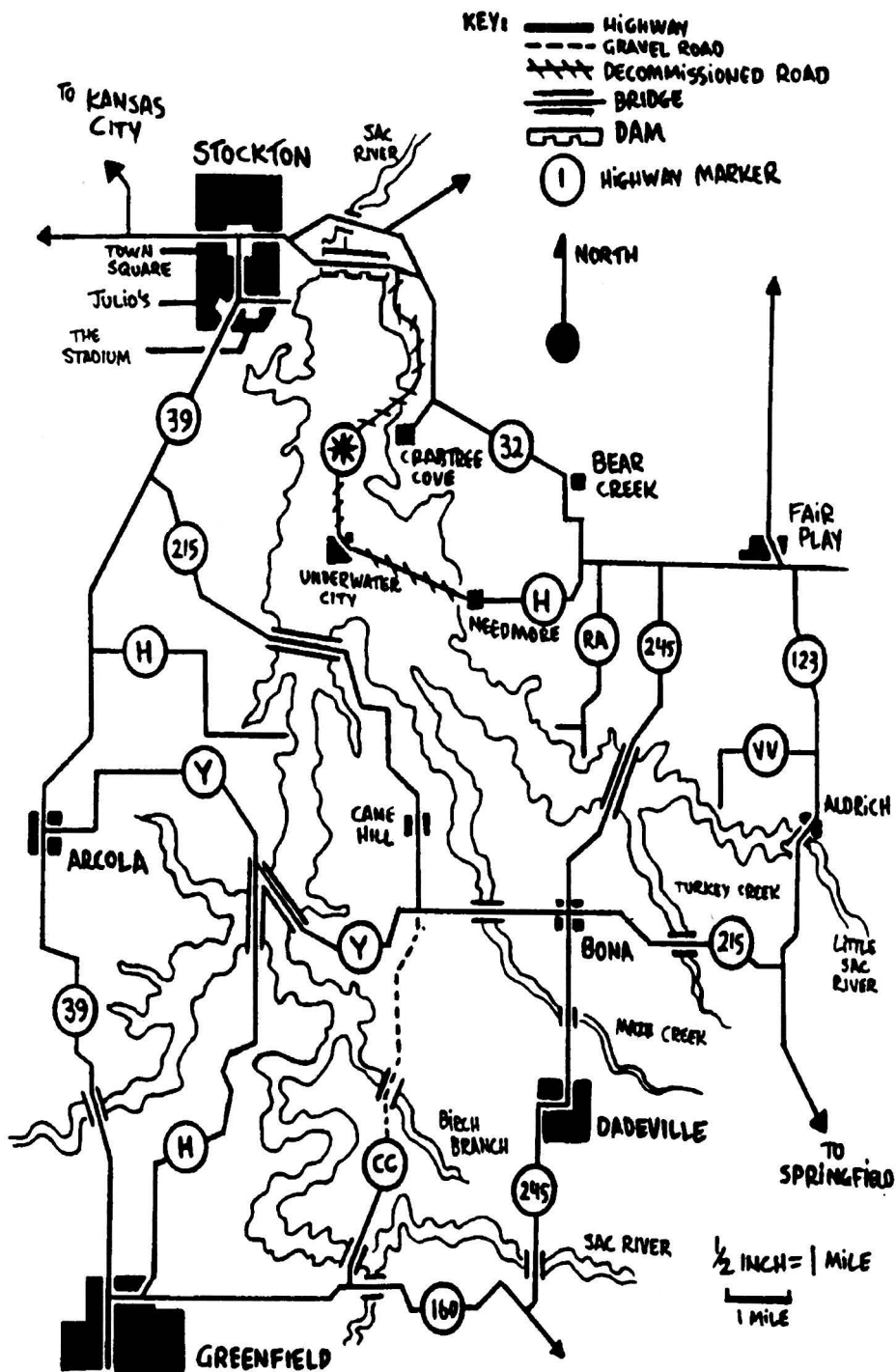
Cloyd will be most often encountered sneaking around and eavesdropping on the group. A little interest can persuade him to relate any two of the Tall Tales.

### Checking Out the Lake

Boats are as hard to find as lodgings. Every Fisherman that didn't bring a boat rented from the locals. Diligent searching (and at least four stops where the PCs are told "Sorry, we're all out"), and boats can be found at the Fischer dock.

The Fischers are a strange pair, Pa and Marcel Fischer. Both have pallid, clammy skin, and Marcel's eyes bulge out unnervingly. They have one boat left (adjust the size to accommodate the party): \$50 per day. Pa Fischer asks the PCs what they want with the boat. No matter what they say, he looks at them suspiciously and grunts "Uh-huh." When the PCs maneuver the boat away from the dock, PA can be seen talking to Marcel and gesturing to the party.

If no-one in the party has Boating or Powerboat skill, the basic percentage is 10% - enough to figure out how to make the boat move and maneuver with a complete lack of skill, without sinking it.



The boat itself is a flat-bottomed scow with a leaky drain-hole and an outboard motor. Slow, ungainly and shabby, it takes on water and must be continually bailed by one of the group. Everyone gets wet feet.

The lake is aswarm with boats. Fishermen can be seen everywhere, dangling lines overboard, casting lures, and consuming unbelievable quantities of beer. There are no pleasure boats out, just fishermen and the Lake Patrol.

#### The Lake Patrol

The Patrol is the Sheriff's answer to law enforcement on the lake. The PCs will be accosted by the two patrolmen, who order them to heave to for inspection. The Patrol will find something wrong (their favorite infraction is possession of alcohol, even though the two officers have a couple of beer-filled coolers on board their boat) and fine the party 2D6 X \$10 (lack of boating license, insufficient flotation devices, etc.) to be paid to the city.

#### The Science Project

On the west shore of the lake, a small group of scientists are approaching the discovery of the "fish-men" with techno-science. They have a jetty laden with scanners, a portable computer and printer spewing out continual printouts, lawn chairs and tables, and a portable generator to power it all. Several video and still cameras are in evidence, as well as a two-man mini-sub moored at the jetty. If approached, the three male and two female researchers identify themselves as a team sponsored by a paranormal organization. Their job is to find and make contact with one of the "fish-men." They are doing real research on the side, recognizing the chance to make scientific headlines the world 'round. All are quite friendly and very busy working with their equipment. So far they haven't found anything, but they have high hopes.

#### In Stockton

The town itself is seething with activity as local merchants strive to exploit the sudden glut of customers. The two-lane streets are jammed with vehicles and there are people everywhere. The locals are polite but hurried. Prices are 25% higher than usual.

The Deep One that started the contest is no longer in town; its carcass have been taken south to the Trout Master's headquarters store. However, Trout Master has set up trailer-stores to market fishing gear to the fishermen and excellent pictures of the "fish-man" are prominently displayed.

The primary local hang-out is the Steakhouse, located on the highway. At lunch-time, the place is crowded with people during the buffet. The people are very friendly and willing to talk about many subjects except drugs or favorite fishing spots (both are family secrets). If the PCs ask about the history of the lake or dam, they will be told overwhelming amounts of folklore - the locals are willing to talk until after nightfall. See TALL TALES for the interesting stories.

Research at the Courthouse is an option - a successful Library Use roll will reveal the following information: the town has been around for over a century. There was no lake until the 1950s, when the river was dammed and the lake was formed. There was a small outlying town that had to be abandoned to the lake; it is now under water - the east road goes to it. This research also reveals the presence of the east road.



"...In an Octopus' Garden..."

If the PCs manage to steal or manipulate the scientists into taking a min-sub run to the sunken town, little can be seen in the murky water. The submarine is suddenly attacked by unseen assailants and battered; it'll take days to repair.

### TALL TALES

There are many myths and tidbits of local gossip and folklore in small towns. Stockton is no exception. Most of the ghost tales are just that: Decades-old ghost stories. Several of the stories might be useful:

*The Dam is haunted.* There are two variants of this - the first holds that a man fishing off the dam got his line snagged by the turbines and was sucked into the spillway to his death. The other version says that one of the dam workers accidentally fell into the wet concrete one night ... He disappeared, and was never heard from again. Legend has him crumpled in the dam. Both versions have the dead man's ghost haunting the dam, bringing misfortune to boaters who sail too close to the dam.

*The Old Usser Place.* The old Usser place out east of town is suspect. There are some mighty strange goings-on out there. Why, just last two months ago, Frank Moons and his girl were cruising the east road and saw something slouched up the turn-off to the Usser's place - and it wasn't human.

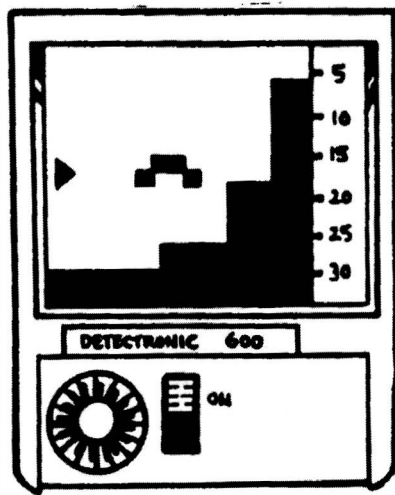
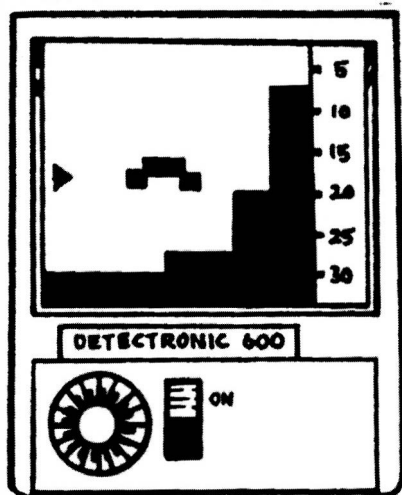
*The Ghost Racer.* The east road has been in use for years - local fishermen use it as a boat ramp, since it disappears into the lake, and youngsters use it as a dragstrip, at night. In 1960, a popular youth vanished on the east road. He was last seen in a race with a black '57 Chevy that sported orange headlights... Legend has it that he raced the Devil and lost. Now, he's doomed to race up and down the east road in that hammed '57 Chevy for eternity.

*UFO Point.* Out north of the town, there's a field where you can see UFOs dancing in the sky, more often than not. Several locals claim to have been inside the UFOs ("They was all Elvis clones, I tell yuh!").

*King Cat.* There's a catfish in the lake that's the king of them all. A real bottom-dwelling monster, this legendary creature is described as larger than a Trout Scouter fishing boat and twice as ornery. Maybe it's in league with the "fish-men!" (Records do record catfish caught in the state missing over 200 lbs...)

### Forces of Good and Evil

Player-character questions about strange happenings in Stockton are noticed: A blue-haired matron with a pinched-up face accosts at least one of the party, telling them to "Turn away from the forces of the Devil, before it's too late!" She says Reverend Luke Skinner has the answer and hands them a flyer advertising an anti-"fish-man" rally that night. "Y'all come and hear him; he'll know how to handle these spawn of Satan!" She goes to pester another visitor, a saw-toothed thin man with goggle eyes hidden behind glasses.



Charlie Scales

STR: 9 DEX:10 INT:17 CON:10 APP: 9 EDU:14 ~~SIZE~~:14 SAN:25 POW:16

Skills: Computer Us 45%, Cthulu Mythos 30%, Dodge 30%, History 35%, Sneak 20%, Deep One Language 15%.

Charlie is tall, thin, sallow-faced and fish-eyed. He has studied the notes of Wilber Whately and learned of the Deep Ones, how to summon and control them. Journeying to Stockton, he hopes to locate a tribe of Deep Ones and put them under his power. Power-hungry, he is a pitiful geek with retiring ways and a lack of social skills. He is spectacularly inept at fighting but possesses the spell Curse of Azathoth, as potent weapon!

Charlie turns up often, showing up around the investigators. He lets little hints of his knowledge show (due to vanity), and is a general non-threatening background figure... Until the Summons of the Deep!

#### Praise the Lord!

If the party attends the rally, they are among a group of near-fanatical zealots. Hymn-singing, "amen"ing, and listening to Rev. Skinner rant about how the "curse of Say-tan" has descended on the fair town of Stockton, to "test the faithful." He argues that the "fish-men" are evil and should be destroyed... By poisoning the lake, if need be! "Certain people," he says, "ceratin people are falling into Say-tan's trap. They seek these evil dee-mons for their own purposes, to make money off of the forces of Hell!" The meeting is full of this sort of talk; characters asking about the Deep Ones are liable to be attacked by irate parishoners.

If the party doesn't attend the rally, Rev. Skinner will bump into them at the lake or the town square, where he's leading a protest against Trout Master's tournament. He says that he's heard of the PC's search for information on the "fish-men," and accuses them of being in league with the "forces fo greed and corruption." He tells the party that he's keeping an eye on them.

#### The Forces fo Progress

There is a town meeting that night to discuss development of tourist attractions based on the possibility of a "fish-man" city beneath the lake. This meeting is attended by land-owners, motel managers and dock owners, representatives from the EPA and the Conservation department ("Are these "fish-men" an endangered species?"). Rev. Skinner and some of his supporters attend, too, and break up the meeting with their protests and accusations. Nothing is resolved. If the PCs attend, they see Charlie Scales examining the topographic map of the lake-bottom with quiet intensity.

#### Checking out the old Usser Place

The old Usser place is accessible only through a small, nearly over-grown road leading off from the east highway. The road has been in use recently, to judge from the tire tracks. About 300 yards down the road from the east road, there is a concealed pit/stake trap, meant to puncture tires. A successful Spot Hidden roll will see that all tire tracks come together at this point, forming minor ruts. Unless the PCs vehicle follows the same ruts (Drive Auto skill roll +25%) the front tires will crash through the pit and impale both tires.

200 yards further on, the road is blocked by a four-strand barbed wire fence. The gate across the road is secured by a thick plastic-coated cable locked with a massive padlock. Investigators notice insulators on the fence with a successful Spot Hidden roll - it is heavily electrified, delivering a 3D6 charge to anyone touching it. Getting thorough the fence is easy - cut the wires without getting electrocuted!

Beyond the fence, crops are found growing in neat rows: Female marijuana plants. Large ones, ready for harvesting. Strung through the plants are strings with cans hung on them - a DEX roll is required to avoid ringing the alarm if someone moves through the plants.

If the investigators are foolish enough to go to the house, let them. There are four dope-farmers there - the whole gang is six, but two of them are gone at the moment. If the investigators want to sneak up to the house, their Sneak +10% rolls succeed in suprising the dopers and allowing the adventureres to peek into the farmhouse window, through which they can spot the dopers. Of course, if one Sneak roll is failed, the dopers are alerted to the presence of strangers and will open fire! Their important statistics are STR 12, DEX 11, CON 13, ~~SIZE~~ 12, Rifle/Shotgun +25. Two have 8-shot pump shotguns and the other two have M-16s.

A gunfight, capturing the dopers and/or injury will bring notoriety and official attention to the PCs. If this happens, the PCs are officially detained during the opening stages of...

### The "Fish-Men" Strike Back!

As the investigation progresses, fishermen start disappearing. Not many of them, just a boat here or there. People tell of seeing strange, man-like forms crawl from the water during the night to scrawl incomprehensible marks on the dam. These things always occur where the PCs aren't, of course. When they arrive at the dam, the marks are still there. So is Charlie Scales, taking a picture of the scrawls. Rev. Skinner and his people are on hand, protesting that the markings are cursed and should be destroyed.

### The Scrawls

The markings look like writing, and are vaguely familiar to Archaeologists. The skills Linguist and Archaeologist are needed to make sense of them. Only 1/5 of each skill may be used when making the rolls; one roll may be made per hour of concentrated study. If desired, full Cthulu Mythos skill may be used instead of Linguist/Archaeologist. The writing is a form of Deep One glyphs, and the message is, "WE NO HURT YOU LEAVE US ALONE."

### The Race

At the local drag that night, the talk is on the Haunted Chevy - several teens are ashen-facedly claiming that they saw it! and that it blew their doors off on the east road. There were *weird* guys riding in it - they looked like dead things, like survivors of a fish kill.

The party may hear this anywhere - a good place is at a gas station. As they listen to the punks' frightened account, a black '57 Chevy roars past on the road... Driven and ridden by three Deep Ones!! Check for SAN loss.

If they chase the Chevy, it maintains a lead on them, turning onto the east road. Drag-racing all the way down the east road in the dark isn't smart - you see, there's a tree growing through the middle of the road about four-fifths of the way to the lake. If the PCs chase that far, the driver(s) must make a Drive Auto roll -20% to avoid the tree. Failure wrecks the vehicle(s), doing 1D6+2 damage to the occupants (3D6 if not seatbelted). If the PCs miss the tree and continue to chase the Deep Ones, the Chevy drives right into the lake! The road continues down into the flooded town...

Of course, trigger-happy PCs may fire weapons at the Deep One Chevy. This will attract the police (who drive much faster cars), firing first and asking questions later. No lie, they shoot to kill and sort the bodies out afterward, folks.

### Boat Ones

At the meeting point of road and lake there is a massive boat trailer and 4-wheel-drive truck standing abandoned. As the PCs ponder the highway the Deep Ones are driving, a pickup drives up, its cargo space laden with cases of beer. A fisherman in full fishing gear jumps out. "Hey, where's the boat? They were supposed to wait for me!" (This fisherman can also show up if the PCs are wrecking and in need of a ride.) He explains that his buddies were going to wait for him to get back with more beer, but he got hung up in town - had to write a personal check - and they must have already launched! And there are no other boats at this time of night... Do the PCs have a boat they could lay their hands on? It's essential to get the beer to the others - they only had three cases left. (If the PCs balk, mention the possibility of scouting out Deep Ones to them.)

Heavy fog is closing in on the lake, top-lit by a full moon. The PCs chug around the lake, looking for anything. Not even the Lake Patrol is out in the night. Suddenly, running lights are spotted; the fisherman says it must be his buddies - noone else would use beer company running lights (indeed, on closer examination, the lights are shining the logo of a well-known brand of beer...). The lights close on the party until the other boat, a massive Trout Scouter Barge, looms out of the fog.

There are no fishermen on board, only Deep Ones. Deep Ones in fishermen's hats, a Deep Ones at the motor, Deep Ones clutching fishing poles and beer, Deep Ones grinning a waving at the PCs. Check for SAN loss (those losing only 1 point of SAN grin and wave back like idiots).

The pirated barge is fast; the PCs' boat has to struggle to keep up. They seem to be headed for an island in the lake...

### Summoning of the Deep Ones

On the island, Charlie Scales is working his magic, summoning all Deep Ones in the area to his call. The PCs arrive in time to see Charlie surrounded by the hulking, slimy shapes of nearly a hundred Deep Ones (including the "fishermen" from the barge). Charlie speaks haltingly to the Deep Ones, threatening them with the everlasting Curse of Azathoth if they don't follow his commands (a successful Linguist or 1/2 Cthulu Mythos roll enables the party to follow the gist of his speech). The Deep One chief croaks that they have little choice...

If the party doesn't stop Charlie, he will send the Deep Ones out to attack every fisherman they can find and rob them. And that's only the beginning of the carnage!

If the party stops Charlie, the Deep Ones do not attack. The chief explains in very poor English that all they want to do is live peaceably at the bottom of the lake. They want nothing to do with men or the Old Ones. They will stay away from men; in time, the turmoil will stop and men will stop hunting Deep Ones. the creatures then slog back to the water and disappear beneath the waves.

#### Aftermath

Charlie will have to be killed or institutionalized; he's working on Empty. If the PCs save the Deep Ones from Charlie and stop his plan, each gains 1D6 SAN from learning of peaceful Deep Ones.



# TROUT SCOUTER



## *Low Passage*

Stand in by John D. Law-Green

### "BlackWing" Grav Strike Vehicle (Tech 15)

The vehicle has a crew of 5 (commander, driver, fusion gunner, laser gunner, missile gunner). It mounts a rapid-pulse fusion gun in a remote mount on the chassis deck, two pulse lasers in a remote mount on the chassis belly, and two tac missile magazine launchers on the chassis deck. It has tech level 15 point defense fire control for the fusion gun, and tech level 15 direct fire control for the lasers. Height: 2.2m (+ dorsal turret .4m, + ventral turret .4m), Width: 7., Length: 16m. Total volume: 153.84 m<sup>3</sup>. Weight: 757.96 tons. Price: Cr 22,825,694.

**Movement:** Maximum 826 kph/688 cm; cruise 620 kph/517 cm;  
NOE 190 kph/158 cm.

**Movement Effects on Fire:** None.

**Armor:** Chassis front: 70; Chassis sides: 67; Chassis rear: 65; belly: 57; deck: 56; remote mounts front and sides: 66; remote mounts rear: 61.

**Target Size DM's:** Dorsal turret: +1; chassis: +5; ventral turret: +1

**Equipment:** Laser sensor (roll 2+), 100-power radio, 200-power all-weather target acquisition radar, 5-power terrain-following lidar, meson communicator (1000 km. range), maser communicator (1000 km. range), 2 maser communicators (100 km. range), extensive ECM, 3 battlefield computers, 3 map boxes, tech level 9 fire direction center, sealed environment with life support for 5.

**Power:** 270 megawatt fusion power plant consumes 405 litres per hour, fuel capacity is 32,500 litres, enough for 80.2 hours. Grav generators produce 1.69 G's.

**Weapons:** i) Rapid-pulse fusion gun, total input 70 megawatts, 35 MW pulse input/14 MW pulse output. It may engage 2 targets and is automatically spotted when it fires. Its other characteristics are shown below:

<b>Range:</b> Effective: 561 cm (+2)	<b>Long:</b> 1122 cm (+2)	<b>Extreme:</b> 2245 cm (+2)
<b>Penetration:</b> 72	61	37
<b>Burst Size:</b> 5 cm	3 cm	1 cm
<b>Frag. Pen.:</b> 56	45	21

ii) Two single lens pulse lasers, 34 megawatt input. Each may engage 1 target, and is automatically spotted when it fires. Its other characteristics are shown below:

<b>Range:</b> Effective: 1000 cm	<b>Long:</b> 2000 cm	<b>Extreme:</b> 400 cm
<b>Penetration:</b> 71	71	71

iii) Each missile launcher carries 20 missiles in its magazine, and the vehicle has storage space for 40 more. The launchers include guidance for target memory missiles. The missiles have a range of 25 km., and weigh 221 kg. each. The following types are available:

a) HE warhead:

Target memory (Cr 9213, DM +3), high performance (speed DM +4)  
Homing (Cr 2412), high performance (speed DM+5)

**Penetration:** 36

**Burst:** 6 cm

**Frag. Pen.:** 5

**b) HEAP warhead:**

Target memory (Cr 10.173, DM +3), high performance (speed DM +4)

Homing (Cr 3372), high performance (speed DM +5)

IR follow-up (Cr 3472), high performance (speed DM +5)

**Penetration: 59**

**Note:** The vehicle has two drone vehicle control stations, the laser and missile gunners doubling as drone vehicle pilots.

**Armed Speeder (Tech Level 15)**

The vehicle has a crew of two (pilot/commander, gunner). It mounts a fusion gun, and two tac missile launch rails, in a remote mount on the chassis deck, with direct fire control. Height: 1.1m (+remote mount 4m). Width: 2.1m. Length: 4.7m. Total volume 8.94 m<sup>3</sup>. Weight: 29.3 tons. Price: Cr 1,183,300

**Movement:** Maximum, 1250 kph/1042 cm; cruise, 937.5 kph/781 cm; NOE, 190 kph/158 cm.

**Movement Effects On Fire:** None

**Armor:** All chassis sides, bonded superdense 45. All mount sides, bonded superdense 53.

**Target Size DM's:** +1 low, 0 high.

**Equipment:** Laser sensor (roll 2+); 400-power radar; 40-power all-weather target acquisition radar; 5-power terrain-following lidar; laser communicator (10 km. range); image enhancement; extensive ECM; map box; battle computer; 10 bottles of prismatic aerosol; sealed environment with life support for 2.

**Power:** 9 megawatt fusion power plant consumes 2.25 litres of fuel per hour; fuel capacity is 990 litres, enough for 440 hours. Grav generators produce 2.05 G's.

**Weapons:** i) Fusion gun, 3 megawatt input/1.2 megawatt output. It may engage one target, and is automatically spotted when it fires. Its other characteristics are shown below:

<b>Range:</b>	<b>Effective;</b> 164 cm.	<b>Long;</b> 329 cm.	<b>Extreme;</b> 657 cm.
<b>Penetration:</b>	44	32	9
<b>Burst Size:</b>	1 cm.	1 cm.	-
<b>Frag. Penetration:</b>	28	16	-

ii) 2 tac missiles, mounted on launch rails, on each side of the remote mount. The missiles are high-performance versions (speed DM +5), have a range of 10 km., and weigh 85 kg. each. There are two models of missile, shown below:

a) Homing Guidance, HE warhead      Price: Cr 1330.

**Penetration: 35    Burst Size: 6cm    Frag. Penetration: 5**

b) Homing Guidance, HEAP warhead      Price: Cr 1810

**Penetration: 59**

## *The People of Kathari*

More AD&D Madness from James LeDuc

The Kathurians are a race descended from the survivors of the Elders. They are born of the same ancient racial stock as elves, fairies, brownies, and dryads. They are a nomadic people who travel in groups of 15 to 150, in horse drawn wagons. They appear much like the stereotypical gypsies of old movies with oarlandish (for the time) garb and horse drawn wagons that are more homes than cars.

A character of Kathurian stock can opt to be a fighter (maximum of 8th level), an illusionist (maximum of 8th level), a thief, an assassin, or a cleric (maximum of 5th level). They may also multiclass, but no cleric/illusionist combinations are available. Restrictions to multiclass characters are the same as per elves. Unlike elves, however, Kathurians have no magic inherent magical resources or bonuses to skills, but they do have abilities: shapeshifting and healing at twice the normal rate. The Kathurians are virtually indistinguishable from elves physically (determine height, weight, and looks as if elven). They possess 30' infravision. As a race the Kathurians gain a +1 to Constitution and a -1 to Charisma.

	STR	INT	WIS	DEX	CON	CHAR
	M/F	M/F	M/F	M/F	M/F	M/F
MIN	3/3	9/9	3/3	6/6	6/6	6/6
MAX	18/17	18/18	15/15	18/18	19/19	15/15

Most societies shun the Kathurians as their innate abilities make them excellent thieves, and they very is most often frowned upon.

Kathurians can speak Elvish, Gnome, Halfling, Goblin, Hobgoblin, Orcish, Groll, and the "Common Tongue." Kathurians do not have their own specific language but normally use Elven. In addition, the Kathurians are a race with the ability to shape shift into animals, other humanoid races, or magical beings. (Note: Dungeon Masters should consider the ramifications of Kathurians shapeshifting into Gods. I suggest that this should be highly limited if possible at all. What God is going to want one of his subjects parading around as himself.)

If a Kathurian chooses to become a normal character class, s/he will have the ability to shift into one other form. This form will be a normal animal (cat, dog, crow, or pigeon for example.) Often the form will be the family form or the form that the family teaches the young Kathurian to change into (DM's should choose the family form). The other alternative (for a Kathurian is to work to develop their innate shape changing abilities to the exclusion of all other character classes.

The shapeshifter, as a class, requires an incredible constitution (16 or better) and a good intelligence (13 or better). A shapeshifter may use any weapon with a -3 non-proficiency penalty. If proficient, the shapeshifter fights as a thief. The shapeshifter may wear any armor, but when the shapeshifter changes form, these clothes and armor will be left behind, or if the character changes into something large, like a Griffin, they will be shredded and destroyed (possibly injuring the character in the process.)

As a shapeshifter progresses in capabilities, s/he will gain the ability to become bigger and heavier creatures. The shapeshifter is never able to use any spells, but may use magic items usable by all classes (but remember, possessions are left behind when forms are changed that can't carry them.)

A shapeshifter may change into any creature of equivalent or less hit dice. A shapeshifter must spend 1 week of intense studying a creature per hit die of that creature to have a chance to change into it. This study requires at least one carcass of the selected creature to perfect the knowledge of how the insides of the creature work. The chance of a shapeshifter possibly learning a new form is the same as a Magic-user learning a new spell. This study costs 1,000 gp per creature's hit die per week. The maximum number of new shapes a shapeshifter can learn is equal to his/her intelligence multiplied by a factor of 2. Once learned, however, the character will gain the skill of healer/ver for that creature.

In all other ways, the shapeshifter character class is like a thief (starting money, secondary skills, etc.) When a shapeshifter assumes a new shape, he is physically, for all intents and purposes, that creature. S/he has the same A.C., Attacks, Movement, etc... Only his/her Hit Points remain the same. If a character shifts while wounded, the same wounds are passed on to the new form. No Hit Points are healed when shapeshifting.

People who view the shapeshifter must make an intelligence roll (mines the shapeshifter's level) to notice "something is out of the ordinary with this animal." The shapeshifter assumes form only, not specifics, so the shapeshifter can become a generic halfling but he cannot become Victor Rumblebottom the Burgermaster of the shire of Labbitland. Shapeshifters do not gain non-physical attacks of the new form either - therefore the shapeshifter can change form into a Mindflayer but

cannot attack psionically (unless they already had their own psionics when created) and s/he can change into a Rakshasha but cannot use its magic. Further, the 10th level Shapeshifter cannot change form into a 10th level wizard or warrior as is convenient.

Experience Points	Level	8-sided Hit Dice	no. of shifts/day
0 - 2,250	1	1	1
2,251 - 4,500	2	2	3
4,501 - 10,000	3	3	5
10,001 - 20,000	4	4	7
20,001 - 40,000	5	5	11
40,001 - 90,000	6	6	15
90,001 - 150,000	7	7	19
150,001 - 225,000	8	8	23
225,001 - 325,000	9	9	28
325,001 - 650,000	10	10	32

Each level after 10th is +325,000 experience points. A shapeshifter gains 1 hit point per level after 10th. A shapeshifter gains 5 shifts per day per level after 10th.

*No. of shifts* is defined as the number of switches that can be made in a 24 hour period. Changing from Kathurian to, say, a cat is considered one shift. No more changes can be made (at first level) that day except to change back to their original Kathurian form. At second level, the shapeshifter could change into a cat, then back, and then into a dog (3 shifts) or from a Kathurian into a cat, then an eagle, and then into a dog (3 shifts) with the only other change available that day being changing back from dog to Kathurian. When a shapeshifter goes unconscious or is killed (or even goes asleep), their new form is maintained as IT IS THERE FORM NOW. It is assumed that a shapeshifter can always change back to their original form even if no more shifts are available that day.



PARSONAVICH © 80"

## ***Enforcing with Extra Power!***

(New powers for 21st Century Games' Enforcers)

By Tony Lee

**Adrenaline.** Adrenaline, like Willpower, is an ability score that starts at 0 and can only be increased by spending creation points at the rate of 10 Adrenaline points per CP. Adrenaline can be used by a character before any offensive or defensive action to temporarily double one of the following stats: Strength, Constitution, Agility/Dexterity, Energy, Armor, Invulnerability, Knockback Factor, Healing Rate, Carrying Capacity, HTH Dam#, Movement Speeds, ABCTH, DAM#, duration, effect, or range of a choice power. If the character makes a percentile saving throw against his Adrenaline score then the stat is doubled for one round. The character must spend an amount of energy equal to double the percentile roll plus the usual E/CU for the power (if applicable), or 5 energy points if he misses the roll.

Please note that such increases will not affect other stats, e.g. doubled Strength will not boost your Hit Points, extra Carrying Capacity will not raise your basic HTH Dam#, etc.

CP = 1   EC = double amount of dice roll or 5   AC = 0

**Chameleon.** This power requires a defensive action to activate, and it allows character to blend into backgrounds, looking like they have faded and vanished visually. Chameleon characters operate under the same rules as invisible characters, except only a stationary Chameleon receives +10% BCTH and 50% defense bonus, whereas a moving Chameleon gets no BCTH advantage and only 20% defense bonus.

CP = 4   EC = 0   AC = d

**Improved Senses.** The following are additional items for Improved Senses:

**Visor Vision** - prevents permanent blinding from Blinding Flash. Note: "Blinding Flash" is a new power from the Enforcers Reinforcement supplement due in a few months.

**360 Degree vision** - enables a character to see all directions at once.

**Microscopic Vision** - allows the character to spot a microscopic being with a Detective Score roll.

CP = 4   EC = 0   AC = d, GM's discretion

**Language Mastery.** This power allows a character to master and translate any language -- man, animal, insect, or alien -- almost instantly. Two percentile saving throws against INT are required to completely decipher a language; character with Sound Projection receive +20 on each roll. If one roll is failed, the character can establish communication only 50% of the time, but may try another roll after 10 minutes of uninterrupted study. If both rolls failed, the character cannot grasp the language and may not try again for at least 1d6 days. Once a language is deciphered, the character becomes fluent and no further roll is required. It will take one defensive action to activate this power in combat.

CP = 4   EC = 0   AC = d

**Mental Paralysis.** Characters who are hit by this power must make a saving throw against INT or suffer effects akin to Paralysis. Note: Bonus from Mental Shield does apply against this power.

CP = 11   EC = CMBT   AC = 0

**Photographic Memory.** Characters with this power can remember and recall details with amazing accuracy. Once they see/hear/smell/taste/feel a thing it remains in their mind forever. Two failed saving throw against INT are needed for them to erase any part of their memory completely and permanently. One defensive action is required to activate this power in combat.

CP = 4 EC = 0 AC = n/a

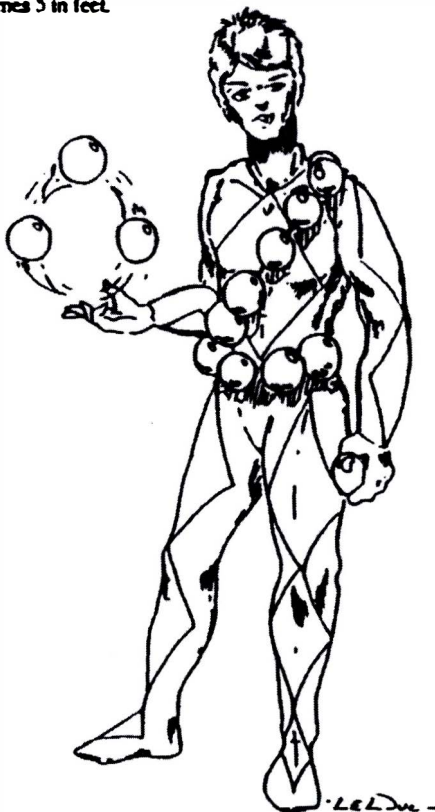
**Sleep.** This is a standard offensive power that functions like Energy Drain, but characters who are completely drained of energy must make a percentile saving throw against their CON or fall asleep for at least one round, during which nothing but the strongest magic can return their consciousness. After one round their colleagues may try to wake them, and the victims are entitled one CON saving throw per round if they're being helped. In any case, the effect wears off as soon as they have recovered five points of energy. This power is generally used to simulate knock-out gas.

CP = 7 EC = CMBT AC = 0

**Vacuum.** This standard offensive power enables a character to create a vacuum atmosphere around his opponent and cause damage by either suffocation or decreasing pressure.

The character may also set up an area of vacuum 1 foot in diameter for every point of Intelligence he has (2 offensive actions needed), inside which exists no air, zero pressure, and total silence. It will cost the character energy to create and maintain each round. Everyone within range during the initial creation of this "vacuum zone" must make a percentile saving throw against ADX to avoid being caught inside and take damage. Characters traveling through it will also take damage, as well as those who stay inside (they take damage at the start of each round). Only characters with adaption or Life Support may remain indefinitely or move freely within the zone without damage. The DAM# of a Sound Projection attack originating from or traveling through such a zone is reduced by its DAM#. The range of Vacuum is the character's STR score times 5 in feet.

CP = 8 EC = CMBT AC = w/d



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