

HEAVEN & EARTH

— THIRD EDITION —



Fiat
voluntas
tua, sicut



in Caelo
et in
Terra.

Heaven & Earth

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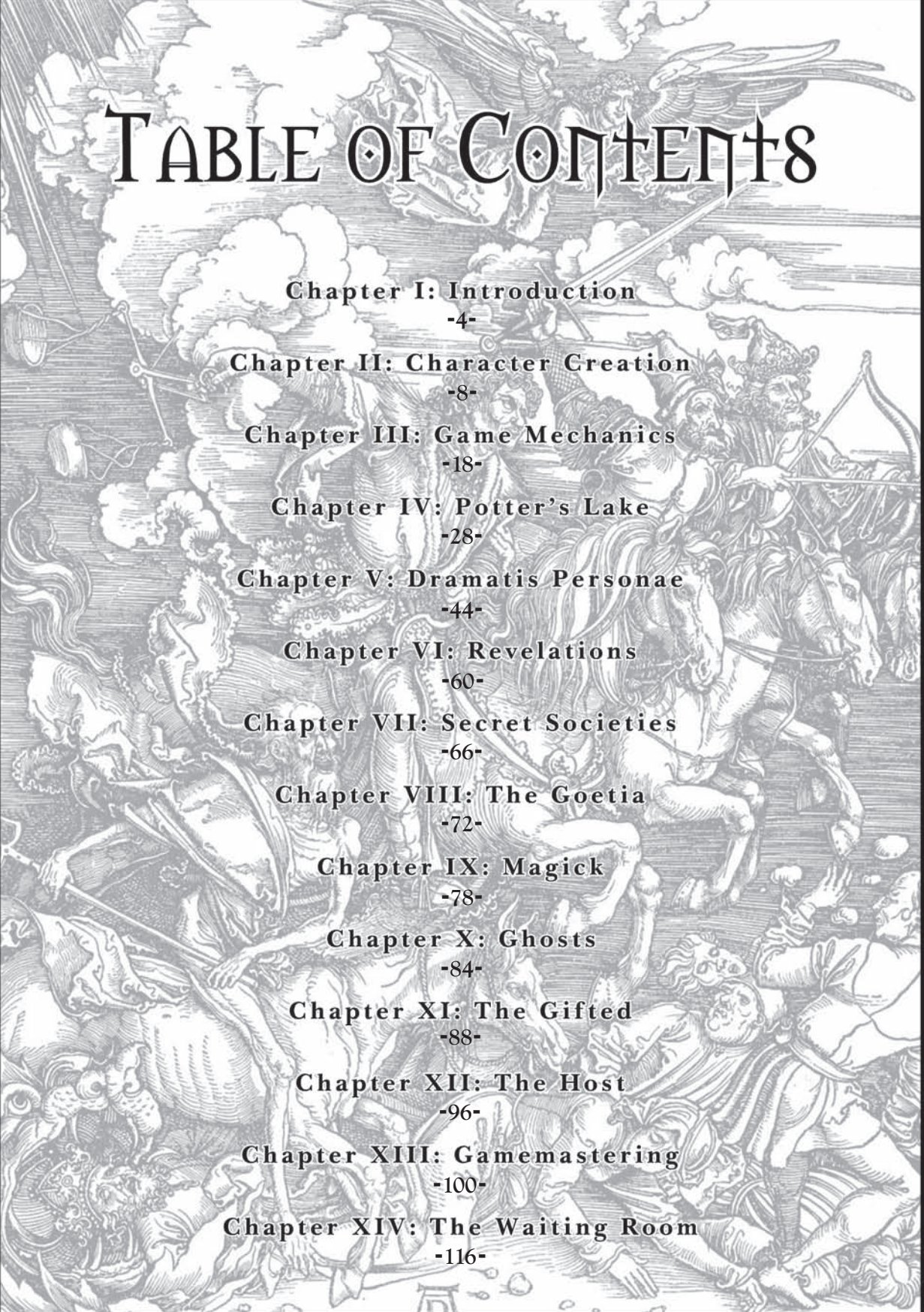


TABLE OF CONTENTS

Chapter I: Introduction
-4-

Chapter II: Character Creation
-8-

Chapter III: Game Mechanics
-18-

Chapter IV: Potter's Lake
-28-

Chapter V: Dramatis Personae
-44-

Chapter VI: Revelations
-60-

Chapter VII: Secret Societies
-66-

Chapter VIII: The Goetia
-72-

Chapter IX: Magick
-78-

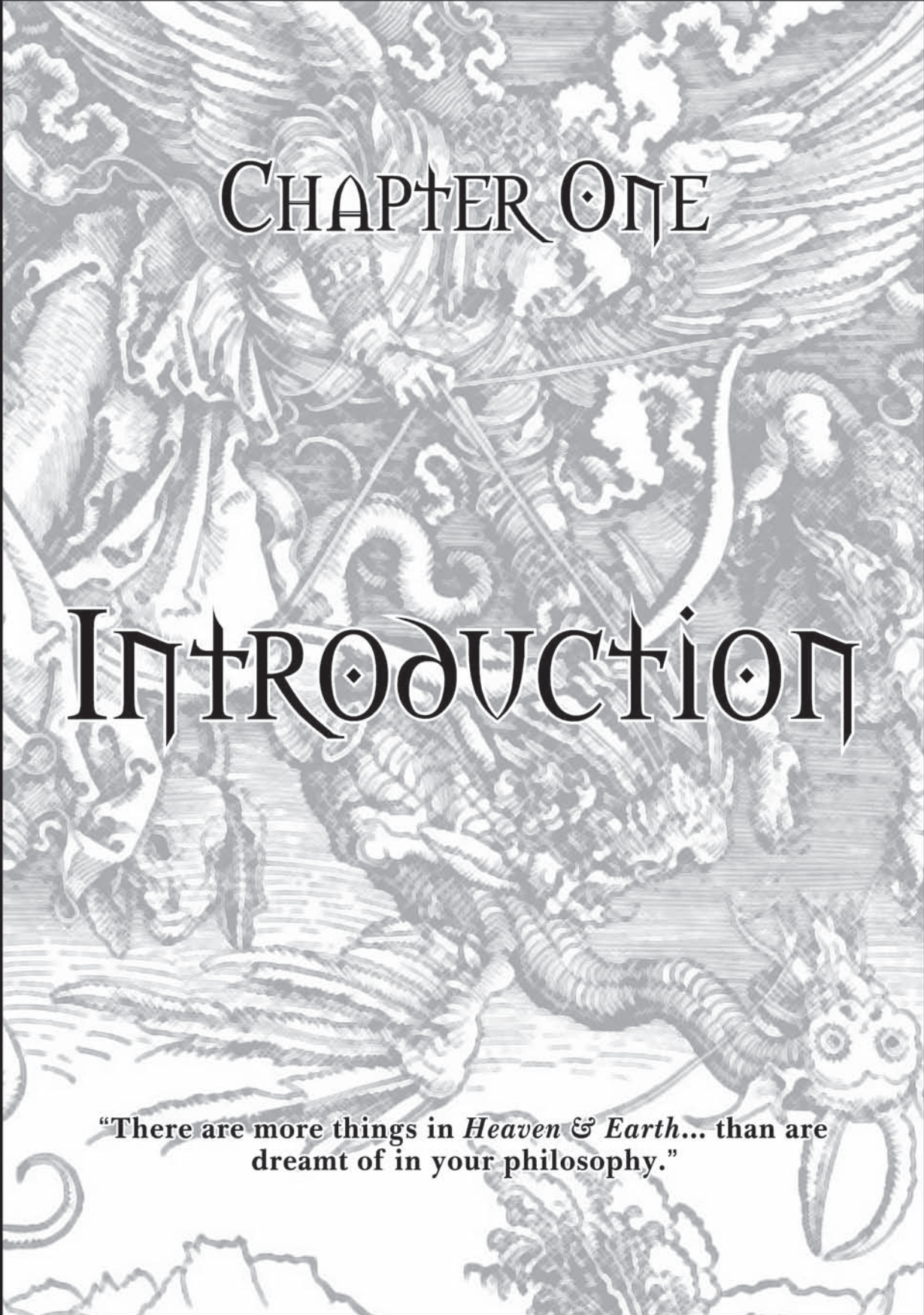
Chapter X: Ghosts
-84-

Chapter XI: The Gifted
-88-

Chapter XII: The Host
-96-

Chapter XIII: Gamemastering
-100-

Chapter XIV: The Waiting Room
-116-



CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

“There are more things in *Heaven & Earth...* than are
dreamt of in your philosophy.”

Welcome to Potter's Lake. On the surface, this small, midwestern town seems like paradise. People are generally friendly to one another, the summers are lazy, the lawns are well-manicured, and white picket fences line many of the streets. But still waters invariably run deep. If one peels away the pleasant mask and gazes beneath, a different picture takes form.

Practically every house that has been standing for more than twenty years has reported a haunting of one variety or the other, and some townsfolk tend to be a little bit quirky. Local legends, wives' tales, and sightings of the supernatural abound. In short, Potter's Lake is a very strange and unusual place.

The bizarre happenings in this Kansas community are only symptoms of a greater malady, a cancer that will consume its host then spread across the world. Something is brewing beneath this town's pleasant veneer, and if it is left unchecked, humanity itself stands at risk.

SYNOPSIS

Welcome to the world of *Heaven & Earth*, a role-playing game of surrealism, horror, and absurdity. In the small community of Potter's Lake, strange things are afoot. Players assume the roles of ordinary people caught in an epic greater than they can possibly imagine. They will be swept into the extraordinary events that plague this town with frightening regularity. It is up to them to unlock the secrets of Potter's Lake and discover the truth of what is really going on before it's too late.

DICE

Heaven & Earth uses an assortment of dice. They are used to determine if a character succeeds or fails at any attempted action. *Heaven & Earth* uses 4-, 6-, 8-, 10-, 12-, and 20-sided dice. One die of each type will be needed. From here on, these dice will be abbreviated with d4, d6, d8, d10, d12, and d20, respectively.

THEME

The expression of deep human themes and ideas separates good literature from mindless entertainment. A game

is similar. The overarching theme of *Heaven & Earth* is human destiny, specifically the battle between free will and predetermined fate. Characters will discover that there is more to Potter's Lake than most people suspect and more to the universe than anyone realizes. A dark fate awaits an unsuspecting humanity, but the player characters have the power to change it – if they can unravel the secrets of Potter's Lake in time.

While individual storylines may feature their own themes, the theme of human destiny should always loom in the background. Every so often, it should rear its head, though subtly. This helps provide cohesiveness to separate and disparate stories otherwise linked only by setting and characters.

MOOD

The mood of *Heaven & Earth* is largely up to those playing the game. Some prefer gloom and dread, others a more lighthearted approach. Some will want their games cerebral and others visceral. All can work equally well. Whatever way the game is run, there are three ideas that should be kept in mind: horror, surrealism and absurdity. *Heaven & Earth* was written with these three elements in mind.

A COMPLETE GAME

While *Heaven & Earth* has an overarching plot, the audience won't have to wait years to find out what it is. There is no doling out of information, piece by piece, over multiple sourcebooks, across many years. Everything a Gamemaster needs to know about what is really going on, and where things are headed, is outlined in this book. Future supplements will provide possible steps and hints to reaching that conclusion (via new rules, new NPCs, new adventures, etc.) but are not necessary to run a full, extended campaign.

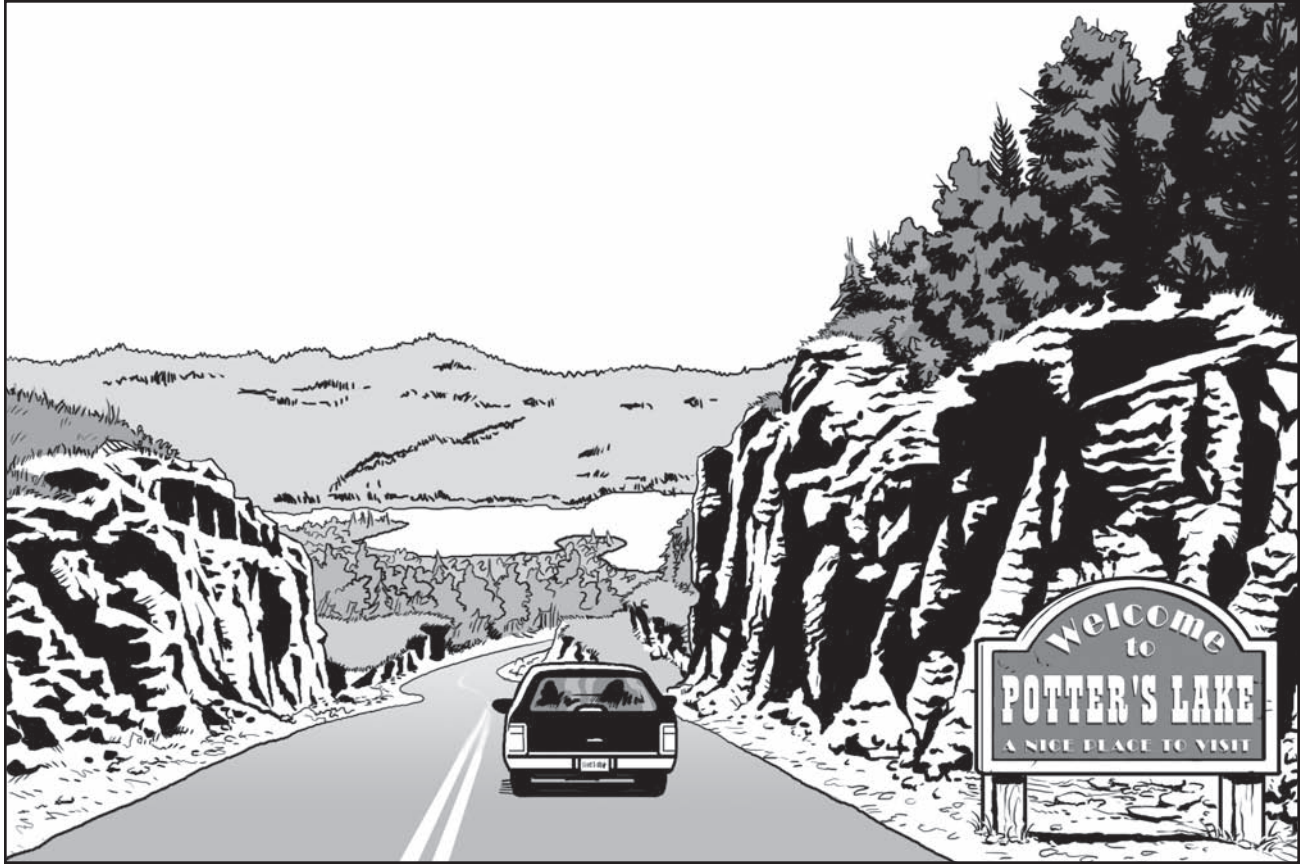
CHANGE IS GOOD

Potter's Lake and its inhabitants are fairly well detailed throughout this book. This was done to minimize the Gamemaster's workload (by providing a ready-made, ready to play setting) and to convey the tone of *Heaven & Earth*. The town's history, locations, and the quirks of its citizens

THE ASSUMPTION

The core audience for *Heaven & Earth* is experienced gamers. Therefore, this book will not attempt to provide the usual "What is a role-playing game" spiel. It's also assumed terms such as Gamemaster, NPC, Initiative, etc. will be common knowledge to the reader. Any terminology unique to *Heaven & Earth* will be described in this book.





are intended to spark a Gamemaster's imagination. The GM is free to change proper names, create new people and places, or even relocate Potter's Lake as desired. The background material was designed to provide scaffolding for telling interesting stories. That's all. GMs should ignore some or all of it to suit their tastes.

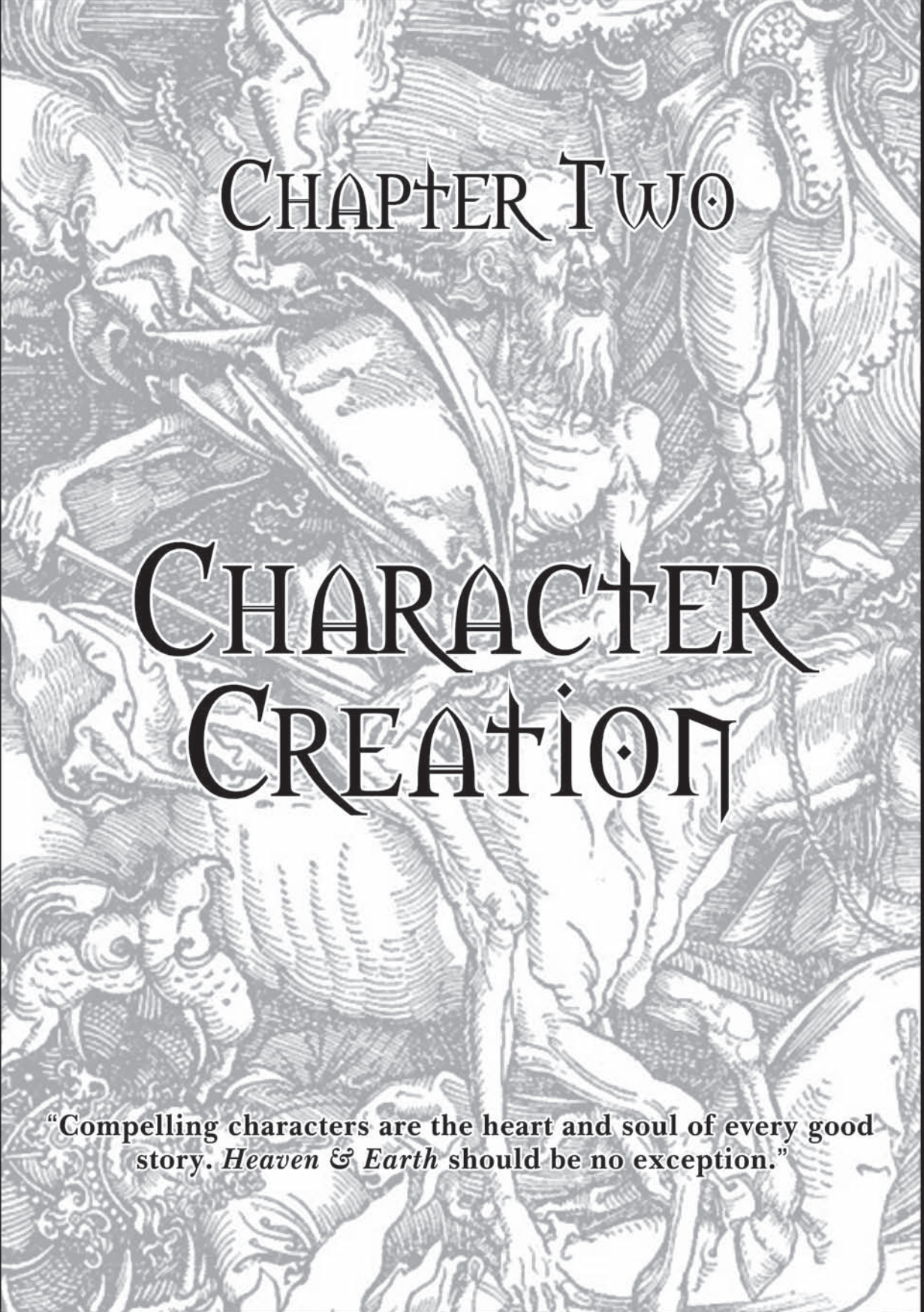
BREAKDOWN

Players and gamemasters alike can read the next two chapters. They cover character creation and game mechanics. **Chapter IV** details Potter's Lake, the official setting for *Heaven & Earth*. While players can read this chapter, it's best if they don't. This allows players to discover and explore Potter's Lake at the same time their characters do. The rest of the book is intended for the GM. These chapters cover the supernatural elements of *Heaven & Earth*, the major NPCs (and their secrets), gamemastering advice, a sample adventure, and the truth about what is really going on.

READER'S CAVEAT

Heaven & Earth is intended for mature audiences and includes themes and situations of an adult nature; it is not intended

for young children. People with difficulty distinguishing reality from fantasy should not play *Heaven & Earth*, nor should anyone who is easily offended. This book is not dogma, creed, or belief. It is a game of alternate, horrific possibilities. If the reader seeks truth in these words, there is none. If the reader seeks advice from these words, there is none save this: Take this game for what it is worth ... it is only a game. The beliefs reflected here, either positive or negative, are not claims or theories about any group of people or system of belief.



CHAPTER TWO

CHARACTER CREATION

“Compelling characters are the heart and soul of every good story. *Heaven & Earth* should be no exception.”

Compelling characters are the heart and soul of every good story. *Heaven & Earth* should be no exception. Players should portray characters who are vibrant, dynamic, three-dimensional people with a variety of interests, hobbies, and job descriptions. Player groups will benefit greatly from such diversity; each character will have a unique skill base and background to draw upon. This will ensure that everyone has a valuable role to play and that the entire group is better prepared to tackle any problems that come its way.

Player characters in *Heaven & Earth* are ordinary people leading mundane lives. They are not heroic adventurers, crack military troops, or traditional action heroes. Instead, they are lawyers, teachers, doctors, or other normal people who might enjoy hiking, swimming, watching television, collecting stamps, or playing video games. The player characters' normalcy provides a stark contrast to the weirdness of Potter's Lake. It is for this reason that all player characters will be new arrivals to Potter's Lake or native sons returning home after many years away. Potter's Lake should strike them as bizarre compared to the outside world. If player characters were already long-standing residents of Potter's Lake, the town's "weird factor" would be commonplace, and the game would lose much of its flavor.

Over the course of their adventures, the characters will fall into a web of conspiracy, deceit, and discovery. There is more to Potter's Lake than most people suspect and more to the universe than anyone realizes. As the story evolves, the characters will learn about existence's real nature and the truth behind Potter's Lake. The theme of human destiny is prevalent throughout *Heaven & Earth*. Characters will learn that they are marked to play great roles in the grand epic of human destiny.

With that said, it's time to dive into the nuts and bolts of character creation.

ATTRIBUTES

Attributes are the innate qualities possessed by every character in the game. They define a character's strengths and limitations. There are six Attributes in all:

- **Coordination:** This is a measure of a character's agility. It includes hand-eye coordination as well as nimbleness of feet. It indicates how graceful or clumsy a character is.
- **Strength:** How strong a character is.
- **Fortitude:** This is the measure of a character's willpower; the ability of mind to overcome matter. It's used to defeat mental

obstacles such as fear and temptation.

- **Awareness:** This is the measure of a character's perception and wits. It reveals how alert a character is to the environment around him, his attention to detail, and his ability to think quickly on his feet.
- **Aura:** This measures the persuasiveness of a character. For some characters this manifests as charisma and for others, intimidation.
- **Knowledge:** This measures the wisdom a character has accrued by this point in life. This wisdom can be born of real-world lessons or acquired through schooling.

All Attributes have a numerical Rank ranging from 1 to 5. A Rank of 2 in any Attribute is average for an ordinary person. Therefore, a character with a Coordination of 1 is clumsier than the average person, while a character with a Coordination of 3 is more graceful. A Rank of 4 is very rare, possessed only by a small minority of people, and a Rank of 5 indicates the character has achieved the pinnacle of human perfection in that area.

A starting character begins with 14 points to divide between all six Attributes. All characters must have at least a Rank of 1 in each Attribute and cannot have a Rank of 5 in any of them.

OCCUPATIONS

In our society, a person is largely defined by what he does for a living. So it is in *Heaven & Earth*. Every player must choose an occupation for his character. In game terms, this is more than just a way for a character to pay his bills. Each occupation implies certain built-in skills that will be useful during the course of play. However, there is no master skill list for each occupation. Instead, players and gamemasters determine what a character can and can't do based on a character's occupation.

For example: It would be reasonable for a lawyer to possess an oratory skill while such a skill would not be within the realm of the paramedic occupation.

For example: A counseling skill would naturally fall under the purview of a priest or psychologist but not a firefighter or mechanic.

Twenty-five sample occupations have been provided. After the player chooses an occupation, the character automatically has access to all the skills that would be



appropriate to that occupation. Again, common sense and GM discretion determine which skills would logically fall under the breadth of any occupation.

Occupations are divided into five categories: 5-star, 4-star, 3-star, 2-star, and 1-star. Each occupation has three possible levels of expertise: Rookie, Professional, and Veteran. Obviously, the Rookie level provides the least benefit to characters during play, and Veteran level provides the greatest benefit. The next chapter will cover the exact nature of the benefits.

Players have 9 points to spend on an occupation, and each occupation costs a number of points equal to its star rating.

For example: A 1-star occupation would cost 1 of the 9 allotted points, and a 3 star occupation would cost 3 of the 9 points.

Next, players purchase their expertise level from the remaining points. The Rookie level costs 1 point, the Professional level costs 2 points, and the Veteran level costs 3 points.

For example: If a player takes a 3-star occupation at Professional level, it will cost him 5 of his 9 points. The occupation itself cost 3 points (equal to its star rating) and the Professional level of expertise cost an additional 2 points. The player now has 4 points remaining.

Any unspent points are not lost. The number of unused points must be kept track of; they will come into play shortly. These points are used to buy previous occupations, Extracurricular Skills, and raise Attribute Ranks. With this in mind, players who purchase lower-rated occupations, and/or purchase only the Rookie level of expertise, will have a bit more freedom to fine-tune their characters' statistics than someone who has a 4- or 5-star occupation at Veteran Level. However, this character will be quite skilled at his job, and he will have a valuable base of resources and contacts to draw upon. Either way, there is a tradeoff. All paths are beneficial; how the 9 points are spent is merely a matter of taste.

5-STAR OCCUPATIONS

- **Doctor:** Likely to possess skills such as biology, chemistry, bedside manner, first aid, medicine, and surgery.
- **Park ranger:** Likely to possess skills such as fighting, firearms, first aid, interviewing,

HIGHER STARTING POINTS

In *Heaven & Earth*, players assume the roles of ordinary people. The starting points used for character creation reflect this idea. However, some players may prefer to have their characters be a little more capable than average folk. To handle this alternative, the GM simply increases the number of starting Attribute Points to a more appropriate number, and the 9 points used to develop a character's occupation are increased as well.

law, survival, tracking, and driving under hazardous conditions.

- **Lawyer:** Likely to possess skills such as interviewing, research, etiquette, fast-talk, law, and oration.
- **Politician:** Likely to possess skills such as acting, accounting, management, etiquette, fast talk, law, leadership, and oration.
- **Priest:** Likely to possess skills such as Latin, counseling, etiquette, instruction, leadership, oration, and theology.

4-STAR OCCUPATIONS

- **Law-enforcement officer:** Likely to possess skills such as fighting, firearms, first aid, law, interviewing, and driving under hazardous conditions.
- **Journalist:** Likely to possess skill at interviewing, writing, research, streetwise, and computer use.
- **Professor:** Likely to possess skills such as teaching, a field of academic expertise, oration, research, and computer use.
- **Scientist:** Likely to be skilled at math, a particular field of scientific expertise, using a computer, research, and writing.
- **Soldier:** Likely to possess skills such as athletics, fighting, firearms, first aid, stealth, and survival.

3-STAR OCCUPATIONS

- **Grifter:** Likely to possess skills such as con

artist, acting, fast-talk, sleight-of-hand, and streetwise.

- **Private investigator:** Likely to possess skills such as firearms, stealth, interviewing, research, surveillance, and tracking.
- **Psychologist:** Likely to possess skill at counseling, psychology, interviewing, and sociology.
- **Salesman:** Likely to possess skills such as acting, fast-talk, haggling, and oration.
- **Shopkeeper/businessman:** Likely to possess skills such as accounting, computer use, and business management.

2-STAR OCCUPATIONS

- **Computer expert:** Likely to possess skills such as using a computer, computer repair, and computer programming.
- **Firefighter:** Likely to possess skills such as firefighting tactics and first aid.
- **Paramedic:** Likely to possess skill at first aid, driving under hazardous conditions, knowledge of the town's street layout, and medicine.
- **Student:** Likely to possess some general knowledge of a variety of basic subjects and computer use.



- **Taxi driver:** Likely to possess skills such as interviewing, knowledge of the town's street layout, and driving under hazardous conditions.

1-STAR OCCUPATIONS

- **Handyman:** Likely to possess skills such as electrical repair and construction.
- **Housewife or Househusband:** Likely to possess skills such as child-rearing and cooking.
- **Librarian:** Likely to possess skills such as research.
- **Mechanic:** Likely to possess skills such as mechanics.
- **Retiree:** Variable, though minimal

The star rating for each of the previous occupations is based on the usefulness of the skills they provide, the number of skills, the usefulness of the contacts and co-workers, income, degree of public fame and respect each occupation is accorded, and other factors. That said, some gamemasters may not agree with the star rating assigned to each occupation. If so, the GM is free to lower or raise the rating of any occupation as he sees fit.

It would be unwieldy to list dozens of occupations. These twenty-five simply represent a cross-section of possibilities. Players unhappy with the choices provided are encouraged to create any occupation they desire.

DO-IT-YOURSELF OCCUPATIONS

Although a wide range of occupations has been presented, some players may want to invent their own. No problem. Here's how to go about it:

1. The player comes up with an idea and determines which skills would naturally fall within the scope of that occupation. The player should also envision what other benefits are yielded by the occupation (such as income, fame, respect, and the like).
2. Based on the number and type of benefits granted by the occupation, the GM declares the star rating of that occupation.
3. Character generation proceeds as normal.

WHY OCCUPATIONS?

So why choose an occupation? Why not just give a player so many points to spend on whatever skills he wants? Here's why:

1. **Occupations can yield role-playing opportunities.** Role-playing does not always mean hunting ghosts and having incredible adventures. Exciting role-playing can be found in the dynamic interactions between player characters and NPCs. Occupations help define these relationships. Does the character have co-workers? If so, does he get along with some of them but not others? Does his occupation grant him a degree of small-town fame or perhaps scorn? What kind of free time does the job allow? How does the boss handle the character missing work?
2. **Occupations are fast.** By choosing an occupation, the character has a preset group of related skills, and players won't have to mull over some gargantuan list trying to decide what they want. Speeding up Character Generation leaves more time for actual role-playing.
3. **Occupations usually dictate lifestyle.** The way a character lives is determined by his income, and income is determined by occupation. Since *Heaven & Earth* has no game mechanic for money, occupation is the best barometer for what a character

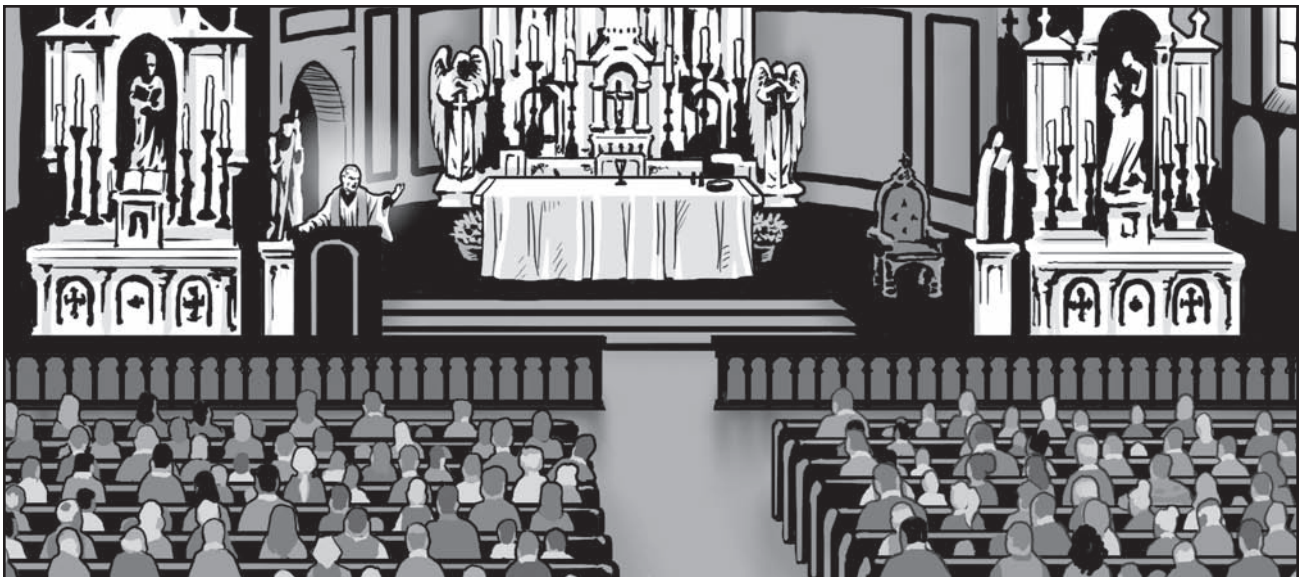
can and can't afford.

4. **Occupations can help determine contacts and resources.** Everyone has friends, resources, and business contacts. Occupations help determine who and what they might be. It would be reasonable for a private investigator to know a cop and maybe a journalist. It's likely a professor has greater access to the school library than others, and some of his friends may be fellow scholars who can provide useful information.

UNSPENT POINTS

Now it's time to spend any left over occupation points. Depending on the amount of points remaining, players have the following options:

- A second occupation can be purchased, which represents previous employment. The same rules and guidelines that governed the initial occupation purchase apply here as well. That is, a second occupation costs a number of points equal to its star rating, and the level of expertise is purchased (Rookie, Professional, Veteran) for 1, 2, or 3 points respectively.
- Any single Attribute can be raised one Rank by spending 3 points. No Attributes can be raised to Rank 5, and gamemasters



should scrutinize the purchase of any Rank 4 Attributes as well.

- 1 point can be spent to purchase an additional point of Destiny (see Destiny below for more details).
- Extracurricular Skills can be bought at Rookie level for 1 point, at Professional level for 2 points, and Veteran level for 3 points. Unlike occupations, there is no base cost to purchase these packages.

EXTRACURRICULAR SKILLS

People often possess skills outside of their profession. These skills may come from previous job experiences, a college education, personal interests, and the like. *Heaven & Earth* represents this knowledge with Extracurricular Skills. These are packages of related skills that have been bundled together. Gamemasters may invent whatever packages they wish, but here are a handful of suggestions:

Arts: Includes skills such as art appraisal, literature, and photography.

Athletics: Includes skills such as competitive sports, running, jumping, and swimming.

Biological Sciences: Includes skills such as botany, ecology, physiology, and zoology.

Business: Includes skills such as accounting, banking, marketing, and management.

Computer: Includes skills such as computer hacking, computer use, computer programming, and computer repair.

Fighting: Includes all forms of melee combat and brawling.

Inquest: Includes skills such as interviewing, tracking, research, and surveillance.

Medicine: Includes skills such as pharmacy, and surgery.

Outdoors: Includes such skills as survival, first aid, and tracking.

Physical Sciences: Includes such skills as astronomy, chemistry, and physics.

Shooting: Includes all forms of ranged weaponry such as pistols, rifles, and bows.

Social Sciences: Includes such skills as anthropology, politics, psychology, sociology, and theology.

Stealth: Includes such skills as hiding and sneaking.

It would be impossible to list every skill package a character might possess. The preceding list is intended as a starting point only. It includes the packages most likely to come into play during the game. If a player wants a package not on this list, it should be invented.

DESTINY

Destiny is a character's purpose for existence. It is the ongoing struggle to find meaning and direction in life. The individual rarely chooses his path, though he can certainly influence and sway it along the course of his life. Destiny is part internal, part external; it is not simply personal reality, but a measure of how the universe acts towards a person. It is a matter of responsible choice in whether or not the character pursues a specific path or travels another road entirely.

In the game, Destiny is measured in points. Destiny is acquired and spent during the course of the game. The Gamemaster awards it at the end of sessions and stories. Characters use Destiny to raise Attributes, improve their level of occupational expertise, and raise Extracurricular Skills (or buy new ones). It can also be used to affect the outcome of actions (i.e. pulling off near impossible feats or changing failed results into successes). Game mechanics for using Destiny are presented in **Chapter III**.

Every character starts with one point of Destiny.

DEFENSE VALUE

Sometimes combat is unavoidable. While the focus of *Heaven & Earth* is on investigation, characters are bound to find themselves in a few fights. The Defense Value represents how difficult a character is to hit in unarmed and melee combat.

A character's Defense Value is calculated by adding the Coordination Rank and Occupational Modifier (if appropriate). If a character's occupation would not logically provide any combat training, the Occupational Modifier is 0. If a character has Fighting for an Extracurricular Skill, he may count his level of expertise as a modifier. If a character has the Fighting Extracurricular Skill and an occupation that would logically have combat training, the higher of the



two ranks is used to determine Defense Value.

- If the sum of a character's Coordination Rank and Occupational Modifier/Extracurricular Modifier is 1, 2, or 3 the Defense Value is Easy.
- If the sum of a character's Coordination Rank and Occupational Modifier/Extracurricular Modifier is 4 the Defense Value is Average.
- If the sum of a character's Coordination Rank and Occupational Modifier/Extracurricular Modifier is 5 the Defense Value is Challenging.
- If the sum of a character's Coordination Rank and Occupational Modifier/Extracurricular Modifier is 6 the Defense Value is Hard.
- If the sum of a character's Coordination Rank and Occupational Modifier/Extracurricular Modifier is 7 the Defense Value is Very Hard.

For example: A Veteran level law-enforcement officer with a Coordination of 2 would have a Defense Value of Challenging (3+2=5).

For example: A Rookie level journalist with a Coordination of 2 and the Fighting Extracurricular Skill at Professional level would have a Defense Value of Average (2+2=4).

GOALS

Goals are the motivation that drives a character. Each player should create a set of goals for his character that represents his dreams and ambitions. On their journey through life, characters should attempt to realize these goals.

This is important because characters that are trying to accomplish their goals are personalities with dimension. They are fuller, more actualized individuals, and it encourages players to think in terms of story and self-accomplishment. Remember: A good story has dynamic characters, and those who do nothing to achieve their goals are static and less interesting.

CHOOSING AND CHANGING GOALS

Goals can be as simple as getting rich or becoming famous,

SUMMARY

1. Assign 14 Ranks to the six Attributes. *
2. Choose an occupation for the character. All occupations have a rating of 5 star, 4 star, 3 star, 2 star, or 1 star. Players have a pool of 9 points to draw from, and the occupation costs an amount of points equal to its star rating.
3. Purchase the level of expertise for the occupation. These points are spent from the pool of 9 points as well. The Rookie level costs 1 point, the Professional level costs 2 points, and the Veteran level costs 3 points.
4. Spend any unused points. One point buys one level of expertise in an Extracurricular Skill. Three points can be spent to raise an Attribute by one Rank. One point can be spent to buy an additional point of Destiny. If desired, a previous occupation can be purchased in the same manner as the primary occupation. *
5. Record one Destiny point.
6. Determine the character's Defense Value.
7. Choose goals and hobbies for the character.
8. Flesh out the character's identity.

* Characters may not start the game with a Rank of 5 in any Attribute.

or they can be very complex and less material in nature. Some goals will be very concrete and tied up nicely, and others will be impossible to ever complete. The point of a goal is to provide direction and motivation for a character. It's the journey itself, not the completion of the goal, which matters the most.

Characters may have as many goals at once as they can reasonably manage. Some people want to do a lot. A few actually can do it all. For the purposes of the game, there is no limit to the number of goals a character can have, so long as he manages to work on all of them over the course of time.

There is no minimum number of goals either. Some characters are single-minded and obsessed. These people have only one thing on their minds, and they spend nearly every waking moment attempting to accomplish it.

Interests change, as do foci and obsessions. Human beings frequently reevaluate their dreams and desires, changing them as they grow and mature. The characters have the

same right.

A character is free to quit pursuing any goal or begin pursuing another at any time. Usually this happens naturally after the story steers the character in new and interesting directions. Changing goals is not necessary for acquiring new ones. A character can simply add a new goal to his list at any time. However, the character must not neglect his old goals along the way.

DESTINY AND GOALS

Characters are awarded Destiny points for working toward and accomplishing their goals. Each player should make sure that the goals chosen are ones he can play well, that his character has an interest in pursuing, and that facilitate the advancement of his character.

HOBBIES

Everyone has hobbies and interests outside of work. Pastimes such as backpacking, poker, chess, and role-playing provide islands of escape from real life responsibilities. They also grant insight into an individual's personality. A person who plays multiple sports is likely to be a competitive individual, and someone passionate about crossword puzzles might be interested in cerebral pursuits. Most people, though, are not so easily pigeonholed. Their interests are diverse and may even seem contradictory to those unfamiliar with the individual. This diversity makes them all the more dynamic and well rounded. Such diversity can enhance and individualize a character's personality.

Each player should choose a few hobbies to flesh out his character. Combined with goals and occupation, they will help cement a character's personality, breathing life into the persona.

While there is no minimum or maximum amount of hobbies a character can have, players need to keep the list manageable and realistic; two to five of them is ideal.

HOBBIES VS. SKILLS

It's important to note that hobbies imply an interest, not a skill. There is a big difference. For example, photography as a hobby indicates a passion for that activity, but possessing any degree of expertise with a camera would require a photographer occupation or the Art Extracurricular Skill. Likewise, backpacking as a hobby does not grant the Outdoor Extracurricular Skill. It is possible for a skill to be a hobby though. For example, a law-enforcement officer skilled with firearms could also have target shooting as a hobby.

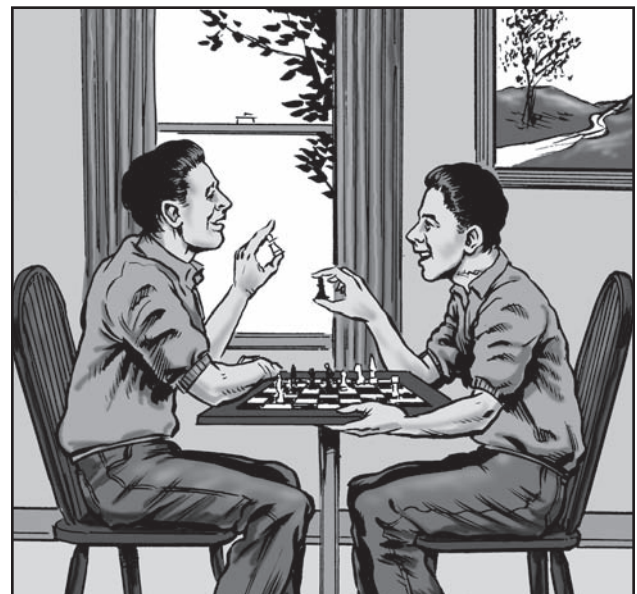
FINISHING TOUCHES

As noted earlier, a character's occupation, goals, and hobbies speak volumes about the individual. However, there is more to a dynamic character than these things. Below are seven questions each player should answer for his character that will help flesh out his personality.

1. What are the character's likes and dislikes?
2. What are the pet peeves that really make the character's skin crawl?
3. Is the character outgoing or shy; is he social by nature or reclusive?
4. Does the character like his job, boss, and co-workers?
5. Is the character compassionate or self-involved?
6. Is the character an optimist or pessimist?
7. Is the character a dreamer or a pragmatist?

Finally, there are a few practical details the player must work out for his character.

1. What is the character's name?
2. Is the character male or female?
3. How old is the character?
4. What is the character's social and ethnic background?
5. Is the character new to Potter's Lake or returning after many years away? If he is new to town, what drove him here (family, work, etc.)? If returning home, why did he originally leave, and what brings him back?



HEAVEN & EARTH

THIRD EDITION CHARACTER SHEET

✦ IDENTIFICATION ✦

Character Name

Occupation

R P V

Past Occupation

R P V

✦ ATTRIBUTES ✦

Coordination



Strength



Awareness



Fortitude



Aura



Knowledge



Defense Value

Destiny

✦ DAMAGE METER ✦

Blunt

Lethal

✦ EXTRACURRICULAR SKILLS ✦

✦ GOALS ✦

✦ HOBBIES ✦

ACTION CHART

Nearly Imp.	d4
Very Hard	d6
Hard	d8
Challenging	d10
Average	d12
Easy	d20

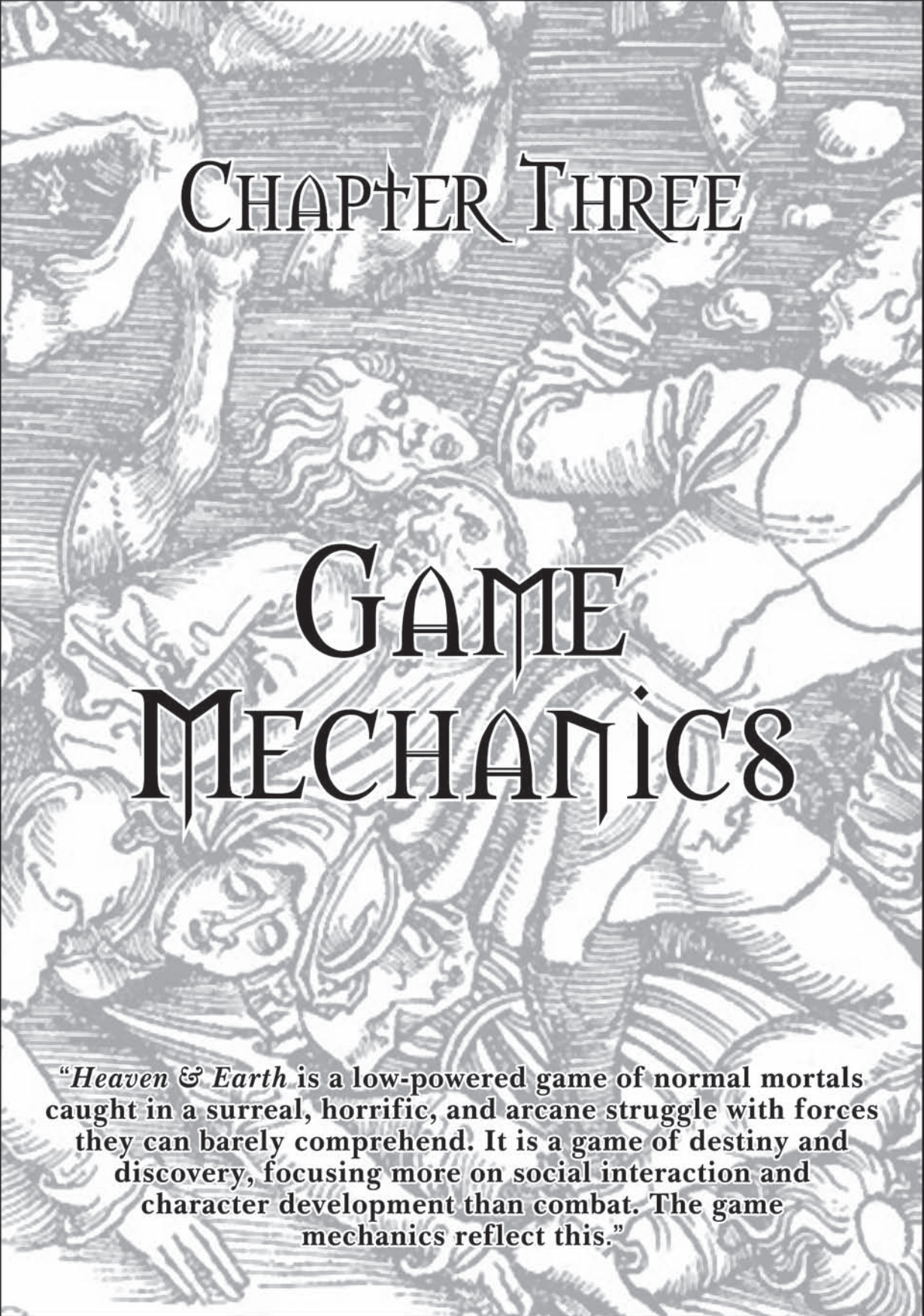
✦ NOTES ✦



6. Does the character have a husband/wife, boyfriend/girlfriend, or fiancé?
7. Does the character have any children?

A FINAL THOUGHT

Everything in this chapter is merely skeleton and outline. All the details about a character's life and personality should not be determined at character generation. Instead, they should be invented and revealed during play as the character reacts to the world around him. It's important that a character has room to grow beyond the player's original concept. People are shaped by their environment and the things that happen to them. Players should allow their characters to grow and evolve in interesting ways unforeseen when the character was generated.



CHAPTER THREE

GAME MECHANICS

"Heaven & Earth is a low-powered game of normal mortals caught in a surreal, horrific, and arcane struggle with forces they can barely comprehend. It is a game of destiny and discovery, focusing more on social interaction and character development than combat. The game mechanics reflect this."

Heaven & Earth is a low-powered game of normal mortals caught in a surreal, horrific, and arcane struggle with forces they can barely comprehend. It is a game of destiny and discovery, focusing more on social interaction and character development than combat. The game mechanics reflect this. The driving design goal behind these rules was to create a quick resolution system while maintaining some semblance of realistic play. There are no dice pools to count, and calculating modifiers is quick and easy. This streamlined approach guarantees the action won't get bogged down during play.

The game mechanics should only come into play when the outcome of an attempted action is uncertain. Players can assume that their characters can successfully carry out routine activities on a regular basis unless specified otherwise by the GM. Common sense is the best guide for determining when a die roll is required.

ACTION CHECKS

When the outcome of an action is in doubt, the player will need to make an Action Check to see if his character succeeds or fails. Performing an Action Check follows six easy steps.

1. **The player declares what his character is attempting to do, and the governing Attribute is determined.**
2. **The Gamemaster determines the Difficulty of the action.**
3. **A die, corresponding to the Difficulty set by the GM in the last step, is rolled.**
4. **The die result, the Rank of the**

governing Attribute, and the Occupational Modifier (if it's appropriate) are added. This total is the Action Number.

5. **If the Action Number meets/exceeds the Target Number (9), the attempt is a success. If not, the action has failed.**
6. **In the instance of failure, the player may spend Destiny to alter the result of the action.**

Although the Action Check process has been outlined in six steps, it takes only seconds to get from Step One to Step Six. After using this system a few times, it will become second nature.

Here is an in-depth breakdown of each step:

STEP ONE: DECLARATION

The first thing a player and GM need to determine is which of the six Attributes logically governs the attempted action.

For example: If a player decides to have his character repair a broken computer, Knowledge would be the governing Attribute.

For example: If a player decides to have his character seduce an NPC, Aura would be the governing Attribute.

For example: If a player decides to have his character follow a set of tracks in the woods, Awareness would



be the governing Attribute.

STEP TWO: DIFFICULTY

After a player declares his action and the governing Attribute is determined, the Gamemaster must set the Difficulty Level of the action. There are six degrees of Difficulty to choose from:

- **Easy**
- **Average**
- **Challenging**
- **Hard**
- **Very Hard**
- **Nearly Impossible**

Obviously, these descriptions are vague and can be open to interpretation. Therefore, the Gamemaster must be impartial when setting the Difficulty. Throughout this chapter, GMs will be provided examples and guidelines to aid in determining appropriate Difficulty Levels. **A general rule of thumb is to assume that most actions under normal conditions have an Average Difficulty.** Specific conditions may then shift the Difficulty up or down the scale, making an action easier or harder to accomplish.

For example: A character is using his Tracking Skill to follow some animal tracks through the woods. Normally, the Difficulty would be Average, but since it's raining heavily at the moment, the Gamemaster declares the Difficulty to be Hard instead (two degrees higher).

STEP THREE: ROLLING THE DIE

With the action declared and Difficulty set, it's time for the die roll. The type of die used is determined by the Difficulty of the action.

- **When the Difficulty is Easy, roll a d20**
- **When the Difficulty is Average, roll a d12**
- **When the Difficulty is Challenging, roll a d10**
- **When the Difficulty is Hard, roll a d8**
- **When the Difficulty is Very Hard,**

roll a d6

- **When the Difficulty is Nearly Impossible, roll a d4**

STEP FOUR: ACTION NUMBER

After rolling the appropriate die, the result is added to the Rank of the governing Attribute and the Occupational Modifier (if appropriate). This total is the Action Number.

The Occupational modifier is determined by the character's level of expertise at his occupation.

- **The Occupational Modifier for the Rookie level is 1**
- **The Occupational Modifier for the Professional level is 2**
- **The Occupational Modifier for the Veteran level is 3**

For example: A Rookie level deputy with an Awareness Rank of 3 rolls the appropriate die type, and the result is an 8. The Action Number for this Action Check is a 12 (8+3+1=12), the sum of the roll, the Awareness Rank, and the character's level of expertise.

For example: A Professional level doctor with a Coordination Rank of 2 rolls the appropriate die type and the result is a 3. The Action Number for this Action Check is 7 (3+2+2=7), the sum of the roll, the Coordination Rank, and the character's level of expertise.

For example: A Veteran politician with an Aura Rank of 2 rolls the appropriate die type and the result is a 7. The Action Number for this Action Check is 12 (7+2+3=12), the sum of the roll, the Aura Rank, and the character's level of expertise.

Occupational Modifiers come into play when a character's occupation would logically grant him the skills needed to attempt the action. Whether or not the character's occupation grants the appropriate skills is determined by common sense and the Gamemaster's judgment.

For example: A character is attempting to track an animal through the woods. Since the character is a forest ranger, the GM decides that the character would possess the appropriate skills to do so.

For example: A character is attempting to track an animal through the woods. Since the character is a doctor, the GM decides that the character would not



possess the appropriate skills to do so.

Sometimes, the attempted action requires no set of skills to perform. In these instances, the character's occupation still comes into play.

For example: The Gamemaster calls for an Awareness Check to see if any of the characters notice movement coming from a nearby bush. One of the characters is a businessman, one is a deputy, and one is private investigator. The GM decides that the deputy and private investigator can factor in their Occupational Modifiers because each is trained to be observant in their occupations. However, the GM decides that the businessman cannot factor his Occupational Modifier into the Action Number because his occupation does not require such astuteness.

If a character has an Extracurricular Skill appropriate to the attempted action, he may factor in his level of expertise with the package in lieu of an Occupational Modifier.

For example: The Gamemaster has determined that a businessman cannot factor his Occupational Modifier into his Awareness Check. However, the character possesses the Investigation Extracurricular Skill at Professional level. With this in mind, the GM declares that the businessman can add the +2 bonus (for having the Professional level of expertise) into the Action Number.

When a character does not have an appropriate occupation or Extracurricular Skill, the action can still be attempted. In these cases, the Action Number is determined by adding the result of the die roll to the Attribute Rank governing

the action. No other modifiers are factored in.

For example: A journalist is attempting to perform first aid. Since his occupation would grant no benefit in this circumstance, and the character does not have the Medicine Extracurricular Skill, only the die result and his Knowledge Rank are added together to produce the Action Number.

STEP FIVE: TARGET NUMBER

The Target Number for all Action Checks is 9. The Action Number must meet or exceed 9 for the action to be a success. An Action Number below 9 means the Action Check has failed.

STEP SIX: SPENDING DESTINY

If an Action Check fails, the character may still have a chance at success. Spending Destiny does this. A player may spend Destiny points to roll the die again or guarantee success. Of course, all this is contingent on the character having Destiny points to work with. Destiny points can be hard to come by and are also used to improve abilities. Therefore, players will need to weigh their options carefully when deciding if an action is worth spending a point or two on.

- **To turn a failed action into a success, the character must spend two Destiny Points.**
- **A character can spend one Destiny point to reroll the die in the hope of obtaining a higher result.**

Since Destiny points are so valuable, spending two of them can leave a character short-handed in the future as well as delay raising or purchasing important abilities. However, spending two points assures success. Spending one point to re-roll the die conserves Destiny, but the character runs the risk of that roll failing as well, wasting the point altogether.

Another advantage of spending two Destiny points is being able to succeed at an Action Check that is normally impossible. If a Professional level lawyer with an Attribute Rank of 2 attempts an action with a Difficulty of Nearly Impossible (d4), he would need to roll a 5 on a four-sided die to hit the Target Number of 9. Obviously, this is impossible...unless he spends 2 Destiny points. By doing so, the action is automatically successful and the impossible happens for the character.

Destiny points are a game mechanic designed to represent a character's higher purpose. In *Heaven & Earth*,

the player characters are slated for great things. This means that sometimes they succeed when they should have failed. Since the universe has plans for the characters, it cuts them a break from time to time. In game terms, Destiny points represent this.

PUTTING IT ALL TOGETHER

With all six steps outlined in detail, it's time to put it all together. The following is an example of the six steps in action.

A Rookie-level mechanic is trying to sneak past a security guard. The Gamemaster declares that Coordination will be the governing Attribute for this action. The Gamemaster decides that the guard's close proximity to the door would normally call for a Difficulty of Hard, but since the guard is beginning to doze off, the GM decides to lower the Difficulty to Challenging. Since the Difficulty is Challenging, a d10 is rolled. The result of the roll is a 3. Since the character's occupation has nothing to do with this action, he has no Occupational Modifier to factor into the Action Number. However, he does possess the Stealth Extracurricular Skill at Professional level. This means the Action Number will be the sum of his Coordination Rank (3), his Extracurricular Modifier (2) and the result of the die roll (3). The mechanic's Action Number is 7 (3+2+3=8). Since the Action Number does not meet or exceed the Target Number of 9, the action is a failure. After momentarily reflecting on this, the player decides that his character cannot afford to be seen and opts to spend Destiny. With an Attribute Rank of 3, an appropriate Professional level, and a Difficulty of Challenging, the player decides his chances of succeeding on a re-roll are fairly good, so he opts to spend only one Destiny. The new die result is a 7. By adding the character's Attribute Rank of 3 and his Extracurricular Modifier of 2 to the die roll, an Action Number of 12 (3+2+7=12) is produced. Since this Action Number exceeds the Target Number of 9, the Action Check is a success, and the character tiptoes past the guard unnoticed.

OPPOSED CHECKS

Sometimes two characters will contest each other in the same action. This is known as an Opposed Check. These Checks work in much the same fashion as Action Checks, but the die rolled is always a d4 and the Action Numbers are not compared to a Target Number. Instead, the Action Numbers of the two participants are compared against one another, and the higher Action Number wins the contest.

For example: A man and his wife are struggling on the attic stairs. The husband has a Strength Rank of 3, and the wife has a Strength Rank of 2. Each rolls a d4. The husband's result is a 3 and the wife's result is a 2. The husband has an Action Number of 6 (3+3=6), the sum of his die roll and Strength Rank. The wife has an Action Number of 4 (2+2=4), the sum of her die roll and Strength Rank. Because the husband's Action Number is higher, he wins the Opposed Check, overpowering his wife.

For example: Quinn and Aaron are racing one another on foot. Aaron has a Strength Rank of 2 and the Athletics Extracurricular Skill at Professional level. Quinn has a Strength of 2 but no modifiers that would be appropriate to the action. Each rolls a d4, and each scores a 3. Aaron's Action Number is 7 (2+2+3=7), the sum of his Strength Rank, die roll, and modifier. Quinn's Action Number is 5 (2+3=5), the sum of his Strength Rank and die roll. Because Aaron's Action Number is higher, he wins the Opposed Check and thus the race.

COMBAT

There are three types of combat in *Heaven & Earth*: Hand-to-Hand, Melee Weapon, and Firearm. Each type follows the same basic steps:

1. **Determine Initiative (the attacking order).**
2. **Perform the Action Check.**
3. **Determine damage.**

Here is an in-depth breakdown of each step:

STEP ONE: INITIATIVE

The first step is figuring out the order in which the combatants attack. Each participant rolls a d20 and adds the result to their Awareness rank; the character with the highest total acts first, the second highest acts next, and so on and so forth. In the event of a tie, those characters' actions occur simultaneously.

For example: Two hoodlums ambush the player characters (Donovan and Lance). The Gamemaster must determine Initiative for all those involved. Donovan has an Awareness of 3 and rolls a 13, giving him an Initiative score of 16. Lance has an Awareness Rank of 3 and rolls a 5, giving him an 8. Each thug has an Awareness score of 2 and they roll 10 and 13 respectively, giving one an Initiative score

of 12 and the other a 15. Based on these results the attacking order is: Donovan (16), Thug Two (15), Thug One (12), and then Lance (8).

STEP TWO: ACTION CHECK

Whether attacking with fists, melee weapons, or firearms, a character must make an Action Check to determine success or failure. **Coordination is always the governing Attribute.** Combat Action Checks work identically to their non-combat counterparts except for determining Difficulties. These slight differences will be covered shortly.

For example: Lance, a Rookie level deputy, swings his fist a drunkard. The GM determines the Difficulty for the attack and the appropriate die is rolled. The result of this roll is an 8. After combining this result with Lance's Coordination Rank of 2 and his Occupational Modifier, an Action Number of 11 ($8+2+1=11$) is produced. Since this exceeds the Target Number of 9, the attack is a success. If the Action Check had failed, Destiny could have been spent to redo the roll or guarantee success.

STEP THREE: DETERMINE DAMAGE

There are two basic types of damage in *Heaven & Earth*: Blunt and Lethal. Lethal Damage results from being struck by deadly weapons and forces with enough inertia to kill. All firearms, explosions, and edged weapons used in a thrusting motion do Lethal Damage.

Blunt Damage is the result of being struck by fisticuffs, blunt melee weapons (such as baseball bats, canes, and chairs) and edged weapons used in a slashing motion.

A character can sustain 10 points of Lethal Damage and 20 points of Blunt Damage. If a character sustains more than 20 points of Blunt Damage, he is knocked unconscious. Any additional damage the character sustains while unconscious is tracked as Lethal. When a character sustains 10 points of Lethal Damage (whether by itself or following Blunt Damage), he is dead.

For example: Lance is knocked unconscious, having taken 20 points of Blunt Damage in a barroom brawl. While unconscious, Lance is kicked in the ribs a few times, sustaining 2 more points of damage. These 2 points are tracked as Lethal Damage.

For example: Donovan is shot and sustains 6 points of damage. Since the damage is firearms based, it is automatically tracked as Lethal.

The Strength Rank of the attacker and/or the type of weapon used determines the amount of damage done (see **Firearm Combat** and **Non-Firearm Combat** for more details).

CALLED SHOTS

When a player or Gamemaster declares that a character is aiming for a particular area of the target's body, the Difficulty is always set higher. This declaration is known as a Called Shot. The GM should set these Difficulties according to the size of the targeted areas.

For example: the Gamemaster should shift the Difficulty for a head shot two degrees higher than normal but only one degree higher for a chest shot. A really small body part, such as an eye, may require an



HIT LOCATION

The amount of damage done determines the hit location of an attack. If an attack does 8 points of Lethal Damage (out of a possible 10), it can be assumed to have hit a vital organ. Likewise, an attack doing only 1 point of Lethal Damage probably grazed a shoulder or some other non-vital area of the body.

upward shift of three degrees or more.

In the case of weapons that do Lethal Damage, a Called Shot to the head or chest always does the maximum amount of possible damage (see **Firearm Damage**, **Melee Weapon Damage**, and **Hand-to-Hand Damage** for these maximums).

DESTINY IN COMBAT

During combat, Destiny points can be spent in three different ways:

1. **To re-roll a failure or guarantee success.** If a Combat Action Check fails, 1 Destiny point may be spent to re-roll the die, or 2 Destiny points may be spent to assure success.
2. **To Survive at death's door.** If a character sustains 10 points of Lethal Damage, he can spend 2 Destiny points to survive what should have killed him; although he'll still need timely medical attention, the character continues to cling to life.
3. **To Raise the attacker's Difficulty to hit.** If being attacked, a character can spend 1 Destiny point to raise his attacker's Difficulty to hit the character by one degree.

NON-FIREARM COMBAT

Hand-to-Hand and Melee Weapon Action Checks work similarly to regular Action Checks. The only difference comes when setting Difficulties. When a character attacks an opponent, the Difficulty to hit is the target's Defense Value.

HAND-TO-HAND DAMAGE

Supposing an attack connects with its target, the amount of damage done must be determined. In the case of Hand-

to-Hand Combat, the damage is equal to the Strength Attribute of the attacker.

For example: Lance has a Strength of 3. His punches do 3 points of Blunt Damage.

MELEE WEAPON DAMAGE

The type of melee weapon used affects the amount of damage done. Each melee weapon has a die type assigned to it that factors in to determining the amount of damage. To calculate melee weapon damage, roll the appropriate die, and add the result to the attacker's Strength. This is the amount of damage from the attack.

- **D6 = brass knuckles, chairs, beer bottles, canes, and the like**
- **D8 = baseball bats, chains, knives, and the like**
- **D10 = pickaxes, very large or dense items, and the like**
- **D12 = chainsaws and items that can easily maim or kill in one strike**

For example: Lance hits his opponent over the head with a wooden chair. A d6 is rolled for damage and the result is a 3. Combined with his Strength of 3, Lance has inflicted 6 points of Blunt Damage to his opponent.

STUNNING

Sometimes during unarmed or melee weapon combat, a character may want to stun his opponent, rendering him unconscious without doing any major harm. To execute a stunning attack, the player must declare his character's intention to do so prior to action. The Difficulty to stun an opponent is always two degrees higher than the Difficulty would normally be. If the Action Number meets or exceeds the Target Number (9), the stunning attempt is a success. The victim sustains only 1 point of Blunt Damage but is knocked unconscious. How long the victim remains unconscious is up to the Gamemaster, but this should be tailored to the needs of the story.

FIREARM COMBAT

Firearm combat works the same as the other two types of combat except when it comes to determining the Difficulty. Since no human being can dodge a bullet, an opponent's

ENVIRONMENTAL CONDITIONS

When two characters are engaged in non-firearm combat, the GM should ignore most environmental conditions, as they will affect both combatants equally. For example, there's no need to shift the Difficulty upward because of a slippery fighting surface; both characters are equally affected by the poor footing.

If for any reason an environmental condition affects only one combatant, then shift that character's Difficulty only. For example, one character is wearing boots designed to grip a slick surface while the other is not; only the second one is subject to the higher Difficulty.

occupation and Attribute Rank have no bearing on the attacker's chance to hit. Instead, the Difficulty is set according to environmental or situational conditions.

Here is a list of a few conditions that might lower or raise the Difficulty of a Firearm attack. Like regular Action Checks, the Gamemaster should assume a Difficulty of Average under normal situations, and then shift the Difficulty up or down the scale appropriately.

- **Reduced visibility**
- **The target is moving**
- **The target is stationary**
- **The target is far away**
- **The target is very near**
- **The attacker is moving while firing**
- **The target was surprised by the attacker**
- **The target is in a confined area; limited mobility**
- **The attacker is severely wounded or distracted, throwing off his aim**

These are only a sampling of the many possible modifiers than can come into play during Firearm Combat. Many more will likely surface during play. How much they shift the Difficulty, making a strike easier or harder to land, is up to the Gamemaster. **Do not forget: These mechanics were designed to facilitate quick play. A GM should factor in all environmental and situational conditions in a second or two, make a quick determination of the appropriate Difficulty, and get on with the action.**

Good example: The target is 20 feet away from the character and diving for cover behind a nearby tree. The GM briefly considers the situation and then assigns the character's action a Difficulty of Average.

Bad example: The target is 20 feet away from the character and diving for cover behind a nearby tree. The Gamemaster starts with a Difficulty of Average but decides to shift the Difficulty to Easy (one degree lower) because the target is only 20 feet away.

However, since the target is diving for cover, the GM shifts the Difficulty up one degree, back to Average.

While both examples are technically correct, the first one was reached intuitively and the second one was not. In time, gamemasters will learn to shift Difficulties instinctively as they become more familiar with the game mechanics. Any GMs who have problems intuitively determining Difficulties can literally shift them up and down the scale, one modifier at a time, until the final Difficulty is reached. However, with this approach, the pace will slow slightly.

FIREARM DAMAGE

Firearm damage is determined by weapon type alone.

- **D10 = low caliber handguns and rifles**
- **D12 = high caliber handguns and rifles**
- **D20 = shotguns and auto-fire weapons**

If an attack hits, a die corresponding to the type of firearm is rolled, and that is the amount of Lethal Damage done.

FIREARM WARNING

In Heaven & Earth, Firearm Combat is deadly. A single shot is likely to kill, so players should think twice about engaging in firefights. The consequences can be dire.

TRAUMATIC DAMAGE

When a firearm, or any other weapon doing Lethal Damage, does 6 or more points of damage in one hit, the resulting damage is considered traumatic. The character will take one additional point of Lethal Damage every five minutes until first aid or hospital treatment is applied (see **Healing** below). If a character's Lethal Damage total reaches 10, the character is dead.

POINT-BLANKING

There is no need to make a Action Check when the target is in point-blank range. No one misses at this distance. Players and gamemasters should assume that point-blank shots to the head and chest always kill. Victims can only survive such an attack by spending 2 Destiny points (see **Destiny In Combat**).

barometer when it comes to determining recovery time.

With application of the first aid or medicine skills, a character will heal an amount of Blunt Damage equal to his Fortitude Rank + 1 each week. If no first aid or medical treatment is applied, the character heals at a rate equal to his Fortitude Rank each week.

For example: A character with a Fortitude Rank of 3 heals 4 points of Blunt Damage per week provided he has received first aid or other medical care. Without such treatment, the character heals 3 points instead (the rank of his Fortitude Attribute).

HEALING

Characters must convalesce after serious injury. Minor injuries pose fewer problems but may still require treatment. Sometimes first aid is all a character needs, and other times surgery or a lengthy hospital stay is in order. The number of Damage Points a character has taken and the type of damage (Blunt or Lethal) will be the Gamemaster's

Lethal Damage is more difficult to heal. **The application of a medicine skill is a requirement for healing Lethal Damage.** Once the character receives successful treatment, he will heal an amount of Lethal Damage equal to his Fortitude Rank per month.

For example: A character with a Fortitude Rank of 2 will heal 2 points of Lethal Damage per month,





provided he has received proper medical care.

FIRST AID

In addition to abetting the healing process from Blunt Damage, first aid can be used to prevent blood loss from Lethal Damage. If a successful Action Check is made immediately after a character takes 6 or more points of damage (see **Traumatic Damage**) the blood loss is slowed. The character will not take the standard 1 point of additional Lethal Damage every five minutes. Instead, the character has one hour to reach a hospital for proper emergency treatment. If this one-hour time frame elapses, and medical care has not been received, the character will start taking 1 point of Lethal Damage every five minutes until death.

GAME JARGON

Action Check: the process of determining whether an action is successful or not

Action Number: the sum of an Attribute, level of expertise, and die result

Blunt Damage: damage sustained from fisticuffs, blunt melee weapons (such as baseball bats, canes, and chairs) and edged weapons used in a slashing motion

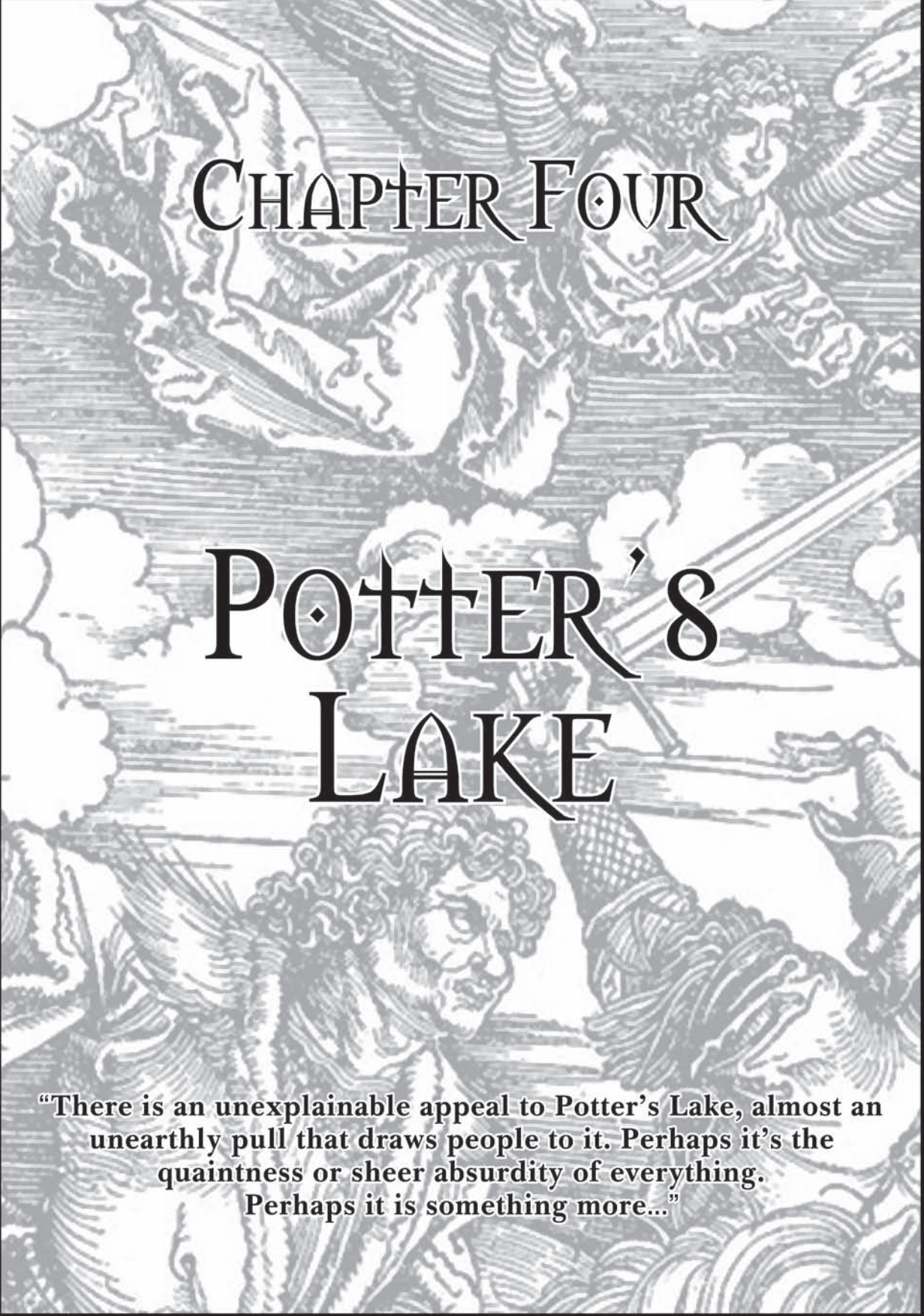
Difficulty: how tough it is to perform an Action Check – there are six degrees of Difficulty: Easy, Average, Challenging, Hard, Very Hard, and Nearly Impossible

Lethal Damage: damage sustained from firearms, explosions, and edged weapons used in a thrusting motion

Occupational Modifier: a number based on a character's level of occupational expertise (either Rookie, Professional, or Veteran) that is factored into an Action Number

Target Number: the number (10) that an Action Number must meet or exceed by for an Action Check to be successful

Traumatic Damage: when a character receives 6 or more points of Lethal Damage in one hit



CHAPTER FOUR

POTTER'S LAKE

“There is an unexplainable appeal to Potter’s Lake, almost an unearthly pull that draws people to it. Perhaps it’s the quaintness or sheer absurdity of everything.
Perhaps it is something more...”

Potter's Lake is the official setting for *Heaven & Earth*. It is small town U.S.A. in a nutshell but with more than its share of quirks and mysteries. Potter's Lake has a population between 15,000 and 20,000, making it larger than the average run-of-the-mill Mayberry RFD, yet it retains the feel of a small community.

Potter's Lake is the home of St. Anselm College, a small Catholic institution located in the town proper, making it an archetypal college community. Potter's Lake also has a small but prosperous industry in the form of Southey's Paper Mill (which sits on the lake and is across the street from St. Anselm). The paper mill is the major employer in town, contracting a fair portion of the local populace. The college is the second major employer, while the remaining residents work in various service industry jobs designed to capitalize on the influx of college students.

Powell Base rests just outside Potter's Lake and serves as a training facility for the Air Force. This provides additional income for local merchants, particularly those with a liquor license.

Potter's Lake is named for the large lake beside which it rests. Both the paper mill and the college butt up against this body of water that lies on the western edge of town. Encompassing the lake and the northern and southern edges of town is a thick vernal wood. Finally, to the east is the rolling plain where Powell Air Force base lies.

Potter's Lake is an odd little town and all the locals know it. They do not understand it in an intellectual or cognitive sense, however. If people thought about it and said, "You know, this place is odd and wrong," they would probably leave...but they stay. People in Potter's Lake know that their town is different; they just do not think of it as a nexus for the bizarre and supernatural. Many of the town's idiosyncrasies are justified away as small town charm.

Any sane person, including the player characters, would look at this place and instinctively know that something is wrong. However, there is an unexplainable appeal to Potter's Lake, almost an unearthly pull that draws people to it. Perhaps it's the quaintness or the sheer absurdity of everything. Perhaps it is something more.

HISTORY

According to the tale retold at each Fourth of July Festival, a group of patriotic citizens led by Calvin Tryst went down to the governor's house on July 4th, 1876 and forced him, at gunpoint, to institute the town's charter on a national holiday despite federal agencies having the day off. Valuing his life, the governor agreed. Afterwards, all six men were arrested and hung in a public execution. The founding stood, however. The state recognized the charter date, and the town honored Calvin Tryst and company as heroes.

Jacob Potter, a fur trader, discovered the lake about fifty years earlier. Town records indicate this occurred in

1825, but there are conflicting accounts of the event and heated debates surrounding the authority of the official date. Suffice to say, Potter's Lake was formally discovered sometime between 1823 and 1827.

Records are accurate about the introduction of religion. In 1827, the Catholic Church and its missionaries arrived to convert the savages and to help civilize the West. Within three years, despite the lack of civilization to support it, the missionaries founded St. Anselm College and broke ground for the first building. They completed what is now the Main Hall in 1831. Many speculate that this institution of higher learning encouraged the settling of the area.

At first, the town was nothing more than a collection of traders and trappers, but it eventually attracted settlers. The town served as a kind of trading post in a bad part of the country but by the turn of the century, with the advent of industrial technology, it became something different. Robert Southey first opened his paper mill in 1902. It rapidly became the major employer, turning the town into quite the exporter of paper goods.

Powell Air Force Base opened in 1951 during the Korean War and has remained open despite budget cutbacks. The base is not one of the Air Force's premier training facilities, but it manages to continue operating even with repeated rumors of base closings.

PLACES OF INTEREST

In Potter's Lake, nearly every place has a tale to tell. Some are horrific; others are merely bizarre. While many of the places in Potter's Lake have nothing odd about them, the number that do is sizeable. The following entries are among the town's more colorful locations.

DEKE'S BAR AND GRILL

Located on Mill Road, Deke's is one of the more popular places in town. Here, all different kinds of people mingle freely. Deke's is situated right between Southey's Paper Mill and St. Anselm College so it receives a high volume of traffic from both locations. Also, it is a favorite watering hole of the Powell AFB personnel. Surprisingly, there are few incidents.

Deke's has a reputation for serving the best food in town and draws folks looking to eat out. Its menu is typical roadhouse fare, but the food served is a cut above what one might expect in similar places. Deke's also hosts live entertainment, making it one of the hottest nightspots in town. Every night there is a band, an open mike, dancing, or some other social event that draws in college students from St. Anselm. People, particularly young people, come to Deke's to socialize.

Many of the town's influential citizens and community

THE MEMORIAL

At Deke's Bar and Grill, the hall leading to back to the payphone and restrooms features a framed selection of photos (some old, some new), portraits, and snapshots of children and adults. There are often flowers found there, small collections of brightly colored daisies, carnations, and small chrysanthemums in vases on a shelf below. The patrons call it the Memorial. It started back in 1955 when the owner, Deke Richardson, lost his sixteen-year-old son. The boy was swimming with some younger children when he went under. Although the others tried to save him, it was no use. The boy drowned and his father was grief-stricken. Since then, Deke has kept a photo of every man, woman, or child who lost their lives in the lake so that they would never be forgotten.

leaders go to Deke's to broker shady deals over a pitcher of beer and a plate of wings. Those who make policy in Potter's Lake often do so at Deke's. It is considered neutral ground in the arena of small town politics and thus is the place where folks make and break political alliances, plan strategies, and hatch schemes. Even if it seems questionable or even reprehensible, it is still perfectly legal (most of the time).

Deke's Bar and Grill is the ultimate hub of social activity in Potter's Lake. It is a place where everyone goes and anything can happen.

KAUFMAN'S

Kaufman's is the primary grocery store for most of Potter's Lake. It is the only one located in town, due in part to the strange misfortunes that have afflicted it over the years. In 1972, within two weeks of opening for the first time, the store burned to the ground under mysterious circumstances. Investigators believed it might have been arson, but eventually it went down in the files as "cause unknown." Kaufman's was rebuilt shortly thereafter and remained open for a year before the only tornado to touch down in Potter's Lake in the 20th century razed the building to the foundation.

After that, the fate of Kaufman's was in the air for two years. The regional chain was unwilling to put any more money into the location, and it would have vanished from Potter's Lake altogether were it not for the efforts of local entrepreneurs. They raised the money for the new building and purchased the franchise from the chain, setting the business up as a privately owned establishment.

Kaufman's has operated around the clock ever since with

a reputation for the best prices in town. Still, odd events have plagued it since it was rebuilt, and local superstition has it that the establishment is cursed and perhaps even haunted. The two initial disasters form the foundation for this legend, but a variety of strange occurrences at the store sustain the superstition.

People often joke that the graveyard shift at Kaufman's is meant literally. A cashier might see a customer walk in and vanish somewhere among the aisles. The solitary security camera might record a quick flash of a person's face or a blur of motion past the field of vision. Sometimes milk or other perishables spoil weeks ahead of the expiration date. These stories and others fuel the local rumor mill and actually add to the store's appeal. Some people shop at Kaufman's not for their fantastic prices, but in the hope of seeing a ghost or witnessing some other inexplicable event for themselves. These people usually leave Kaufman's disappointed.

The Health Department has inspected Kaufman's on numerous occasions, and it always passes with flying colors.

ST. ANSELM

St. Anselm College was built in 1831 after Catholic missionaries journeyed into the American wilderness to civilize the west. Upon arriving in what would later be eastern Kansas in 1827, they met Jacob Potter and decided to stay. A mission was quickly built then replaced with a college. Over time, St. Anselm grew into a respected institute of higher learning and helped spur the growth of Potter's Lake.

Situated directly opposite the lake, St. Anselm is equally as important as Southey's Paper Mill as a town fixture and landmark. Despite local resentment towards the rich college students who come here for the four-year party, St. Anselm is crucial to the town's economy.

St. Anselm brings people into the region. Potter's Lake has little to offer the outside world besides its paper products. The college, however, lures people in from across North America. Each year, there are new students in town with the arrival of the latest freshman class.

The students spend a great deal of money on entertainment and alcohol. While the college has an excellent reputation as a fine academic school with a strong religious background and fundamentals, it is in fact a wholly secular party school. The student body is composed largely of wealthy teenagers who chose St. Anselm because of its reputation as a good school where they can spend four years in a drunken stupor. They major in business or some other innocuous degree that places few demands on their intellectual development and that will supposedly grant them an immediate career upon graduation. The average student does not work very hard. Most of them

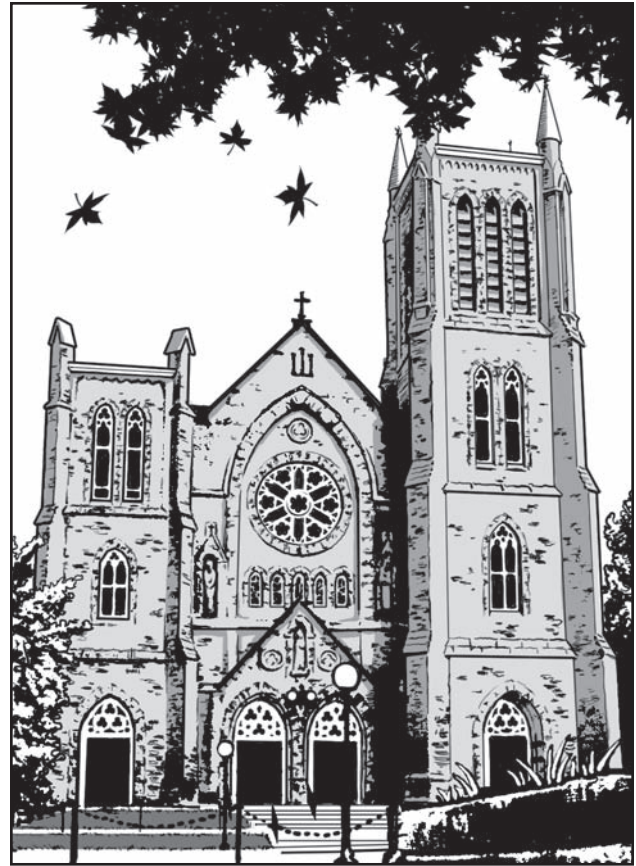
slide by with a grade-inflated B average before returning home to work for the parents who paid for their expensive tuition in the first place. All of this is unfortunate because St. Anselm does have a fine academic reputation with a competent and talented faculty that has academic pursuits firmly in mind. Most of the professors bemoan the state of the modern student who has little interest in the knowledge that the faculty has accumulated and tried to pass along.

Of particular excellence is, as one can imagine, the Religious Studies Department. There are some fine minds here interested in the pursuit of truth and the dogma of the Catholic Church. Most of these men and women are excellent teachers and truly concerned about the spiritual wellbeing of both the students and the people of Potter's Lake.

The bottom line is that one can get a fine education from St. Anselm through effort and simple application. The sad fact is that most students do not.

Like many college towns, the students have little respect for the locals or the community itself. They come to Potter's Lake for college but do not necessarily want to live here, especially since it's a somewhat disturbing slice of rural America. Likewise, the populace has little regard for the students who are rowdy, young, disrespectful, and a pain in the ass by local standards.

St. Anselm College, like Kaufman's Grocery, is no stranger to the supernatural.



THE MAIN HALL

The Main Hall, the first building built on the campus, is known for odd occurrences. At least two windows in the front hall are continually found open regardless of the time of year. This has happened for more than fifty years, dating back to the then-dean's daughter, who was only five. In 1970, in an attempt to quell growing stories of ghostly activity, the president of the college had all the windows nailed shut. Two weeks later, all twelve windows in the Main Hall were found open with the nails lying on the floor. Since then, two windows are left open an inch or two year round to appease the spirit.

From time to time, in the late hours of the night, students claim to hear the giggling of a small girl echoing throughout the Main Hall. Many believe the ghost of that 5 yr old girl still walks the Main Hall, gleefully playing harmless pranks on the unwary.

THE BASILICA

The basilica at St. Anselm is the archetypal Catholic church. The altar is made of chiseled marble and the tabernacle glistens with a sheen of gold. Finely polished wooden pews form neat little rows, and the Stations of the Cross are

displayed across the church walls. Stained glass windows line the top half of three walls, allowing beams of colored light to illuminate the upper level balcony. Aesthetically, the St. Anselm Basilica is breathtaking.

The rectory is attached to the backside of the church. It is here that strange things happen. The contents of cabinets switch themselves when no one is looking. Light bulbs repeatedly burn out prematurely, sometimes in mere hours. Minor accidents occur with frightening regularity. Though none of this is overtly supernatural, it's odd and recurrent enough to foster rumors and speculation.

THE THICKET

The campus, situated on the shores of the lake, is full of restful walks and scenic vistas. Throughout the fall, winter, and spring the lanes are crowded with students and faculty as well as the occasional citizen of Potter's Lake out for a stroll. There is one area, however, that everyone avoids. It is known as the Thicket.

The Thicket began as a manicured retreat where students could study outdoors in serenity. Added to the college during the building boom of the 1910's, it is an alcove made of tall trellised rose bushes, not a stone's throw from the lake's edge. Tall trees surround it, and in the center is a shaded



set of benches around a small stone fountain, with a statue of a graceful girl in draping robes. Such secluded spots are found on campuses across the nation, but the fountain is what makes the Thicket unique.

In November 1941, Potter's Lake made headlines throughout the Catholic world when the statue manifested the wounds of Christ, or stigmata. A young couple discovered the statue and immediately told a priest who had the statue cordoned off and kept under surveillance. The bleeding lasted for two weeks then stopped, two days before Pearl Harbor. Within a month, the bleeding began again and continued intermittently through the end of World War II. The Catholic Church was suspicious of stigmata appearing on a secular piece of art but upon further investigation could find no trace of trickery. The statue was deemed a miracle but in a surprising turn of events, the file was sealed and the stigmata accounts hushed. Some believe this was because the statue had no religious basis and thus could not be accounted as a miracle per se.

In the years that followed, the statue reputedly bled on numerous occasions. It has always been a portent of doom, bleeding prior to national military movements or local tragedies. The statue has been accurate so often that campus security becomes anxious whenever someone reports blood on the statue. As often as not, it precedes a violent crime on campus such as rape or murder. The last known account of stigmata directly preceded the brutal murder of a campus co-ed at the hands of a serial killer who has since been caught by the FBI.

The Catholic Church has no comment about the statue at this time.

ROOM 616

The faculty at St. Anselm does not like to talk about Room

616. It was the winter of 1969 when this dormitory in St. John's Hall was permanently sealed. It has remained untouched ever since.

According to spurious accounts, Father Ezekiel Cage performed an exorcism in this room. The subject was said to be a male freshman possessed by demonic forces. No official records support these claims, but the constant retelling of the story every year has lent an artificial veracity to the tale. Although no one has been known to enter the locked room for decades, rumors continue to swirl regarding the secrets contained within. Some say there are obscenities scrawled on the walls in black crayon or even human blood. Others speak of strange burn marks on the walls and furniture. Still others claim that although Father Cage cast the Devil from the student, he did not send it back to Hell; that the Devil still sleeps in Room 616, awaiting a new victim to walk through the door.

SOUTHEY'S PAPER MILL

Southey's Paper Mill is another fixture crucial to the town's economy. The mill is the largest employer in the area and manufactures paper products for hygienic consumption (such as toilet paper, paper towels, and napkins). The mill borders the lake, directly across from St. Anselm College. Mill Road runs east to west, from the lake to the highway, and separates the two institutions.

The mill opened in 1902 under the helm of Robert Southey. Since then, it has been passed down through the generations. Robert Jr. took it from his father, Robert III from him, and the current proprietor is Robert IV.

Robert III turned it into a hugely successful operation in the 60's by concentrating solely on disposable paper products at a time when such things were coming into vogue. Robert IV, "Bob" to most people, was wise enough

THE SOUTHEY FAMILY CURSE

Robert Morris Southey I, undeterred by naysayers who felt that small western towns weren't ready to support industry, built and ran a paper mill, the first of its kind, in the Potter's Lake area. In only a few years, the mill made Southey a wealthy man. When asked about his success, he claimed he simply listened to the will of God, a claim that added to his popularity in the small and deeply Christian community. Legends claim, however, that Southey was laid under a curse despite his God-fearing nature.

Southey was building his mansion, stories say, when one of the contractors was injured and comatose after completing most of the ornate woodcarving that decorates the interior. Southey waited a week for the man to recover then hired someone else to finish the work. When the contractor awoke and regained his health, he returned and requested payment. Southey refused. The man was furious upon hearing this and cursed the house and the work he'd done. He swore that Southey and anyone living under that roof would never know peace. Unfortunately, he was still severely injured and the confrontation caused him to have a stroke. He died there on the spot.

Southey was an intelligent, insightful man who didn't believe in superstition, but all that knowledge couldn't save his first wife, Elizabeth, and his son, Jacob, when the house caught fire in 1909. The house was saved, but his wife and son were both asleep at the time and perished. His second wife, Mary, was with him for six years before she finally bore him a daughter, whom they named Caroline. Mary died of influenza a year later. Southey remained a widower for five years, raising his daughter alone. Finally, at the age of sixty, he married again and produced a son, Robert Southey II.

Robert Southey the Second (or Robby, as he was called) came into his inheritance at twenty-two. At the age of thirty, Robby married Alice Peterson, the daughter of his chief foreman. They had three children over the next six years: Robert Southey III, Helen, and Luke. It was 1943 that Robby decided to answer his nation's call to arms and enlisted. He died in France, in the fall of 1944. Alice, his widow, never remarried. Alice died in 1964 after a five-year battle with cancer. Helen died of congenital heart defect at age thirty-six, leaving two children. Luke lost his legs in the Korean War and never married.

Robert Southey III also suffered from heart disease, an inherited malady from his mother's side. He married Alicia McCarthy, the daughter of a wealthy Texas oil magnate, in 1972. She bore him five children, the eldest of whom was Robert Southey IV. Alicia died in 1991, years of secret alcoholism taking its toll.

Robert Southey IV, known locally as Bob, lives with his extended family at the Southey mansion, the house his great-grandfather built a century ago. Locals claim those family members who died now haunt the house, and it is said Southey the First appears just prior to a tragedy. While nothing has happened yet, there are many who believe the Southey Curse is simply biding its time.

The mill has known its share of ill fortune too, from mysterious injuries to missing workers, to saws and presses that malfunction without warning. To the credit of Bob Southey IV, the safety record at the mill has improved greatly. Still, accidents of one variety or the other happen with chilling regularity. Some believe this is the Southey Curse at work.

to see the coming ecological backlash of the 90's and took steps to make Southey's an environmentally friendly mill by 1989. He also recycled paper long before many of his competitors. In short, both he and his father are shrewd businessmen who have kept the mill open through ingenuity and anticipation of a changing market. Both men are revered as local heroes.

MEMORIAL HOSPITAL

The Potter's Lake Memorial Hospital, southeast of Main Street, is a curious amalgam of the old and the new. The original building was constructed in 1930 with additional

wings added throughout the years. The hospital has a sterling reputation, competent staff, and the most modern medical equipment available. All in all, it's a fine institute, but like most buildings in Potter's Lake, it has its stories.

THE MORGUE

On their own, morgues are creepy enough. They are halfway houses for the dead and grim reminders of human mortality. The morgue in the basement of the Potter's Lake Memorial Hospital is all that and more.

Modern folklore speaks of hospital employees who have ventured to the morgue after hearing the metallic ringing



of an old-fashioned bicycle horn. What they saw could be considered comical if it wasn't so terrifying: a clown, done up in white face paint and a conical hat, peddling about the morgue on a unicycle. The bodies of the dead are sitting up on their cold steel slabs, enraptured by the movement of the clown. Seconds after the employee's intrusion, the show stops and all heads slowly turn toward the unwanted visitor who quickly flees the scene. This horrific sideshow exists as a friend-of-a-friend urban myth with no one actually seeing the ghastly event for him or herself. Some of the hospital staff jokingly refer to the clown as "Mourgie" and laugh off this bizarre, unexplained modern-day ghost story.

THE SOUTHEY WING

Robert Southey III donated the Southey Wing in the 1950s after a polio epidemic struck the town. Over thirty severe cases of polio spread among the children of Potter's Lake, beginning with the sons and daughters of many mill workers. Most of the children endured some form of paralysis, many severe. The hospital had to purchase extra respirators, or iron lungs, to keep their young patients breathing, but it had no place to put them. The city donated a portion of the school gymnasium for the care of the children until other quarters were erected, and the Southey family oversaw the construction of a new wing specifically for that purpose. Once the wing was built, the hospital

moved the children into the new state-of-the-art building which it then used exclusively for the care of polio inflicted patients until the early 1970s. After that point, the wing offered other pediatric services, and the antiquated iron lungs were eventually replaced with new portable models.

The last iron lung patient left the Southey Wing on 1980. All the old iron lungs had been sold by this point, replaced with the modern equipment.

Since then, when the wing is quiet, one can hear the deep resonating sound of an iron lung, the mechanical rush of air moving in and out of its bellows. Between the pulses of the machine, the faint crying of a child can be heard. The sounds emanate from an empty storage room that had once been a large open hall prior to remodeling, filled with children lying in huge tank-like respirators. These noises always stop when someone approaches the storage room. Some people believe that the souls of the children who died from the polio epidemic haunt the Southey Wing, unable to move on to whatever reward awaits them.

On numerous occasions, the Potter's Lake Ghost Hunters Society has asked permission to investigate the Southey Wing. To date, every request has been denied.

THE BRANDEIS THEATRE

Stephen Harker, an original resident of Potter's Lake, began construction of the Brandeis Theatre in the spring

of 1884. The architecture firm of Smith & Stutter, out of Kansas City, designed the structure as a "testament to the glories of the modern age." The Harker family spared no expense and imported sculptors, stonemasons, and artists from Chicago to work on it.

The Brandeis Theatre was the pride of Potter's Lake for many years, until motion pictures stole away its audience. Use of the theatre stopped in the late 1970's. It still hosted a show or two, but it never made any money at that point, and age was taking its toll on the Brandeis. In the 1980's, a new theatre opened in Potter's Lake, and the Brandeis closed its doors, seemingly for good. The owner was going to tear the place down when the Potter's Lake Historical Society stepped in. They raised money to buy the Brandeis and have it refurbished to serve as a community fine art center.

During the remodeling, workers had to tear down the back wall of the building and put it back up. At the time, it was decided that one of the back exits should be moved to allow for better positioning with some of the modern stage equipment recently installed. Where the old door once stood there is now only solid wall...most of the time. Every now and then, someone reports finding the old door where it used to be. In some of these reports it opens to a brick wall; in others, it leads to the alleyway behind the Brandeis. A few of the more fanciful tales claim that the doorway is actually a portal into the past, and by walking through it, a person can step into the 19th century. Most people doubt the existence of the disappearing door, and only the most gullible believe it's a gateway to another time.

The theatre itself, at the corner of Main and Maple, can hold 500 individuals with a moveable stage, an orchestra pit, and a balcony. The Brandeis Theatre hosts no fewer than four plays per year. It also shows vintage films, both speaking and silent, the latter with the Potter's Lake Chamber Orchestra in the pit for accompaniment. In addition, the front second story of the building has been converted from offices to classrooms that hold workshops on everything from acting to woodcarving.

Recently, the Potter's Lake Historical Society successfully lobbied to have the theatre declared a historical landmark.

TRYST MANOR

Tryst Manor is another historical landmark. Now maintained by the Potter's Lake Historical Society, the estate was originally owned by local legend Calvin Tryst. Tryst built his house by hand and finished it just months prior to his death in 1876. It remained empty and unused for nearly twenty-five years.

In 1900, Tryst Manor was declared a historical landmark. One year later, the building was opened to the public for tours and select civil functions. For the last few years, the Potter's Lake Historical Society has maintained the estate.

Civic functions and celebrations are no longer held at the manor, but tours of the building still continue. The ground floor of Tryst Manor now serves as town museum, replete with gift shop and snack bar. Tours run six days a week and admission is free.

THE CAIN HOUSE

Annabella Visconti is the current owner of the notorious property known as the Cain House. The building is a turn-of-the-century, three-story, brick-and-timber home. It is in excellent shape, having been well cared for over the years. Annabella purchased the old house on the outskirts of town for a song; its infamy as a crime scene site all but guaranteed it.

The house's previous owner, Luther Cain, was a serial killer who plagued Potter's Lake and the surrounding area for years before his capture in the winter of 2000. Seven bodies were discovered in the basement of the Cain House, buried in pits of lime beneath its dirt floor. Luther Cain, only 33 years of age, died of heart failure while in police custody, never reaching trial for his hideous crimes. Oddly enough, the autopsy revealed no medical condition that could sufficiently account for his death, and family medical records indicated no inherited disposition to heart disease. Although baffled, no one really cared. Everyone simply wanted to lay to rest the demon of Luther Cain.

Luther's only living relative was an older brother named Bartholomew, a mentally retarded ward of the state. Because of Bartholomew's situation, the Cain House went up for public auction but had few interested buyers. The stigma of the recent murders was simply too much for most to handle. It took a few months, but the Cain House was finally sold to Annabella Visconti, a recent transplant to Potter's Lake.

Since the seven-bedroom home was more space than Annabella could ever need (she has no husband or children), the place was turned into a boarding house. Many boarders have come and gone over the last year, with no one staying longer than three months. More than one tenant has departed prematurely upon hearing the background of the Cain House. Still, the six guest bedrooms are more often occupied than not.

SUICIDE SPOT

The old Potter's Lake High School was used until 1960, when the population boom forced the creation of the current high school. The building itself is still attractive though the windows are boarded up to keep what little remains of their glass from falling out. The school is abandoned, fenced off to keep children and vagrants away. There is talk periodically of either condemning or restoring the school

for civic use, but neither is likely to happen anytime soon. The memories of the Suicide Spot are still too strong.

It was 1955 and Elizabeth Barnett was just 17 years old. She and Andy O'Connell had been going steady for a year. Most people thought they would marry. In fact, Andy promised Elizabeth that they would marry someday after high school. Elizabeth believed him. But before the end of their senior year, everything changed. Elizabeth became pregnant.

Elizabeth's strong Catholic upbringing made her feel guilty and fearful of revealing her condition to anyone, including Andy. Eventually though, Elizabeth worked up the courage to tell Andy, expecting that they would quickly marry, and no one would be the wiser when the baby was born. After all, the two were in love. Elizabeth shared the news with Andy on Prom Night, whispering into his ear during the last dance. The effect was immediate. Andy stopped dancing and just stared at her. He grasped her hand, pulled his ring off her finger, and walked away.

Elizabeth was shattered. She called out his name and tried to follow, but he grabbed her by the shoulders and pushed her away. Andy had his heart set on going to college back East and couldn't handle getting married and becoming a father. He told her he wanted nothing to do with her or the baby, and that it was her problem, not his. Elizabeth turned white as a sheet and ran out the door crying.

Elizabeth returned to the gymnasium at about 1:00 a.m. She found one of the doors unlocked and went in. Elizabeth had her father's .45 caliber pistol in one hand and a letter in the other. After placing the letter on the edge of the stage, she shot herself in the head. She died instantly. Elizabeth was six weeks pregnant at the time.

Andy O'Connell was found the next day in Kansas City where he had gotten drunk and thrown in jail until he sobered up. Upon hearing the news of Elizabeth's death, he suffered a nervous breakdown. He was placed in the Peaceful Valley Sanitarium for a year before being released. He never fully recovered from the event. He died one year later, committing suicide in the old gym.

The administration hoped that over time people would forget about the suicides. They were wrong. Unhappy students seemed attracted to the place, and more than one committed suicide in the gym, earning the place its notorious nickname. The Suicide Spot name stuck regardless of the efforts by school and church officials to put an end to it.

When the new high school was completed, the old one was shut down. No attempt was made to reopen it or use it for any civic or extracurricular activities. One year before the old school was closed for good, the gym was closed altogether with the entrances sealed and the windows boarded. For a few years, kids would break into the building, but in time it was forgotten. The suicide attempts stopped and life went back to normal.

No one wants the old building reopened, afraid of what might happen to the town's children. The memories and

fear of the Suicide Spot remain.

HOLLYVALE CEMETERY

Hollyvale is the old secular cemetery for Potter's Lake that was used for non-Catholic burials until 1915. All of the plots in the cemetery were nearly filled when it was decided to build the new Potter's Lake Cemetery east of town. The planners never accounted for sudden population growth in the original planning, and it was necessary to add a second resting place for the deceased.

The old cemetery remained open until 1920 but closed due to the deaths of both the caretaker and the cemetery chaplain from diphtheria. Fear of the deadly infectious disease stopped anyone from entering the cemetery for years, and in time it was forgotten.

The chapel at Hollyvale Cemetery is not much to speak of: only one room with the altar at one end and a place for the casket in front of it. Shards of jagged stained glass jut out of the window frames, the aftermath of vandalism and the weather.

In 1956, lightning struck the old chapel in Hollyvale Cemetery. Being not much more than rotten wood and stone, it caught fire immediately. The fire department was hard pressed to do anything about the fire because the woods had grown up around and through the grounds from lack of use. The gates were rusted shut, and they had to cut the chain to get in because no one had a key to the lock anymore. The firemen did their best to keep the fire from spreading and managed to keep it out of the woods proper. What was left was a smoking ruin that ought to have been torn down but somehow never was.

Over the ensuing years, Hollyvale became a hangout for young adults who would gather to drink, smoke cigarettes, swap ghost stories, and sometimes perform séances to entertain themselves. In the early 90s, a group of St. Anselm students anonymously circulated flyers and

THE GHOST HUNTERS SOCIETY

The Potter's Lake Ghost Hunters Society is a group of individuals devoted to the study of paranormal phenomenon, specifically ghosts. The society formed in 1984 and has been investigating hauntings ever since. They have investigated many of the town's more famous haunts, including Kaufman's, Hugent Farm, and Lover's Lane. Although the society claims to have proof of spectral activity via gauss meters, photographs, and anomalous temperature readings, many people in Potter's Lake remain skeptical of their findings.

pamphlets that claimed Hollyvale Cemetery was not only a place of debauchery, but also one of seven portals to Hell. This was followed by the abduction of a 4-year-old girl from her front yard. She was found two days later, unconscious and unhurt, within the ruins of Hollyvale Chapel. Because of such incidents, the police started keeping Hollyvale under much closer surveillance, and reports of vandalism and trespassing dropped significantly. Still, deputies have spotted unexplained lights around the chapel at odd hours of the night, and some have reported hearing wailing coming from that location. To date, all investigations into these phenomena have yielded no explanations.

HUGENT FARM

The old Hugent Farm is all but deserted these days. Although it is still occupied by Daniel Hugent, age 88, he has allowed the property to fall into disrepair.

Daniel doesn't leave the main farmhouse much these days for fear of his life. According to him, the ghosts of Indians slain by his ancestors haunt the property, seeking Daniel's life in retribution for their own deaths. On multiple occasions, friends and family have tried to move Daniel or get him to sell the property, but to no avail. Although terrified, Daniel refuses to sell and "cater to them damn redskins," as he so eloquently puts it. His family, none of which are residents of Potter's Lake, considered having him committed but ultimately didn't have the heart to do it. Daniel Hugent, though eccentric, poses no threat to anyone, even himself.

The Potter's Lake Ghost Hunters Society has investigated the Hugent Farm on several occasions and concluded that there are indeed spectral forces at work. However, they believe the ghosts to be those of slaves murdered years ago, not Native Americans. While Daniel Hugent respects the

THE GHOST LINE

The Underground Railroad of the Civil War used Potter's Lake as a stop, but the escaping slaves feared it almost as badly as being captured. They called it the Ghost Line, and very few who came this way were heard from again. One of the stops was the old Hugent Farm, now only a short distance from Southey's Paper Mill. The legends say that on nights when the moon is bright, you can see the shadows of the dead slaves on the ground, hanging from trees no longer standing. How they came to this fate is anyone's guess.

society's opinion, he strongly disagrees. Every few nights, he hears the dead braves chanting and yelling from the overgrown fields, demanding a payment of blood for past transgressions.

THE AURORA

The Aurora Motel was originally built in the 50s, when the lure of the open road was at its peak. At the time, chain hotels hadn't really come into existence, and the Aurora was the modern wonder of the Potter's Lake roadway age. It hosted the visiting parents of St. Anselm students and travelers who day tripped out from Kansas City and Topeka for a little fun at the lake. Neat, clean, and affordable, it did a brisk business for decades. In the 70's, however, that all changed when the Aurora was the scene of one of the worst homicides in the history of Potter's Lake.

In 1978, Chuck Johnson (then owner of the Aurora) discovered his wife Barbara was cheating on him with



multiple men. Chuck Johnson was always a little hotheaded, but this time his rage was inhuman. Chuck knew his wife was using one of the motel rooms for her secret liaisons, but he was unsure which one. So, one by one, he kicked open the doors to rooms and shot anyone he saw inside. He got to Room 6 before he found his wife hiding with her latest lover. He shot them both before turning the shotgun on himself. A total of ten people died in the deadly rampage with three injured.

The Aurora Motel was sold three times since then, each time getting seedier and seedier. The last owners even tried to market Room 6 as the “Scene of the Aurora Massacre.” Today, the motel is clean and trim once again, thanks to its current owners. Aware of the motel’s history, they feel they can overcome the stigma surrounding the Aurora.

POWELL AFB

The facility opened in 1951 with a great deal of controversy. Many questioned why an Air Force base was necessary near the Kansas-Missouri border and because it was built as a training facility, its presence was even more unusual. Despite this, Powell has managed to remain open ever since.

The Air Force still maintains the facility despite dwindling crops of recruits arriving here for training. With the wave of military base closings in the early 90’s, everyone figured that Powell was doomed. It continues to operate, however, even with the annual threats of its demise.

Although Powell is listed as a training facility, it functions under a surprising level of secrecy for such a run-of-the-mill task. Powell only has a small area of the base accessible

MEN IN BLACK

Everyone knows the image: black suits and mirror shades, rigid posture and mechanical voices. They silence and harass those unfortunate enough to witness a UFO or other unexplained phenomenon. Some say they are agents of an alien intelligence. Others say they work for the United States government and military. Some say they are active in Potter’s Lake.

There are rumors of Men in Black showing up at people’s homes in the middle of the night and taking them away. These rumors link the Men in Black to Powell, claiming them to be agents from the base. But while this gossip continues to circulate, no proof has ever come to light. The military denies these rumors, and the Potter’s Lake Sheriff’s Department finds them laughable. Still, they persist.

PROJECT: BLUEBOOK

There were rumors back in the seventies that Powell Air Force Base was the secret headquarters for Project: Bluebook, the government’s investigation into the UFO phenomenon. Local scuttlebutt claims the Air Force has proof of extraterrestrial life and that this proof is concealed at Powell AFB. The conspiracy theorists often cite Powell’s unusually tight security as proof positive for their wild allegations. These allegations, of course, are completely unfounded.

to the general public, requiring an official parking sticker to be allowed inside. The only two publicly accessible gates are guarded twenty-four hours a day, and armed guards man the gates of classified areas.

The number of civilians employed by the base is very small in comparison to other facilities of a similar size, keeping Powell AFB and Potter’s Lake from developing the symbiotic relationship that infuses so many “military” towns.

LOCKHAVEN OBSERVATORY

Lockhaven Observatory, built from 1953 to 1957, lies outside of Potter’s Lake proper. Abandoned and locked shut in 1981, it has remained relatively unscathed by the years of neglect. The grounds, overgrown with vegetation, are the only indication that the building is not in use. Private institutes and organizations have offered to buy or lease the observatory (to make use of its excellent, though dated, commercial telescope) but its owner, Montgomery Lockhaven, always refuses. Montgomery, a citizen and current resident of Great Britain, is the grandson of the observatory’s original owner and financier, Archibald Lockhaven.

Archibald Lockhaven was not a native to Potter’s Lake or even America for that matter. He was a wealthy Englishman who inherited his fortune, never working a day in his life. By all accounts, he was a personable fellow whose views and opinions were insightful and highly regarded; except when it came to the little green men.

Lockhaven came to Potter’s Lake in 1953 and used his considerable wealth to construct the observatory that bears his name. Whenever someone asked why he built the observatory so far from his native land, he would respond matter-of-factly, with a straight face, “Because the little green men told me I should.”

According to Archibald, three diminutive green men from another world visited him one evening and instructed him to travel to Potter’s Lake and build an observatory.

These otherworldly beings also told Archibald that he wasn't really human, but one of them operating undercover. Apparently, Archibald believed his cover so much, he had forgotten about his true nature. Lockhaven was to use the observatory to find their native planet among the countless stars so all four of them could finally return home. For nearly five years, Archibald spent a sizable amount of his wealth constructing the observatory for this purpose. He spent the rest of his days in Potter's Lake, gazing into the nighttime sky.

Archibald Lockhaven died in 1981, at the age of 99. He never found his way home.

THE WOODS

Thick woods surround Potter's Lake on three sides. It looks pleasant enough for afternoon picnics and recreational camping, but the locals know better than that. The woods are not safe. There are stories of disappearances and accidents, abandoned cabins that are never in the same place twice, and a graveyard predating the Civil War that is so weatherworn and overgrown by forest, that the grave markers are nameless. Parents tell their children not to play in the woods though it has become customary for teens to brave the forest for one evening. Town legends feature the woods themselves, almost as a regular character. The superstitious believe that there is something in the woods, but nobody talks about it because it's considered bad luck to do so.

Since 1947, the woods around Potter's Lake average twenty-four disappearances per year.

MEGIDDO'S HILL

Father Aloysius Dominic, one of the original missionaries to the area, was the first to discover the Monolith, an oddly shaped stone covered with weatherworn pictographs assumed to be of Native American origin. The Monolith is a triangular slab of rock two feet thick, four feet wide, and nearly eight feet tall that juts out of the ground. The edges are jagged and the stone slab leans slightly to one side. Strange symbols are etched into both sides of the Monolith, though time has made them nearly impossible to perceive.

The Monolith rests atop a small hill nestled deep in the heart of the woods. It was Father Aloysius who named this topographical feature Megiddo's Hill, though his motivation for doing so remains a mystery. According to local legends, the Monolith and the hill it rests upon are said to be many things; an Indian burial ground, an alien artifact, and an altar to the Devil are the most popular. To date, no one has been able to explain the purpose of the Monolith or decipher its cryptic markings. The brave



few who venture to Megiddo's Hill speak of a palpable uneasiness to the place.

There are some who say that the Monolith is what really brought the missionaries to Potter's Lake those many years ago and that the Vatican still has an interest in it to this day.

THE DEVIL'S CLAW

The Devil's claw is the name given to the odd, old tree, split by lightning, about two miles into the woods. It is a

THE SAND DUNE

Among the stranger legends of Potter's Woods is that of the mysterious sand dune that is supposedly somewhere among the shifting trees. The legend dates back to the Dustbowl era when the worst dust storm ever blew through Potter's Lake destroying property and taking lives. The "Black Blizzard" lasted for hours, coating the town and woods in inches of dirt. While other dust storms left Potter's lake mostly untouched due to the surrounding woods, this one blew the roofs off houses, suffocating animals and people alike. From that day to present, children have come back from playing in the woods with sand in their clothes and shoes, not knowing how it got there. Though many have tried to find it, no one has ever located the mysterious sand dune. Most of the parents dismiss the legend out of hand, disregarding the evidence to the contrary.

THE CABIN AND THE WILD MAN

Nestled deep in Potter's Woods, tucked away beneath a canopy of trees, is "The Cabin." Plenty of reputable folk have come across it while in the woods, so everyone assumes it really exists. The problem is, it has the unsettling habit of not staying in one place for too long.

The Potter's Lake Historical Society and the Sheriff's Department have made a number of attempts to locate the cabin over the years. Two such attempts, in 1988 and 1999 respectively, made use of helicopters and planes for aerial reconnaissance. Still, the cabin remained as elusive as ever, continuing to be invisible to investigating eyes.

Eyewitnesses describe the cabin as small and rundown. The windows are boarded shut, and rot has overtaken much of the structure. Dozens of animal bones litter the cabin's porch, and animal entrails hang from rusted hooks on the porch's ceiling. A pack of wild dogs, numbering from three to seven according to different accounts, stalks the area around the cabin. Their snarling muzzles and glaring eyes are enough to drive off most people, but when they fail, there is always the "Wild Man".

A few, though not many, of the accounts include the appearance of the so-called "Wild Man of the Woods." He is said to emerge from the cabin when the dogs are not enough to frighten off the unwanted. They say his eyes burn like fire and his voice unsettles the soul. His old, ripped clothing is unidentifiable, and his long, grey mane is a tattered and matted mess. He waves his arms about frantically when he speaks while clutching a gnarled tree limb. Affixed to his homemade staff is a silver crucifix, bound in place with twine. His ranting is laced with caustic warnings and biblical imagery, but it's the tone of these sermons, not the words themselves, that have such an unnerving effect on the listener. The eyewitnesses say that as his preaching reaches a fever pitch, the dogs begin baying along in a twisted cacophony. Upon hearing this din, every eyewitness has fled the scene. Most never desire to return to this place, but those few who do are never able to find the cabin again, no matter how long or hard they search.

The identity of the wild man of the woods and the secret of the moving cabin remain two of the more intriguing mysteries of Potter's Lake. Neither is likely to be solved anytime soon.

favorite spot of college students who like to camp there for an evening and tell ghost stories, usually as part of some initiation rite for one of the fraternities. Countless stories exist about the old tree, most of which are fabrications by imaginative students. Popular tradition holds that each initiate must tell a homemade ghost story and incorporate the Devil's Claw into the tale. Over the years, a massive body of lore has become affixed to the gnarled tree as old and new stories build upon one another. Although the authorities always worry about something happening to the pledges who spend the night at the Devil's Claw, there have been no incidents to date. Oddly enough, this makes the old tree the safest place in all of Potter's Woods, despite tales to the contrary.

GAS & GOSPEL

Today, there is only one road that actually runs through the woods, and it is little used at best. It's State Highway 128, a short stretch of road linking Potter's Lake to Highway 56. Travelers routinely report odd occurrences along this route such as cars mysteriously stalling, hitchhikers who fade from view as you pass them, and even running over phantom animals or people that jump in front of the car

and vanish afterward. Even worse, people who get out of their cars to check for damage or victims sometimes disappear themselves.

The only business on this highway is Reverend GeeBee's Gas & Gospel. Old man GeeBee is a fixture in Potter's Lake and the surrounding area, not only for his reputed ability to accurately diagnose and fix automotive ailments, but also for his art. A modern folk art sculptor, Rev. GeeBee's marionettes are a prized commodity among area collectors, along with the small, carved "protector" figures he gives away. The scope of his work, however, can only be realized by going inside the concrete and bottle glass walls surrounding his property and into his sculpture yard. There, "Papa" as Rev. GeeBee calls himself, has filled the area with larger than life-size sculptures in metal, wood, and plastic. Most have a religious theme, though many also explore his African-American heritage. To Rev. GeeBee though, they serve a different purpose. He believes they are little saints, antennas for the holy power of God, keeping everything safe within the walls of his property.

The Reverend considers himself a guide to Heaven. According to Papa, the Lord visited him and told him to, "Help the people going into the wilderness and spread the word of God's strength and loving kindness to everyone who passes this way."



As Rev. GeeBee sees it, “I don’t just sell gas and fix cars; I give directions through the dark ways that men and women walk.”

His “protectors”, little handcrafted figurines, are always freely given (never sold) to those Papa deems needy. Rev. GeeBee claims his “protectors” keep people safe from the temptations of the Devil, particularly those people who must venture into Potter’s Woods. Considering the myths and stories regarding the woods, many are inclined to agree with him.

THE LAKE

The woods are not the only mysterious natural feature of the landscape. The other is the lake for which the town is named. It’s a peaceful stretch of water with a strange history of unpredictable incidents. The summertime sunsets reflecting off its surface are spectacular, but the locals do not swim or boat there very much these days. The high number of drowning deaths and the unusual occurrences surrounding them has scared most folk off. In a couple of

incidents, adults have drowned in shallow water. In others, several people simply dove into the deep water and never returned to the surface. Even with the massive reduction in recreational traffic, there is still at least one drowning death per year.

During the early part of the 1900’s, the lake was the center of the town’s community calendar. Ice cream socials, fireworks, and boating were regular events throughout the year. The placement of Tryst Park reflects this, continuing the strip of manicured green lawns from the grounds of St. Anselm, down past the Town Square and City Hall, and along the lakeshore. Somehow all this changed.

By 1970, fatalities from boating accidents were up to four a year. In 1984, the city council put an end to organized recreational boating on the lake, and the boathouse was closed. In 1992, swimming was restricted to the park area, and City Hall hired lifeguards to supervise swimmers. These actions did decrease the number of deaths and close calls, allowing earlier boating and swimming restrictions to be lessened somewhat. Still, the lake claims at least one victim per year.

In the local mythology, the lake is considered to be

ST. ANSELM AND THE WOODS

There are accusations from St. Anselm's detractors that the missionaries founded the college for more than academic enlightenment. As the story goes, the Vatican sent missionaries to introduce Christ to the savages and to help bring God to a border town in the lawless west. What they found was something unexpected. The stories do not say what the missionaries discovered, but it did alarm them. Some say that the college was a cover for the local priests so they could closely study whatever it was they uncovered in the wilderness.

St. Anselm College is also home to one of the Catholic Church's famous exorcists, a priest trained specifically to deal with spiritual or demonic possession. For those who believe that there is more to the founding of St. Anselm College than meets the eye, this is further proof that something strange is going on in the woods, something insidious and evil, and that the Vatican is aware of it.

In 1831, when St. Anselm was founded, there were barely any settlers to speak of and certainly none to educate. Records show that the original graduating class of St. Anselm numbered only five. Why then did the Catholic Church give its permission for the school's founding where there were no students, only expense and danger? Could it be because a university gave the Vatican a reason to send some of its most skilled spiritual researchers to the American wilderness?

far more hospitable than the woods, though no more trustworthy. People maintain a sense of trepidation regarding the lake though not the type of irrational fear that is often engendered by the woods. Although cautious, the townsfolk do not shy away from the lake.

SOCIAL EVENTS

Potter's Lake celebrates all the major holidays in much the same way as most towns across America. However, Independence Day and Halloween are celebrated with a little more zeal than one is likely to find elsewhere. The town also has a few social events, which are entirely unique to Potter's Lake. These celebrations say a lot about the personality of Potter's Lake and the people who call it home.

FOURTH OF JULY

Potter's Lake was officially founded on July 4th, 1876 making the Fourth of July Festival the biggest annual event of the year. Given the founders established the community on the centennial anniversary of the birth of the nation,

patriotism for both the town and the country runs deep among the native residents. It is a source of great pride that Potter's Lake is the only town in America that was officially founded on such a significant national holiday.

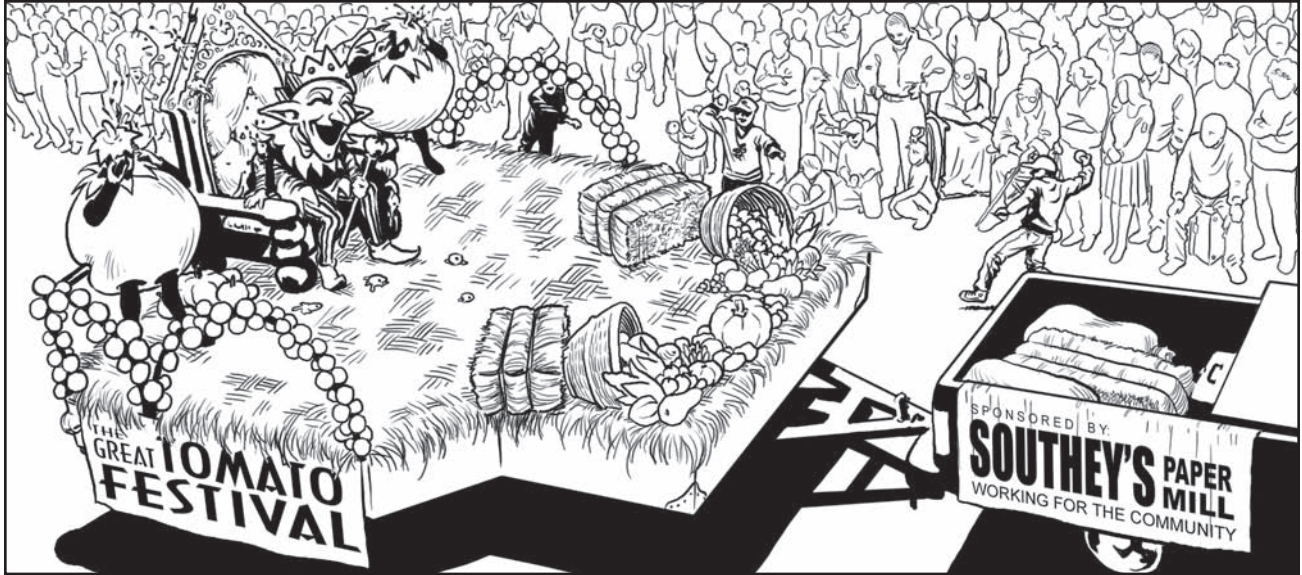
The annual Fourth of July Festival is huge. It includes a parade, a baking contest, a town picnic, and a fireworks display of epic proportion. The festivities begin with the traditional Founding Day Parade, which runs down the length of Main Street and ends at St. Anselm. The parade is followed by the carnival at Tryst Park, which features a variety of rides, games, and contests.

THE GREAT TOMATO FESTIVAL

Each year, on the 28th of September, Potter's Lake celebrates the Great Tomato Festival. A lavish parade, rivaling the one on the Fourth of July, opens the festivities of the day. The parade is filled with floats manned by adults costumed as giant ripened tomatoes. The "Goblin King" of the festival sits upon his throne on the last float, waving to the onlookers. Armed with tomatoes, the local children pelt the Goblin King's float as it passes by. The Festival is followed by a banquet at Tryst Park. Everything served is tomato based, ranging from the mundane (tomato soup,

LOVER'S LANE

Surrounding the lake is the local lover's lane, a scenic stretch of road with a number of secluded areas seemingly custom-made for romance. Young couples drive out together at night, drawn by the beauty, lack of public lighting, and relative privacy that the road affords. Most are wary, however, of parking on the side of the road closest to the water. Like most of Potter's Lake, Lover's Lane has no shortage of unusual occurrences. More than one couple has been carried away by the moment only to discover the lake is far closer to the car, no matter how far away they parked. The far side of Lover's Lane is reputedly haunted as well. Couples have reported a ghostly figure three times over the last decade, darting in and out of the tree line, accompanied by a quiet sobbing sound. Searches for the figure have repeatedly turned up nothing, and the origin of this ghost has never been explained.



tomato sandwiches, etc.) to the downright bizarre (such as tomato cakes and tomato pies). The Great Tomato Festival has been a Potter's Lake tradition for well over a century, and it continues to be popular among the locals.

According to local legend, a fierce goblin lived in Potter's Woods and once a year, on the 28th of September, the creature would descend on the town and vandalize with reckless abandon. Each year, the townsfolk would close their businesses, bar the doors to their homes, and cower in fear of the goblin's rampage. One year a market owner forgot to put away his tomato stand. He watched curiously as the goblin approached the stand, ate a single tomato, and hobbled back into the woods. The next year, everyone in town left a tomato on their front stoop as an offering to the goblin. The tactic worked. The attacks stopped and Potter's Lake knew peace on that September day each year.

To this day, it is still tradition for households to place tomatoes on their front porches to appease the goblin of Potter's Woods.

LITTLE LEAGUE

Potter's Lake has little league baseball, just like every other town in America. In Potter's Lake, however, the game and the league are local obsessions. Various teams recruit little boys and girls, and all parents are passionately defensive of their child's talents and position on the starting roster. Parents even host representatives from the various teams in their homes in an unintentional parody of college recruitment. Recruiters will often go to great lengths to sign a little boy or girl, with rumors of bribes circulating frequently. Some of the children are as young as seven.

No season ends without at least one riot in the stands.

HALLOWEEN

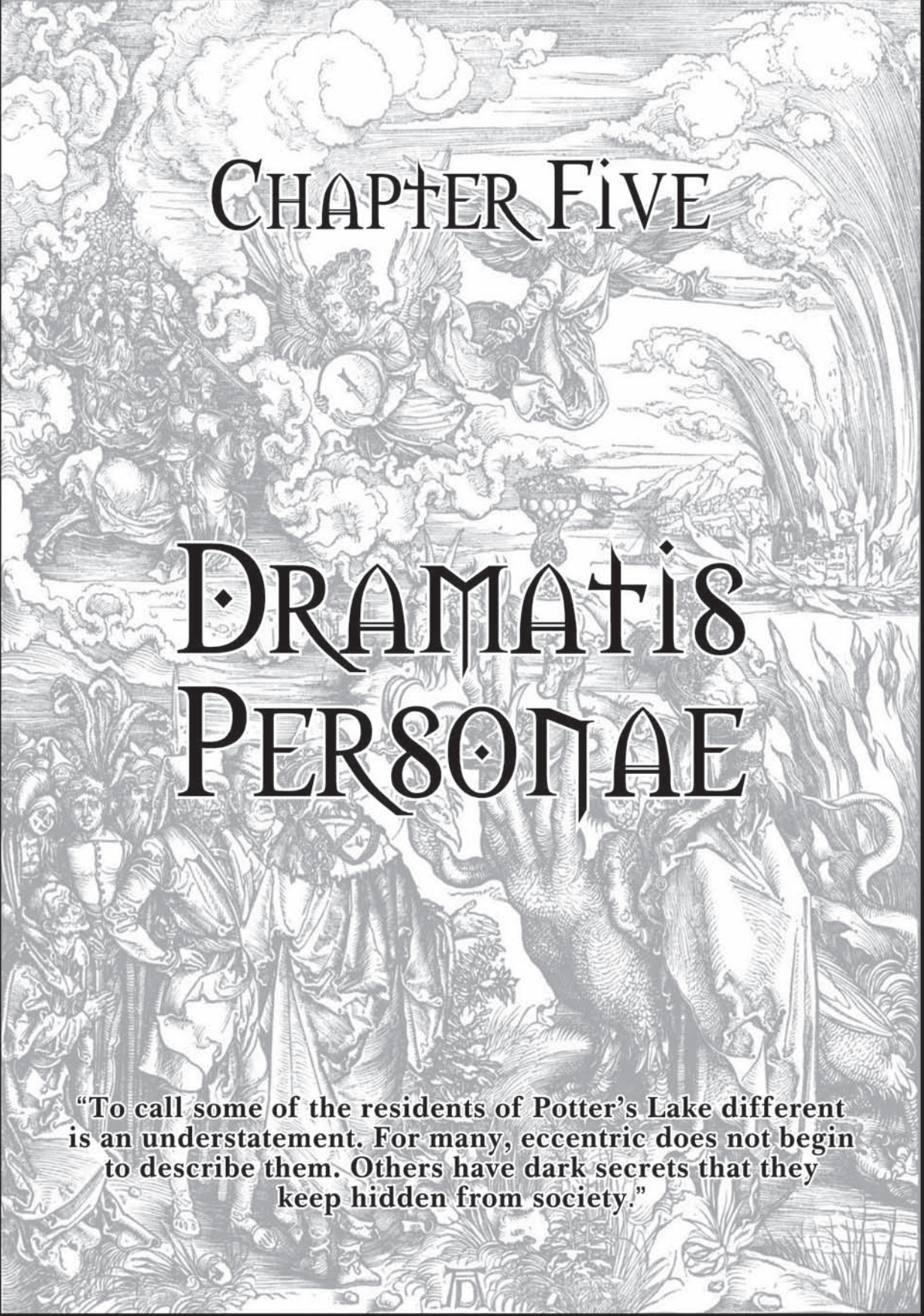
The town revels in this macabre holiday. The trick or treating tradition is preceded by a weeklong celebration that includes a costume contest, a pumpkin smashing competition, a dinner and dance, and a pumpkin pie bakeoff. On Halloween night, trick or treating goes on late into the evening, and there is a ghost story competition held down at the lake.

People are strongly advised not to venture into the woods on October 31st. There are stories of frequent disappearances in the woods on Halloween night. Most people follow this advice, not wanting to become another statistic.

PUBLIC SERVICE BALLS

Every year, the Sheriff's Department and the Fire Department hold their annual balls. Unfortunately, for the last twenty years, they have been on the same night. This was originally a scheduling error, but after degenerating into a feud between the two organizations, it became a contest to see who would have a better turnout and the more elaborate ball.

The two departments get along fine until about a month before the events. Then the rivalry begins. It generally lasts until a week after the balls, and then life settles down and returns to normal.



CHAPTER FIVE

DRAMATIS PERSONAE

“To call some of the residents of Potter’s Lake different is an understatement. For many, eccentric does not begin to describe them. Others have dark secrets that they keep hidden from society.”

The heart and soul of any small town are the people who call it home. They drive events and define a town's personality through their hopes, dreams, and fears. With that in mind, it's easy to see why outsiders consider Potter's Lake strange. One has to look no further than the oddball collection of colorful characters who live in this town to know that something is just not right.

To call some of the residents of Potter's Lake different is an understatement. For many, eccentric does not begin to describe them. Others have dark secrets that they keep hidden from society. While such characters are in the minority, there are enough of them to cause people to sit up and take notice, but only after spending some time in Potter's Lake.

This chapter details twenty-five noteworthy citizens of Potter's Lake. Some are important movers and shakers, while others are everyday nobodies. Each and everyone, however, has a quirk or secret that makes the character stand out. These individuals are guaranteed to spice up any encounter and can enliven even the most mundane of events. They also provide the most direct means by which the players can experience Potter's Lake. How better to drive home the absurdity, horror, and surrealism of Potter's Lake than with those living within its borders?

The characters in this chapter are intended to spark a GM's imagination. Through them, it is easier to convey the mood of *Heaven & Earth*. Gamemasters should create their own characters in addition to the ones presented or even replace some of them with ones of their own.

No statistics are given for any of the following characters. While some descriptions may imply certain interests and aptitudes, none are explicitly stated. This gives the Gamemaster room to personalize the characters as needed or desired. Gamemasters are encouraged to assign any goals, hobbies, etc. that they see fit. A GM should always keep in mind that it is the personalities of the characters, not their abilities and stats, that make them unique.

FLORENCE ABRAMS

Florence Abrams was born without hands. Although this birth defect has made her life difficult, she has never used it as a crutch or a justification for negativity. She always sees the best in people and tends to bring out the positive qualities in everyone around her. Her mood is always chipper, sometimes sickeningly so. Florence Abrams truly loves life and wishes to share her joy with everyone.

Florence is in her early 50s, single, and without children. Her black hair is beginning to grey, but she has no intention of ever dying it. Her almond eyes radiate the kindness and warmth that has defined her entire life. Her voice is bubbly and she sounds much younger than she actually is. Florence is usually attired in a gardener's smock, with her hair pulled



back and concealed by a brightly colored scarf. She never wears any shoes.

Florence owns a small florist shop in Potter's Lake. Gardening has always been a passion of hers, one she's parlayed into a successful business. She is amazingly self-sufficient around the shop, in defiance to her physical condition. Most of her customers do the lifting for her and Florence uses her toes to ring up purchases on the cash register. More than one customer has wondered how Florence can possibly do everything necessary to keep the shop running, and when pressed on the issue, Florence mentions the elves.

According to Florence, three little elves live in the walls of her shop. They come out at night, when no one is looking, and tend to the needs of the shop. Of course, no one believes Florence, assuming that her younger brother, Adolph, is helping her out. The elves are not a subject Florence likes to discuss. She fully realizes the idea of little nocturnal helpers living within her walls sounds crazy, and she has no desire to become known as an eccentric old lady.

DARYL BOWMAN

Sheriff Bowman's face is frozen in an expression of jaded cynicism. His only emotive response is to methodically raise a thick eyebrow, but only when the situation truly deserves it. In contrast, Bowman's jaw repeatedly mashes a wad of chewing tobacco. He rarely spits except to signal a forthcoming eyebrow raise. The sheriff's entire wardrobe is composed of identical lackluster brown uniforms.

Over his twenty years as Potter's Lake sheriff, Daryl Bowman has seen enough oddities, bizarre atrocities, and unexplained phenomenon to drive lesser men into fits and

padded rooms. Constant exposure to peculiarities has left him numb and immune to further shock. With only a few years to retirement, Bowman simply no longer cares. His only outlet is the aggressive plotting to outdo the concurring Fireman's Ball with outrageous Policeman's Ball stunts. His plan this year is to host a massive outdoor bonfire requiring Fire Department supervision.

Sheriff Bowman's friends attribute his dour demeanor to family tragedy. His wife died five years ago of food poisoning after eating contaminated fish. A year later, his daughter and only child disappeared in the woods on a Girl Scout hike. Her body was never found and Sheriff Bowman's resignation does not prevent him from scouring the woods for clues on days off and sleepless evenings. His deputies have heard him in his office at night, talking terms of endearment to a loved one, but when they enter the room, they find him alone.



EZEKIEL CAGE

At seventy-five years of age, Father Cage's health is failing him. Muscular dystrophy robbed him of the use of his legs fifteen years back, and two recent strokes have left him frail. He is very soft spoken except when discussing his faith. In these moments, his voice becomes passionate and the vigor of his youth returns: a fleeting glimpse of the man he once was.

Father Cage is a ward of the Church, and these days he seldom leaves the grounds of St. Anselm. On Sunday afternoons, he is often seen being wheeled about by his personal nurse or one of the priests. His favorite location is the Thicket, a secluded area that few others visit. Never much of a people person to begin with, Father Cage has



become even more ornery in his waning years.

Although a fine priest in his day, Ezekiel Cage will be forever known for his other work within the Church, that of exorcist. Father Cage knows the Roman Rituals' *Rite of Exorcism* verbatim and has reputedly performed over two hundred exorcisms. His duties took him around the world for many years before he finally retired in Potter's Lake. Although reporters and curious students approach him from time to time, he seldom speaks of his work as an exorcist. On the rare occasion that he does, his stories quickly devolve into fire and brimstone preaching about the wiles of the Devil and the need for constant vigilance against the machinations of Hell.

ISAIAH CRYINGHEART

Isaiah Cryingheart is a physically fit man, 33 years of age. He wears his long black hair in braids and usually dresses in khakis and polo shirts. He is a full-blooded Wichita Indian and avid history buff. Isaiah is the chairman of the Potter's Lake Historical Society and has a passion for preserving the history of the area (secular, Christian, and Indian). For years, he was quite the ladies man, but that has changed recently. A few months ago, Isaiah unnerved even his closest friends with his abrupt conversion to Christianity. Being a life-long atheist, this was even more striking.

Isaiah will share the story of his conversation with anyone who will listen. As he tells it, Jesus Christ visited him while he was cleaning his gutters a few months back. Jesus told Isaiah that he was to be the first apostle of Christ's new ministry on Earth. At that moment, Isaiah decided to give up his hedonistic ways and commit himself to the work of the Lord.

As one would suspect, Isaiah's claims do not sit well with



the clergy of St. Anselm. If he continues to offend them it is likely that St. Anselm will use its considerable influence to make life difficult for Isaiah Cryingheart.

JESSE DAVIS

Jesse Davis has stark, chiseled features, offset by long, wavy, reddish-brown hair. Despite entire months spent indoors and buried in books, she has good vision and the skin tone of a weathered traveler. Middle-aged, she works out regularly and her height (6'1") makes her seem imposing. Her speech has a trace of European accent.

The chief librarian at St. Anselm, Jesse Davis is rarely seen except when visitors request a tome from the rare and

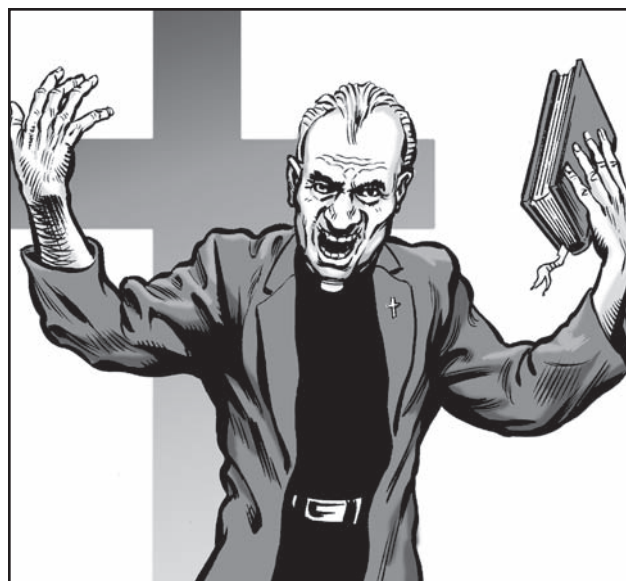


restricted demonology, witchcraft, and occult collection. Davis spends most of her time poring through these dusty, arcane pages, letting lesser librarians handle the daily tasks.

A ranking and obsessively dedicated member of the secretive Wing of St. Michael, Davis is charged by the Vatican to investigate the presence of the supernatural in Potter's Lake. With a cadre of twelve knights of the Wing of St. Michael and the Vatican's influence at her call, Davis can react quickly to any situation that arises. She is careful to keep her role confidential but is aware that Chancellor Hardig views her with suspicion. She carries a firearm at all times, and she keeps a sword blessed by the Pope himself strapped under her desk, within easy reach.

GABRIEL GORRAND

At 55 years of age, Father Gabriel Gorrand has more fire in his eyes than most people half his age. The balding, blue-eyed priest has the lean look of someone who has lived an acetic lifestyle for decades and looks forward to a few more. The ingrained authority of his voice draws the attention of those around him, and his public pronouncements quickly rise to passionate displays and speeches intended to inspire immediate activity.



Gabriel Gorrand was a young man without direction until the Army recruited him. After a horrendous tour of duty in Viet Nam, Gorrand returned to a society that did not welcome him back. Scarred by the war and sickened by what he saw as rampant moral decay, Gorrand turned to the Church for reassurance. A decade as a monk in the Franciscan Order solidified his faith, and he emerged as a soldier of God ready to engage in spiritual warfare for the

souls of humanity.

Gorrand's zeal led him to St. Anselm Church where he was given the mantle of priesthood and instructed to lead the town to salvation. Gorrand took to his task with relish, using his oratory skills to drive a stable of younger priests with strict discipline and whip the fear of God into the people of Potter's Lake.

Father Gorrand is convinced that the Apocalypse has begun. Monstrous soul-shattering nightmares plague his sleep, where demonic entities rape and pillage the souls of Potter's Lake in a landscape reminiscent of a Mekong Delta bloodbath. Waking in a panic each morning and fearing the worst, he feels justified to pursue a more severe set of tactics and escalate the battle to correct the town's faltering morality.

In this vein, Gorrand is putting the residents of Potter's Lake on the spot and naming names during Mass, hoping to drive the sinful to repentance through public embarrassment. While this tactic has not earned him friends, each mass is packed to capacity with hordes of gossipers looking to hear the latest dirt on the neighbors.

Unknown to Father Gorrand, the nightmares that haunt his sleep are the work of angels. Intent on harvesting souls for God, they see Gabriel as an ideal tool to guide more souls to their master's throne. The End Time is now and Heaven and Hell are tallying the souls of humanity in some obscene contest. With the help of Gabriel Gorrand, the angels of God feel confident that victory will be theirs.

GERALDINE HARDIG

Chancellor Hardig is the sharpest dresser in Potter's Lake. She carries herself with an upper class bearing that is mirrored in her expensive clothes. As the public voice of St. Anselm College, Hardig needs to look competent, upstanding, and dignified. Even in the midst of severe crises, she maintains her composure and aura of control. She never falters or breaks down in public, nor allows a stray hair to wander out of place.

Geraldine Hardig is a child of privilege schooled in etiquette and accustomed to leadership. The daughter of a state Supreme Court justice, Hardig has circulated through the state's high-ranking social circles since she was a child. She counts dozens of high placed officials and leaders as personal friends, including Bob Southey IV, Mayor Wainwright, and Powell AFB commander Colonel Bernard Lemar. Through her breeding, family contacts and Ivy League education, Hardig obtained her position as St. Anselm's chancellor, where she oversees a public institution in the vicinity of her family's traditional home.

Hardig's father took his role as judge and public servant very seriously and instilled a strong sense of ethics and dedication to truth in his daughter. Hardig refuses to compromise her personal integrity and attempts to maintain



St. Anselm's public image and stability with these virtues foremost in mind. To this end, Hardig refuses any course of action that leads to bad press for the college and does her best to keep the institution's reputation untarnished. Hardig has dealt with strange occurrences at the college for years and is a master at minimizing public exposure.

Hardig knows the Catholic Church has an especially large interest in the college and town but does not fully understand why. Likewise, she is unaware that the Vatican's clandestine order, The Wing of St. Michael, is active in Potter's Lake and pursuing a secret agenda on behalf of the Church.

She has seen a large amount of unusual and questionable requests originate from the Religious Studies Department, the library, and Father Gorrand's office. She has stymied the most extreme and unusual requests and carefully concealed the rest behind a bureaucratic smokescreen to avoid problems and embarrassing questions. In effect, Hardig is playing a dangerous role, balancing the demands and strange investigations of the church with her desire to keep a façade of normalcy in tact. Ironically, Chancellor Hardig belongs to a secret society herself. The Zetetic Society is comprised of prominent townsfolk eager to cover up the supernatural occurrences that plague Potter's Lake. Although Geraldine Hardig is uncomfortable concealing certain truths from the residents of Potter's Lake, she rationalizes her actions, believing that protecting the town's image is the paramount concern.

QUINN HARKER

Deputy Quinn Harker is a dedicated law enforcement officer in his early thirties. Although he has only been on the force for a short time, Quinn has made quite a name



for himself; not only for his sterling job performance and work ethic, but because he suffers from multiple personality disorder.

Quinn Harker has two other personalities that surface from time to time, Edgar Blaumeister and Dirk Strong. Edgar is a shy man who is fearful of his own shadow. He stutters uncontrollably and is uncomfortable in social situations. Dirk, on the other hand, is always in control of every situation, carrying himself with a quiet, macho stoicism. In Strong's world, actions speak louder than words. Dirk Strong is the living, breathing incarnation of every hard-nosed television cop stereotype.

The real Quinn Harker is an affable person always quick with a snappy retort, clever line, or bad pun. The deputy is a bit of a prankster and is always craving the attention of others. Although, most people appreciate his quick wit and upbeat demeanor, his dour supervisor, Sheriff Bowman, does not.

Harker has remained on the police force despite his malady, which surfaced only a few months ago. Although psychiatrists have advised both Sheriff Bowman and Mayor Wainwright that Quinn should be removed from duty, they have chosen to ignore that advice. They believe Quinn is a threat to no one, and his condition has not affected his work in any way. Unless his disorder begins to hamper his ability to perform his duties, Quinn Harker's is in no danger of losing his job.

NAPOLEON HAWTHORNE

Hawthorne & Sons Funeral Home has been servicing Potter's Lake for over seventy-five years. Its current owner, Napoleon Hawthorne, arrived in Potter's Lake a few years back to take over the family business after a car accident

claimed the life of both his father and older brother. Eager to finally take the reins of the family business, Napoleon tackled his new responsibilities with gusto. People assumed he was using his work as an outlet for his grief, but nothing could be further from the truth.

Napoleon Hawthorne has a secret he's kept from everyone, namely that he is actually a she. Born Robin Hawthorne, Napoleon has lived this lie for the last few years while living away from Potter's Lake.

Robin was always a tomboy. She enjoyed building tree houses and racing bicycles, not dresses and dollhouses. She always felt uncomfortable in her own skin and hated playing the role society demanded of her. As the teen years gave way to adulthood, Robin embraced transvestitism. For the first time in her life, she felt comfortable in her own skin. The feeling lasted for only a few years though. By that time, Robin knew what she needed to do to become a whole person. After much counseling and soul-searching, Robin Hawthorne decided to become a man. She turned to her father for financial aid but was flatly turned down.

Robin's father, already irate that his daughter was dressing as a man, was unable to handle this development. The Hawthorne family was well respected in Potter's Lake, tracing their roots back to the original settlers. Robin's transvestitism was already tarnishing the family name, and her father was determined to see their reputation damaged no further. Robin was cut from the will and disowned by her father and only brother (her mother was deceased, having died of cancer nearly twenty years earlier). For the first time in her life, she was on her own.

Robin left Potter's Lake for New York City. There she met and married a wealthy, older man who doted on her hand and foot. However, it wasn't love that drove Robin to marriage; it was the money. After a year of marriage, an unlikely tumble down the stairs took the life of Robin's husband. Now rich and independent, Robin had the means



to correct the mistake nature had made with her. After a year of counseling, she was approved for the gender-altering operation.

Napoleon, as Robin rechristened herself, remained bitter about the lack of love and support shown to her by her family. When the anger became all-consuming, Napoleon quietly returned to Potter's lake, his new identity unknown to all. He arranged an accident for his father and brother, one that claimed both their lives, and then snuck out of town, unnoticed all the while. Shortly after, the grief-stricken Napoleon arrived in Potter's Lake to tend to the Hawthorne family's affairs. Napoleon's claim of being a long lost son of his father's did not sit well with certain prominent townsfolk who were skeptical and suspicious of him.

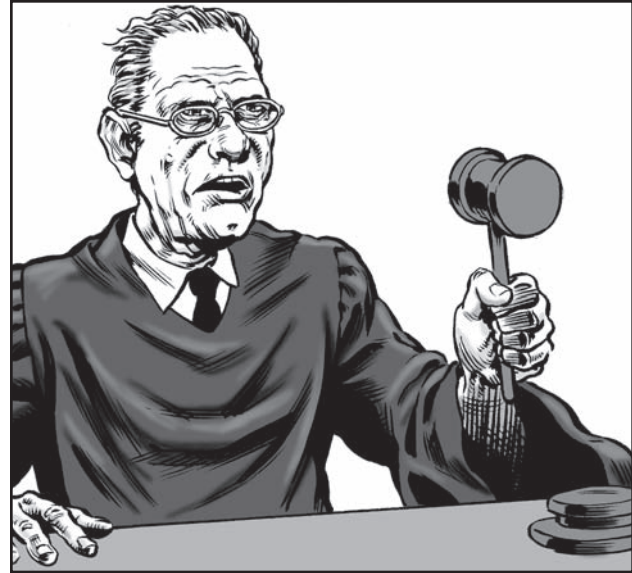
In time, intense scrutiny and investigation by certain prominent townsfolk unearthed Napoleon's true identity. He pleaded with those who had discovered the truth to keep this revelation a secret. The desire to maintain the Hawthorne family's good name in Potter's lake, not to mention a few bribes and civic donations, succeeded in doing so. The few people who know Napoleon's secret have agreed to stay quiet on the matter and allow him to own and operate his family's business.

Napoleon has become overly paranoid the last few months. He hates this sword of Damocles hanging over his head, fearing that one of those aware of his past may attempt to blackmail him. Napoleon is also starting to suspect that Devin Sinclair, a columnist for the Daily Sentinel, is nosing around in his affairs. Napoleon is worried that Sinclair may discover the truth about his identity, which could in turn lead to the reporter noticing the string of accidents that seem to befall those close to Napoleon/Robin. As proven in the past, Napoleon is a man who will go to any lengths to get what he wants. If his fears turn out to be justified, he will arrange an accident for Devin Sinclair. Napoleon Hawthorne will do anything to protect his secrets.

Although surgery and ongoing testosterone injections have done much to obliterate his female identity, Napoleon's features are still slightly effeminate. His inability to grow facial hair leads Napoleon to always groom and dress himself in the most masculine manner possible.

SOLOMON KING

Solomon King, 69 years of age, stands a towering 6'8", but his thin, wiry frame makes him appear unimposing. In his younger days, he was muscular and athletic but Father Time robbed him of that physique years ago. Solomon's intellect and wit, however, are as sharp as ever, though there are some who would disagree with that assessment. His detractors claim that his mind has eroded, and that this respected man is an eccentric shadow of his former self. To prove their point, they always use the Potter's Lake Animal Court as their primary evidence.



Solomon King served Potter's Lake as a judge for many years. His rulings were considered stern but fair, and he had a reputation for integrity and honesty. He was so popular and respected that many of his friends and colleagues tried to push him into the political arena, but he always refused. The law was King's calling, and he faithfully served Potter's lake as judge for many decades. Although retired for some time, Solomon King still serves Potter's Lake as a judge but in a different forum altogether.

Solomon runs the Potter's Lake Animal Court. The court operates in a manner similar to the real judicial system, but all the defendants are members of the animal kingdom. Prosecutors and plaintiffs bring charges against canines, cats, birds, and any other animals they feel have violated the law. Although a few wild animals are occasionally tried (defended by a court appointed lawyer, no less), most defendants are pets represented by their owners. Charges range from vandalism to public indecency to the killing of other animals. The histrionics one finds on television courtroom dramas are in full swing in the Potter's Lake Animal Court. Fists are slammed on tables, surprise witnesses are often called, and Judge King threatens to hold someone in contempt of court every ten minutes. All in all, it's a bizarre spectacle, but one that attracts numerous onlookers. On most days, the courtroom is packed, and townsfolk love being called to jury duty. The local television channel has recently begun airing the proceedings and ratings are going through the roof with talk of possible syndication in the near future.

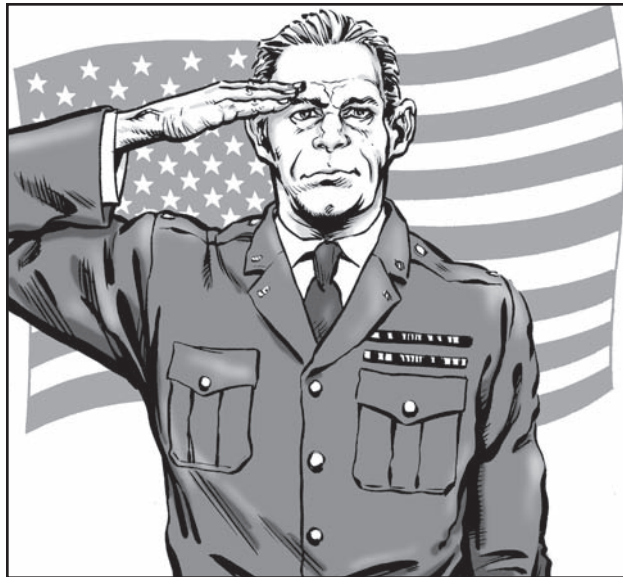
The Potter's Lake Animal Court is such a town attraction that the absurdity of it has had little effect on Judge King's reputation. While he does have his detractors, they are few and far between. Solomon's family (Julia, his wife of forty years, and his two daughters, Kathryn and Lucille) is completely supportive. They feel the Animal Court doesn't harm anyone, brings a smile to people's faces, and

gives Solomon something to occupy his self with during his retirement years. The real court system finds the whole thing quaint.

BERNARD LEMAR

Colonel LeMar is in charge of Project: Grayscale, the government's covert investigation into the paranormal and the potential military applications of psychic phenomenon. From Powell AFB, LeMar coordinates all of Grayscale's activities with exacting precision. Although he does not fully understand all of Project: Grayscale's studies of findings, he aptly manages them and follows his orders to the letter. While he has seen evidence that the paranormal is real, that knowledge is tucked away in a pocket of his consciousness where it will not affect his sanity or daily work. Likewise, LeMar refuses to let morality or sentimentality interfere with his duties. He orders dissections of live subjects with the same dispassionate tone in which he orders coffee.

Lemar is rarely seen in town, usually dropping a package off at the post office. Occasionally he takes an R & R night



out at Deke's when his wife Fonda is away on her frequent travels. He is careful never to give away his real name or military occupation, and he always travels armed and alone. Recently he has developed an attraction to a waitress at Deke's, drawing him out more often.

VICTORIA MCCARTHY

McCarthy's postal uniform is a common sight in Potter's Lake. Her short auburn hair, ruddy cheeks, and button nose stick out from under her USPS cap. Despite her wiry, athletic build, her short stature makes her presence



unobtrusive.

Vic McCarthy is the town's hardest working postal person, picking up and delivering mail all over Potter's Lake. She knows all the residents by name and cheerfully trades gossip while making her rounds.

In reality, McCarthy is Major Vicki Brubeck, the main talent scout and field operative for Project: Grayscale in Potter's Lake. This secret government operation is run out of Powell AFB and seeks to identify, capture, and study individuals displaying psychic abilities. Brubeck runs an extensive network of watchers in town who feed her rumors and reports about the paranormal. Most watchers are run-of-the-mill residents, unaware of her real identity, but a few are trained military operatives posing as regular citizens in mundane jobs.

McCarthy's cover allows her to oversee this network and intercept mail to and from the targets of her investigations. She also has access, even keys, to most buildings within Potter's Lake, allowing her to plant bugs, follow people, eavesdrop, etc. quite easily.

McCarthy leads any black ops teams sent from Powell AFB to acquire psychically gifted individuals discovered in Potter's Lake. Her current investigations are focused on Bob Southey IV, Annabella Visconti, and Meltdown. Although aware there is a high percentage of unexplained phenomenon and psychics in Potter's lake, Victoria McCarthy is baffled as to why this is.

MELTDOWN

Meltdown has not bathed since the last time it rained and it shows. His shaggy, black dreadlocks are matted into a thick rat's nest, and his unkempt beard advertises the remnants of his last dumpster meal. His teeth are in perfect shape, but his breath reeks more than his body odor. His



intense, crazed stare is enhanced by a lazy eye, almost if his eyes worked independent of one another. If someone were to wash away Meltdown's grime, they would find an extraordinarily attractive man.

Meltdown has been a fixture in Potter's Lake for as long as anyone can remember. A solitary homeless man plagued by paranoid schizophrenia, Meltdown spends most of the day trudging the length of Mill Road and back, talking to himself and glaring suspiciously at others. He inspires kindness in most residents and regularly receives handouts, spare change, and food without ever begging for it. No one knows where he lives, though the children who play games with him say he sleeps in the woods.

Some residents claim Meltdown has prophetic visions and that he has seen the dark depths of the woods. He is known to sometimes approach people on the street, with blazing bloodshot eyes and the fiery temperament that earned him his nickname, to deliver some cryptic message laden with portents.

It's also rumored Meltdown is impervious to harm. A local trucker still claims he ran over Meltdown while driving drunk one night but that he simply stood up and shambled away. Seriously shaken, the trucker now leads a more sober existence.

Project: Grayscale has taken Meltdown into custody on three separate occasions, but he has mysteriously escaped each time.

ED MILLER

Ed Miller has an aura of healthiness and well-being. His relaxed demeanor and warm, crooked smile makes him a natural confidante to his patients. Ed always dresses casually and inconspicuously, but his dark hair and bright green eyes make him stick out in a crowd.

Dr. Ed Miller grew up in Potter's Lake and feverishly

looked forward to the day he could escape from the small town's clutches. With brilliant grades and scholarships he fought his way into a Chicago med school, fleeing town at first opportunity. To his personal horror, Miller quickly learned he simply could not hack city life. The crush of people, the sterile buildings, the pollution, and the insensitivity were all too much. It took all of his willpower to force himself through school and the day he graduated he found himself heading home to Potter's Lake.

Miller hates Potter's lake with a burning passion. He despises the vicious rumor mill, the backward attitudes, and the small-minded religious bigotry. He has tried moving away several times, but something compels him to return. Slowly, he has come to accept he will never be able to leave.

Making the best of his situation, Ed opened shop as a family doctor, rapidly becoming the town's preferred physician. His appointment schedule is always full, and he makes frequent house calls. The constant stream of elderly hypochondriacs and screaming children has taken



its toll on him, but he carries on heroically. At the least, the unexpectedly high rate of mysterious ailments, millwork accident victims, and bizarre injuries keeps him on his toes.

Out of sympathy for local young girls with nowhere else to turn, Ed Miller secretly performs abortions. Although legal with a license, Miller knows the town's dominant religious majority would never allow such a death mill in the vicinity, so he justifies his illegal activity out of a sense of subversive morality.

MARTHA MOYNIHAN

Martha Moynihan is known as the Cat Lady throughout town for her daily habit of placing missing cat posters

on every available bulletin board and street post. A kind, elderly lady with no children, she is rumored to speak to cats, and some folk claim they spy for her. Cats seem drawn to her in public, and she always has a treat to give them before she picks them up and walks away. Her grocery cart is always filled with cat food tins, and felines are her favorite topic of conversation.

Cat toys, catnip bags, scratching posts, and litter boxes lie scattered across the cat Lady's house, while thousands of missing cat posters, some dating back decades, plaster her walls. Oddly, no cats are ever seen inside her house, despite the signs of cat habitation.

The Cat Lady knows many secrets and odd tidbits of information about Potter's Lake and its residents, all told to her by the cats she has befriended (or so she claims). Once a conversation slides away from felines, Martha becomes brutally blunt and will use slang and pejorative terms unbecoming of an old lady. She apologizes for her "potty mouth" afterwards before branching once again into her love of cats.



SULLIVAN PIERCE

Sullivan Pierce is a fit, trim man in his early forties. His eyes are steel-blue, and his carefully groomed hair is beginning to grey distinctly at the temples. Sullivan wears nothing but the most expensive designer suits and shows open disdain for those he considers to be fashion impaired. Pierce is always quick to show off his vocabulary and genius-level IQ, often belittling people in the process. He is an aloof man with few friends, and that's exactly how he likes it.

Hidden Treasures is an antique shop owned and operated by Sullivan Pierce. Although it is located in Potter's Lake, the shop draws patrons from around the globe. In his field, Pierce is highly regarded and world-renowned, with profits to match his ego. Most of his merchandise is high dollar,



but he collects small amounts of bric-a-brac to sell to the locals at very moderate prices.

For years, Sullivan has attempted to purchase one of Rev. GeeBee's sculptures to no avail. Rev. GeeBee rebukes every offer, and this infuriates Pierce to no end. GeeBee considers Sullivan to be a vile human being and wants nothing to do with him. Undaunted, Pierce still wants a sculpture.

Although a highly developed sense of superiority is the main reason for Sullivan's aloofness, there is another. Unbeknownst to all, Sullivan Pierce is a magician of considerable ability. He practices his craft in secret, knowing full well what would happen if this knowledge was discovered by the overly religious community of Potter's Lake. Pierce has accrued an impressive collection of occult lore over the years, including a personal library of over five hundred books. He maintains a ceremonial workspace in the basement of his shop that is off limits to everyone and always locked to keep out the curious.

Sullivan is aware that something epic and supernatural in nature is building in Potter's Lake, but he's unsure exactly what it is. He suspects the Judeo-Christian Apocalypse or some other major calamity, but he has yet to verify his suspicions. What he does know is that Potter's Lake is becoming a haven for the bizarre and paranormal; he just doesn't know why. In fact, this is what drove him to Potter's lake in the first place, nearly ten years ago. Unlocking the secrets of this uncommon little town has become somewhat of an obsession for Pierce.

There are a few secret societies at work in Potter's Lake, and this has not escaped Sullivan's attention. He knows bits and pieces about some of them, most notably the Wing of St. Michael, which operates out of St. Anselm. He suspects these clandestine groups are interested in Potter's Lake for the same reason he is, and Pierce is actively seeking to discover what clues they already have. Unfortunately, Sullivan's antisocial behavior has made him few friends,

making these investigations difficult to pursue.

LYDIA PRICE

Raven-haired with piercing green eyes and a voluptuous figure, Lydia Price is a stunning woman. A recluse by nature, Lydia spends most of her time painting. She is a remarkable artist whose surrealistic visions never found the acclaim they deserved. Still, she toils in anonymity.

Something of a vagabond, Lydia spent the late 1970's traveling across the country. She was in her early twenties and eager to experience everything life had to offer. She began her odyssey with very little money and usually depended on the kindness of strangers to survive. In April of 1978, her journeys led her to Potter's Lake and disaster.

Lydia was staying at the Aurora Motel, on the edge of town, when its owner went on his (now legendary) murderous rampage. Chuck Johnson, proprietor of the motel, went room to room with a double-barreled shotgun searching for his cheating wife and her current lover. At each stop, he fired on whomever he encountered. Unfortunately, Lydia was in her room that night, and Johnson shot her in the head, killing Lydia instantly.

Lydia had no ID, no car, and no credit cards. For all intents and purposes, she was a bum. Her face was so badly disfigured by the shotgun blast that identification was impossible. Other attempts were made to identify the young lady but each one failed. The only clue authorities had was a painting found in Lydia's room signed with the initials L.P. The motel registry proved useless, as Lydia had used a false name. After weeks of futility, the police gave up any hopes of identifying the body, and Lydia Price was laid to rest in a modest, unmarked grave.

Lydia Price is a ghost, a psychic echo of a once vital woman. She is aware of this but never acknowledges it to

herself. Restless, she wanders Potter's Lake. Lydia engages many of the town's residents in conversation, feeling the most alive when around others. Naturally, no one suspects her true nature, but a few question her out-of-date attire (circa late 1970's).

Lydia's skin is cold to the touch and sometimes that touch induces instant visions and hallucinations. Because of this, she usually avoids physical contact with others. On three occasions, Lydia took a mortal lover, but each time the romance ended in tragedy.

REVEREND GEEBEE

Reverend GeeBee is an elderly black man, thin and frail, his legs bent so awkwardly with age that he limps about with a solid oak walking stick. A sense of youthful vitality and a healthy, bellowing voice counter his skeletal features and slow habits. He dresses in the soiled remains of mechanics coveralls.

The sign reads, "Reverend GeeBee's Gas & Gospel," but the reverend prefers to be called Papa. His gas station sits on the road leading from town into Potter's Woods, the last sign of civilization before foreboding trees swallow the road. When a vehicle pulls in, Papa ambles out to gas it up, check the oil, clean the windshield, pump up the tires, and deliver a hellfire n' brimstone sermon that would stir the Pope to cartwheels.

Papa can tell what's wrong with a car by the sounds it makes, and if a person needs help, he can sometimes tell why. His rants include poignant insights and useful advice to those who heed them, couched in religious parables that cross the line from Christian to gritty animism.

Papa's sermons are intended to aid those who need direction or who are venturing forth on a mission into the dark woods. He hopes to help those fighting against the



corruption in the woods.

A small junkyard is piled high behind Papa's station. Papa spends his free time sculpting small idols from the refuse, which he gives away to customers. Papa also sculpts lifelike marionettes out of junk, selling them to tourists and college students. More than one resident has remarked on how the marionettes eerily capture the likeness of certain townsfolk.

Colorful, six-foot high walls composed of the cemented bottoms of glass bottles surround the entire station and junkyard. Within this area, crucifixes, Papa's protective idols, and strange masses of bloody feathers and skin cover every available surface, reflecting Papa's attempt to ward off all corruptive influences and keep his home a secure, sanctified ground.

DEVIN SINCLAIR

Devin Sinclair is a graduate of St. Anselm College. Originally from Massachusetts, he decided to stay in Potter's Lake after meeting and falling in love with Emily Walker, a Potter's Lake native. Devin, like his famous ancestor Benjamin Franklin, has a deep and abiding love affair with the printed word. After four years of college and an internship with the local newspaper, Devin took a fulltime job as a columnist for the Daily Sentinel.

The oddness that pervades Potter's Lake was evident to Devin the moment he first arrived in town. As a writer, he found all the ghost stories, eccentric characters, and small town secrets to be intriguing. This made the decision to stay in Potter's Lake even easier.

Devin knows that something is not right in Potter's Lake and has seen evidence of the supernatural, though he tries to maintain a skeptical view of it all. While the town's colorful cast of characters is always of keen interest to him, he gravitates towards new residents. When someone new arrives in Potter's Lake to stay, Devin quickly corners them and tries to make friends. Firstly, he's interested in their opinions on the town's obvious uncommonness. Secondly, he's curious to see what effect the strangeness has on them. In his few short years in Potter's Lake, Devin has seen quite a few new arrivals metamorphose from ordinary people to eccentrics, almost as if the bizarre environment of Potter's Lake was molding their personalities. While far from every citizen of Potter's Lake is abnormal, the amount of oddball characters is staggering. Devin is certain there's a logical explanation, but he's damned if he knows what it is.

In a town populated by interesting and colorful characters, Devin Sinclair is boring and average.

BOB SOUTHEY

In his plaid work shirt, work boots, blue jeans, and jean jacket, Bob looks like a regular mill worker and lumberjack.



His large build and toned muscles are a testament to his hands-on approach, and his grimy hands, dark eyes, and unshaven face add to his no-nonsense, tough guy demeanor.

Bob is the scion of the Southey clan and owner of Southey's Paper Mill, founded by his great-grandfather in 1902. As the largest employer in town, Southey's Mill is crucial to the town's economy and stability. This makes Bob a divine being to many of the townsfolk and ensures immunity from opponents.

Like his forefathers, Bob abuses his power ruthlessly. He knows exactly how important he is, and he loves to throw his weight around. His close underlings feel privileged to work for the tyrant, taking his abuse just to be close to the top. The rest of the Southey clan (a dozen aunts, uncles, and cousins) plays their part, greedily picking up the crumbs.

Each member of the Southey clan, including Bob, is haunted and frequently possessed by a spirit called Marbas. Marbas has exploited the family's inbred greed and desire to maintain total control over the area, influencing them to methodically clear-cut the surrounding forest and poison the lake with toxic runoff from the mill's bleaching process. The entire operation is carefully screened behind bureaucracy and a public pro-ecology stance. Though it will take years to complete, the repercussions (dead fish, polluted water tables, and long tracts of stumps) are already being felt, sparking direct action from local environmental activists.

Bob experiences the influence of Marbas as the voice of his father or grandfather, imparting lessons and guidance. Like the others in his family, he occasionally suffers blackouts or sudden inspirations that lead to amazing mechanical improvements or inventions.

Bob and his clan live in the Southey mansion, far from the mill. Visitors are common but to truly earn Bob's respect his guests must take their turn on the mechanical



bull he keeps in the basement.

AARON STONE

Aaron Stone, the town's Fire Chief, is a recent transplant to Potter's Lake. Born and raised in sunny California, he bears all the trademarks of his home state: blonde hair, blue eyes, and tanned skin. Aaron is an avid outdoorsman and thrives on competition, particularly the yearly tit-for-tat between his department and the Sheriff's Department. He has served as Fire Chief for two of the three years he has lived in Potter's Lake, and Aaron attacks his duties with the same zeal he attacks everything in life.

Aaron Stone has come to embrace Potter's Lake wholeheartedly. He is very active in the community, donating much of his time and money to local charities. Very few citizens can match his passion for Potter's Lake. Aaron often comments that this is where he was always meant to be. However, if he is asked about what originally brought him to this small midwestern town, he becomes uncharacteristically tightlipped.

A tattoo of a graveyard covers the entirety of Aaron's back. Some of the tombstones bear the names of friends and loved ones who have passed on, while other headstones are blank. Whenever someone close to Aaron dies, he commemorates their life by having their name tattooed on one of the blank tombstones. In this way, Aaron memorializes all those he has lost to death.

GIDEON TREMAIN

Gideon Tremain's eyeglasses, neatly trimmed goatee, and fastidious demeanor give him an aura of distinction. He is very well spoken and seldom raises his voice, no matter how



angry he gets. A small but noticeable paunch is beginning to form as he climbs further into middle age. He is married to his childhood sweetheart, Cynthia, and is father to two young boys, Eric and Stephen.

Gideon is a highly regarded professor of religious studies at St. Anselm College. Devoutly Christian, Gideon is extremely tolerant of those who do not share his faith. Considered pragmatic by most, Gideon is often sought out by students and fellow staffers for his advice. He shares his wisdom gladly in hopes of bettering the lives of those around him. In short, he truly cares about his fellow man.

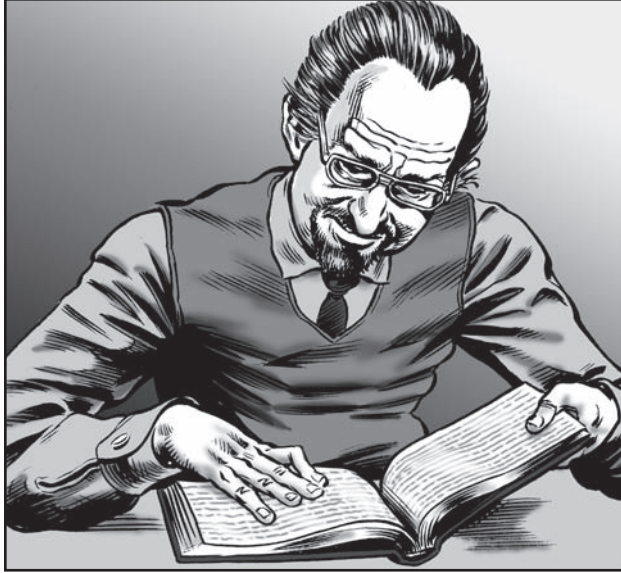
Unknown to everyone, Gideon Tremain is a knight in the Brotherhood of Ioannes, a secret society interested in Potter's Lake. The Brotherhood arranged for his transfer to St. Anselm years ago, believing that Potter's Lake will have a significant role in the biblical Apocalypse. While the Brotherhood's beliefs are grounded in Christianity, they deviate considerably from traditional Christian thinking, especially catholic dogma. This means the Brotherhood of Ioannes must operate in complete secrecy for fear of ostracism and persecution. Gideon is quite adept at maintaining this secrecy; not even his wife is aware of his membership in the Brotherhood.

Gideon uses the library at St. Anselm, his fellow knights, a network of friends and contacts, and his own keen, scholarly mind to subtly investigate the drama unfolding in Potter's Lake.

ANNABELLA VISCONTI

Annabella Visconti is an attractive middle-aged woman of Italian descent. Her olive skin, black hair, and Mediterranean features make this readily apparent. She usually dresses in ragged clothes even though she can afford better.

Anabella inherited a sizable fortune a few years back



and used a portion of it to purchase the Cain House. She bought the old house relatively cheap on account of it being the home of the most infamous serial killer in the history of Potter's Lake. After moderate renovations, the Cain House was converted into a boarding home by Annabella. Unfortunately, the house's reputation assures a quick turnover in guests, but it still manages to remain full most of the time.

Annabella is a medium, a psychic able to interact with ghosts. Although most assume her a fraud, she really can speak to ghosts and even bind them to her will, although she has seldom done the latter. Occasionally she can be heard talking to herself, but in fact she is conversing with the ghosts of the Cain House.

It was the ghostly cries of Luther Cain's victims that drove Annabella to this house in the first place. They are

also the ones who coaxed her into transforming the old place into a boarding home, though their reason for doing so remains unknown. Annabella has developed a friendship with the ghosts of Cain's seven victims, but shares this with no one. Too many people in Potter's Lake already view her with suspicion, and she has no desire to stoke the flames any further.

BELINDA WAINWRIGHT

To call Mayor Wainwright ugly as sin is to be extremely kind. The bags beneath her bloodshot eyes, the long crooked nose, and pale complexion make her look like a Halloween witch. Her personal hygiene is atrocious. Her teeth are rotting in her mouth, and her straw-like hair is seldom combed. Mayor Wainwright often belches, farts, and picks her nose in public. Surprisingly, few people comment on it. Even more surprisingly, most actually describe the mayor as beautiful and graceful. To outsiders and newer residents this is perplexing. While they see an old crone with odious personal habits, long-time residents claim to see a stunningly beautiful woman. Those visiting Potter's lake assume its residents are just being polite, but a few jokingly claim that Wainwright is a real witch who has cast a spell on the people of Potter's Lake.

Belinda Wainwright sat on City Council for years before becoming mayor in 2000, after the untimely death of then current mayor, Phillip Jackson. Even though Mayor Jackson served Potter's Lake admirably for twenty years and was beloved in Potter's Lake, the citizens immediately embraced their new mayor. Wainwright takes her job very seriously, and all of her decisions are made with the town's welfare in mind.

Mayor Wainwright belongs to the Zetetic Society. She and her fellow Zetetics are movers and shakers in Potter's





Lake who use their influence to conceal the presence of the supernatural from ordinary citizens. It is an uphill battle, but one Mayor Wainwright and the Zetetic Society eagerly wage for the good of Potter's Lake.

KYLE AND LUCAS WOLF

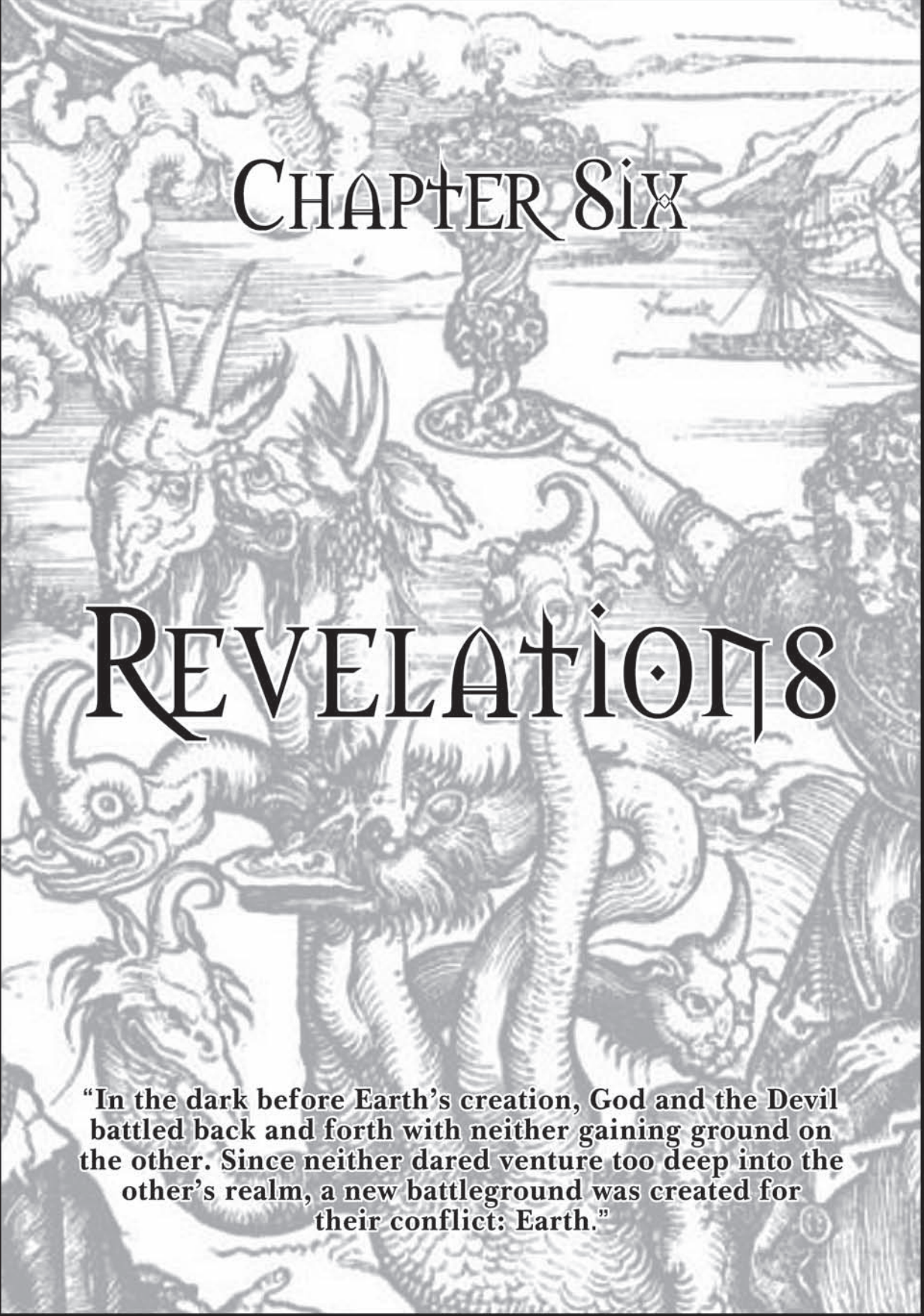
Kyle and Lucas Wolf are more than just twins; they are best friends, roommates and coworkers. Where one goes, the other follows. They love the nightlife and frequent Deke's Bar & Grill. As twins in a small town, the Wolf brothers stand out wherever they go.

Lucas is a mute. The ten-inch scar across his neck leads to speculation among the townsfolk that an accident of some kind robbed him of his speech. Kyle's unwillingness to discuss the issue only serves to add fuel to the local rumor mill.

Lucas' silence has sometimes made things difficult for him, but it doesn't hinder his work as an EMT for Potter's Lake Memorial Hospital. Both he and his brother perform their jobs adequately but are beginning to tire of them. If they do decide to move on, it will have to be a job where they can work side by side. For them, there is no other alternative.

Kyle claims to have a telepathic rapport with his brother (according to him, Lucas is quite the chatterbox). Kyle often acts as a mouthpiece for his brother, making conversations with the two a bit unconventional to say the least.





CHAPTER SIX

REVELATIONS

"In the dark before Earth's creation, God and the Devil battled back and forth with neither gaining ground on the other. Since neither dared venture too deep into the other's realm, a new battleground was created for their conflict: Earth."

Heaven & Earth is a game of discovery. Around every corner lurks a secret awaiting exposure or a mystery longing to be solved. The game's official setting, Potter's Lake, is the ultimate playground for this. The town has its fair share of quirky individuals, many with secrets of their own, and Potter's Lake has an inordinate amount of strange traditions, local legends, and ghost stories. Even the founding of the town is peculiar. Potter's Lake is an unusual community, one that serves as a magnet for the bizarre. There are weird happenings here, and weirder still, the locals either don't notice or they take it all in stride.

THE APOCALYPSE

All the weirdness in *Heaven & Earth* is merely window dressing for a much larger and more subtle tale, that of the Apocalypse. Time is running out on humanity, and most people do not know the fate that is awaiting them. Worse, those who do suspect the Apocalypse is nearly upon them do not understand its nature. They know God will eventually end the world but not for the glorious Eschaton promised in Revelation. Further, Christ is not returning to Earth in a second coming as God's champion. He has rebelled and is working on his own agenda involving the salvation of humanity.

In the dark before Earth's creation, God and the Devil battled back and forth with neither gaining ground on the other. Since neither dared venture too deep into the other's realm, a new battleground was created for their conflict: Earth. In time, the two decided to resolve their conflict with a contest rather than tirelessly wage war forever. Each would compete for treasure and at contest's end, whoever had the most would be declared victor. The treasure in question was human souls. The angels of Heaven and the demons of Hell would collect souls for their masters, and the final results would be tallied at the End Time. Sadly, for all man's aspirations, he is nothing more than a token to be won by either God or Lucifer.

No matter who wins the contest, humanity loses. If Satan wins, Hell will have dominion over the Earth. If God wins, the Rapture will bring an end to humanity. Either way, humanity will cease to be. That mankind has no destiny other than as treasure to be won, troubled God's

only son. The Lamb himself is part flesh, having been born of woman, and pitied mankind. In humanity, Christ saw the most powerful of possibilities. He beseeched God to end the contest and spare humanity, but his pleas fell on deaf ears. Seeing no other option, Christ rebelled against his father, just as Lucifer had done ages ago. But where Lucifer rebelled out of pride, the Lamb rebelled out of love. Now walking amongst his mother's people, Jesus has undertaken a mission to save humanity from the clutches of both Heaven and Hell.

So, while there will be an Armageddon, it is not like the one that devout Christians believe in and wait for. That in and of itself is a horrific thought. Even more disturbing though, are the motives of God. What exactly he may intend in the end is unclear, but it does raise the question of why he would tell humanity one thing through the Bible and other sacred texts while He is, in fact, planning something else.

POTTER'S LAKE

Why is Potter's Lake so important? Because it occupies one of the last vestiges of paradise, the legendary Garden of Eden itself. While many people believe the Middle East to be the cradle of humanity, the truth is God cast Adam and Eve far away from Eden...nearly half way around the world. Until the arrival of European conquerors, the Americas were an unspoiled and lush virgin wilderness under the care of Native Americans who understood the inherent power of the land and their responsibility to it. Even then, Eden occupied a small corner of this world, mostly forgotten by God who believed it had served its purpose.

Over the years, the slow press of colonization and development wore away the walls of paradise, consuming everything with the gradual rot of industry. Eventually, the once verdant Eden fractured into tiny oases dotting a spiritual desert. Some such pockets retained their defenders who fought the persistent advance while other places simply surrendered and died beneath a smothering blanket of concrete. Potter's Lake is one such vestige of Eden that refuses to die, and it all has to do with an angel and two trees.

Iophiel was one of many angels who stood watch at

MYSTERIES REVEALED

This chapter details the secrets underpinning the world of *Heaven & Earth*. It reveals the true nature of Genesis and Revelation, covers the supernatural elements of the game, and explains why Potter's Lake is such a bizarre place. In other words, all the major mysteries of *Heaven & Earth* are revealed. With that said, not every question posed throughout this book is answered. This was intentionally done to allow GMs room to add their own fingerprint to *Heaven & Earth*. Likewise, gamemasters should change anything they want to better suit their tastes or vision.

A SELF-CONTAINED GAME

This chapter reveals the overarching story behind *Heaven & Earth*. While future supplements will provide optional pieces and possible paths to take, no other book will ever be required. Everything a Gamemaster needs to know about what's going on and where the game's storyline is heading, is included in this book.

Eden's gate after Adam and Eve's expulsion from paradise. In fact, he was the last angel at his station. Alone for millennia, Iophiel guarded Eden until driven to madness by the aching solitude. Even God had forgotten Iophiel's role on Earth after Eden no longer mattered. It was only natural that when mortals first flocked here, Iophiel tolerated their presence, if only to end his lonely exile. Since that time he has wandered Potter's Lake, still mad from his experiences but now free of God's influence. He has forgotten his role as one of the Heaven's Host, as well as his own name. Iophiel wanders Potter's Lake as an amnesiac, but he wears the guise of a mortal man. The locals call him Meltdown.

As guardian of Eden, it was Iophiel's responsibility to protect the Tree of Life and the Tree of Knowledge of Good and Evil. With humanity's encroachment into Eden, Iophiel's final sane act was to hide both trees from harm and discovery. He planted them in what later became Potter's Lake, hence his lingering presence. Unfortunately, Iophiel no longer remembers where he hid the trees, much less his own divinity.

With the trees, humanity can take control of its own destiny. Adam and Eve may have consumed the fruit of the Tree of Knowledge, but they discarded the most important part of the apple, that which perpetuates and spreads wisdom: the seed. The seeds of the fruit from the two trees grant wisdom, spiritual insight, and immortality. By partaking of the fruits of both trees, humanity could become as powerful as God or Lucifer, enabling them to break free of the divine contest and lay claim to their own destiny.

Both trees are hidden within Potter's Woods and Hell knows it. The last thing the Devil wants is to be upstaged by humanity. To keep the trees from mankind, Hell has begun corrupting the woods outside of Potter's Lake. The monolith at Megiddo's Hill is a gateway to the Inferno,

allowing access between Earth and Lucifer's Realm. The armies of Hell are gathering there for the final days, and their presence, though invisible, can be felt throughout Potter's Woods. By tainting the area, the servants of Lucifer hope to ward off any mortals who might discover the trees and better yet, they hope to actually corrupt the fruits of the trees. To date, the former has been mostly successful, but the latter has failed.

Heaven too is aware of the trees but remains distant from them. The woods have become so corrupt that it is difficult for God's angels to even enter them. Besides, they are content to let Hell waste its time and resources polluting the woods as keeping humanity away benefits Heaven as well. Regarding Hell's attempt to taint the fruits of the trees, the angels know such a thing is impossible. They find such efforts by their demonic counterparts to be amusing.

In addition to Heaven and Hell's interest, the trees have attracted the attention of others. Ancient spirits and mortal magicians are flocking to Potter's Lake. They sense the power here and pursue it for their own purposes. A few know that the trees are the source of the power, but most do not.

The presence of so many supernatural beings in Potter's Lake is having a strange effect: normal, consensual reality is breaking down. The magick of the sorcerers, the machinations of angels and demons, and the presence of the ancient spirits called the Goetia, is unhinging reality. What one considers normal reality is like a rubber band, and these beings have stretched it to near breaking. The cumulative effect is a warping of reality in the Potter's Lake area. The strange behavior of the townsfolk, the unexplained phenomena, and all the ghosts haunting the town are aftershocks and symptoms of this warping. The more reality unhinges, the more the supernatural is drawn to Potter's Lake. The more the supernatural is drawn to Potter's Lake, the more reality unhinges. It's a vicious circle that's getting worse all the time.

THE MELTDOWN WILDCARD

Meltdown is an intriguing wildcard in *Heaven & Earth*. What happens if he regains his memory? Will he be angry that God has forsaken him and pledge his services to Hell? Will he choose to rejoin the Heavenly Host and collect souls for The Almighty? Will he sympathize with humanity's plight, becoming another ally in their fight to stake out their own destiny?

CHRIST ON EARTH

The Apocalypse is the culmination of the contest for souls, with the winner deciding the universe's ultimate fate. Fortunately for humanity, Christ has rebelled. He has no desire to witness the End Time, for his sacrifice two-thousand years ago has given him insight and compassion into their plight. Thus, he works independently, hoping



to prevent the Apocalypse from occurring. Unfortunately, Jesus can not simply appear in the second coming, for this would immediately cause people to follow the teachings of the Bible, repent their sins, and pledge their devotion to God. This, in turn, would tip the contest in favor of God and hasten its conclusion. Christ must seek another way to prevent the Apocalypse, and so he works in the shadows on humanity's behalf.

The Lamb knows the power of the trees hidden within Potter's Woods. He knows what fruit they bear and what consumption of the seeds would grant humanity. If mankind has any chance to survive, they must be able to stand on a level playing field with God and Lucifer, and the trees are a means to that end.

To accomplish his mission of salvation, the Messiah needs the assistance of others. To this end, Jesus is drawing twelve disciples to himself, as he did two millennia ago. These mortals will carry out Christ's instructions, going places and doing things that he cannot, for Jesus cannot allow his father or Satan to discover his hand in these events. But his new disciples may not be enough, particularly if the agents of Heaven and Hell discover Christ's involvement. To cover this contingency, Christ is summoning forth his sacred bloodline to Potter's Lake. These rare and gifted individuals carry within them the spark of divinity, one that will prove useful in the coming days.

THE BLOODLINE

The New Testament is the word of God as recorded by mortal man. All the truths revealed within come from the life and teachings of Jesus Christ or the inspiration of the Holy Ghost. It is the foremost accounting of Christ's life and ministry on Earth. Unfortunately, it has been considerably edited over time. Throughout the years, books and verses have been altered, improperly translated, or deleted to support the views or beliefs of certain groups. Such is the case of Mary Magdalene.

Although Mary of Magdala stood by Christ's side during much of his ministry, she has never been accorded the same respect as the Apostles. Much about her life and relationship with Jesus has been excised from the New Testament, making her appear ancillary. Nothing could be further from the truth. Although Mary's role in Jesus' life has been trivialized and suppressed by a jealous and chauvinistic society, the truth remains the truth: During his life, Jesus of Nazareth took a bride, and her name was Mary Magdalene.

The fact that Jesus was married in no way lessens his message. If anything, it humanizes him. He cares for humanity so much because he lived, loved and died as any man does. Jesus was the Son of God, but he lived the life

CHRIST'S CONTINGENCIES

Locating the two trees of Eden is Christ's foremost goal. With the seeds of the fruit born of these special trees, he hopes to give humanity the means to stand up to his father. However, other measures may be needed should this plan fail. To this end, Jesus is creating a series of contingency plans. The Gifted, those born with psychic abilities, are one such contingency. Exactly what else the Lamb has planned is up to the GM to decide.

of a mortal man.

After her husband's crucifixion, Mary fled the Holy Land to what is now modern-day France. Followers of Christ were unpopular with Roman and Jewish authorities who had no desire to see the teachings of Jesus blossom into a religion. With her brother Lazarus and Joseph of Arimathea at her side, Mary headed westward. It was important that she escape the fate that befell her husband, for Mary was with child.

When it was time, the son of Jesus and Mary took a bride for himself. His children and grandchildren went on to have families of their own, marrying into other European families. After a few generations, the bloodline was extremely diluted and its lineage long forgotten. With the Age of Exploration and New World colonization, many of Christ's descendants made their way to America. Most recently, many are making their way to Potter's Lake. On the surface, the descendants of Christ are coming to Potter's Lake because of jobs, families, and other mundane reasons. In truth, they are being drawn to this small town by their ancestor's hand. They have no knowledge of the Apocalypse or Christ's agenda, let alone their own ancestry, but that will soon change as the Apocalypse builds to a crescendo.

The descendants of Jesus all possess the spark of divinity, though it is stronger in some than others. It manifests in the form of psychic abilities, or powers of the mind. Some know of their gifts while others do not. They are telekinetics, clairvoyants, and the like. While most have only minimal control over their abilities, there are a few highly developed psychics.

The descendants of Christ have a pivotal role to play in the coming days. Their powers will be needed if humanity is to have any hope of thwarting the dark fate laid before it.

MAGICK AND THE GOETIA

Magick is real. Like most aspects of *Heaven & Earth*, it is

a subtle thing. Magicians do not throw around fireballs or teleport from place to place. Instead, the gently tug at reality's coattails, manipulating situations quietly and invisibly. They wish ill upon enemies and it happens. They desire wealth, and they win the lottery. This is how magick works in *Heaven & Earth*.

When man was new to this world, the Goetia were already ancient. They are powerful spirits who represent concepts and ideas. Only God knows their origin, and He has yet to share this knowledge with anyone, even his most trusted angels. One theory holds that the Goetia are older than God. Of course, this theory was first championed by the Devil, so it's hard to say if it's true or not. Another theory states they were God's first creations, proto-angels designed to embody concepts and ideas later realized by the Heavenly Host and humanity. Most likely, the truth will never be known.

Magicians work their wonders by tapping into the power of the Goetia. Possessing a soul is a prerequisite for working magick, so only humans are capable of magick, since they alone among God's creations have a soul. Being capable or working magick and actually performing it are two different things. Although every human being has the potential to be a magician, very few possess the willpower, focus, and knowledge to do so. Sullivan Pierce is one of these few.

Not only is Sullivan Pierce a magician of some power, but he is also a servant of Hell. More than a century ago, the Devil granted him immortality. In exchange, Pierce would perform certain tasks for his benefactor. Sullivan fully remembers the deal he struck, but he has no recollection of the actual work he has done for his master. This was part of the original contract. Pierce spends most of his time investigating the strangeness of Potter's Lake, not knowing

USING THE SUPERNATURAL

While mention has been made of reality's breakdown in Potter's Lake, GMs need to be reminded that it is a subtle thing. Even a few ghosts or magicians should be considered an unusually high amount. Gamemasters should not overpopulate Potter's Lake with supernatural entities or the world of *Heaven & Earth* may cease to be believable to the players. Gamemasters should not infer that reality's unwinding means Potter's Lake has turned into Wonderland. Most people know there is something odd about their town, but very few consider it a nexus for the supernatural. Even fewer have encountered the unexplainable for themselves. All of the talk about reality's breakdown is to provide an explanation for the weirdness. GMs should use the supernatural elements of *Heaven & Earth* with care.

the role he is playing on behalf of Hell.

To date, Pierce has performed admirably when called upon by his master. His most noteworthy act was binding Marbas, one of the Goetia, to the Southey family many decades ago. Over the multiple generations, the Southey family has unknowingly acted on behalf of Hell, subconsciously guided by the will of Marbas. The Southey Paper Mill was used to corrupt Potter's Woods, and it is still doing so to this day. Bob Southey IV is completely oblivious to the real intent behind the mill's actions. As far as Southey knows, he is simply a greedy businessman with little respect for the environment.

The Goetia and magicians like Sullivan Pierce are drawn to Potter's Lake by the inherent power of the area. The presence of the Heavenly Host, Lucifer's fallen angels, and the two trees of Eden are a lure far too enticing to be ignored. As more spirits and sorcerers flock to Potter's Lake, the more reality unwinds.

GHOSTS

Ghosts are the echoes of powerful and passionate human beings. In many cases, they are the result of unfinished business by their living selves. Some move about Potter's Lake freely, but most are tethered to places emotionally significant to their former selves.

Over the years, the amount of reported hauntings in Potter's Lake has grown dramatically. While most of these stories have no truth to them, a significant number of ghosts prowl the darkened corners of town.

ANGELS AND DEMONS

In Potter's Lake, angels and demons have two agendas. First, they must guide mankind to morality or sin so their masters can harvest the souls. Second, they must make sure humanity never discovers the two trees of Eden concealed within Potter's Woods. Beyond these agendas, little else is of consequence.

Angels and demons always remain hidden from sight and suspicion, acting through mortal proxies.

SECRET SOCIETIES

Perhaps as disconcerting as the presence of the supernatural, invisible conspiracies are unfolding in the background. Organizations of like-minded men and women operate in secrecy, pursuing private agendas. They are shadowy cabals at the fringe of society, just out of sight but always present.

There are four major secret societies at work in *Heaven & Earth*, though gamemasters are free to invent more.

The Wing of St. Michael operates out of St. Anselm

College and answers only to the Vatican. For more than a century, they have been investigating the woods and other strangeness on behalf of the Church. They have seen hints that the Apocalypse has begun, but they have no clue about its true nature.

On the other hand, the Brotherhood of Ioannes knows the truth. They know the true story of Genesis, understand the real nature of the Apocalypse, and are aware of Christ's rebellion on behalf of humanity. The details are what elude them.

Members of the Zetetic Society are the movers and shakers of Potter's Lake. They seek to maintain their power through arranged marriages and political favors. Their primary goal, however, is to hide the evidence of the supernatural from the residents of Potter's Lake. Each Zetetic has an abiding love of their hometown and will do whatever is necessary to safeguard it.

Project: Grayscale is the military's covert investigation into psychic phenomenon. They realize Potter's Lake is a hotbed of such activity, though they have no idea why. Grayscale conducts its investigations from Powell Air Force Base, where they are afforded secrecy from prying eyes.

IN CONCLUSION

The Apocalypse is real.

Armageddon is actually the final round in an ancient contest between God and Lucifer where souls are collected and tallied to determine the winner.

Christ has rebelled from God on behalf of humanity. He will not allow God or the Devil to win the contest, for the contest's end signals the end of humanity.

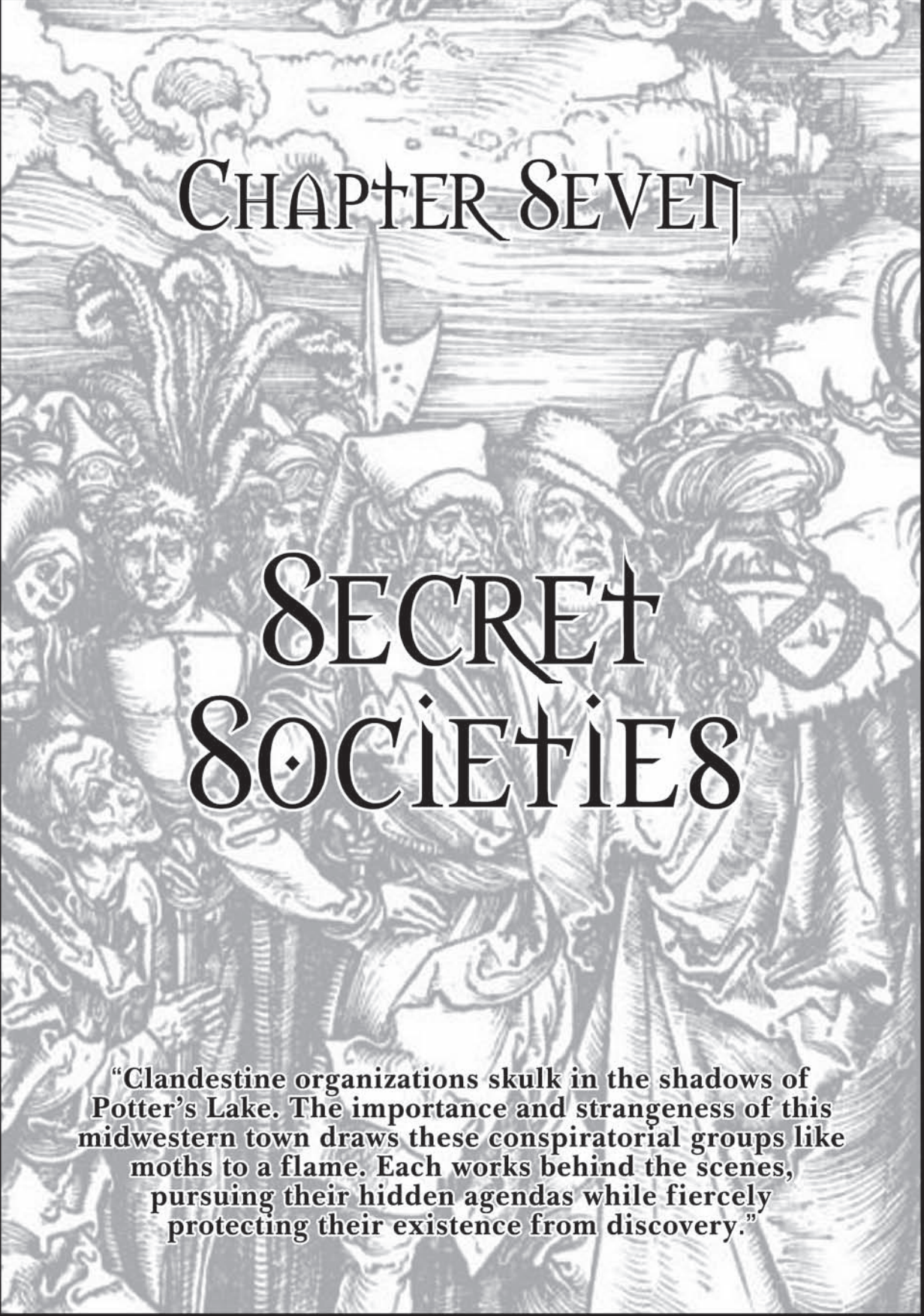
Potter's Lake is a tainted slice of Eden.

The Tree of Knowledge of Good and Evil and the Tree of Life are hidden within Potter's Woods. They are the key to humanity's salvation.

Angels, demons, spirits, magicians, psychics, and ghosts are active in Potter's Lake, though few people are aware of this. Their presence is unraveling reality, making Potter's Lake a bizarre place.

There are secret societies at work in Potter's Lake, pursuing hidden agendas.

The player characters must discover the truth about everything before it's too late.



CHAPTER SEVEN

SECRET SOCIETIES

“Clandestine organizations skulk in the shadows of Potter’s Lake. The importance and strangeness of this midwestern town draws these conspiratorial groups like moths to a flame. Each works behind the scenes, pursuing their hidden agendas while fiercely protecting their existence from discovery.”

Clandestine organizations skulk in the shadows of Potter's Lake. The importance and strangeness of this midwestern town draws these conspiratorial groups like moths to a flame. Each works behind the scenes, pursuing their hidden agendas while fiercely protecting their existence from discovery.

Secret societies can be good or evil. Perhaps they strive to defeat a dark presence in town. Perhaps the society is plotting to bring about corruption and suffering. In either case, secret societies are (as the name implies) secret. They do not appreciate being uncovered and will protect their secrecy at any cost. This can cause even the most benevolent of secret societies to become dangerous.

Although most secret societies are involved with the supernatural in some way (e.g. studying it, combating it, suppressing it) they are firmly rooted in the mundane. That is, they are composed of regular human beings who have banded together for some clandestine purpose. Each is intent on securing more knowledge for itself and advancing their agendas through that knowledge.

Potter's Lake is too small a locale to include too many major players. Although several occult groups have taken an interest in this remarkable Kansas town, only a handful wield sufficient influence to call them major players. These groups have committed the greatest resources and have the largest number of agents in Potter's Lake. They are the movers and shakers whose decisions and agendas color so many of the events occurring in town. These major players act from a position of strength. They do not move rashly or without forethought; they don't need to. Instead, they bide their time and wait, marshalling their many resources, advancing their goals slowly and deliberately.

The following four groups are the major players in Potter's Lake. Individually, they possess pieces of the puzzle, as well as the desire to learn more, but the big picture eludes them. Each constitutes a potential ally or threat for the characters, but they all possess information that the players will eventually need. How the characters retrieve that information depends on their relationship with these organizations.

BROTHERHOOD OF IOANNES

The Brotherhood traces its history back 900 years or so, to the advent of the venerable Knights Templar. The order began in 1099, following the first crusade that captured Jerusalem, and arose to protect pilgrims en route to the Holy City. Unofficially, evidence suggests the Knights Templar were in fact keepers of arcane and hallowed knowledge. Accounts differ wildly, but there have been allegations suggesting they bore the lost Wisdom of Solomon, the Holy Grail, or even the hidden lineage of Christ. Regardless, the Templars rapidly rose in popularity and power before the fall of both Jerusalem and all Outremer forced them back

to Europe.

While the Templars enjoyed tremendous influence in European affairs, the order fell to the betrayal of supposed advocate Phillip IV (monarch of France) in 1307. Phillip was heavily indebted to the rich Templars and still needed more money. Coveting the order's riches, the king leveled charges of heresy and black magic against the Templars, immediately arresting all 2000 knights in France. With sanction from Pope Clement V, who disbanded the order, the king ordered the knights tortured into confessing their sins.

Among the many charges was that of idolatry, specifically the worship of a severed human head. According to testimony obtained during torture, this ghastly relic was called Baphomet. In the eyes of the Church, this was clearly proof that the order had lost its way, turning to depravity and Devil worship.

When Phillip IV entered the Templar's treasury to take account of his newfound wealth, he discovered it empty. Someone had forewarned the Knights Templar of their fate, leaving the monarch with little to show for his efforts. More unusual, however, was the 1314 execution of the order's Grand Master, Jacques de Molay. While he was burning, he cursed Philip IV, the king's lineage, and Pope Clement V, calling both men to account for their lies before God. Less than one month later, Pope Clement V died. Within six months, Phillip IV passed on, leaving his three sons to perish, each before the age of thirty-five. None of the three sons' wives produced an heir to the throne, bringing the Dynasty of Phillip IV to an end.

Pope Clement V's decision to betray the pious Templars did not ring well with the other members of the Holy Church. Within days of Clement V's death, several cardinals rescued a handful of Templar knights who were rotting away in various European dungeons and brought them under their wing. Although the order itself was now broken and fractured in all countries, the rescued knights formed the Brotherhood of Ioannes with the help of their cardinal allies. Promptly, they disappeared into the shadows, taking their secrets with them.

Although the Templars were God-fearing men, and Phillip IV did covet their wealth, the charges of idolatry were actually correct (at least from the Church's perspective). The order did worship, or at least venerated, a severed human head they called Baphomet, meaning "Father of Wisdom." What the Templars did not reveal to the inquisitors was the identity of the head. This knowledge was among the order's greatest secrets for Baphomet was actually the severed head of John the Baptist.

John the Baptist appeared around 27 A.D. As a prophet, he not only foretold the coming of the Messiah but also preached that his arrival was at hand. When his cousin Jesus approached him in the wilderness, seeking baptism, John instantly knew that this was the Son of God. Soon after, King Herod arrested John for denouncing the king's

incestuous relationship with his niece. While a prisoner of the king, John was beheaded at the request of Herod's daughter, Salome. After his death, followers of John stole the head and hid it safely away. How it came into the possession of the Knights Templar is a mystery.

In some fashion not understood by the Brotherhood, the head of John the Baptist is still alive. Although silent most of the time, Baphomet will sometimes stir, its glowing red eyes opening as dusty lips spout prophecy. The Brotherhood always heeds these words, knowing full well that they foretell events to come.

However, the head is not the only secret of the Brotherhood of Ioannes. They know the true story of creation; that the Earth was made solely to serve as chessboard in an epic contest between God and Satan. They also know of Christ's rebellion on behalf of humanity. Finally, they are aware that the Apocalypse has begun and that Lucifer and God are scrambling to acquire as many souls as possible before their contest ends. These secrets are just some of the things whispered to the order by Baphomet during its waking moments.

The Brotherhood has committed much of their knowledge to paper over the years, and The Book of Ioannes is their single most important text. It is a record of the history and beliefs of the order, as well as the prophecies spoken by Baphomet. Among the many relics possessed by

the Brotherhood, the Book of Ioannes is second only to Baphomet.

Internationally, the Brotherhood numbers only a few dozen, with twelve of the knights assigned to Potter's Lake. Knowing that Potter's Lake is important in the final days and that humanity's potential salvation is somehow tied to this small town, these twelve have brought Baphomet with them, hoping it will provide further insight. The Brotherhood of Ioannes understands that the fate of humanity hangs in the balance and will do whatever is necessary to fend off the Apocalypse. They realize they have a role to play in the unfolding drama and will not skirt away from their responsibilities. If Christ will risk all for humanity, should they do any less?

PROJECT: GRAYSCALE

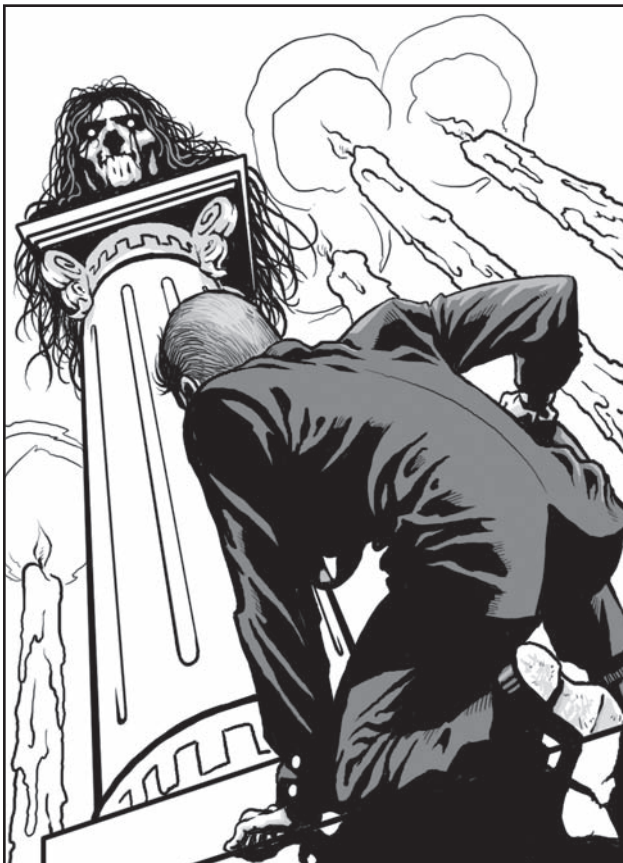
Project: Grayscale is an ultra-secret military experiment under the aegis of the Air Force. Grayscale has been studying psychic phenomenon for years in an attempt to harness it for espionage and military applications. It has operated out of Powell AFB since 1980 and grew out of numerous government and military investigations into unexplained phenomenon, most notably Project: Scanate and Project: Grillflame.

Potter's Lake is important to Grayscale for numerous reasons. Firstly, it is sufficiently isolated, enabling the military to perform experiments in complete privacy. One of Grayscale's primary mandates is to kidnap individuals displaying psychic abilities and transport them to Powell for study. From this secure location, the experiments are conducted. Some scientists test the strength and range of paranormal abilities while others perform autopsies and biopsies in an attempt to discover a genetic explanation.

Secondly, Potter's Lake has a high percentage of psychics among the local population. Approximately .05% of the citizens demonstrate identifiable psychic prowess. For approximately ten individuals in such a small town to be so gifted is truly unprecedented. More so, there may be more psychics in town that Grayscale simply has not yet identified. This possibility intrigues the top brass in charge of Project: Grayscale to no end.

Lastly, nearly all of the psychics known to Grayscale have migrated to Potter's Lake within the last few years. This leads Grayscale to believe that Potter's Lake acts as a type of magnet for the paranormal, drawing psychics to it. The Project is looking for environmental conditions that might explain this theory but so far have find little to substantiate this assumption.

Project: Grayscale maintains a small stable of agents hidden throughout Potter's Lake and nearby cities who are constantly looking for psychics and paranormal phenomenon. All Grayscale activities are coordinated out of Powell AFB by Col. Bernard LeMar, who maintains





tight control over the Project. LeMar realizes the danger of exposure and insists that his operatives act with subtlety. Grayscale's undercover agents are all highly trained military personnel with a background in espionage. Project: Grayscale's coldhearted scientific objectivity and military might make it the most dangerous secret society in Potter's Lake.

THE WING OF ST. MICHAEL

In 1171, King Alfonso I of Portugal founded the Wing of St. Michael to commemorate his victory over the Moors. According to legend, St. Michael himself aided the king in battle. To honor his divine patron, Alfonso I named his chivalric order of knights after the archangel. For the next few years, the Wing of St. Michael served king and country with distinction and honor.

Many fanciful stories arose about the Wing of St. Michael, but none more incredible than the Demon Plague of Alcobaza. In 1176, or so the story goes, the small Portuguese town of Alcobaza was infested with hellspawn. They possessed man and animal alike, destroyed livestock and crops, and walked the streets at night with impunity. When the Wing of St. Michael discovered what was happening, they swiftly descended from their nearby

Cistercian monastery and dispatched the creatures with faith and steel. Word of the order's victory quickly traveled to Rome, where the Pope declared them heroes. More so, the legends say the Pope was so impressed with the order that they were given the duty of combating the minions of Hell whenever and wherever they walked the Earth. To safeguard the lives of these noble knights, the Wing of St. Michael went underground, becoming a secret society answerable only to the Pope. Whether this story is truth, fabrication, or exaggeration, the fact remains that the Wing of St. Michael disappeared from plain sight.

During the papal inquisitions of 1484, Pope Innocent VIII called upon the Wing for assistance. His Holiness felt that their *raison d'être* made the order uniquely skilled to ferret out the heretics who threatened Christendom. In addition to their demon-hunting prowess, the Wing's three hundred years of clandestine activity made them excellent spies as well. Answering the Pope's call, knights of the order quietly assumed the roles of inquisitors, using their abilities to destroy the enemies of the Church.

In 1909, Pius X chose knights from the order to serve in his Sodalitium Pianum. Modernism, a growing heresy within the Church, threatened to weaken the Vatican, and the Sodalitium Pianum were the Pope's answer to the threat. They acted as secret police for Pius X, investigating and exposing Modernists within the Church. Although no supernatural elements were involved, the knights of the Wing of St. Michael were chosen because of their exceptional skill at espionage and their ability to conduct investigations discreetly.

Today, the Wing of St. Michael still serves the Vatican. They are investigators of the unexplained, defenders of the faith, and the secret police of the Pope. They act as the Holy See's enforcing arm against the supernatural, with only the Pope and select members of the College of Cardinals aware of their existence. The order sees to the recording and storage of mystical artifacts, tomes of forbidden knowledge, and even the occasional bound spirit or demon.

In the early 1800's, a missionary named Father Aloysius Dominic discovered a dark, malignant presence in the woods outside of Potter's Lake. He theorized that the Monolith at Megiddo's Hill was the cause of this but was unable to prove it. Additionally, he believed the Monolith to be a gateway to Hell itself, and from here Lucifer would launch his assault on the Earth when the time was right. Father Aloysius contacted his superiors, and the Wing of St. Michael was dispatched to investigate. The order confirmed that something evil was at work in the area, but were unable to determine exactly what it was. A long-term investigation would be required to solve the mystery, and a cadre of knights from the Wing was permanently stationed in the area for this purpose. In order to conduct their work without raising suspicion, a cover story would be needed. To this end, St. Anselm College was constructed. It would

serve as a front for the clandestine work being done by the Wing of St. Michael; work that continues to this day.

At any given time, there are no more than a dozen knights in town. Working in pairs, they have assumed the roles of ordinary townsfolk and travelers rather than men and women of influence. This allows the knights to move freely and without fear of discovery. The knights keep to themselves and act according to their directives (issued from Rome). They will cooperate with like-minded individuals at St. Anselm College if there is mutual advantage to be gained, but they prefer to remain aloof. They have adopted this demeanor to avoid jeopardizing themselves or anyone else in Potter's Lake. Men and women of profound faith, they care deeply for every soul in town and would do nothing that might put those souls at risk.

The knights of the order typically carry a sword blessed by the Pope himself, along with any other weapons they might find useful. The swords are not for show however, since every knight knows how to use it along with a variety of melee weapons and firearms. The knights are trained alongside the Pope's elite Swiss Guard.

While the Wing of St. Michael is vaguely aware that the Apocalypse is looming, they don't possess much information beyond this. Obviously, they know the woods are somehow connected and suspect the Monolith at Megiddo's Hill has much to do with it. One of the Wing's ongoing projects is the translation of the Monolith's runes, and so far the order has deciphered about a third of the writing. What they have learned from this endeavor appears to support Father Aloysius Dominic's original assertion regarding the Monolith's function.

The order is keenly aware that it is not the only secret society active in Potter's Lake. They know of Project: Grayscale and suspect another cabal with ties to St. Anselm (The Brotherhood of Ioannes), but the identity of the later remains a mystery.

The Wing continues to investigate the strangeness of Potter's Lake, focusing on the woods, while using St. Anselm as a cover for their activities.

THE ZETETIC SOCIETY

The Zetetic Society traces its roots to ancient Greece, circa 270 B.C. Known then as the Disciples of Pyrrho, the society was a loose knit band of freethinkers dedicated to Philosophical Skepticism, a systematic questioning of the notion that absolute knowledge and certainty are possible. They challenged the philosophical dogmatism of the day, asserting that science could not explain all and that there are tremendous gaps in man's understanding of his world. Over time, they became known as the Zetetics, the Greek word for seekers.

Over the ensuing centuries, multiple organizations laid claim to the name Zetetic. Of these, only the Universal

Zetetic Society of Britain has any connection to the organization currently active in Potter's Lake. It surfaced in the late 1840's and shared the Pyrrhonist belief that man could not explain the entirety of his universe. However, they married Pyrrho's philosophy to Christian Fundamentalism, creating a new ideology that laughed in the face of scientific progress. They boldly proclaimed many scientific facts to be poorly constructed lies and used Scripture to support this doctrine, taking Pyrrho's skepticism to a whole new level. The Society even went as far as declaring that the Earth was flat and denounced the Copernican notion of a heliocentric existence.

In 1849, The Universal Zetetic Society established a chapterhouse in New York City. The American Zetetics, like their British brethren, found it difficult to be taken seriously and had few converts to their way of thinking. In 1879, three of the Zetetics packed up their families and migrated west. They sought out a small, isolated community with Christian convictions to start the society anew. That same year, they settled in Potter's Lake, Kansas.

Shortening their name to the Zetetic Society, they began preaching their ideology to anyone who would listen. They managed to convert a few prominent townsfolk but mostly failed in their mission due to interference from St. Anselm College. As a catholic institute of higher learning, St. Anselm was opposed to the radical teachings of the Zetetic Society. The majority of the town's population shared this viewpoint, forcing the Zetetic Society into obscurity. However, the Zetetic Society did not disband; it merely kept a low profile.

Before disappearing from public affairs in 1934, the Zetetic Society realized something was not right in Potter's Lake. Since the supernatural and unexplained phenomenon did not fit into their worldview, the Society openly refuted accounts of them. They quelled any stories of the supernatural even going as far as citing scientific reasons to disprove the reports. This contradiction of their basic tenets played a minor role in the Society's failure to gain acceptance in Potter's Lake, and many came to view the Zetetics with derisiveness. However, this was only the public face of the Zetetic Society. In private, they acknowledged these things modern science could not explain, but acceptance of them clashed with their Christian Fundamentalism. In the end, their faith conquered their philosophy and they denounced all unexplained phenomenon.

The Zetetic Society saw enough proof of the supernatural in Potter's Lake to know it was real. They couldn't rationalize the things they saw and this damaged the Society from the inside. Many Zetetics simply did not know what to believe. As skeptics and God-fearing individuals, they decried the unexplained. However, as pyrrhonists, they acknowledged that man could not know everything in creation, and this was certainly the case in Potter's Lake. Ultimately. The Society decided to wear the face of rational skeptics while in the public eye. In secret, they worked to cover up the

existence of the supernatural from the general public.

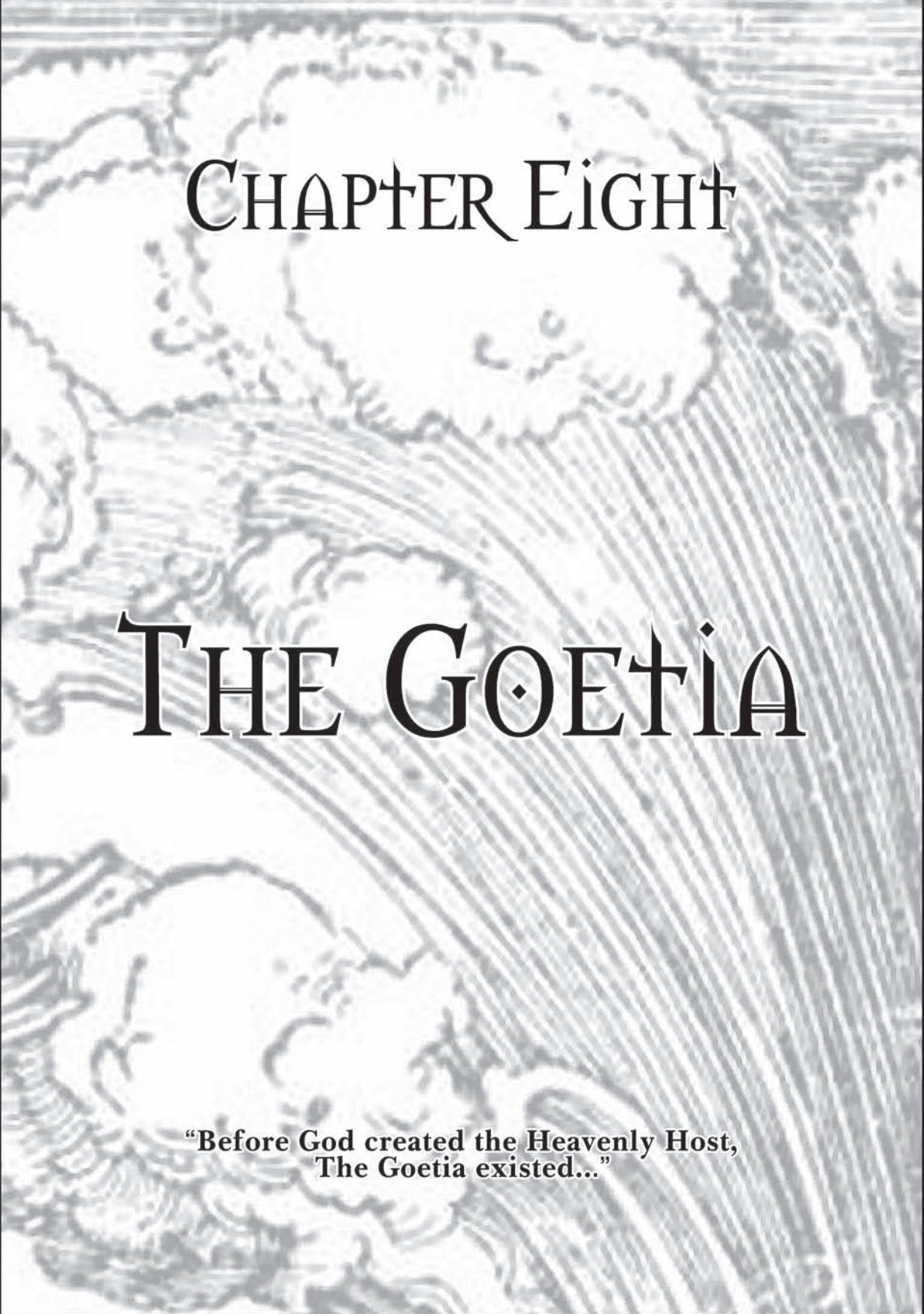
These days, the Zetetic Society operates in complete secrecy. In fact, most people have never heard of them, and local historians assume they dissolved in 1934. The Society numbers only seven, but all are influential individuals in Potter's Lake. They follow up leads on unusual happenings and do their best to hide them from the populace, derailing any investigations into unexplained phenomenon (particularly those of the Potter's Lake Ghost Hunters Society). The goal of the Zetetics is to keep the townsfolk and outsiders ignorant of the peculiar nature of Potter's Lake. The last thing the Society wants is for Potter's Lake to get a bad reputation as another small midwestern town of inbred hicks who see aliens and fairies behind every tree. Worse yet, they fear the presence of the supernatural may lead Potter's Lake down the path of sin, and that they won't allow.

As a result of their self-imposed task, the Zetetic Society has a fair amount of knowledge concerning the mysteries of Potter's Lake. For example, they know the military is conducting a secret project out of Powell AFB. They also know that the Catholic Church has taken more than a passing interest in supernatural events. The Society's knowledge of these and other mysteries is cursory, limited to snippets of information acquired here and there. Like the other secret societies in Potter's Lake, they cannot see the forest from the trees.

The Zetetic Society also acts as a support group for its members. These individuals come from old families with wealth and influence who use their standing in society to push their private agendas. Each uses the organization to achieve their personal goals, calling on favors from one another.

Of final importance is the Zetetic's informal agreement with one another to keep their bloodlines pure. By pure, they mean only marrying into other influential families. This way, the Zetetic Society guarantees their continued power in local politics and business. To this end, they arrange meetings between their own young scions and do whatever they can to encourage couplings. They do their best to ensure that none of their youth take an interest in outsiders or in anyone of whom they do not approve.

The Zetetic society is largely harmless, but it is still not best to cross it. Its members are powerful, influential, and dedicated to their agendas. Those who investigate the supernatural in Potter's Lake often find themselves following wild goose chases or having their lives threatened. Anyone who takes a fancy to one of their children or grandchildren soon meets gentle persuasion to pursue their romantic inclinations elsewhere. The group takes its perceived responsibilities very seriously, seeing itself as the guardian angel of Potter's Lake.



CHAPTER EIGHT

THE GOETIA

**“Before God created the Heavenly Host,
The Goetia existed...”**

Spirits are astral manifestations of universal forces. They are sentient personifications of metaphysical concepts, human emotions, and ideas. If man can think it, feel it, or dream it, there is probably a spirit to represent it.

Every spirit possesses a single-minded goal or purpose connected to its concept. To serve their conceptual premises, spirits flock to humans with strong penchants for the idea or abstraction represented by the spirit. Murder spirits will follow murderers around while spirits of compassion might keep the company of those with saintly virtues. The actions of humans sustain and strengthen them. Spirits grow fat and bloated on the thoughts, deeds, and emotions of mankind.

Spirits are bodiless and genderless but assume a variety of forms when dealing with mortals. On occasion, a spirit will grow so dedicated in purpose or powerful enough that it can possess a human who shares its concept (e.g. murderers will attract murder spirits). This rare lot is indeed dangerous, for in possession they gain an uncomfortable understanding of the human condition. They are among the most sinister of all supernatural creatures for even the most beneficial ones manipulate humans for their own devices and have the power to easily do so.

Multiple spirits can represent the same concept, but this is rare. Usually, one spirit will gain dominance over the others and squash the opposition for fear of future challenges. The spirit who best represents the conceptual premise is always the most powerful. Of all the thousands of spirits, none are mightier than the Goetia.

THE GOETIA

Before God created the Heavenly Host, the Goetia existed. Often referred to as The Ageless, the Goetia are feared by even angels and demons. These spirits are powerful enough to defend themselves against most threats and are usually given a wide berth by angels and demons alike. Old when the Earth was new, the Goetia at one time numbered in the thousands, but cannibalism amongst their kind thinned the herd. To nourish themselves, the Goetia consumed one another in a Darwinian struggle for survival. However, this all changed with the coming of humanity. No longer forced to gorge themselves on each other, the Goetia had a new source of sustenance. As mankind grew and evolved, the spirits grew fatter and even more powerful. In time, the oldest of these spirits established themselves as the greatest of their kind. These elder spirits are collectively known as the Goetia.

Although there are thousands of spirits, representing thousands of concepts, the Goetia number only seventy-two. They are the ancient and powerful rulers of their kind, organized by a strict hierarchy. Nine kings sit atop twenty-three dukes, who in turn preside over seven prelates.

Below the prelates are fifteen marquises, followed by nine presidents, who are followed by eight earls. Lastly, there is one knight. It alone must answer to all others.

Each spirit of the Goetia is strongly tied to its concept, though there is some overlapping among the seventy-two. Wide-ranging concepts, such as love, often have more than one of the Goetia laying claim to it. This sometimes leads to confrontations between spirits as each attempts to gain sole dominion over the concept it represents. These confrontations can be short and subtle or protracted and dramatic. It is not uncommon for mortals to get swept up into these disputes, most likely as pawns of one or more of the Goetia. Thankfully, these confrontations are few and far between.

THE CONVERGENCE

Potter's Lake is a perfect microcosm of humanity. Its citizens tend to be passionate, obsessive, and single-minded (especially those belonging to secret societies). This makes Potter's Lake an ideal hunting ground for the Goetia who are descending on the community to partake in the feeding frenzy.

The Goetia can sense the growing power in Potter's Lake and are drawn to it. The presence of the two Eden trees, along with the strong personalities of the townsfolk and a growing number of psychics and magicians, has attracted their attention. That so many angels and demons are here as well has not escaped their attention either. Although the Goetia has no idea the Apocalypse is at hand, they know something epic is brewing. This ignorance is a byproduct of their slavish devotion to their concepts. While the Goetia can sense that the supernatural power in the area is growing, they have yet to look for any underlying causes. Likewise, they choose to not investigate what all these supernatural beings are up to. The Goetia are simply too focused on their personal goals to take interest in the events unfolding

HEAVEN AND HELL

The Goetia have no interest in the conflict between God and Lucifer. They exist solely to pursue their conceptual premises. Unless the work of the Heavenly and Infernal Hosts overlaps into a spirit's sphere of influence, it will keep its distance from the affairs of both Heaven and Hell. Of course, this may all change if the Goetia realize humanity is on the verge of extinction. The Ageless may get upset at losing the prey they have stalked and dined on for so many millennia. The threat of infinite hunger may be enough to drive the Goetia to action.

around them.

MAGICIANS

While the Goetia have little fear of the Heavenly and Infernal Hosts, they tremble at the thought of a mortal magician. The most learned of these occultists know rituals capable of binding even the most powerful kings of the Goetia into servitude. It is this fear that causes the Goetia to move unseen among mortals. They dare not risk discovery. In biblical times, King Solomon discovered the Goetia and bound all seventy-two of them for a time. Once freed, they realized that for all their might, they were susceptible to human willpower. Terrified of this, the Goetia vowed to henceforth move invisibly and never again put themselves at risk.

All spirits, including the Goetia, are neither good nor evil, but they can be made to do either at the command of a knowledgeable magician. With the proper incantations and considerable force of will, a sorcerer can summon and bind a spirit. Though rare, this does happen from time to time. Over the millennia, spirits have become adept at avoiding detection. They will also go to great lengths to track down and destroy any written copies of the incantations capable of binding them. Still, not every grimoire or tract of information can be destroyed.

Most disturbing to spirits is the nature of magick itself. Sorcerers perform their reality altering feats by tapping into primal cosmic forces, namely the Goetia. Magicians borrow a portion of the Goetia's collective power to work their magick. This explains how mankind has the might to bind the Goetia. The Goetia are being beaten by their own power, which is siphoned and turned against them.

POSSESSION

Spirits require mortals to propagate the conceptual premises they represent. They enjoy passions vicariously through them and use mortals to commit specific acts that better serve their goals. Most often, spirits possess mortals as invisible passengers and offer subconscious suggestions to the vessel's mind to steer him in specific directions. This is a difficult process and requires an ideal subject. Hence, spirits spend months, if not years, searching for the right candidate for possession by watching and testing the potential vessel.

Once a spirit believes it has found someone whom it can manipulate easily, it begins the process of possession. In some cases it will actually ask permission to enter the mortal vessel. This tactic, however, is rare and used only when it believes that the person will agree. It is also the preferred method of possession since it is much easier to accomplish; all the spirit needs is a single word of acceptance.

More often, the spirit must possess the subject forcibly (usually through trickery). The spirit guides the person into fulfilling a predetermined set of circumstances, which invariably grants its possession. These circumstances are unique to each spirit but are ultimately tied to its precept. A spirit of manslaughter might trick the subject into murdering someone, possessing the individual once he has committed the terrible deed. Regardless of how the subject accomplishes the spirit's intended goal, the act serves as permission for the spirit to possess the character. In any case, victims of possession rarely remember the incident while under the spirits dominion. Once possessed, they cannot recount subsequent events unless the spirit allows it.

Although a spirit may take direct control of a vessel, it seldom does. Spirits do not understand the nuances of being human and do not fake it very well. Their fear of discovery and imprisonment means they will usually guide a vessel by subtle, subconscious manipulation rather than by assuming direct control of the vessel's body.

Spirits communicate their desires to their vessels through dreams. In the surreal world of the dreamscape, it is possible for a spirit to convey any message to the vessel's mind. Dreams are a safe haven for the unusual and the profound for they are easily dismissed during waking hours as the workings of imagination. This has both positive and negative repercussions for a spirit attempting to influence its vessel. On the positive side, it can say and do anything to the host and not jeopardize its presence. The waking mind chalks it all up to strange dreams with a recurring theme. Only a psychoanalyst would attempt to ascertain connections and even then, his conclusions would do little to reveal the spirit's presence. Conversely, the downside is that humans dismiss dreams as strange. Hence, spirits cannot offer great or specific instructions since the vessel would likely ignore them as the stuff of dreams. Therefore, the spirit must employ subtlety. To communicate, the spirit implants surreal visions and likely outcomes of the future in the vessel's dreams. These often emerge as vivid, easily remembered clues upon waking. Then, while the person proceeds through his daily life, he sees aspects of the dream come true.

Spirits use dreams as elaborate puzzles where the entirety of the dream bears significance or eventually leads to an important revelation. Often times, it is the act of understanding the mysterious dream that draws the individual on the spirit's quest. The overall message does not tell the vessel what to do. Rather, discovering its intent sets the person upon a path that accomplishes the spirit's desire. This is perhaps the most disturbing and subtle form of manipulation that a spirit can employ for the vessel serves as the spirit's unwitting accomplice through his desire to unlock a mystery.

Seldom will a spirit abandon its vessel. This only occurs when a vessel is killed or has been incapacitated and thus

THE STAGES OF POSSESSION

When a spirit is attempting to possess an NPC no game mechanics are necessary. As long as the vessel is ideologically suited, the GM simply makes it so. However, the Gamemaster cannot go overboard. Having too many possessed individuals in the town ruins the uniqueness and rarity of possession, and the GM runs the risk of upsetting the mood of the game.

Things get trickier when a spirit possesses a player character. Players have freewill to do what they will with their characters, so rules and game mechanics are necessary to determine if the attempted possession is successful or not. The following text covers the four basic stages of possession and the gameplay elements when a PC is involved.

1. The spirit must find a mortal vessel that is ideologically suited to its purpose. For example, a spirit whose premise is murder and mayhem will not inhabit a strictly law-abiding person unless something exists in that person's makeup that would make such corruption possible. Likewise, a spirit that personifies nurturing will not pursue a sociopath. The spirit will spend months and sometimes years invisibly observing a small handful of mortals, looking for the right one.

Gameplay: No game mechanics are required, but the player must be roleplaying his character in line with the concept represented by the spirit. Otherwise, possession is not possible.

2. Once a spirit has determined the potential vessel to be ideologically suited, it begins a series of subtle manipulations. The spirit cannot approach the subject directly for such attempts usually lead to outright rejection. Instead, the spirit communicates through the subconscious mind. It places thoughts and ideas from the subconscious into the conscious mind in the form of impulses and flashes of insight (in such a way that they appear as the person's own thoughts). With the aid of dreams, the spirit gently urges the potential vessel into actions keeping with its precept, strengthening the bond between the spirit and its potential vessel.

Gameplay: The GM and player roleplay through the dream sequence. The dream should be cryptic and guide the player to a course of action. The dream should be a puzzle in need of solving whose solution serves the spirit's conceptual premise. Once again, no game mechanics come into play.

3. With the invisible guidance of the spirit, the subject performs an action that strengthens its connection to the concept embodied by the spirit.

Gameplay: If the player character follows the spirit's instructions (received through dreams and usually made to seem noble or enticing to the PC) the player must make an Action Check (Fortitude is the governing Attribute) with a Difficulty of Average. A successful Check means the spirit's attempt at possession has been rebuffed (although the character is unaware of this). Failure means the character is now a vessel of the spirit. For more dramatic actions, such as murder, the GM can raise the Difficulty as he sees fit.

4. If needed, the spirit guides the potential vessel through another action in an attempt to thoroughly break the individual. The end result will either be a new vessel or the subject is forever spared the manipulations of that spirit.

Gameplay: When the player character fulfills a second task set before him by the spirit, he again makes an Action Check governed by the Fortitude Attribute. However, this time the Difficulty is Challenging. Failing this Action Check means the character has succumbed to possession. If the player's Action Check is a success, the spirit can never attempt to possess the character again.

unable to continue working for its master. Sometimes, however, the vessel abandons the spirit. If the vessel ever takes an action directly contradictory to the spirit's conceptual premise, the bond may be severed between the two. For example, if a vessel possessed by a Goetia of War were to broker peace between two warring factions, there is a chance that the bond between vessel and spirit might dissolve.

Gameplay: If a possessed player character takes an action directly contradictory to the possessing spirit's concept, the player makes a Fortitude Check against a Difficulty of Challenging. If the check is a success, the bond between the two is broken.

PLAYER CHARACTER AS VESSEL

A possessed PC is still under the control of the player. The only changes from his pre-vessel life are an upswing of bizarre dreams and sudden flashes of insight (both bestowed by the spirit via GM advice to the player). On rare occasions a spirit will assume complete control of the vessel's body, during which time the character will experience a blackout period. Sometimes he will awaken in strange locations, unaware of how he got there. Since repeated blackout episodes can tip off the vessel that something is not right, spirits seldom take the risk of assuming full control of the vessel's body.

ROLEPLAYING VESSELS

Possession is taxing on the mortal mind. Some handle it well (like Bob Southey) and others do not. How each character deals with it is unique, but there are a few telltale signs of possession that manifest in a vessel's personality, habits, or lifestyle. The gamemaster should consider these things when roleplaying vessels:

1. Vessels suffer from constant dreams and nightmares. In time, this can lead to detachment from reality or other mental disorders. If a spirit's negative influence shifts the morals of the vessel beyond society's accepted limits, their views can warp to the point of becoming completely alien to those around them.
2. Vessels tend to be private individuals. This does not mean they are loners (although

POSITIVE POSSESSION

As odd as it may sound, it is possible for possession to be a positive experience; the end result being that the influencing spirit changed the vessel's life for the better. Many spirits represent wholesome and decent qualities and by drawing out these traits in a vessel, the spirit makes the vessel (and sometimes the community in which he lives) better in the process. The GM should keep in mind that there are spirits of love, honor, and wisdom not just war, thievery, and apathy.

many are), it simply means they like to keep their affairs private. Their secret lives and questionable actions breed feelings of guilt and uneasiness. Their need for privacy is a byproduct of these feelings.

3. Vessels tend to become more single-minded and obsessive the longer they are enslaved. This single-mindedness is usually reflective of the abstraction represented by the spirit who controls the vessel. In other cases, it manifests in the form of Obsessive Compulsive Disorder. The longer the period of servitude, the more pronounced these traits become.
4. Sometimes, though rarely, a vessel will construct multiple personalities for itself. This is a manifestation of the vessel's subconscious battle to oust the spirit, albeit a failed one. When a vessel cannot deal with what it has become, but still retains enough willpower to fight back, it will sometimes create these multiple personalities as a way of separating

NO STATISTICS

No statistics for spirits are included in this chapter. The Goetia and others of their kind are not intended to be direct opposition for player characters. They are a mystery to be solved, a piece of a much larger puzzle, impetuses for storylines, etc. They are background material, not opponents to be vanquished in combat. Confrontations with spirits are resolved by willpower, not brute force. Since they are merely part of the setting and springboards for stories (not to mention absurdly powerful), there is no point to assigning them any statistics.

THE GLASYA-LABOLAS KILLINGS

Glasya-Labolas is known as the “Author of Bloodshed and Manslaughter.” In 1978, this Goetia spirit attached itself to a psychotic named Chuck Johnson who went on to murder ten people before committing suicide. Two decades later, Glasya-Labolas bonded with a serial killer named Luther Cain, amplifying the man’s murderous nature. In time, Luther Cain was apprehended and Glasya-Labolas left its mortal vessel.

Glasya-Labolas is still at large in Potter’s Lake.

THE MARBAS BINDING

Decades ago, a Goetia spirit called Marbas was bound to the Southey family by Sullivan Pierce. Acting as a proxy of Hell, Pierce bound the spirit so it could be made to take actions that would benefit the Inferno, most notably the corruption of Potter’s Woods and the lake for which the town is named. Marbas has been bound to the Southey bloodline for many generations, but the family so strongly adheres to the spirit’s conceptual premise that it has made no attempt to free itself from this servitude. As much as the Southey family’s actions serve Hell, they also serve Marbas.

the individual’s true being from that of the spirit. One personality will reflect the spirit’s ideology, and the other will be an idealized image of who the vessel yearns to be.

the possessed character might. When the vessel needs the benefit of this knowledge, the spirit may impart a particular skill for a limited time even though the vessel does not possess it. Of course, this new knowledge must serve the spirit’s agenda as well.

SUSTENANCE

Spirits gain sustenance from earthly manifestations of the concept they embody. For example, a spirit whose conceptual premise is deceit will feast on lies and half-truths while a spirit of war dines on bloody conflict. Spirits guide their mortal vessels to actions that reflect the spirit’s conceptual premise so that the spirit may gorge itself. In short, vessels are used to guarantee the proper conditions exist for the spirit to thrive.

Might: While spirits do not have physical forms, they can give their vessels a temporary infusion of strength. This allows them to lift incredibly heavy objects beyond what is possible by human standards.

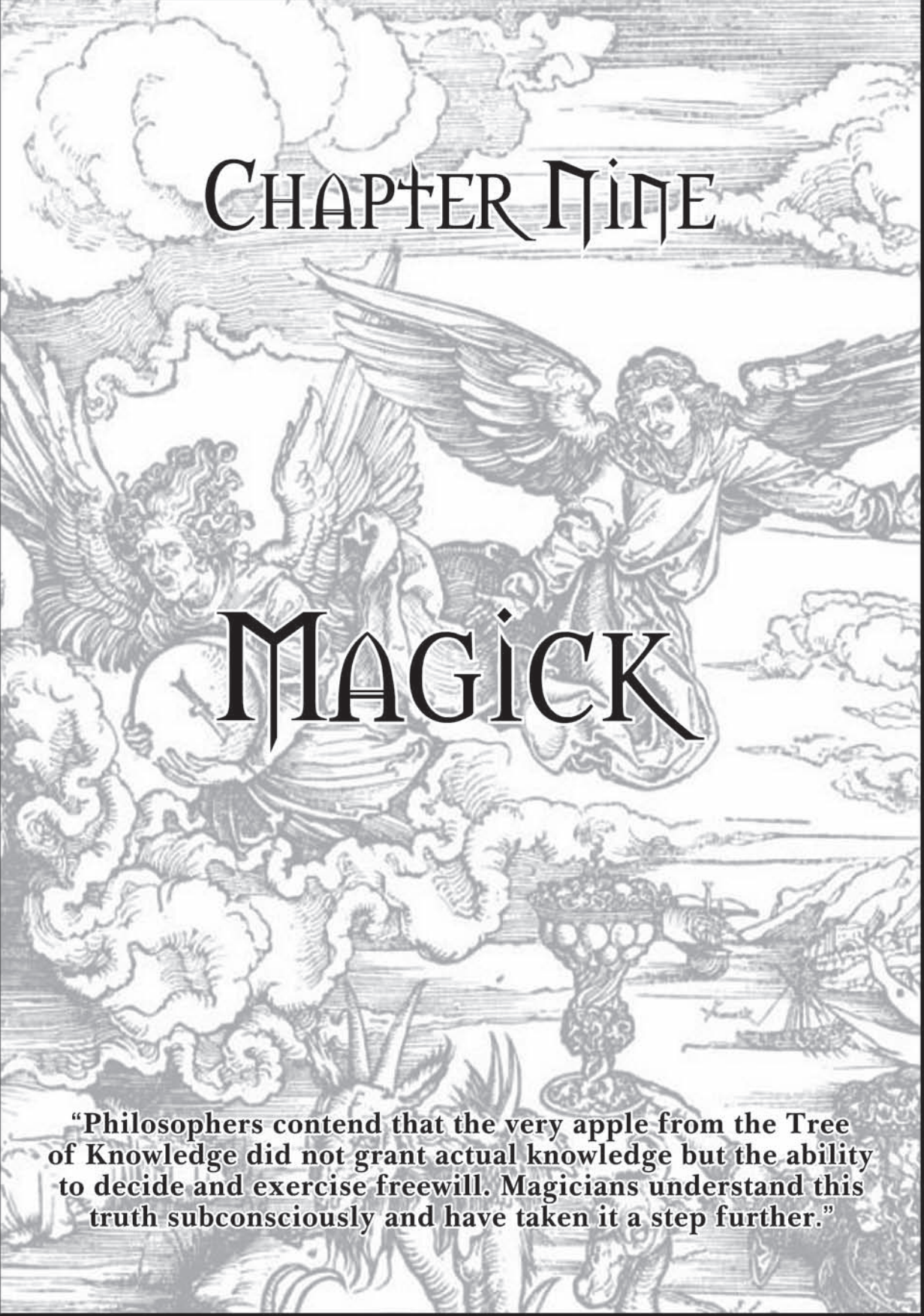
Read Conscience: This ability allows spirits to study the minds and hearts of mortals they think are suitable for possession. The spirit delves into the character’s soul, searching for clues to his or her nature.

POWERS

Spirits possess a host of supernatural abilities. While a few of these abilities are detailed below, gamemasters are encouraged to invent whatever powers will suit their stories.

Dreamweave: This is the ability to grant visions and signs to a character in his dreams. It also enables the spirit to reshape the dreamscape (i.e. guide the dreams) of an ideologically suited subject.

Impart Knowledge: This power enables a spirit to convey key information to its vessel when necessary. Since spirits possess the knowledge and skills of previous vessels, it knows far more than



CHAPTER NINE

MAGICK

“Philosophers contend that the very apple from the Tree of Knowledge did not grant actual knowledge but the ability to decide and exercise freewill. Magicians understand this truth subconsciously and have taken it a step further.”

Magick is the manipulation of reality in accordance with the will. It is the altering of events and the realization of desires. Magick is the force that drives human destiny.

Magicians are normal human beings with the means to manipulate the universe. The ability to work magick is a result of possessing a soul, the greatest gift that humanity has ever received. Magick and soul are both indicative that humanity possesses ultimate responsibility for its own fate. Philosophers contend that the very apple from the Tree of Knowledge did not grant actual knowledge but the ability to decide and exercise freewill. That decision was integral to God and Lucifer's contest for humanity must have the capacity to formulate a decision for either side to win. Like all things, making a decision is more than choosing A or B. A decision implies the imagination to pursue a wealth of selections. Decisions are imagination's survival instinct for sometimes A and B are simply not options.

Magicians understand this truth subconsciously and have taken it a step further. Magick allows the practitioner to change the nature of reality and the shape of the world. It is the ability to open new possibilities that others have yet to consider. No other creature on Earth can make such sweeping and powerful changes to its environment. Humanity can, thanks to their imagination, will, and soul.

Magick is never showy. Practitioners do not throw lightning bolts from their hands or fly high above the town on invisible wings. Coincidence is a magician's best friend. The practitioner desires a beautiful summer day for an upcoming picnic and, contrary to the forecast, the weather cooperates. The practitioner desires additional money and the next day he happens to receive a raise at work. This is how magick functions. Reality is altered in accordance with the will of the magician.

THE GOETIA

The spirits that exist invisibly around humanity provide the fuel for magick. Although willpower, soul, and imagination are necessary to work magick, they are actually used to channel the power of the Goetia. This power is then harnessed and focused in accordance with the desire of the magician.

Although magicians work magick by tapping into the power of the Goetia spirits, most of them are unaware of this. They assume willpower, soul, and imagination are the source of magick when in reality they are merely a means of access to it.

BACKLASH

Magick is a powerful means of reshaping reality, and it is not to be taken lightly. A magician must be careful how

grandiose his designs become; the grander the desired outcome, the more power required. To change reality, all that power is channeled towards the desired outcome, but when a magician fails his magickal working, that summoned energy still needs a target. The magician is always that target. For this reason, magicians are careful not to abuse their ability. While most have no hesitation in subtly altering the world to their benefit, few attempt massive change. The risk is simply too great. For example, a magician who desires to become a millionaire via magick will find himself penniless should the working fail. Likewise, a magician who wishes death to an enemy will find that a misfire leads to the death of a loved one or even the magician himself. The moral: Don't summon more than you can handle for every desire has an appropriate degree of risk.

WORKING MAGICK

The first stage of working magick is to determine the desired outcome. Most magicians have a specific goal in mind (e.g. winning the affections of a particular person) but some keep it general (e.g. merely falling in love).

The next stage is the ritual. Although not necessary to work magick, rituals help focus the will of the magician making magick much easier to perform.

The third stage is the casting. This is where the magician summons the invisible energy of the Goetia and redirects it towards a desired outcome.

The final stage is the result of the working, be it success or failure.

MECHANICS

The game mechanics for working magick consist of six

MAGICIANS ARE RARE

Every man, woman, and child on Earth has the ability to access magick, though few knew this. This ignorance, coupled with a disbelief in the fantastic, is why magicians are so rare. Additionally, magick requires considerable discipline and willpower, something sorely lacking in many people.

For these reasons, magicians should be rare in *Heaven & Earth*. This also means that those who are aware of the existence of magick, and consciously utilize it, tend to be focused, strong willed individuals. In other words, most magicians know what they want and are not shy about pursuing it.

ACCIDENTAL MAGICK

Although extremely rare, accidental acts of magick do occur from time to time. When human willpower is tightly focused, even with a disbelief in magick, things can happen. Like regular magick, this manifests subtly and without supernatural fanfare. This means that the act itself will go completely unnoticed by all, including the accidental magician. This is why economically needy people are often the ones who win the lottery, and how star athletes sometimes take their game to the next level. Willpower can truly do amazing things.

steps: Declaration, Assigning a Difficulty Level, Ritual Modifiers, Die Roll, Action Number Determination, and Result.

Note: A Fortitude Rank of 3 or higher is a required to work magick.

Here is an in-depth breakdown of each step:

STEP ONE: DECLARATION

The first step in working magick is the declaration of intent. In short, the desired end result of the working is described.

For example: A character decides to perform a magical working to locate a missing family heirloom.

STEP TWO: DIFFICULTY

After the desired outcome of the magical working is made clear, a Difficulty Level must be assigned by the Gamemaster. Unlike Action Checks, there are only three degrees of Difficulty when working magick: Hard (d8), Very Hard (d6), and Nearly Impossible (d4). Mundane workings of minimal consequence should have a Difficulty of Hard, dramatic alterations to reality with far reaching or deadly consequences should have a Difficulty of Nearly Impossible, and anything in-between should have a Difficulty of Very Hard. As with Action Checks, the GM is the final arbiter when setting Difficulties, and these decisions should be made impartially.

For example: The Gamemaster decides that finding a lost family heirloom has a Difficulty of Hard because the working is relatively consequence free, requiring only a slight alteration to the fabric of reality.

For example: The Gamemaster decides that a magician's intent to wish death upon an enemy has a Difficulty of Nearly Impossible. The GM rules that taking a life before its destined time is a major disruption of reality. Therefore, a Difficulty of Nearly

Impossible is assigned.

STEP THREE: RITUAL MODIFIERS

Magick can be worked in the blink of an eye. As soon as a thought is formed, a spell may be cast. However, this approach is an extremely difficult one, since magicians have no level of expertise to factor in. This makes magical workings far more likely to fail than succeed. This sobering truth means that magicians must do all they can to tilt the odds more in their favor. Rituals are the means for doing so.

In game terms, rituals are an organized means of modifying an upcoming die roll. Rituals contain various components, and the more components included in a ritual, the greater the chance that the magical working will succeed. There are eight possible components to a ritual:

- **Astrology:** Knowing when the stars are best aligned to make magick easier to work is important to a magician. Access to this knowledge comes by way of the Astrology Skill (see **Magick Skills** later in this chapter).
- **Chanting:** Certain archaic tongues are conducive to focusing the will of a magician. By chanting in these ancient languages, the magician can increase the odds of his magick succeeding. The Archaic Tongues Skill (see **Magick Skills** later in this chapter) is required.
- **Fasting:** Purifying the body by fasting helps focus the will. The triumph of mind over matter exemplified by fasting strengthens the mind for the purpose of working magick. The magician must fast for thirty days prior to working his magick and make a Fortitude Check (with a Target Number of 9) at a Difficulty of Hard.
- **Foci:** Utilizing certain implements to

help focus the will has been a common practice in magick for ages. The implements used should be appropriate to the working (e.g. a sword might be used for cursing an enemy while a rose might be employed to win the love of another). Knowing which items are beneficial to which types of workings is determined by sheer instinct or use of the Occult Skill (see **Magick Skills** later in this chapter).

- **Grimoire:** For centuries, magicians have kept written records of their magickal successes. Grimoire is the name given to a book of these writings. A grimoire is not a book of spells. It is, however, a log of which workings have yielded successful outcomes so that the processes may be duplicated in future attempts. A magician may follow the instructions in another's grimoire, but most keep to their own path, repeating the processes that worked well for them. A magician who writes down the details of a successful working in a personal grimoire may use the book as a blueprint when trying a similar working in the future.
- **Laws of Sympathy:** Magicians believe in the Laws of Sympathy, meaning that "like affects like." They believe that an unseen force links similar or related objects and that these similarities can be used in magickal workings. For example, when casting a death curse, having a picture of the target or a lock of his hair makes the working's odds of success greater. Another example is using one family heirloom as a sympathetic link to a missing one that is being sought via magick. The Voodoo Doll is a familiar example of the Laws of Sympathy in action.
- **Site of Power:** Certain buildings act as foci for magickal workings. Performing magick at these locations is easier than at others. To determine which buildings are conducive to working magick, the Sacred Geometry Skill is required (see **Magick Skills** later in this chapter).
- **Time:** By focusing the will over a length of time, the magician finds the forces

of magick to be more tamable. All the magician need do is meditate or otherwise concentrate his effort for an appropriate length of time (one hour when the Difficulty is Hard, two hours when the Difficulty is Very Hard, and three hours when the Difficulty is Nearly Impossible). The GM may call for a Fortitude Check, but the Difficulty should always be Easy, Average, or Challenging.

For every three components a magician incorporates into his ritual, he receives a Ritual Modifier of 1.

For example: A character seeking a lost family heirloom performs a ritual to increase his chance of success. In the ritual, he uses another heirloom to invoke the Laws of Sympathy and meditates on the subject for one hour at a site of power. By utilizing three components in his ritual, he now has a Ritual Modifier of 1. If he utilizes three more components, he can raise his Ritual Modifier to 2.

Magicians may incorporate a maximum of six ritual components into their workings. A magician may also spend one point of Destiny to add another +1 to the Ritual Modifier, enabling a maximum Ritual Modifier of 3. Unlike regular Action Checks, **Destiny cannot be spent after a magickal working has failed; it must be spent prior to the die being rolled.**

For example: A magician performing a ritual using three components has a Ritual Modifier of 1. By spending one Destiny, he can raise this Ritual Modifier to 2.

For example: A magician performing a ritual using six components has a Ritual Modifier of 2. By spending one Destiny, he can raise this Ritual Modifier to 3.

STEP FOUR: ROLLING THE DIE

With the intent of the working declared, the Difficulty set, and ritual modifier determined, it's time to roll the die. Like regular Action Checks, the die type is determined by the Difficulty set:

- **Hard = d8**
- **Very Hard = d6**
- **Nearly Impossible = d4**

For example: The magician in search of a lost family heirloom rolls a d8 because the GM declared the Difficulty to be Hard.

A NOTE ON GRIMOIRES

Most magicians keep grimoires and PC magicians should as well. If a similar working is attempted in the future, the character will already have one of the three ritual components necessary to gain a Ritual Modifier of 1. Since most ritual components require unique skills, sympathetic links, and various Action Checks to utilize, only a reckless magician would not keep a record of his successful workings.

STEP FIVE: ACTION NUMBER

The result of the die roll, the magician's Fortitude Rank, and the Ritual Modifier are added together. This total is the Action Number.

For example: The magician rolls a d8, and the result is 5. This result is added to his Fortitude Rank of 3 and his Ritual Modifier of 2, yielding an Action Number of 10 (5+3+2=10).

STEP SIX: RESULT

The Action Number must meet or exceed the Target Number (9) for the working to be successful.

For example: A magician with an Action Number of 9 (the total of his die result, Fortitude Rank, and Magical Modifier) would succeed with his working, though just barely.

If a magickal working fails, the energy backlashes in a symbolically appropriate way that is commensurate with the grandiosity of the desired outcome.

For example: A failed attempt to locate a missing family heirloom means the magician will soon lose something else of similar material or personal value.

For example: A magician's failed death curse will likely lead to his own death soon, perhaps by accident or due to a previously undiagnosed health problem. At the very least, death will visit the character in some form (perhaps a cherished loved one or good friend passes away unexpectedly).

The threat of backlash means magicians are careful with their workings. Dramatic workings with deadly or far reaching consequences (a Difficulty of Nearly Impossible)

are rarely performed because of the inherent risk involved. All magicians must carefully weigh the risk/reward factor of any magickal working.

MAGICK SKILLS

In *Heaven & Earth*, there is a small collection of esoteric skills that are rare to the common man but employed by magicians in their pursuit of knowledge and mastery of magick. Practitioners of magick possess these skills, but it is not unheard of for non-magicians to possess them. These Magick Skills aid in the performance of rituals, the pursuit of supernatural knowledge, and the manipulation of spirits.

At character creation, players cannot begin with any Magick Skills unless the Gamemaster allows it, and this should be highly scrutinized. Other than a few dabblers, new-agers, and researchers, these skills are of no interest to the average person.

From the standpoint of game mechanics, Magick Skills function exactly like Extracurricular Skills, with Difficulties ranging from Easy to Nearly Impossible.

Action Checks involving Magick Skills are most often made during the ritual phase of a magickal working (e.g. a magician makes a Sacred Geometry Action Check to determine the suitability of a building for the purpose of working magick). However, some Magick Skills have benefits outside of the ritual phase or have no bearing on it. Divination, Dream Interpretation, Eschatology, Exorcism, and Invocation all fall into this category.

Like regular skills, it would be impossible to list every Magick Skill that might exist. Below is a list and brief description of nine Magick Skills that have the most bearing in *Heaven & Earth*.

Archaic Tongues: This skill represents fluency with languages no longer spoken in the modern world. These forgotten tongues are employed in rituals to help focus the will of the magician. Their otherworldly ambiance evokes a feeling of isolation in the magician enabling his mind to focus more intently. Which specific languages are known is a matter of taste, but Egyptian, Sanskrit, and Homeric Greek are the most popular among practitioners of magick.

Astrology: This is the study of the position and relationship of celestial bodies and the influence they have on earthly affairs. Magicians use this Skill to determine the best times to perform their rituals, which in turn makes their magickal workings more likely to succeed.

Divination: The ability to predict the future by way of an earthly medium such as tea leaves, a tarot deck, the I-ching, etc. is known as divination. The insight gained through this Skill is always ill defined. A magician's use

LEARNING MAGICK SKILLS

Very few books accurately teach Magick Skills. For this reason, potential students usually must learn from a suitably knowledgeable magician. The secretive nature of most practitioners, and their unwillingness to share their knowledge, makes finding a mentor problematic at best. Finding such a mentor and convincing him to share his knowledge is likely to be an adventure in its own right.

of divining techniques will produce accurate hunches and vague feelings of what is to come rather than crystal clear images of future events.

Dream Interpretation: This is the ability to analyze the contents of a dream or nightmare.

Eschatology: The study of End of the World prophecies and beliefs.

Exorcism: The ability to cast out spirits and demons from people and places.

Invocation: The ability to summon and bind spirits.

Occult: This Skill represents a general knowledge of the supernatural focusing on magick, its rituals, things infernal and divine, ghosts, and spirits.

Sacred Geometry: The knowledge to design and identify architecture built for (or capable of) channeling magickal energy is covered by this Skill. Most often, magicians use this Skill to locate a suitable site for an upcoming ritual.

SUMMONING SPIRITS

The Invocation Skill is a prerequisite for summoning spirits. This skill covers the ceremony and techniques need to call forth a spirit. It also includes the knowledge of how to bind these entities. Summoning is most often done to gain temporary insight or power from a spirit. A bound spirit can provide details about events to come, grant supernatural knowledge, answer questions otherwise unknowable, temporarily grant unearthly powers to the magician, etc. The exact details are left to the GM to determine.

The Difficulty of an Invocation is set according to the importance or magnitude of the knowledge or power being sought. Gaining mundane knowledge of an enemy's activities might have an Average Difficulty while knowledge of great universal secrets might have a Difficulty of Very Hard or Nearly Impossible. As always, the decision is left to the GM's discretion.

Bindings are usually temporary things lasting only till the next sunrise. However, a magician can attempt to bind a spirit indefinitely. To do so requires a mandatory

expenditure of one Destiny point, and the Difficulty is always Nearly Impossible. Success means the magician has a lasting fount of knowledge and power to draw upon. Failure, on the other hand, means instant retaliation by the spirit. In light of this, magicians usually summon the Goetia or other spirits for fleeting access to powers, skills, or knowledge rather than making them into indefinite slaves. As with most things magickal, there is always a risk.

Another prerequisite for summoning a spirit is knowing its name. Magicians use the Occult Skill or pour through countless dust tomes to acquire such knowledge. Without it, a summoning is impossible.

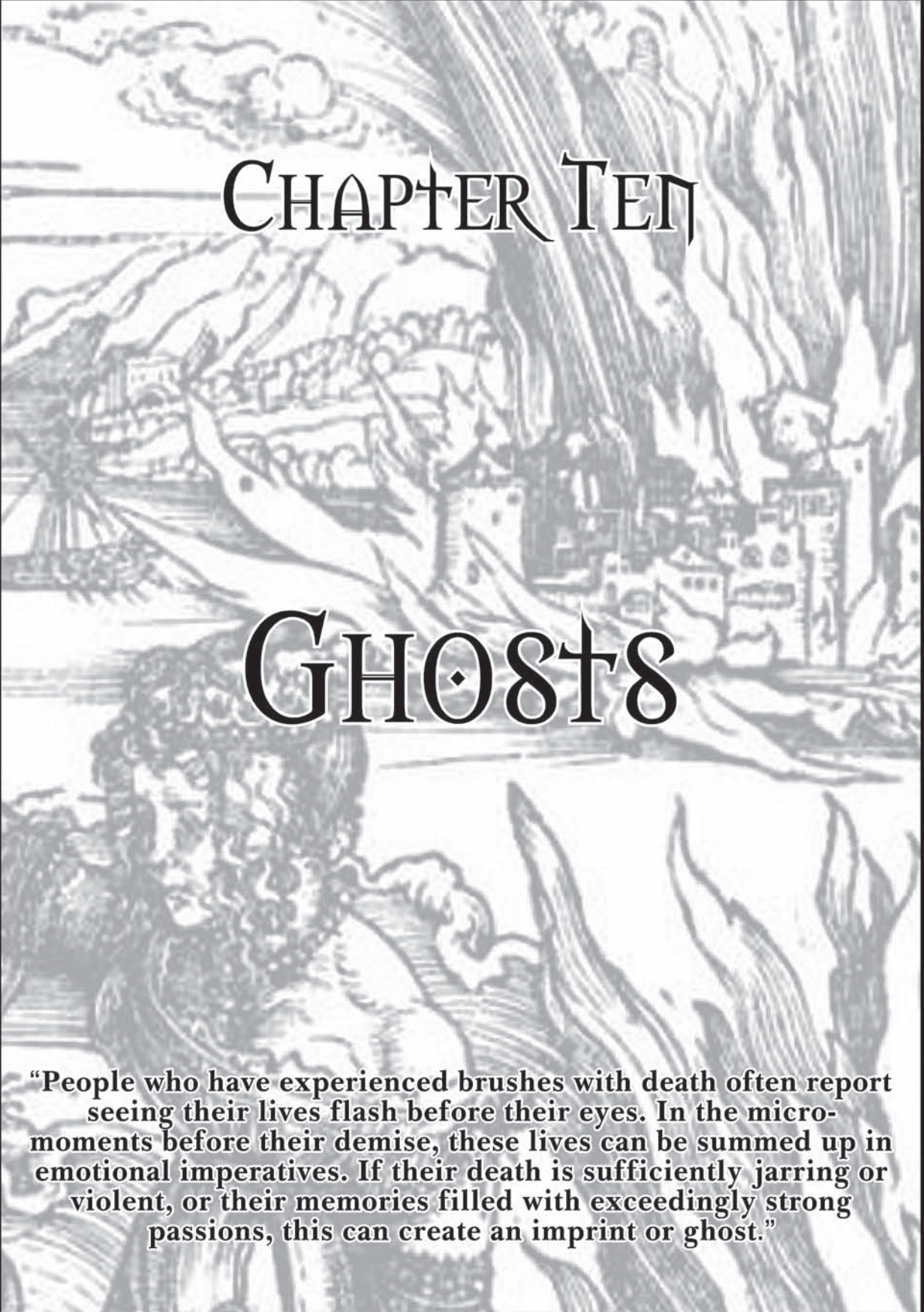
EXORCISM

Banishing a spirit or demon is tricky business. The Difficulty for such an action is set according to the power level of the entity to be exorcised as well as the strength of its hold on the person or place the magician is seeking to banish it from. A failed exorcism usually leads to retaliatory actions from the spirit or demon, but such actions are usually short-lived and seldom deadly, unlike the retaliation that accompanies a failed Invocation.

PC MAGICIANS

Since all player characters start the game as ordinary people, they cannot be magicians; at least not at the outset. However, it is entirely fine for player characters to learn magick as the game progresses. As they learn more about the truth behind reality, their minds will become more open to the improbable, and the option to study magick is likely to surface.

If the characters are strong willed enough (have a Fortitude Rank of 3 or higher) and can handle the responsibilities inherent to working magick, gamemasters should allow them access to this power. Finding a mentor in the world of magick and learning how to harness it can be an interesting subplot in a *Heaven & Earth* game.



CHAPTER TEN

GHOSTS

“People who have experienced brushes with death often report seeing their lives flash before their eyes. In the micro-moments before their demise, these lives can be summed up in emotional imperatives. If their death is sufficiently jarring or violent, or their memories filled with exceedingly strong passions, this can create an imprint or ghost.”

Mythology commonly speaks of the dead with a mixture of fear and reverence. Ancient cultures have long attributed their existence and presence to improper burials, unfinished business, and curses. Some societies turn ancestors into quasi-deities of good fortune or evil spirits sent to plague wayward descendants. These beliefs, however, are yesterday's mythology.

Contemporary ghosts are the near spent shells of emotionally charged individuals. They are remnants of yesterday much like black & white photographs or the onionskin sheddings of a snake. When a person dies, they go on to Heaven or Hell (Purgatory and Limbo not withstanding). There are no souls wandering the confines of the mortal coil, wondering what to do with their afterlives. The nature of God and Lucifer's contest assures this. Dead is dead, and ghosts are their echoes, their regurgitated actions in life.

People who have experienced brushes with death often report seeing their lives flash before their eyes. In the micro-moments before their demise, these lives can be summed up in emotional imperatives. If their death is jarring and violent enough, or their memories filled with exceedingly strong passions, this can create an imprint or ghost. Some imprints are strong enough to act and react to as their living selves once did. Many even appear to have form and substance, appearing much like they did in life. This, however, is only illusion. In fact, the illusion is often so good that many ghosts of this type have no knowledge of their true nature, instead believing they are actually the individuals they are aping rather than mere psychic echoes.

Other ghosts are intangible caricatures of human life. They act like a film caught in an endless feedback loop. They repeat actions and reactions like a living program, no matter the intervening circumstances. Usually, this repetition was important to their living selves, something of emotional significance. The spiritual bodies of these ghosts are normally translucent if not invisible. Additionally, reality's dictates do not affect these ghosts, allowing them to drift through walls and solid objects, walk on air or water, or perform other similar feats. This type of ghost is the kind most people are familiar with, and indeed it is the most common form of psychic imprint encountered.

On occasion, this latter type of ghost will break out of

its feedback loop. In these frightening moments it turns its supernatural might on the living. Usually they only frighten, but occasionally they will exhibit poltergeist behavior, hurling objects about in an invisible tantrum. Thankfully, such incidents are rare.

APPEARANCE

Although a ghost's corpus does not actually carry anything real, it usually appears clothed in either its favorite dress or its burial attire. Sometimes, it will appear different from its living body, seeming more beautiful or monstrous. In this case, the appearance is the outward manifestation of the passion guiding the ghost. Specters empowered by love and other positive emotions tend to be strikingly beautiful while those empowered by negative ones, such as hate, tend to be monstrous in appearance.

POWERS

Ghosts possess a host of supernatural abilities. Gamemasters are encouraged to make up their own, assigning whatever powers help them tell an engrossing story. Below are a few sample powers derived from popular folklore.

AFFRIGHT

Affright is the most powerful special ability a ghost can possess: the power to frighten mortals beyond reckoning. The ghost unleashes its own passions in a cathartic wave and sends them unfettered against an unwitting target. Anger and pain manifest unrestrained and without apology, hitting the target with the scare of his life.

Before a ghost can employ Affright, the mortal must be aware of its presence. The target must know that something supernatural or unexplainable is occurring before the ghost can terrify him.

How Affright affects the target is up to the Gamemaster, who should call for a Fortitude Check to resist its influence. The effects may be cosmetic (hair turns to white), psychological (new found monophobia), or deadly (heart attack).

APING HUMANS

Some ghosts appear and act like mortals, unaware of their true nature. Gamemasters planning on using this type of ghost should limit the powers it possesses or only allow these powers to manifest in subtle ways. Not only is this type of ghost ignorant of its true nature, the GM will have difficulty concealing its true nature if its constantly performing impossible supernatural feats. On the other hand, the stereotypical phantoms of popular myth can be given multiple powers allowing them to torment and frighten in the traditional manner.

This power is often used in conjunction with others such as Banshee's Lament.

BANSHEE'S LAMENT

Banshee's Lament allows ghosts to generate sounds mortals can hear that range from rattling chains and whispers to rudimentary speech. Mortals within a reasonable radius will hear the disembodied noises although they may not be able to determine their source since the ghost can remain invisible. Ghosts can also throw their voices into other objects and decide if one or more mortals hear Banshee's Lament.

While ghosts can certainly use this ability to project speech, most often they only repeat sentences from their mortal lives. Even then, the words are generally simple, short, or both. Usually, the noises generated by Banshee's Lament are a byproduct of the ghost's presence, not a deliberate attempt to communicate.

DREAD VEIL

With Dread Veil, the ghost can cast a pall of fear over a place it occupies. This ability often leads mortals to believe the place is haunted and accounts for a small portion of haunted locales like graveyards and abandoned houses.

The results of Dread Veil are up to the Gamemaster to determine. The effects should be minor, though, and temporary. Unlike Affright, Dread Veil creates an aura of fear and uneasiness in an area; it is not a direct attack.

HORRIFY

This ability allows a ghost to afflict mortals with terrifying hallucinations that appear completely real, right up to the end. Continued use of Horrify against a single character is a good way to force a person to question his very sanity. Ghosts can affect mortals in a variety of ways with this hallucination, but the visions most often relate to the ghost's own memories or passions. To use this power, the ghost must be in the same room as the victim.

Gamemasters may call for Awareness Checks to determine whether or not the characters realize they are experiencing a hallucination.

POLTERGEIST

This power allows ghosts to move objects in the physical world without manifesting visibly or solidly via Profane Corpus (see below). Poltergeist activities can range from levitating objects to invisible slaps in the face.

PROFANE CORPUS

For those ghosts who are invisible to mortal senses, Profane Corpus allows them to manifest in the world of the living. Sometimes ghosts manifest in a translucent state, appearing as a mirror reflection or photographic negative, immaterial to human touch. Other times, ghosts achieve brief substantiality enabling it to perform quick physical actions such as moving an object, flipping a switch, punching a target, etc.

CORPSESITES

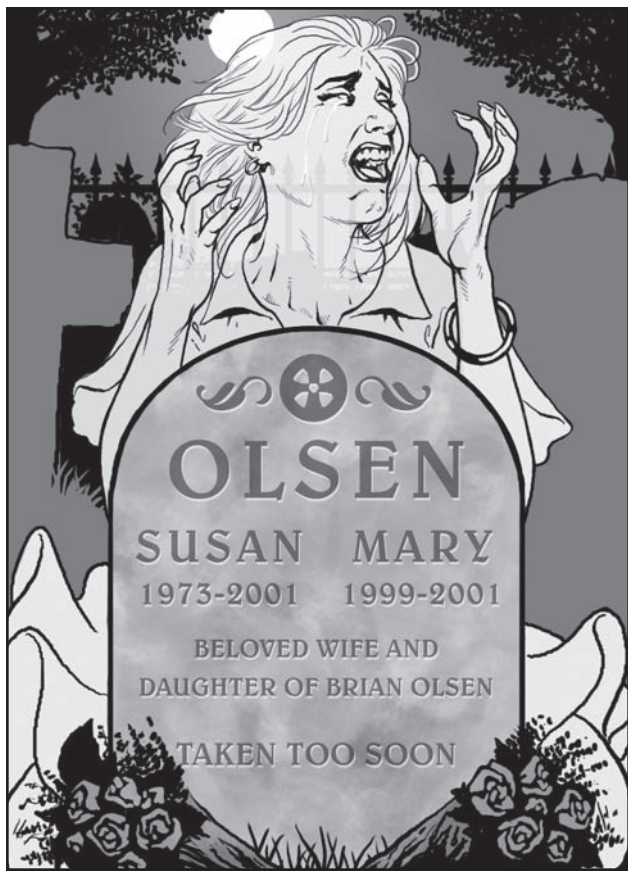
A corpsesite is a location so frequented and affected by ghosts that it becomes unstable in relation to the world around it. Essentially, physics takes a holiday, permitting some bizarre and unusual effects. This typically includes corridors that stretch in length, doors that lead into a different room each time, water that reverses its flow, candles that burn green flame, etc. These cheap-fright theatrics remain the providence of the Gamemaster, for while ghosts have some intent behind their actions, corpsesites can never do actual harm. They are simply distortions in reality the way a dropped pebble creates ripples in water.

The trouble with corpsesites is that the residing ghost will be exceedingly territorial. This is often because the location is the only thing grounding its existence. Without it, nothing tethers its memory to the world, and it will fade away. If the ghost senses that its corpsesite is in legitimate danger, it may vigorously defend it with all manner of supernatural powers.

Finally, corpsesites affect their surroundings like a slow poison. Plants die or refuse to grow at all. Animals escape the area or they become erratic, mangy, and emaciated. A strange malaise settles over people's moods. Neighborhoods surrounding corpsesites invariably suffer from higher crime

NO STATISTICS

No statistics and few mechanics are included in this chapter. Ghosts are not intended to be direct opposition to players. They are a mystery to be solved, a piece of a larger puzzle, impetuses for storylines, etc. They are background material not opponents to be vanquished in combat. Gamemasters must not abuse the powers these beings possess, constantly attacking characters who cannot properly defend themselves. Confrontations with ghosts are resolved thorough investigation, ingenuity, and storytelling, not brute force.



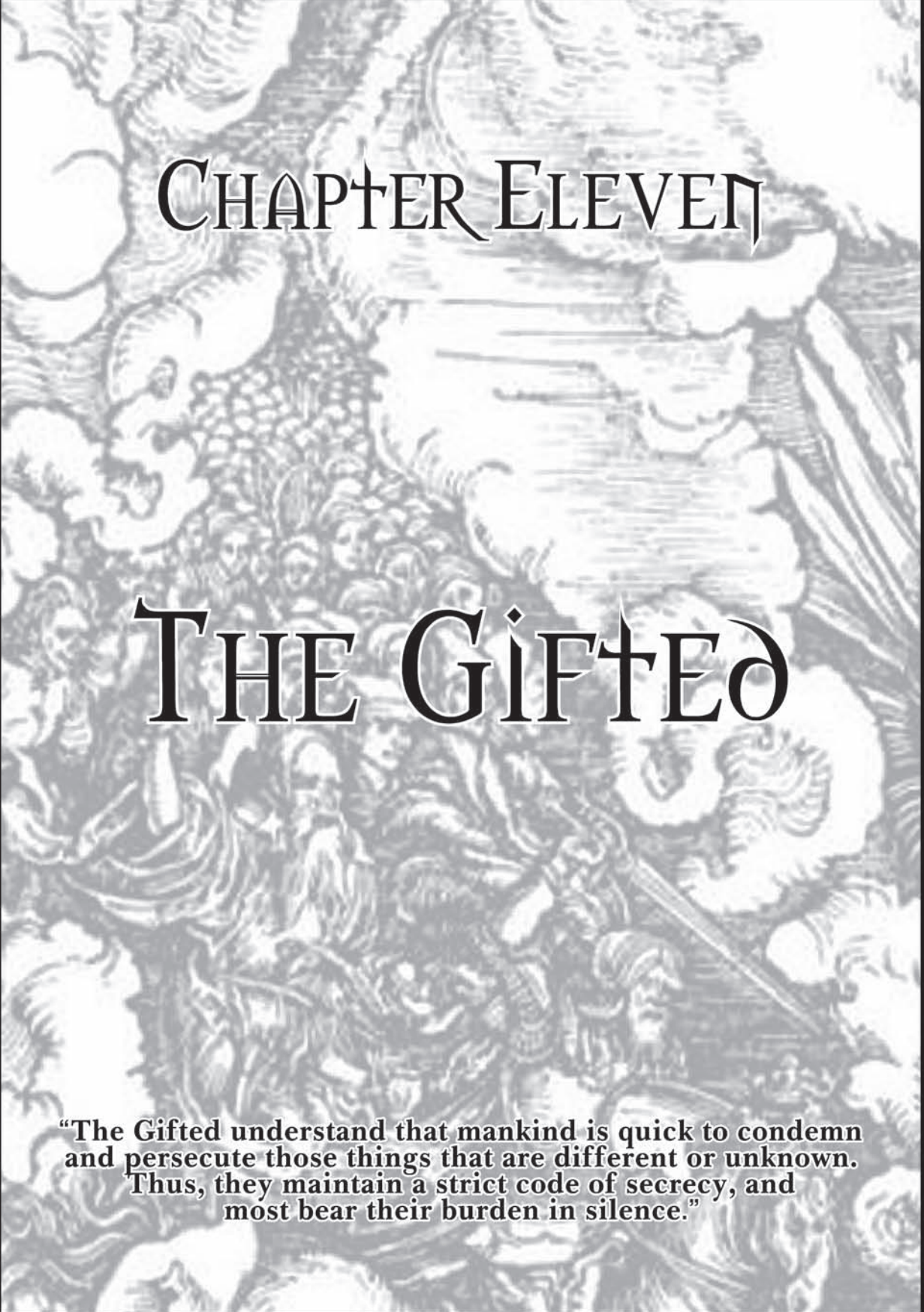
3. **Resolution:** Many ghosts are passionately driven to complete tasks left undone in their mortal lives. Characters who conclude a ghost's unfinished business can banish it from the mortal world.
4. **Destroy the Corpse:** Ghosts are often tethered to a single location by a particularly strong memory. Destroying this corpse site often banishes the ghost from the corporeal world.

rates or greater instances of violent acts like murder and rape.

BANISHING GHOSTS

There are four ways to banish a ghost from the mortal world:

1. **Channeling:** Psychics who possess this power can demand obedience from ghosts. This can include ordering a ghost to leave this mortal world forever (see **Chapter XI: The Gifted** for details on psychics and Channeling).
2. **Overload:** Ghosts are driven by the passions of the mortal who birthed them. Exposing a ghost to an overload of its primary passion can sate the entity, banishing it from the mortal world. For example, if a ghost driven by a passion for peace were to be thrust into the middle of a peace rally of thousands, the resulting overload would be enough to erase the psychic imprint from the world of the living.



CHAPTER ELEVEN

THE GIFTED

“The Gifted understand that mankind is quick to condemn and persecute those things that are different or unknown. Thus, they maintain a strict code of secrecy, and most bear their burden in silence.”

The Gifted are human beings with developed powers of the mind who can perform amazing feats, seemingly with but a thought. Although wondrous at first glance, psychic abilities are often more curse than gift. Paranormals (another name for the Gifted) know that the average human being would fear their kind of power, especially given how they appear like normal human beings with the ability to do so much more. They understand that mankind is quick to condemn and persecute those things that are different or unknown. The lessons of the Papal Inquisitions and the Red Scare have been well learned by the Gifted who realize that it is too dangerous to trust anyone else with their secret. Thus, they maintain a strict code of secrecy, and most bear their burden in silence. Frightened of being viewed as different and fearing the reaction of their fellow men, paranormals rarely reveal their powers lest a new witch-hunt emerge.

While experts on psychic phenomenon are hard-pressed to explain how or why these abilities exist, the popular theory is that the Gifted possess or can activate a portion of the brain or a gland that has yet to develop in most human beings. Nothing could be further from the truth.

THE TRUTH

Unknown to both scientists and the Gifted, psychic abilities are of divine origin. All paranormals descend from a common ancestry, one that grants them their fantastic powers. Although they are of various ethnicities, nations, and cultural backgrounds, the Gifted all share a single progenitor: Jesus of Nazareth.

While the Bible is indeed the Word of God, it has fallen under human editorial control. Over the centuries, men have rewritten, reinterpreted, and improperly translated the scripture out of ignorance or to better serve their personal ideologies. Governments and religious denominations that felt their inclusion unnecessary, heretical, or unsupportive of their particular view of the faith excised many important books. Certain characters were given short shrift, their roles reduced to bit parts in the greater drama. The most egregious reduction of role was that of Mary Magdalene.

The chauvinistic world of centuries past did its best to obscure the Magdalene's role, that of Jesus' wife. Like all rabbis, Jesus took a bride, and she accompanied him throughout much of his ministry. It is Mary who anointed her husband's feet, and it is Mary who first witnessed the resurrection. With her husband's time on Earth spent, at least for the moment, Mary left the Holy Land to what is now modern-day France. She traveled with her brother Lazarus, Joseph of Arimathea, and her husband's unborn child.

Mary lived out her life in quiet anonymity, and her son went on to marry and begin his own family. In time, his children begat children of their own, and so on and so

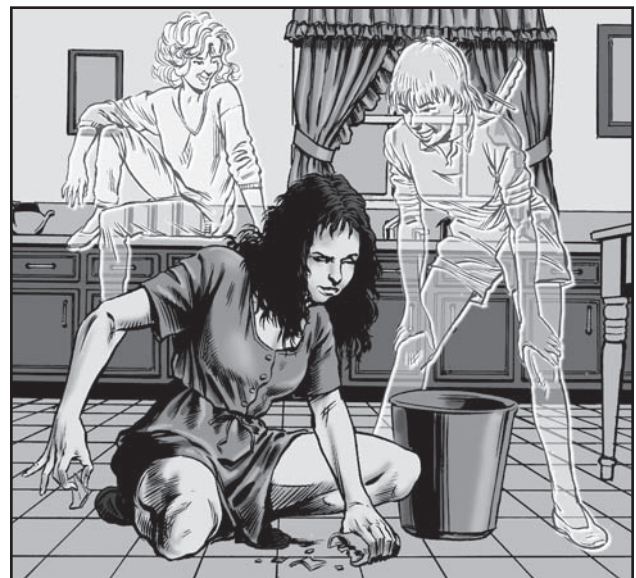
forth. With each new generation, the bloodline became more and more diluted. It became so far removed from Christ that the spark of the divine was nearly extinguished. However, those that did possess the spark were capable of great powers of the mind. These individuals quickly learned to conceal their abilities, for failure to do so meant condemnation, torture, and sometimes death. Branded as witches, many of the Gifted were burned at the stake. It didn't take long for the others to realize the danger inherent in possessing these powers.

With colonization, many of the Gifted made their way to the New World. America had cast a spell on them, drawing the Gifted to its verdant lands. From the original colonies, Europeans marched westward, and the Gifted went with them. Unknown to the paranormals, they were slowly being drawn to a particular place for a deliberate purpose. The place was Potter's Lake, and the purpose is only now unfolding.

The Gifted perform their miraculous feats because their common ancestor, Jesus Christ, was divine. That spark of divinity, however small, exists in all of them. The Apocalypse has begun, and the Gifted have a role to play, though none yet know it. Christ needs his progeny at Potter's Lake as events unfold. Their might will be needed if humanity is to escape its dark fate. Christ has no desire to see his mother's people perish and will use the Gifted to combat his father's plans. Exactly how he plans to use them remains a mystery.

PSYCHOLOGY

Regardless of how well the gifted individual adjusts to being different, he should be justifiably paranoid. While friends and family may understand a person's gifts, there



is the continual fear of persecution and becoming a guinea pig in a government lab somewhere. American society deeply distrusts the government, and even the most foolish paranormal knows that if Uncle Sam learned his little secret, they would study and dissect him in an attempt to understand the nature of his special abilities.

Naturally, the Gifted are loners as well. Despite the fact that psychic phenomenon occurs all over the world, it is so extraordinarily rare that the individual feels like he is undergoing this curse alone. On the rare occasions when paranormals discover others like them, they feel an immeasurable joy and relief at not being so isolated and alone. Unfortunately, most psychics are so afraid of capture or being ostracized that they rarely seek out other such individuals. Secrecy is paramount and that means that trusting anyone is next to impossible. The Gifted are always living on the edge, afraid that someone is watching or knows their secret, fearing society will find out, not understand, and call down the very wrath of God on his head.

A few Gifted adopt a performer's guise. They are the occasional fortunetellers and psychics who offer up nuggets of insight thanks to their powers. Many serve a select clientele to prevent themselves from becoming too famous or sought out, but a few make their services available to all. This latter group is careful to make certain the truth of their abilities can never be verified. Many go as far as being publicly wrong with an insight or two in order to throw off anyone looking too closely.

Very rarely, a paranormal believes his gifts to be Heaven sent. Although this is actually true, they base it on personal faith rather than any factual information. The Gifted have no knowledge of the real origin of their powers. Fools who claim to possess special abilities granted by the Lord, and demonstrate them in public, have a tendency to disappear.

These indiscreet individuals usually end up in the hands of Project: Grayscale.

PROJECT: GRAYSCALE

Project: Grayscale is a top-secret military operation run out of Powell AFB. The mandate of Grayscale is to study psychic phenomenon and paranormals in particular. For years, they have been conducting psychical research, trying to understand the nature of the Gifted's powers and how to duplicate them. If Grayscale could replicate these abilities, the military applications would be staggering. To date, their research has yielded no answers.

The more indiscreet among the Gifted end up as guinea pigs in the laboratories of Project: Grayscale. Although most paranormals have no idea of Grayscale's existence, the ominous presence of Powell AFB and the local rumor mill keep the Gifted justifiably paranoid.

POWERS

The special abilities of the Gifted fall into two categories: Psychic Skills and Wild Talents. Psychic Skills are powers under a character's control. Wild Talents, however, are supernatural abilities that a character cannot control. They activate in specific situations or under duress, regardless of a character's desire or intent.

PSYCHIC SKILLS

Each Psychic Skill a character possesses will have a level

THE GIFTED AS PLAYER CHARACTERS

In *Heaven & Earth*, player characters begin the game as ordinary people. As such, they cannot possess psychic powers at the outset. However, it is perfectly acceptable for them to show signs of these abilities as the game progresses. Gamemasters who allow player characters access to these powers need to keep in mind the origin of these powers and what that entails. They also should consider how well a player character fits the standard psychology of the Gifted (though this is far from an absolute). Lastly, GMs need to keep an eye on who (if anyone) the PCs share their secret with and how discreet they are with their gifts. Obvious paranormals will quickly attract the attention of Project: Grayscale.

No rules are given for the purchasing of psychic abilities. How they are doled out, and at what level of expertise, is up to the Gamemaster. They do not cost experience; they simply manifest and develop over time. A Gamemaster can have a player character develop one power at Rookie level, multiple powers at Veteran level, or anything in between. The style of play and the tone of the Gamemaster's stories will be the chief indicators of how developed these abilities should become. It is advised that Gamemasters allow them to manifest and develop slowly. It's always easy to speed up their development if needed, but once the genie is out of the bottle, it is very difficult to reign in.

of expertise attached to it, reflecting the psychic's degree of mastery. Like occupations and Extracurricular Skills, there are three levels of expertise: Rookie, Professional, and Veteran. A Rookie level of expertise means the character may add a +1 to any Action Check involving a Psychic Skill. A Professional level of expertise grants a +2, and a Veteran Level grants a +3. Most paranormals only possess one or two Psychic Skills, and usually these are at Rookie or Professional level of expertise. Having more than two Psychic Skills or having any Psychic Skills at Veteran level is extremely rare.

Action Checks for Psychic Skills work the same way as regular Action Checks (see **Chapter III**). The character declares his action, the GM decides if the action is possible, the Difficulty is set, the appropriate die is rolled, the sum of the die result, the character's governing Attribute (which is always Fortitude) and the character's level of expertise yields the Action Number, and the Action Number is measured against a Target Number of 9 to determine success or failure. Destiny may be spent to alter the outcome in the exact same way as regular Action Checks.

With that said, there are three differences that separate Psychic Skill Action Checks from regular Action Checks:

- The starting Difficulty for a Psychic Skill Action Check is always Hard, Very Hard, or Nearly Impossible.
- The guidelines for determining Difficulties for Psychic Skills are more clearly defined and vary from Skill to Skill.
- After each successful Psychic Skill Action Check, the character must make a Fortitude Check. The Difficulty for this Action Check is always the same as the Difficulty of the action that preceded it. A successful Check means there are no ill effects from the use of the Psychic Skill while failure means the character is mentally fatigued and cannot employ any Psychic Skills for twenty-four hours. At that time, he will be sufficiently rested and may again use his special abilities.

For example: a character decides to use a Psychic Skill, and the GM determines the Difficulty to be Hard. With the Difficulty set, the corresponding die is rolled (a d8). The result of the roll is 6. This result is added to the character's Fortitude Rank (3) and his Professional level of expertise (2), yielding an Action Number of 11 (6+3+2=11). Since the Action Number equals or exceeds the Target Number (9), the Psychic Action Check is successful. Next, the character makes a Fortitude Check. The die rolled

is a d8 because the Difficulty is Hard, the same as the preceding Action Check. The result of this roll is 2. Combined with the Character's Fortitude rank of 3 and Professional level of expertise (2), an Action Number of 7 is produced (2+3+2=7). Since the Action Number does not meet or exceed the Target Number (9), the Fortitude Check has failed. The character is mentally fatigued, and no other Psychic Skill Action Checks can be attempted for the next twenty-four hours.

There are seven psychic Skills: Channeling, Clairvoyance, Dream Voyage, Precognition, Psychic Healing, Pyrokinesis, and Telekinesis. A description of each Psychic Skill and the guidelines for setting their Difficulties are provided below.

CHANNELING

This ability allows the Gifted to perceive, communicate with, and potentially control ghosts due to their nature as psychic echoes. Channeling only works on ghosts because they are psychic imprints; it is not possible to interact with those who have gone on to their eternal reward (or punishment) since these individuals are not ghosts, nor can the paranormal affect the Goetia or other spirits.

Paranormals with Channeling automatically sense the presence of ghosts in their immediate area. Communicating with or binding a ghost into service, however, requires a successful Channeling Action Check.

- **Hard:** The Difficulty for communicating with a nearby ghost is Hard.
- **Very Hard:** Commanding a ghost for a short period of time to perform a minor service is a Difficulty of Very Hard.
- **Nearly Impossible:** The Difficulty for binding a ghost into extended service is Nearly Impossible.

If the Channeling Action Check fails, the ghost will be aware that the character attempted to bind it and will act accordingly. It will use whatever means it has at its disposal to enact revenge. This can range from simple hauntings to violent poltergeist activity.

CLAIRVOYANCE

Clairvoyance is the ability to see beyond the limits of normal sight using the powers of the mind. Often called Remote Viewing, the Gifted can see events transpiring in other locations even though great distance or physical

barriers separate them. By simply focusing on a particular location, the paranormal can perceive the events occurring there. Not even the most secure military installations are impenetrable to a clairvoyant.

- **Hard:** When the clairvoyant is familiar with the location he is attempting to view, the Difficulty is Hard.
- **Very Hard:** When the clairvoyant is unfamiliar with the location he is attempting to view, but it falls within the surrounding area (in most cases, Potter's Lake), the Difficulty is Very Hard.
- **Nearly Impossible:** When a clairvoyant is attempting to view a location both unfamiliar and distant, the Difficulty is Nearly Impossible.

DREAM VOYAGE

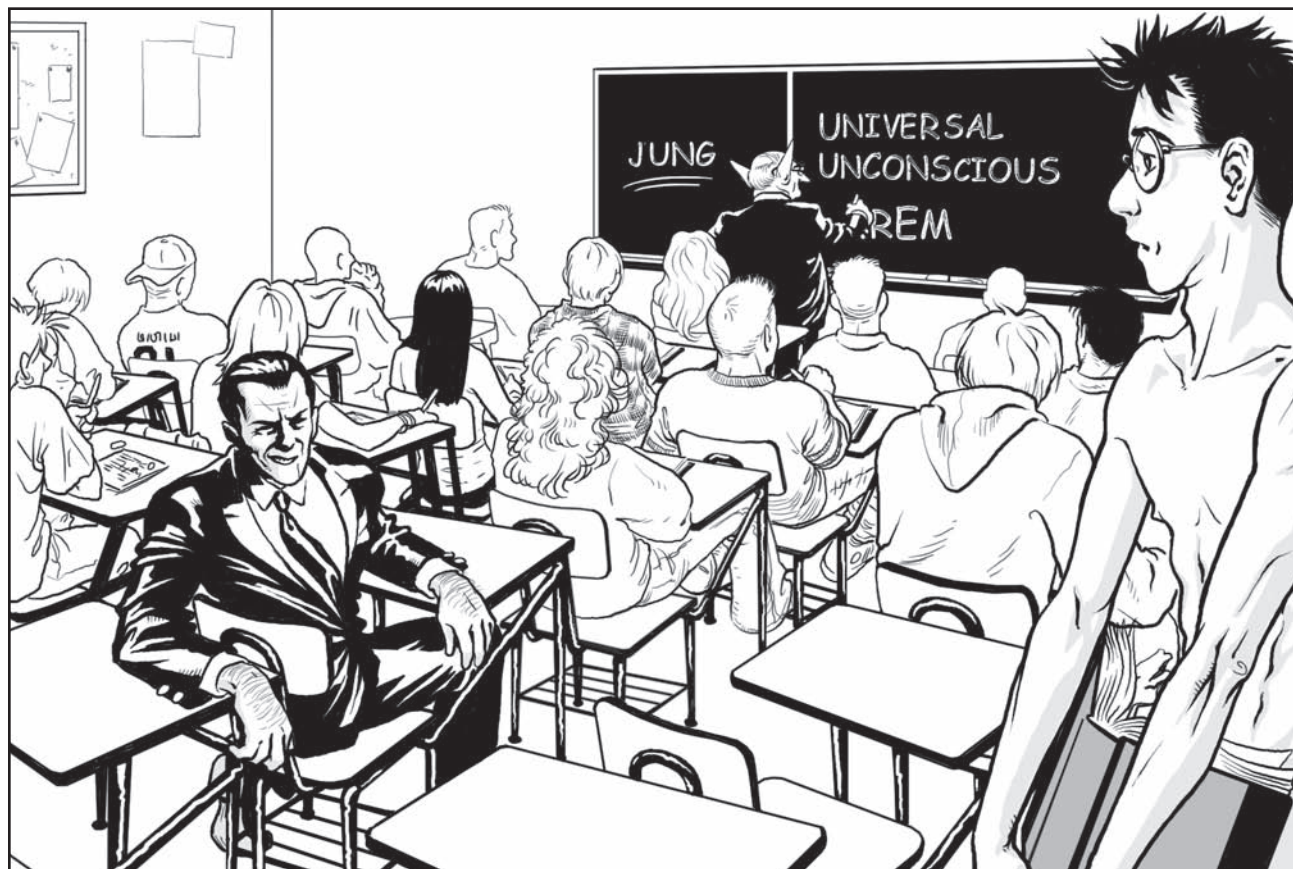
This ability allows the Gifted to enter someone else's sleep and either observe or attempt to alter the subject's dreams. To do so, the psychic must be fairly familiar with the subject's personality. To hone in on the dreams of one

sleeping person in a town of thousands is difficult. For this reason, psychics will often spend days observing a subject or even interact personally with the individual to get a better feel for his personality. By knowing the subject's personality, his dreams become like a beacon that the paranormal can focus on.

Once the character enters another person's dreams, he has two options. The paranormal can simply observe, or he can assume an active role in the course of the dream. If the character elects to watch, he is caught up in the dream's stage play. The character's actions are not his own – the dreamer's subconscious mind shapes them. This is the preferred method of spying on people in their dreams. By allowing the dreamer to direct the action, the Gifted has a better idea of the individual's thought process and psychology. Further, the dreamer tends not to notice the intrusion. They awake thinking, "I had the strangest dream about so and so last night."

The Gifted may attempt to alter any aspect of the dream include landscape, setting, the purpose of others in the dream, and his own role. In this way, the paranormal forces the sleeper into dreaming about certain events or pursuing certain actions. Since dreams are surreal and fluid, drastic alterations rarely disturb the sleeper. Frightening events, however, may cause the subject to wake up.

While employing Dream Voyage, the character is in a comatose state with no knowledge of what is happening



around his body. If someone disturbs the paranormal's body (e.g. trying to shake him awake) the connection between the psychic and his subject is lost. Likewise, if the sleeper awakens, the Gifted will be flushed out of the subject's mind. There is no ill effect in either situation, to the intruder or the dreamer.

Altering someone's dream has little effect in the short term. It might help them enjoy a good night's sleep if they suffer from recurring nightmares. Conversely, it can cause a poor night's sleep by inflicting nightmares on the subject. Over time, however, Dream Voyage can alter the subject's personality in subtle ways. By constantly inducing nightly dreams of angels, the subject may become obsessed with them or turn to religion for answers. Alternately, by generating nightmares about spider attacks, the subject might develop arachnophobia. These changes should take quite some time.

- **Hard:** Observing the dream of an individual is a Difficulty of Hard.
- **Very Hard:** Making a single alteration to a dream (changing the setting, the identity of an individual, etc.) is a Difficulty of Very Hard.
- **Nearly Impossible:** Making multiple alterations to a dream is a Difficulty of Nearly Impossible.

Contrary to popular myth, dying in one's dreams does not lead to death in the real world. If a paranormal's dream-self is murdered, there will be no ill effects to his comatose body, though he will awaken immediately. Likewise, murdering a sleeper's dream-self will not lead to the death of the subject's physical body.

PRECOGNITION

Precognition grants the Gifted premonitions that foretell the future or a possible future, usually as a warning of approaching danger. The visions are rarely detailed but will always provide useful clues.

- **Hard:** When a character opts to use Precognition but has no specific event or timeframe in mind, the Difficulty is Hard.
- **Very Hard:** When a character is looking into the future of a specific person or the outcome of a specific event, the Difficulty is always Very Hard.
- **Nearly Impossible:** The only time the

Difficulty is Nearly Impossible is if the future event directly involves the machinations of Heaven or Hell.

The Difficulty for a Precognition Action Check is almost always Hard or Very Hard. Only when the future event involves the Heavenly or Infernal Hosts is the Difficulty Nearly Impossible. This is true whether or not the character knows of the angelic or demonic involvement. The power that masks the presence of angels and demons also dims the precognitive abilities of the Gifted.

PSYCHIC HEALING

With the power of their minds alone, the Gifted can heal another's injuries and illnesses, though never their own. It requires total concentration during which time neither the subject nor the healer may perform any other actions. The psychic must lay his hands directly upon the infirmed for this power to work. There are no maladies that a Gifted with Psychic Healing cannot vanquish. Broken bones can be mended, and open wounds can be closed. Everything from the common cold to cancer can be cured with Psychic Healing.

- **Hard:** When a character seeks to cure a minor health problem (such as the flu) the Difficulty is Hard. Also, the Gifted may heal half of the injury points a subject has sustained (Blunt or Lethal).
- **Very Hard:** When a character seeks to cure a major disease (such as tuberculosis) the Difficulty is Very Hard. Also, the Gifted may heal all of a subject's injury points (Blunt and Lethal).
- **Nearly Impossible:** When a character wants to cure a major genetic defect (blindness, paraplegia, etc.) the Difficulty is Nearly Impossible.

PYROKINESIS

Pyrokinesis is the power to agitate the molecules of an object to the point of explosive friction, thus causing fires. Pyrokinetics have long been the Grail of government agencies looking for operatives with the ability to cause widespread damage. These individuals have also remained the rarest and most unstable of the psychic types, with volatile personalities to match their powers.

To use this ability, the paranormal must first be within sight of the target. The character then focuses his attention

on a small but fixed area from which a localized flashpoint is created that causes the target to erupt in flames. Once the target is aflame, it will burn normally with the fire spreading or subsiding according to the environmental conditions around it.

- **Hard:** When the character wants to ignite a single small item that is naturally flammable (a shirt, a wooden chair, etc.) the Difficulty is Hard.
- **Very Hard:** When the character wants to ignite a single large item that is naturally flammable (a large desk, a deck, etc.) the Difficulty is Very hard.
- **Nearly Impossible:** When the character wants to ignite a single small or large item that is not naturally flammable (such as anything metal) the Difficulty is Nearly Impossible.

Warning: Pyrokinesis can be turned into a deadly weapon when directed at a living being. The GM should carefully consider the ramifications of putting this power into the hands of player characters.

PYROKINETIC COMBAT

If Pyrokinesis is used to ignite flesh, the target instantly takes 4 points of Lethal Damage and will continue to suffer 1 point of Lethal Damage every few seconds until the fire is extinguished.

If Pyrokinesis is used to ignite clothing worn by a target, the individual instantly takes 2 points of Lethal Damage and will continue to suffer 1 point of Lethal Damage every few seconds until the article is removed or the fire is extinguished.

TELEKINESIS

Simply put, Telekinesis is mind over matter. The paranormal affects his physical environment just by thinking about it, thus turning thoughts into the physical force that acts upon objects. Telekinesis is an ability limited only by the imagination of the Gifted possessing it.

A character with Telekinesis can lift an object or group of objects and move it about at walking speed. He can manipulate items as though held in the character's hand, like wielding a knife as a weapon, firing a gun, diffusing a bomb, etc.

Telekinesis works at full power at close range (within twenty feet) but items far away tend to be moved about at

a slower pace. Like Pyrokinesis, this Psychic Skill requires that target to be within sight.

- **Hard:** When a character wants to lift a light object (20 pounds or less) the Difficulty is Hard.
- **Very Hard:** When a character want to lift an object of medium weight (20 to 200 pounds) the Difficulty is Very Hard.
- **Nearly Impossible:** When a character wants to lift a heavy object (over 200 pounds) the Difficulty is Nearly Impossible.

TELEKINETIC COMBAT

If Telekinesis is used in combat, whether to “punch” an individual from a distance or wield a hand-to-hand weapon, the psychic's Fortitude Rank is used instead of his Strength Rank for determining damage. Telekinetic “punches” always do Blunt Damage.

WILD TALENTS

Wild Talents are not like Psychic Skills; the Gifted cannot invoke or control them. Instead, each Wild Talent reacts to an individual-driven stimulus that triggers its effect. The paranormal may eventually discover the stimulus, but initially it remains a mystery and a nuisance. If the Psychic understands the stimulus, he can deliberately subject himself to it, thereby forcing the power to work. Otherwise, from the paranormal's perspective, it apparently activates randomly.

SAMPLE STIMULI

Below is a sampling of possible stimuli that could trigger a Wild Talent. Gamemasters can use any of them or invent their own. When creating stimuli, GMs should ensure that they are common enough that the Wild Talent is easily triggered but not so common that the ability activates all the time.

- Physical exhaustion
- A particular emotion, like fear or love
- Being near supernatural phenomenon
- Stress

SAMPLE WILD TALENTS

Below are a few sample Wild Talents, though GMs should feel free to create more. These powers are meant to spice up a game and can be as confusing as they are helpful. GMs should use them as interesting wildcards.

- **Psychometry:** Sometimes people and events leave an indelible mark upon objects and places. A paranormal with Psychometry can perceive these events in vivid detail when they come into physical contact with such items and locations. When Psychometry activates, the Gifted experiences a flashback about the person who last touched the object or an event in which the object played a significant role. Sometimes the paranormal will assume the role of the person possessing the object in the vision. While the Gifted can see what happened, he cannot necessarily tell who he is in the scene. Further, a flood of raw emotions often accompanies these flashbacks, providing an empathic context. All of this can be used to disturbing and interesting effect by a creative Gamemaster.
- **True Sight:** A Gifted with this ability can see beyond the shadow of illusion to perceive reality as it really exists. Ghosts, angels, demons, and spirits are all visible to the psychic when True Sight is activated. This is both a dangerous and useful tool

for a GM. He can use it to give characters hints and clues about the true nature of reality and the strange beings who operate invisibly within it, but it can also ruin the mystery of the game if it reveals the truth too quickly.

- **Visions:** Periodically, the psychic glimpses events in the past, future, or present. These flashes of insight usually take the form of signs and portents, and they always point toward a significant event in a story. GMs will want to prepare a vision or two in advance if any player characters have this Wild Talent.

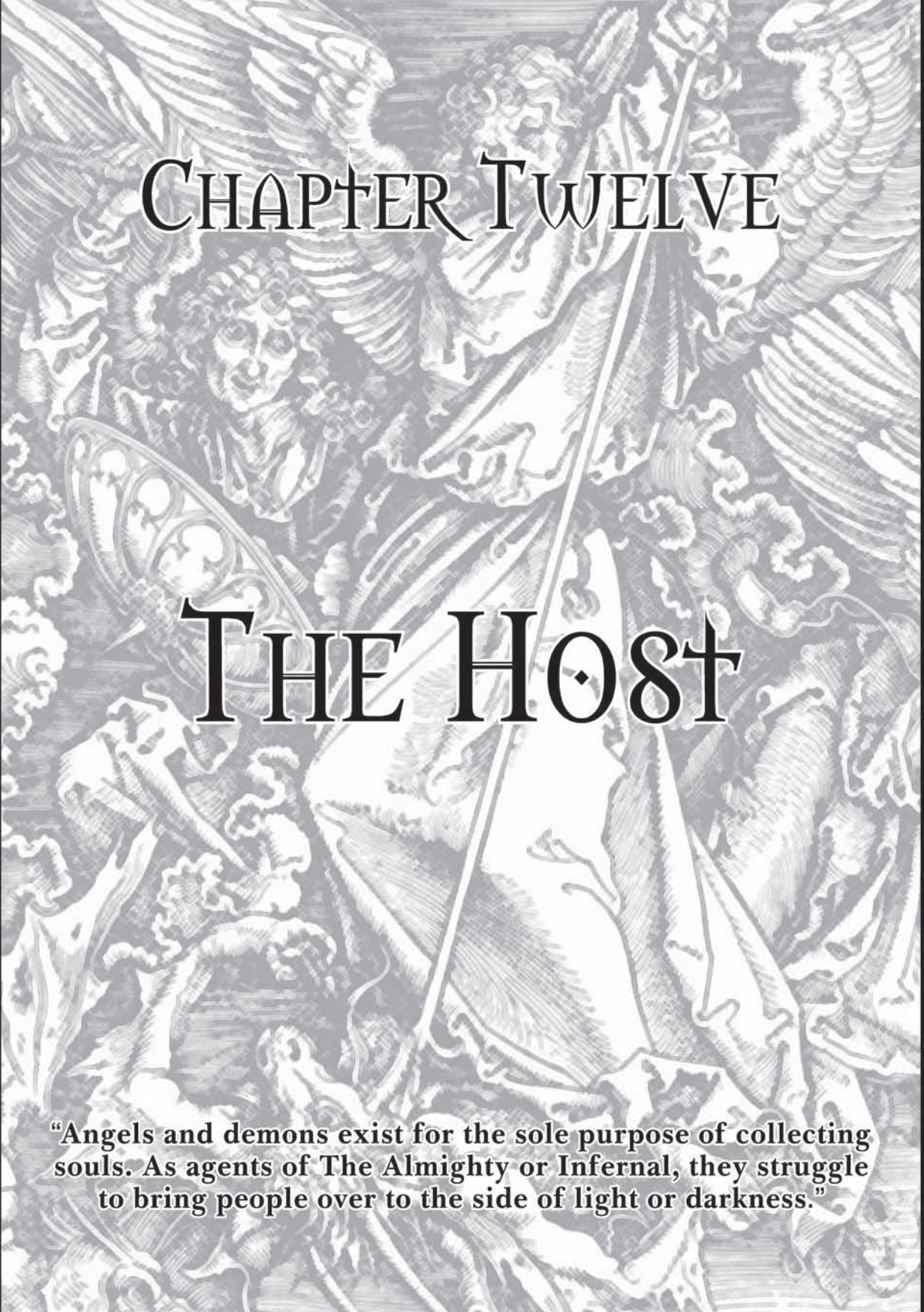
GAME MECHANICS

No mechanics are provided for Wild Talents. They simply happen when exposed to the proper stimuli. GMs who worry about their games being overrun with the constant activation of Wild Talents may want to impose a limit of one activation per day, week, month, etc. If this is done, the time frame must remain consistent to give the player a chance to discover the stimulus. Another tactic is to make the stimulus exceedingly rare so the GM has more control over the regularity of the Wild Talent's activation. A final option is to make each activation (wanted or unwanted) cost the Gifted one Destiny point. While this will successfully limit the amount of possible activations, gamemasters must not be constantly robbing characters of hard-earned Destiny.

TRUE SIGHT AND MELTDOWN

If any character with True Sight encounters Meltdown, the GM will need to determine whether or not they can detect his true nature. Gamemasters should handle this situation in whatever way best suits their games, but here are two suggestions:

1. Meltdown is losing his divinity and aging like a mortal man, as well as getting madder with each passing day. His millennia on Earth has corrupted his divinity to the point where he is only a shadow of his former glory. In this scenario, his separation from Heaven means that he has fallen from grace so greatly that his angelic presence is undetectable by the Host or the Gifted. This "humanizing" of Meltdown explains why the forces of Heaven and Hell have paid him no mind: They have no idea who Meltdown really is.
2. Meltdown's divinity can still be sensed, but his power has waned so much over the millennia that neither Heaven nor Hell pay him much mind. They are aware of his presence in Potter's Lake, but they consider him mad, ineffectual, and unworthy of their time. Of course, this might change should any characters with True Sight show an interest in this fallen angel. GMs should also consider that even though the Gifted can sense that there is something mystical about Meltdown, they might not realize that he is actually a fallen angel. In other words, without a point of comparison to measure Meltdown against, they'll know he's not human, but they will not necessarily know that he is an angel.



CHAPTER TWELVE

THE HOST

“Angels and demons exist for the sole purpose of collecting souls. As agents of The Almighty or Infernal, they struggle to bring people over to the side of light or darkness.”

Angels and demons, known collectively as the Host, are the administrators of divine/infernal will. They are celestial creatures in the service of God or Lucifer and the foot soldiers of their masters' imperial commands. They are extremely powerful and not to be trifled with lightly, if at all. Angels and demons exist for the sole purpose of collecting souls. As agents of The Almighty or Infernal, they struggle to bring people over to the side of light or darkness. They assist, inspire, manipulate, and persuade humanity for their own ends.

Angels and demons do not possess souls of their own. These creatures exist solely to serve their masters, be it God or the Devil, and they do so with a determination unimaginable to the mortal frame of reference.

Characters will rarely encounter angels and demons beyond the quick flapping of wings or a shadow in the corner of a person's eye that darts away. These creatures move through the world quietly and work their affairs through mortal proxies. It will not be the angel reaping souls for God but the evangelist gathering followers through his snake oil pitch. It is not the demon driving those teens to murder but the cult leader condoning vengeance upon all enemies. Angels and demons have hidden among mortals for enough millennia to understand the merits of subtlety. Even when men encounter these beings, they will be hard-pressed to remember the specifics of the encounter and will eventually explain away the event as a dream or hallucination (in game terms, a Fortitude Check with a Difficulty of Nearly Impossible is required to perceive them for what they really are). This is mostly Lucifer's doing, for at the contest's inception, The Almighty already possessed an advantage. Should an infernal minion reveal itself to a human, that person believes in God by default because there can be no Hell without Heaven and no Lucifer without God. The same limitation does not affect angels. By manifesting publicly, angels can immediately shift the contest in the Lord's favor. Therefore, to even the playing field, Lucifer arranged it that any mortal who sees an unmasked angel or demon shall slowly forget the meeting, and any recording of the encounter will show nothing. Should an angel or demon be clothed in human guise, people will recall their encounter with the being but remember it as being perfectly human. However, there are instances where singularly devoted individuals remember meeting the divine/infernal, but these are rare. In conclusion, there is seldom anything to gain through full manifestation, meaning angels and demons usually operate through proxies or disguises to achieve their goals.

Angels and demons each rely on different methods to pursue their ends, but they share the same goals. The aim of the celestial and infernal is to lure human souls to their fold. Therefore, both creatures (in human guises) will appear friendly at first, offering to help people with their problems. Of course, this friendship is insincere since the Host is only interested in furthering their own agenda by

whatever means necessary.

Typically, angels attempt to inspire their targets, hoping these individuals will, in turn, guide others. They strive to instill faith in the Lord, prove God is at work in the world, and enforce the teachings of the Bible and other holy books. It is important to note that angels are not the kind seen on television or the guardians portrayed in modern myth. These are the creatures of the Old Testament, the instruments of God's will. They will threaten, cajole, or harm anyone who impedes them.

Demons, on the other hand, love offering temptations through vague promises, valuable possessions, or otherworldly knowledge to corrupt their targets. Demons willingly lie, steal, and cheat their way to victory – no tactic is unacceptable. Oddly enough, demons are easier to deal with than angels. They understand far more of the human condition than their heavenly counterparts and can offer more rewards in the form of instant gratification or material goods. Additionally, while it takes a lifetime to live a life of charity, it takes but a moment to cause harm. Demons know this and are therefore more patient in their pursuit of souls. They know they can undo an angel's work by convincing the mortal to commit sin, even once. Afterwards, once leads to twice, and twice leads to habit.

Angels possess the advantage that mortals can turn to God in their final moments and seek forgiveness, regardless of their life of debauchery. This toughens the process of collecting souls for demons, especially since salvation is only a breath away, and it can undo years of stygian influence. The Infernal, however, possess an advantage to balance the scales: anyone who does not actively choose God goes to Lucifer by default. Thus, some demons simply work to weaken humanity's faith in God.

Generally, it suits both sides not to kill those who have yet to make their decision. For angels, the principle is simple in that a person who has found or believes in the

NO STATISTICS

The Host are not given statistics or recommended powers because they are devices of the GM and capable of near-infinite feats. They are, after all, manifestations of the two principle forces in the universe. If they wanted to lift a car, they could. If they wished to spit plumes of fire or fly, they could. Gamemasters should remember that angels destroyed Sodom and Gomorrah, killed all the first-born of Egypt, and fulfilled countless deeds mentioned in the Bible. All of this means that characters cannot and should not contend with angels and demons directly. It is only the will of God and Lucifer that stops them from rampaging across the world and destroying it with ease.



Lord will perpetuate his faith by bringing others into the fold. Likewise, demons know that misery begets misery and would prefer sinners to spread as much suffering and doubt as possible. Killing mortals simply to reap their souls is shortsighted thinking and unbecoming of the Host.

Angels and demons appear where and when they can do the most work. Since they can move between the mortal sphere and their masters' realms with ease, the Host simply appears and vanishes as the mood strikes. Still, they mostly consort with those whom they can either manipulate or whom they feel will affect the most people. They do not just randomly manifest. They appear to mortals who best suit their masters' purposes.

Angels and demons also have the benefit of knowing all the souls on Earth and their intentions. Mortals have no hope of keeping their intent hidden from the Host, meaning mortals can trick them, but they cannot lie to them.

LEGENDS

Existing legends of angels and demons are convoluted, complex, muddled, and worthy of their own book. Although the Bible, Torah, and Koran mention few angels and demons by name, hundreds of the Host are titled by latter accounts, fictional or otherwise. Even the role and

function of several angels shift and change over time with Satan himself referred to as God's messenger in the Old Testament.

All of this means gamemasters can make what they will of the Host. The hierarchy, names, and functions of these beings are open to creative license. Gamemasters may prefer to draw inspiration from the Bible or from fictional accounts of modern writers. Creative GMs may simply opt to name the Host themselves and map out their own hierarchy for the creatures. There is also no reason any of this need be done. Since the Host occupy a shadowy corner of *Heaven & Earth* and are seldom encountered, the Gamemaster may decide it's unimportant to name any of them (or their functions).

THE GIFTED

Beyond the truly mad, the Host is usually invisible to human eyes. The Gifted are the exception to this rule. Due to the divine origin of their powers, some psychics can perceive the Host for what they really are (see **True Sight** in **Chapter XI: The Gifted**) as well as remember their encounters with them. This means that angels and demons will move more cautiously in the presence of these individuals, lest their work be discovered.

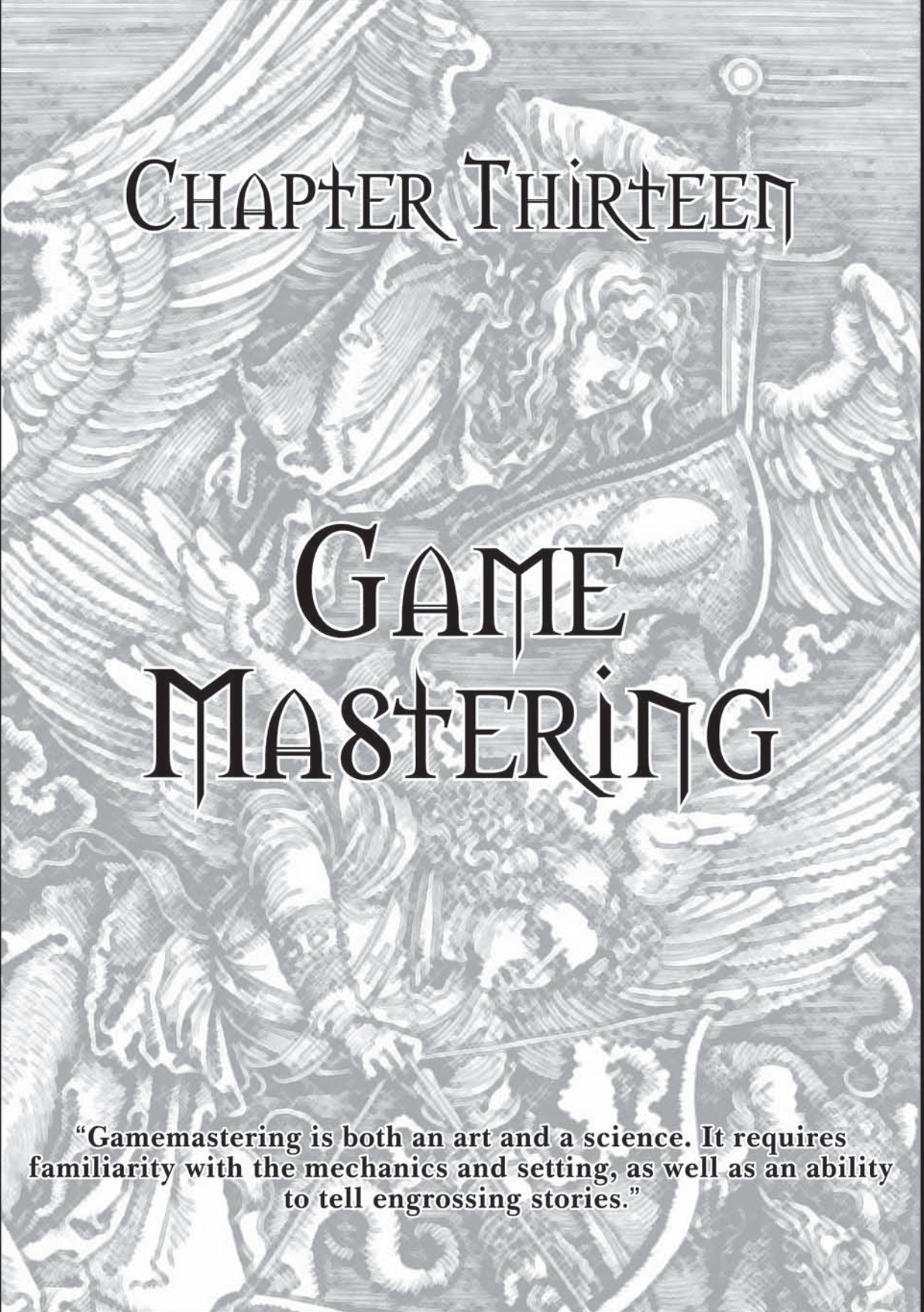


POSSESSION

Countless fiction portrays demonic possession, but for the most part, these accounts are inaccurate. While demons (and angels for that matter) have the power to possess a mortal, this is rarely done. Too often, the human mind snaps under such duress and cannot make a true choice for God or Satan. This is unacceptable to both sides for a wasted soul serves no purpose. There is also the possibility that the possessed will eventually turn to the opposition once his ordeal is over. Such reactions have happened in the past, and the Infernal have learned from these mistakes. They have seen far too many of the possessed flee into the hands of the enemy, post-possession.

A final consideration is the effect possession has on those around the victim. More than one apathetic family or community has turned to God after seeing the Devil's handiwork. As noted earlier, subtlety is the key if the Host is to accomplish their agendas.

Most accounts of possession are actually the work of spirits. Since mankind is largely unaware of the creatures that walk the shadowy outskirts of their world, it is understandable that they cannot differentiate between the two. Most assume that all possession is demonic even though this is usually not the case.



CHAPTER THIRTEEN

GAME MASTERING

“Gamemastering is both an art and a science. It requires familiarity with the mechanics and setting, as well as an ability to tell engrossing stories.”

Gamemastering is both an art and a science. It requires a familiarity with the mechanics and setting, as well as an ability to tell engrossing stories. The intent of this chapter is to cover the fundamentals of gamemastering *Heaven & Earth*, including story construction, storytelling techniques, useful advice, guidelines for awarding Destiny, rules for character advancement, and more.

PREMISE

Heaven & Earth is a roleplaying game of discovery and destiny. The focus is on investigation and social interaction, with combat playing only a minor role. Although ignorant at the outset, the player characters will come to realize that the Apocalypse is beginning, and they have a part to play in the drama. Since the small town of Potter's Lake is the backdrop for some of the pivotal events of the final days, it is also the place the player characters call home.

Initially, the Gamemaster should not focus on the End Time but instead worry about introducing the characters to their world slowly. During the formative stages (i.e. the first few sessions), the GM should not divulge too much. It is the not knowing that keeps the players hooked to the plot and helps their imagination work against them. The Gamemaster should drop hints and portents but answer few

questions, at least early on. The reality that the supernatural exists should be a slow discovery. The players should realize through their initial clues that matters are not what they seem. The GM should give them reason to question the nature of reality and an impetus to explore it further.

Between the machinations of Heaven and Hell, the plotting of secret societies, the unexplained phenomenon, the quirky townsfolk, and the general weirdness of Potter's Lake, gamemasters should have ample material to throw at players. Discovering all the secrets of *Heaven & Earth* is a considerable task, and one that will take some time to complete.

STORYTELLING

Characters, setting, plot, subplots, theme, and mood are all important components to storytelling. The next few sections offer advice on each of these as it relates to *Heaven & Earth*.

PLAYER CHARACTERS

The players are the most vital component of *Heaven & Earth*. They play characters at the center of the drama and serve as the game's fuel. Without them, the story goes



nowhere. If the players are not enjoying the game, the GM must challenge and entertain them. Therefore, when the Gamemaster works on a story, he should keep in mind what his players might find entertaining. If the story interests the GM but not the players, the game will ultimately fail.

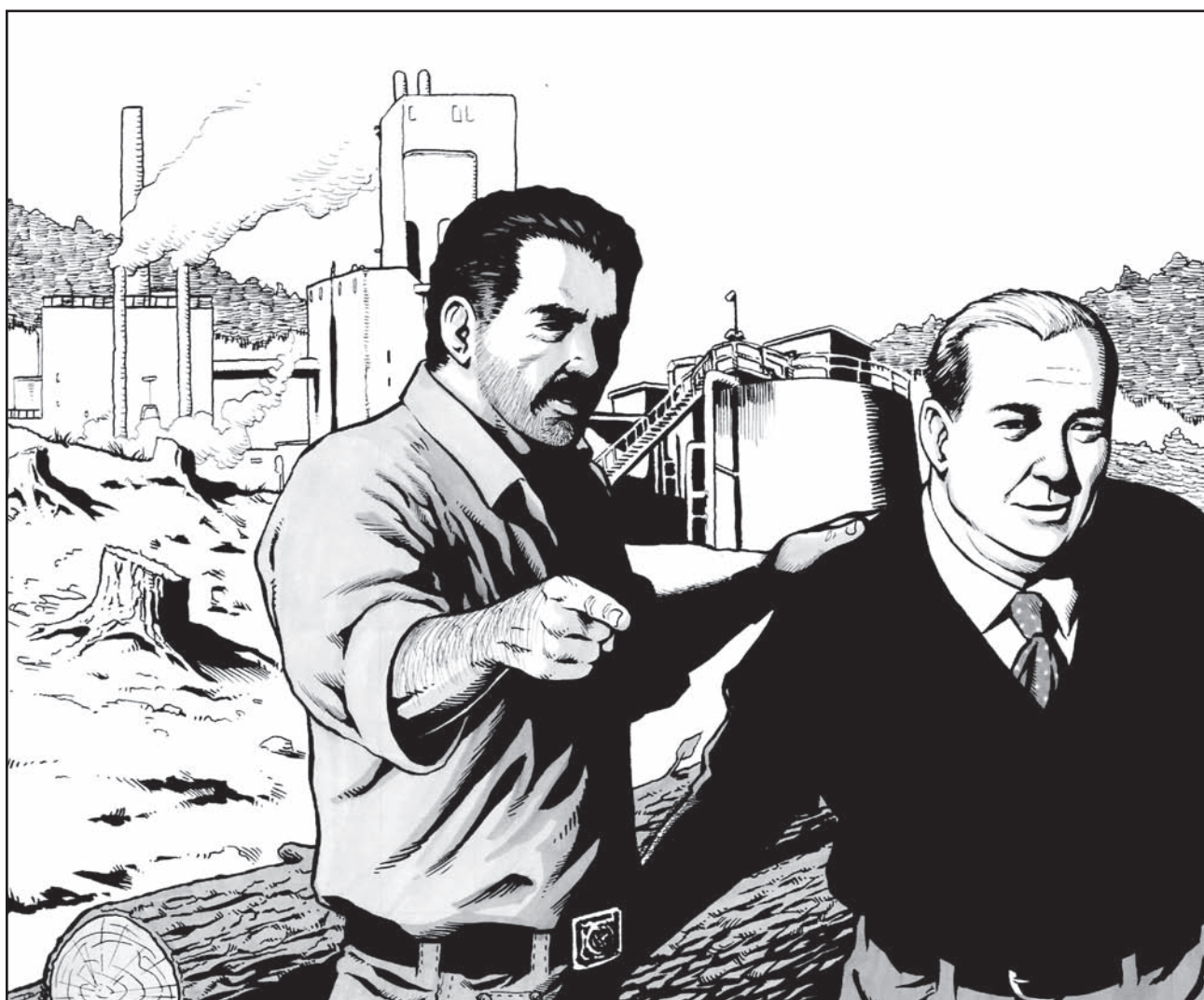
When designing stories, the Gamemaster must remember that the player characters are the focus of the game. The story should allow players to showcase their roleplaying abilities and challenge the players. The Gamemaster should never script the entire scenario and pigeonhole the players into fulfilling his vision of the game. The GM must decide, in broad strokes, what is happening in the game world and create the hooks to involve the player characters. After that, the players should make their characters' decisions while the Gamemaster reacts to their actions, describes the results of those actions, and plays the NPCs.

Gamemasters should tailor their stories to the players' tastes. If the GM understands them well, he can design scenarios around the players' hopes and fears. The

occupation each player has chosen for his character will say much about where the player's interests lie. If a player has assigned a particular skill or hobby to his character, it's safe to assume that those things interest him, at least enough to roleplay them. The player will want to make use of these skills; otherwise choosing them was pointless. The GM is obliged to provide opportunities for him to do so. A character's hobbies should also come into play during the game. They provide insight into a character's psyche and are excellent for fleshing out a character's personality. Whether during the main storyline or personal subplots, a character's hobbies and personal interests should surface from time to time.

NPCS

The most direct means by which the players experience Potter's Lake is through the non-player characters living



within its borders. Although the player characters are at the heart of the drama, the NPCs are important too. They have their own hopes, dreams, fears, and desires. The Gamemaster must always give NPCs private agendas and a life behind the scenes. Events keep moving forward because the NPCs influence them. Without any aspirations, NPCs are nothing more than lifeless cardboard caricatures.

NPCs should react to the situations around them and be changed by the events they experience. They should grow as individuals, making new friends and enemies, honing their skills, and altering their opinions as any person does over time. Gamemasters who allow their NPCs to devolve into static, flat characters will be doing a great disservice to their games.

PLOT

Plot is the natural consequence of action. It is the trajectory along which a story travels after a character or event sets it into motion. Without the action and conflict of plots, there could be no stories – even if the GM created the most detailed and interesting characters imaginable. Moreover, gripping plots are essential to the long-term health of any lengthy *Heaven & Earth* epic.

In creating plots, the GM should consider several elements including structure, action, and conflict. Many gamemasters overlook structure, falsely believing it will come about as a natural consequence of the action or conflict of a session. While that can be true, it is not a certainty. For example, what is the natural structure of a story concerning the rescue of a young boy from the clutches of Project: Grayscale? How about an investigation into the unexplained disappearance of Father Gorrand's predecessor as pastor of St. Anselm? Many plots are amenable to multiple methods of recounting. Thus, the Gamemaster should give serious consideration to what constitutes the beginning, middle, and end of any storyline or session. Doing so not only makes for smoother play, but it's also a boon in any epic, long-term game where story arcs and recurring themes play a major role.

In the context of a long-term, multi-session game, conflict

BRAINSTORMING

Brainstorming is a great way to scavenge the mind for ideas. Gamemasters in need of a plotline can use this technique to spark the imagination. After writing down dozens of thoughts, words, sentence fragments, etc., the GM can fish through all the data for hints of a story. Some of these ideas can be linked, forming the beginnings of a story. Others will not fit into the picture. Gamemasters should not be surprised to find themselves throwing away more ideas than they use. However, some of this excess might be useful in crafting future tales.

can become much more significant – not in a sense of being more prevalent but in requiring more planning. To keep a game vital after many sessions, the GM must consider its central conflict, as well as the lesser conflicts that add spice to the story. If the Gamemaster has treated the NPCs of Potter's Lake like other characters, giving them their own lives, this should not prove difficult. One benefit of fleshing out NPCs is gaining an understanding of how they (and their goals) fit into the grand scheme of things.

SUBPLOTS

Another key ingredient to a good story is the subplot, a smaller scenario tangentially related to the main one. Subplots are crucial for several reasons. First, they keep the game from becoming dull. Stories that proceed from point to point with nothing in between lack substance. Subplots spice up the action and backdrop, allowing the Gamemaster to focus attention away from the main plot. Having two or three subplots open at any one time keeps the action interesting and fresh.

Secondly, subplots allow the Gamemaster to shift the focus between characters. A player character may not be important to the main plot currently, but if he is part of an engaging subplot, the player feels involved and important to the story. Subplots also allow the players to explore their passions and hobbies. As long as all the players have something to do and are given their moment to shine, they will be content.

Thirdly, subplots allow the GM to control the dissemination of critical information. If the entirety of the action revolves around *Heaven & Earth's* main storyline (i.e. the Apocalypse), the Gamemaster will have to surrender key secrets much faster. Subplots allow the GM to cut back and forth between several plotlines and not reveal vital clues as quickly.

This technique also enables the Gamemaster to dole out information to different player characters. There is nothing

IDEAS

Coming up with an interesting plotline can be a daunting task for some gamemasters, but reading the chapters on Potter's Lake, its citizens, and the secrets of the game should make this less so. Each of these chapters contains dozens of potential story seeds that can be made into full-blown plotlines. Perusing this background material is an excellent way for a GM to spark his own imagination.

FIRST SESSION

The hook is the most important part of a story arc's first session. It should be exciting and entice players to get involved. A good mystery will intrigue some, a sense of adventure will motivate others, and some players will need their characters to have a vested interest in order to get involved. This will vary from player to player and group to group. The Gamemaster should know his players' hot buttons and involve them appropriately.

The theme and mood of the story arc should be established in the first session. It's also a good idea to introduce a few of the important NPCs and locations that will be featured throughout the story. However, GMs must not go overboard, introducing too much at one time. The setting of *Heaven & Earth* has great depth, and too much data in the first session can overwhelm some players. Additional NPCs and locations can easily be added (and will be added) in future sessions.

quite like offering separate key pieces of a puzzle to several characters who have no reason to interact immediately. The GM then has a situation where everyone knows a little, but if they managed to share information, the whole picture suddenly becomes much clearer. By handing out separate bits of information, the Gamemaster decreases the likelihood that this will happen immediately and prevents one character from monopolizing the clues.

Finally, major plots often start as subplots. They begin as little events behind the scenes and grow until they become the focus. This is in the Gamemaster's favor since it is usually a player who serves as the subplot's catalyst, through his actions. Anything that uses player characters to drive the plot is good for the game.

Subplots should weave in and out of the main storyline, building momentum as they go. Gamemasters may want to link them to the main storyline by theme, though this is a matter of personal preference.

DEVELOPMENTS & SCENES

As events unfold, characters will react to them, and both the events and the reactions will have consequences. These consequences are developments, and they shape the direction of a game.

Scenes are important story moments that need to be roleplayed out. Mundane actions that link scenes together need not be played out unless they provide excellent roleplaying opportunities for the players or grant insight into a particular event or NPC.

Developments and scenes are the meat of a storyline. They can be fast paced or slow, but they always drive the game forward. Gamemasters should keep a log of important developments and scenes; that way they are not forgotten. Reflecting on what has transpired can give the Gamemaster a sense of where his game might be headed or how he should alter it in relation to what has gone before.

SETTING

Chapter IV provides a great deal of information on Potter's Lake, including its history and places of interest. Gamemasters can use that information to make the town a vibrant setting for their tales. However, Potter's Lake is more than the setting for *Heaven & Earth*; it is as much a character as the people who inhabit it. This fact becomes especially important when running an ongoing series of sessions or story arcs. Over the course of play, characters grow and develop. They change in accordance with the events they experience. The same should be true of Potter's Lake itself. This small town is a living, breathing community with its share of vicissitudes. The challenge lies in constructing stories that convey this dynamism. It is no simple task to be sure, but it makes *Heaven & Earth* the unique roleplaying experience that it is.

An additional benefit of treating Potter's Lake as a character is it creates a bond between the characters and the game's setting. Players can see the results of their characters' actions and enjoy the knowledge that they made a difference in the life of the town. In this way, they truly share the world in which they live.

With a deepening bond, the characters will reflect elements of the town's background, becoming as important to its existence as its resident NPCs. They will take on significant roles and come to see the townsfolk not as useful tools, enemies, or obstacles, but as individuals like themselves. When this occurs, the Gamemaster has succeeded in making his players care about the setting and its denizens.

Heaven & Earth differs from many roleplaying games in that it derives much of its power from its small community setting. Potter's Lake is a community of people who call the town home. Whether they are catholic priests, schoolteachers, or law enforcement officers, these people feel an attachment to Potter's Lake. They are as much a part of it as it is a part of them.

The Gamemaster should work to ensure that the player characters feel some sense of kinship to their environment. This does not mean they should blindly support all the outlandish and sometimes horrific things happening within the town's boundaries. Rather, it is important for the characters to feel a connection with, or a pull attracting them to, Potter's Lake. If the town remains an abstraction to the players, then events will mean little or nothing to

BRINGING THE CHARACTERS TOGETHER

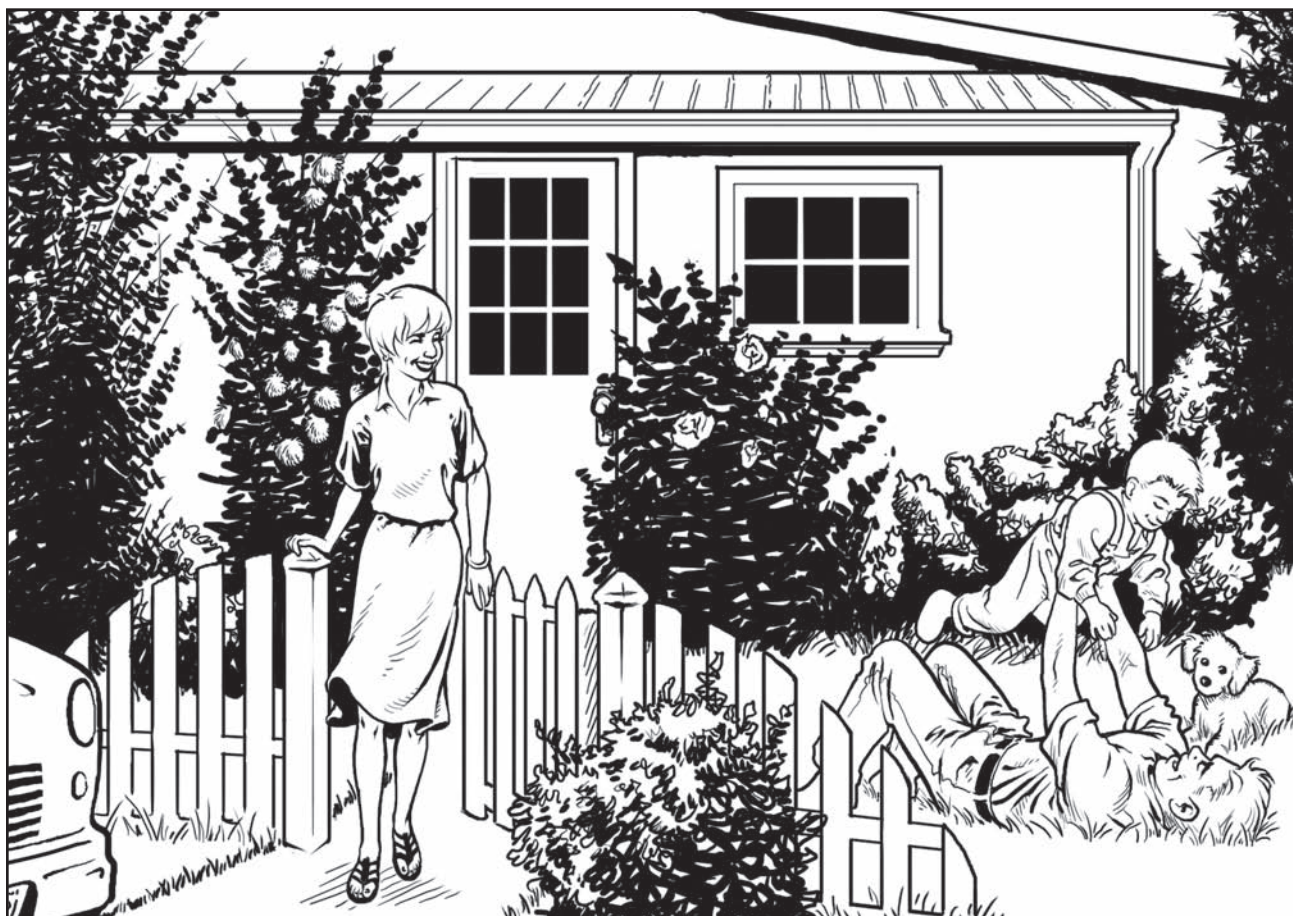
Unlike many roleplaying games, *Heaven & Earth* can shine brightest during one-on-one roleplaying. That is, the Gamemaster roleplays a scene involving one or just a few of the player characters while the other players wait their turn. If the GM is a good storyteller and has crafted an engrossing tale, those in wait should enjoy watching the others play, provided they don't have to wait too long. These scenes should be short as not to waste the time of everyone currently not playing.

Most of the time, however, the Gamemaster will want all the player characters together in one location. There are a few ways to accomplish this. Firstly, the GM can have all the characters belong to a community organization such as the PTA, the Jaycees, or the Chamber of Commerce. This gives them reasons to regularly interact with one another, and when they do, the GM can stage events to draw them into the plot.

Secondly, the Gamemaster can have all the player characters inducted into the same secret society. This gives them a regular reason and place to meet. The secretive nature of these organizations can create strong bonds between the characters. Additionally, the organization can be a source of additional storylines or subplots as players try to advance their society's agendas or discover its deeper secrets.

Thirdly, the characters can all be friends or even live on the same block. This assures that they'll be constantly bumping into one another. If the Gamemaster has the characters living on the same block, he can stage an event there for all of them to witness simultaneously, enticing them into the plot.

Lastly, the Gamemaster can use NPCs to unite the players. He or she can be a mutual friend to all the player characters, even if none of them are friends themselves. The NPC can call on the player characters for help with some matter, simultaneously drawing each of them into the plot. This method provides immediate impetus for everyone to pursue the GM's main storyline.



them. Their characters must learn to care about Potter's Lake and its community of people before they can plumb the depths that *Heaven & Earth* offers.

There are many ways for the Gamemaster to achieve this goal, but two are particularly effective. The first is creating compelling stories that establish connections between the player characters and the town. If the players aid the Chamber of Commerce in preserving the town's good name, for example, they will become respected citizens admired for their willingness to place the town's welfare ahead of their own. Similarly, compelling characters can serve to draw players into the community of Potter's Lake. Romantic relationships, friendships, and rivalries are all equally good ways to establish connections. The GM should remember that anything that can serve as the basis for a story could also help develop a sense of community.

The second option is allowing the players to develop small portions of Potter's Lake for themselves. If, for example, their characters all live at the same boarding house on Elm Street, why not let them describe the other tenants or the building itself? This not only saves the Gamemaster time, but it also establishes a very real connection between the players and their environment. When they play *Heaven & Earth*, they can see a part of the setting that is theirs; they created it and gave it life. This is a wonderful way to personalize the game and ensure its longevity.

THEME

Human destiny is the overarching theme of *Heaven & Earth*. God and Satan's game has trapped humanity in the middle of their struggle. Does this mean humanity is destined to be nothing more than tallies on a scorecard or can they fight back, forging a new path for themselves? Freewill vs. predestination is the main theme underpinning *Heaven & Earth*.

Individual story arcs and plotlines will have their own themes, unconnected to the main one. These themes are ideas, points of view, or perceptions embodied by the events in the game. They are recurring motifs that surface throughout a storyline. Themes are the earmark of good literature and can enrich roleplaying equally as well. They force people to think, even if they ultimately disagree with the idea or point of view presented.

Themes create memorable stories and add significantly to the drama. The Gamemaster must consider how to approach the thematic elements of his story. They should never be heavy-handed or beat players in the head. Subtlety is the key.

One technique the Gamemaster can use to impart theme is having one specific NPC embody the theme of the story. This works best if the NPC does not appear too often, since players are astute enough to know when someone is hitting them over the head with a motif. The words, actions,

personality, or background of the NPC can be used to impart the theme.

Additionally, player characters can also be useful vehicles for theme. Once a story is underway, it is likely a player character will embody the story's theme (or its antithesis) inadvertently. The Gamemaster should encourage this kind of behavior when it happens by focusing on the player character for that session or scene.

Another technique is allowing theme to be the glue linking disparate storylines and subplots together. By doing so, a game acquires a unity that keeps players focused and lends much needed depth. Any long-running game of *Heaven & Earth* requires both focus and depth to survive and prosper. Theme is perhaps the best way to achieve both.

MOOD

Mood is the pervading feeling that hangs over a story. It might be consistent throughout an ongoing epic or vary from story arc to story arc. Lapses from the established mood are fine as long as they are not prevalent. There are three key ideas to evoking mood in *Heaven & Earth*. They are horror, surrealism, and absurdity.

Horror scares through suspense and mounting tension. It should be disturbing and creepy, producing feelings of fear and dread. A person's own imagination is the best facilitator of this. It will paint a picture far more horrific than any words or images can describe. In other words, what is unknown and unseen is far more frightening than anything else.

Surrealism is a storytelling technique designed to simulate the bizarre, nonsensical nature of dreams. Dreams have a logic all their own and can take the sleeper on strange and sometimes disjointed rides into the world of the odd. Dreams are difficult to explain the next day, yet make perfect sense while happening. Surrealism is the application of these dream-like qualities to waking events.

When things are so bizarre, so off-kilter that they become almost comical, that is absurdity. While something that is absurd is meant to be funny, it isn't slapstick funny. Rather, it's strange and quirky. The audience laughs because something is so out of place it strikes them as funny, though it's a disturbing, uncomfortable laughter. In *Heaven & Earth*, absurdity helps emphasize mood, contributing to an existing level of weirdness in the gameworld, thereby making things all the more disturbing. The comical moments created through absurdity can also provide some lightheartedness to an otherwise dark story. Used properly, absurdity grants respite from horror and enhances it at the same time.

Heaven & Earth is flexible enough to allow for a variety of other moods. Gamemasters may employ whatever mood they wish, but they need to establish it in the first session and keep it relatively consistent throughout a story arc. After a few sessions, players will come to expect a certain



mood, and the Gamemaster should oblige. Of course, pulling the rug out from underneath the players by briefly changing the mood can be useful for keeping things lively and keeping them on edge. However, this technique must be used sparingly so not to completely destroy the mood the Gamemaster has carefully constructed. For example, if the Gamemaster has created a sense of dread throughout the story arc, then runs one session as a comedy, it may be difficult to recapture the original mood.

The mood of the game can be a synthesis of multiple moods. In fact, the overarching mood of *Heaven & Earth* falls into this category. The entirety of this book supports this synthesis of horror, absurdity, and surrealism, but GMs are welcome to shape their stories as they see fit.

STORY FORMAT

There are three types of stories that can be constructed for play: a stand-alone session, a single story arc, or an ongoing series. While certain commonalities exist between the three, there are important differences as well. The

following sections detail each approach, providing advice along the way.

STAND-ALONES

A stand-alone session is a single story that can be handled in one sitting (i.e. a few hours). As such, it needs to have a clearly defined beginning and end. A stand-alone session is much like episodic television in that it requires little to no knowledge of previous events or back-story to enjoy. When time is a factor, or the player group is constantly changing, a stand-alone session can be an ideal story format for *Heaven & Earth*.

Since a stand-alone session is a complete story in and of itself, it's important that by session's end all key story points are tied up. The plot hook, the initial event that drives the story forward, should grab the players' interest immediately, and the climax should be thrilling so players feel that their time was well spent. With limited playing time, the GM should introduce the plot hook as soon as possible, and every scene should support the main focus of

the story and be a logical offshoot of the plot hook. GMs should treat each scene as a little set piece, and most should hold the possibility of conflict. Using exotic locations (e.g. a museum at night, an abandoned carnival, a haunted house) is the easiest way to do this. Most, if not all, the scenes in this story format should drive the player characters from plot hook to climax in a timely manner. Every scene and development should advance the story.

When running a stand-alone session, gamemasters should focus on only one aspect of the game's setting. Uncovering a neighbor's dark secret, investigating a haunted house, and looking into a friend's disappearance are all excellent examples of stories suited to this format. Uncovering the true nature of the Apocalypse is obviously too wieldy a subject to be nicely tidied up in one session. Thus, it is a bad choice of subject matter for the stand-alone session.

While use of theme can enhance stand-alone play, it is of lesser importance. Developing a satisfying and enriching theme can take several sessions, and it is difficult to execute in this format.

Although stand-alone sessions should be tightly focused, plot wise, that doesn't mean there is no room for character development. What it does mean is that the characters' personalities should be defined by their words and deeds instead of roleplaying through personal moments in their lives. In the stand-alone session, there is little time for personal subplots. The choices made by the players will define their characters.

STORY ARCS

If a stand-alone session is like a television episode, then a story arc is like a miniseries. It is a finite group of interlocking sessions that form a complete tale with a defined beginning and end. Unlike the stand-alone session, a story arc has more room to meander and grow organically. However, the main story and any key plot points should still be resolved by the arc's end.

A story arc needs to have an intriguing plot hook to get the players interested. However, unlike a stand-alone session, the plot hook need not be introduced immediately, and developments can occur at a slower pace, leaving more room for subplots and character development. Since the story is spread over multiple sessions, there is plenty of time for players to engage in tangential roleplaying (i.e. roleplaying through moments of their character's personal lives that are irrelevant to the story arc's main plot). Tangential roleplaying makes developing dynamic, three-dimensional character easier and yields a more satisfying roleplaying experience.

Story arcs can be tightly focused and concluded in a few sessions, or they can meander in a more freeform manner. Because of this format's flexibility, every scene does not need to support the main storyline. Secondary plotlines,

including any subplots geared specifically to one or more player characters, can weave in and out of the main storyline, making the arc fuller and richer. Dovetailing the secondary plotlines into the main storyline, or linking the two thematically, can also enhance a story arc, though neither is a requirement.

Theme is more important to the story arc format than to the stand-alone session. It can be useful for linking otherwise disparate events and plotlines. Mood is another tool at the GM's disposal. By maintaining a consistent mood throughout the arc, the Gamemaster can create a greater sense of unity to the whole. Running one session as a comedy and another as a dark thriller will make the story arc seem disjointed and ruin the players' suspension of disbelief. This does not mean a grim and serious story arc cannot have lighter moments of comic relief or vice versa; it simply means these mood changes should occur sparingly. When it comes to mood, it is the overall effect that is important; small lapses are fine and even useful for catching players off guard. Gamemasters should establish the mood and theme of their story arc in the first session and develop them over subsequent sessions.

A denouement can be used to clarify plot points and tie up loose ends after a story arc's climax. The flexible pacing of the story arc format allows events to wind down slowly if desired. The final scene can also hint at future story arcs when running an ongoing series.

ONGOING SERIES

Although *Heaven & Earth* can be run as a stand-alone session or a single story arc, it was designed for the ongoing series format. An ongoing series is a collection of interlocking story arcs, storylines, or individual sessions that form a sprawling epic greater than the sum of its parts. Soap operas and long-running comic books are good examples of this format.

An ongoing series can be very defined, with story arcs or storylines planned from the outset, or it can develop organically as play progresses, meandering in unforeseen and uncharted directions. An ongoing series will often take on a life of its own, regardless of the Gamemaster's initial preparation or planning. In other words, while the GM may design the first storyline or two, and have a master plan at work, the will of the players usually dictates the ultimate direction of the ongoing series. As players respond more favorably to certain plotlines, NPCs, and subplots than others, their tastes and interests will determine where the game is heading. The Gamemaster maps out possible paths, but it is the players who choose which ones to follow.

After a few sessions or story arcs, the Gamemaster should reflect back on what has transpired. Many times there will be recurring themes and ideas the GM didn't even know he was incorporating. The Gamemaster can also take note of

LAYERS OF AN ONION

While each story arc should be a self-contained tale with its own beginning, middle, and end, it should also point to something larger. The key to longevity is answering questions, but each question should raise even more questions. So long as there is genuine progress, the players will be happy – even if their characters are ultimately more ignorant than before.

The characters should experience genuine victories. Their struggles must mean something, if only in minor ways. Constantly thwarting the characters' efforts is a sure way to quickly kill an ongoing series.

As long as the GM does not prohibit answers to immediate questions, he avoids the potential frustration inherent in a game built around mysteries and occult conspiracies. Players enjoy solving puzzles. They enjoy fighting against their own ignorance for a greater cause. They do not enjoy being consistently kept in the dark, despite their best efforts. So long as the Gamemaster provides little victories along the way, this concern should quickly dissipate, ensuring the success and long life of a *Heaven & Earth* game.

dangling plot threads or unsolved mysteries and craft new storylines to resolve them. Reflection also helps illuminate player interests. Upon review, the GM may find that his players gravitated towards particular NPCs or locations. If so, these people and places should become more prevalent and important in the ongoing series. Catering to the interests and tastes of the players will keep them happy, and the ongoing series will thrive.

Of all three story formats, the ongoing series is by far the most fluid. Calmer moments of character interaction can be interspersed with slam-bang action, and colossal events can be juxtaposed with quieter, more personal ones. Pacing can vary considerably throughout, with the GM slowing things to a crawl or quickening the flow as needed.

Theme and mood can vary considerably throughout an ongoing series. Regarding mood, it is probably best to keep it consistent throughout with only a few minor deviations here and there. Theme, however, is a different beast. While it is possible for one theme (such as human destiny) to dominate an entire ongoing series, it's more likely that each story arc will have its own theme. The theme of each story arc should be relevant to the tale being told.

The ongoing series is an ideal vehicle for promoting character development, handling unrelated subplots, and running secondary storylines. With time being a non-factor, the players can pursue personal interests and stray from the storyline for periods of time. As noted in the previous section, tangential roleplaying can greatly enrich the game for all involved.

In an ongoing series, the Gamemaster is free to blur the lines between story arcs. In fact, the GM can even do away with much of the story arc format, instead having multiple storylines running simultaneously. New plotlines can begin while old ones are still underway, and some old ones can end while others are still gaining momentum. Soap operas use this type of narrative. An advantage to this approach is that gamemasters can deemphasize storylines that players show little interest in while emphasizing others. By throwing out so many nets, the GM is guaranteed that something will

hook the players' interest.

A final advantage to the ongoing series regards the release of key information. In this format, it is easier for the Gamemaster to dole out bits and pieces about the true nature of reality. Details of the Apocalypse and the mysteries underpinning *Heaven & Earth* can be revealed slowly, and this gradual sense of discovery will fuel the players' enthusiasm. If the Gamemaster feels the revelations are coming too quick, he can always shift the players' attentions to another plotline or increase the amount of tangential roleplaying. In this way, the GM can still control the pace of the game and guide its course while allowing player decisions to influence events.

TECHNIQUES

Most stories follow a linear approach (i.e. Event A begets Event B, which in turn begets Event C, and so on and so forth). Of course, the decisions of the players will determine exactly what these events are. While this makes for clear and concise storytelling, it can also lead to blandness. Going from scene to scene in a strictly linear fashion can bore some players, and players should never be bored. As noted earlier, subplots are an excellent means of enlivening a game, adding depth and substance to a storyline. However, there are other techniques a gamemaster can utilize to inject excitement into his stories.

FLASHBACKS

The most riveting stories are often those with an intricate history. The flashback technique relies on past events to create a second narrative, thereby telling two interwoven stories at once. The first sequence is normally the flashback itself, which relates the relevant history that leads up to the second sequence or the actual, current storyline involving the player characters. To make this a dynamic process, the

Gamemaster has two options available.

The first option involves more work, but it can make for memorable roleplaying and grant the players a fresh perspective on the current storyline. In this option, the contemporary adventure is actually related to another incident that took place years ago. It could be a murder with the same strange *modus operandi* as another murder decades ago, a missing body discovered after thirty years, a 1950's theft where the important artifact has resurfaced in a contemporary auction, a dying cop who wants closure on the one case he could not solve, etc. Regardless of the instance, it is enough to involve the players. During the investigation, just before the player characters are about to learn a new morsel of information or clue, the Gamemaster flashes back to the initial episode that started everything. Instead of being observers in a narrative, the Gamemaster allows the players to assume the roles of characters involved back then. They play through the scene that leads up to the clue that their contemporary selves are discovering.

The second flashback method that gamemasters can use requires far less work but can be fun nonetheless. In this scenario, the session or storyline begins with the player characters already in a difficult situation. They might be caught in a dead-end alley, facing a pack of wild dogs, or they could be standing over a mutilated corpse while facing police officers who have their guns drawn. The Gamemaster allows the characters one action to react before rewinding the entire episode to the beginning. Play then proceeds towards the event that began the session or storyline. Now the players know something terrible is in store for them and that heightens their anticipation.

CLIFFHANGERS

Cliffhangers are a technique pioneered by radio serials, 1950's action series, and contemporary season finales. When used properly, they can make a fine dramatic tool. At the end of a session, the Gamemaster simply leaves the players hanging either in some precarious situation or on the cusp of a major revelation. Gamemasters are likely to hear cries of protest initially, but if he uses this technique properly, it will leave the players hungry for the next session. GMs must tread carefully though. If they wait too long between one session and the next, the players might forget past events, and their enthusiasm could wane.

DREAMS

Dreams are a storytelling device that fits nicely into the tapestry of *Heaven & Earth*. They are a surrealistic tool useful for imparting information to characters in a mysterious, symbolic manner. The origins of the dreams are up to the Gamemaster. The character may be in communion with

heavenly or infernal agents, unknowingly one of the Gifted, possessed by a spirit, or anything else the Gamemaster desires.

The nonsensical, surreal nature of dreams grants the Gamemaster a license to go over the top a bit. Dream sequences should be strange, disturbing, confusing, or even terrifying. They should be obtuse yet contain clues and important information, albeit shrouded in crypticness. A dream should be a mystery for the character to unravel and should contain information that will help the character down the road. This can be the identity of someone the character will meet, insight into a real-world event, a sign of things to come, or a hint at the true nature of reality. The bottom line is that dreams should mean something.

When giving a character a dream, the Gamemaster should include two to four key elements or clues. Each of these should, in some way, elucidate the meaning of the dream as a whole. However, each element is a mystery itself that must be unraveled. They are each a separate piece of the puzzle that forms a key to unlock the mystery of the dream itself.

INJECTING THE WEIRD

Integrating the Apocalypse, supernatural beings, and secret societies with the game's setting bears specific mention. When incorporating these aspects of *Heaven & Earth*, gamemasters need to proceed carefully. Using these aspects in a heavy-handed manner can ruin an ongoing series. It's always best to begin with small mysteries and unexplained strangeness then build from there.

THE APOCALYPSE

World's end approaches and *Heaven & Earth* is thrown into that turbulent time. This does not necessarily mean the Apocalypse will reach fruition tomorrow, but it does signify that the unwinding of creation is underway. Fortunately for the players, what has started can be stopped with effort and determination.

The Apocalypse is actually the climax of an ancient contest between God and Satan. This realization should unfold slowly for the players. In a world dominated by science, pop culture, and global media, society easily dismisses the idea of the supernatural or a creator god. The player characters must first discover that text from sacred books like the Bible and Torah are true, but they must also realize that what they learned in church is not wholly accurate. God and Lucifer do exist, but they are only interested in human beings are prizes in a cosmic contest of supremacy.

All of this is the backdrop for an epic that the Gamemaster and players create through their characters. This is a

story about human beings and thus starts in the realm of humanity. Characters do not begin with the grand celestial revelation but start as ordinary people living ordinary lives. Over time, they will discover that things are not as they seem, and the big picture will come into focus.

Initial sessions or story arcs should contain seeds of the Apocalypse, but these clues should not be realized as such. Only after a collection of events should the truth become clear. If players discover the truth too soon, the stakes will go up before the Gamemaster is perhaps ready for them to do so.

Gamemasters should read *Revelation* for insight regarding what is to occur. This final book of the Bible is filled with fantastic imagery and symbolism that can be utilized in *Heaven & Earth*. It also provides a rough timeline for the Apocalypse, one that gamemasters can use to guide events in their games. However, GMs must remember that the truth about Armageddon is actually different than what's written in the Bible. This means that gamemasters have creative license to reinterpret or alter anything in *Revelation* to better suit their stories.

SECRET SOCIETIES

Secret societies offer the Gamemaster new approaches into the *Heaven & Earth* mystery by introducing organizations that hint at the game's greater truths. They can serve as the subject of investigations or as sources of information. Discovering the existence of a secret society or attempting to join one can be an excellent plot hook, especially if the Gamemaster uses it as a subplot. The four secret societies from **Chapter VII** each have a role to play in the drama of *Heaven & Earth*.

The Wing of St. Michael creates a religious undercurrent to the game. Their presence verifies that something strange is transpiring in Potter's Lake, and the Vatican is very interested in it. Investigations into the Wing can eventually lead to the realization that the Apocalypse is underway, and their presence lends a conspiratorial atmosphere to events.

The Brotherhood of Ioannes possesses the truest knowledge of the Apocalypse. They are aware of the celestial contest and are actively working to save humanity. While they are the smallest and least influential secret society, they have the greatest understanding of what is really transpiring behind the scenes.

Project: Grayscale also engenders a conspiratorial atmosphere but, unlike the Wing of St. Michael, they offer a scientific perspective on the supernatural. They also represent people's fears of a heartless, immoral Big Brother concerned only with control. Grayscale is every military or government-based conspiracy made manifest.

The Zetetic Society's cover-ups can spark investigations into supernatural phenomenon, which can lead to other, bigger things. They also represent the "good ole boy"

network that exists in any small, insular community. The Zetetic Society provides opportunities to explore small-town politics as well as the supernatural.

SUPERNATURAL BEINGS

The supernatural beings that populate *Heaven & Earth* all speak of various truths surrounding the universe. They help drive stories and impart a sense of the metaphysical. When used properly, they can be the centerpieces of stories and serve as gateways into the true nature of reality.

GHOSTS

Ghosts are lingering echoes of particularly strong passions and events still bouncing around the ether. They are fragmented memories somehow given substance and form. They are not souls – the contest between God and Lucifer is such that it claims all those who die.

Ghosts are useful for introducing the supernatural for they are hidden and enigmatic without being overly powerful. Additionally, everyone has heard ghost stories, and while people may not believe in them, they relish tales of reported encounters. Ghosts are perfect for "bump-in-the-night" stories and stand-alone sessions.

Ghosts are a traditional horror. Their very existence ties into humanity's primordial fears concerning the unknown. While mankind has managed to rationalize the world into convenient pockets of sensibility over time, ghosts remain frighteningly nebulous.

Ghosts represent humanity's greater potential for they are creations of human-driven concepts and emotional resonance. If mankind can create such creatures unintentionally, imagine the possibilities when common will directs society's thoughts towards one agenda.

Ghosts also present the opportunity for roleplaying tragedy since their existence is usually the result of misery. Whatever circumstance created the ghost is a story in itself, and it's usually one that requires some effort to unravel. After the characters discover the presence of a ghost, they must delve into its history and the reason for its presence before they can pursue possible avenues of eliminating it. These investigations can make for excellent stories and roleplaying.

THE GIFTED

The Gifted are great for introducing conspiracy subplots. They are a link to the government and potential storylines involving black helicopters and men in black. On the surface, they seem to have little to do with the Apocalypse, which means they can be used by the Gamemaster to

discreetly introduce the game's apocalyptic backdrop.

Obviously, discovering the true nature of psychic powers will lead characters deeper into the celestial events brewing in the game's background. This can lead to discovering Christ's role in the final days and even directly joining his cause. Thus the Gifted can be used not only as a cleverly obfuscated introduction to the Apocalypse, but also as a means of revealing its true nature.

MAGICIANS

Magicians represent the ability to control one's own destiny. They prove that man can have mastery over the world around him if he sets his mind to it. They also represent an opportunity to learn, for they are the first beings who understand a part of their world and can relate that information in human terms.

Friend or foe, magicians have made a career of keeping their powers hidden from the world and are not inclined to trust most people. This means that many of them are solitary individuals and suspicious characters. As such, they can provide story opportunities as intrepid player characters investigate their secrets.

Gamemasters should not use magicians as outright adversaries. Instead, they should be employed as story-building tools. They can act as mentors, obstacles, informants, or anything else the Gamemaster desires. Using magicians as the enemy is fine, but it's best if they develop into one rather than starting off as an adversary. Magicians represent the human face of the supernatural and have all the foibles of their fellow man. They are not villains or heroes, merely human beings with the knowledge and willpower to change the world.

SPIRITS

The Goetia and other spirits usually operate behind their vessels, bereft of concerns outside their agendas and personal actions that best suit their essences. They have little fear of being harmed physically given that they either operate through an expendable mortal or because they are in spirit form.

Spirits are ancient creatures who have developed into expert manipulators. Their very existence and activities depend on machination and artifice. Tracking them is like tracking a spider through its footprints in the sand. Spirits may be single-minded, but they are older than man and unrivalled in duplicity.

Stories featuring spirits often involve the characters encountering a mortal involved in questionable activities only to find out that the person was not entirely responsible for his or her actions. The characters come to realize that the person is a vessel for a supernatural creature, which leads

to further investigation. Since spirits fear imprisonment and need vessels to sustain themselves long-term, they will usually do whatever it takes to avoid discovery, provided it does not contradict their guiding precept.

To best use spirits, the Gamemaster should know the full extent of the spirit's involvement and the length it will go to in protecting itself. The GM should also consider the power and resources the vessel has to call upon as well as the spirit's own abilities.

ANGELS & DEMONS

Gamemasters should not use these entities right away, and when he does introduce them, it should be subtly. The player characters will likely not even know that they are dealing with the Host. Angels and demons prefer to operate through mortal form simply because their unveiled presence can do more to undermine than aid their effort. Through these disguises, they will offer help and possibly even serve as advisors. They will attempt to manipulate as subtly as possible. Only a truly desperate angel or demon will risk overtly forcing an individual into choosing sides. This gamble usually fails.

The Host, while always in the background, should seldom (if ever) be the centerpiece of a storyline. They act through believers rather than direct intervention. Only at the end of a pivotal storyline or the ongoing series itself, should the Host put in an appearance.

Gamemasters should always remember that angels and demons are alien creatures. They are the creations of God and Lucifer, two entities that are well beyond the grasp of the human intellect. As such, the Host is no more understandable than the beings who created them.

QUIRKY TOWNSFOLK

Although Potter's Lake is filled with colorful characters, gamemasters should be careful not to overpopulate the town with eccentrics. While these individuals can make for interesting encounters, they should be counterbalanced with more mundane personalities. The sampling of individuals provided in **Chapter V** is there to provide inspiration. Not everyone should be so unusual, but Potter's Lake needs to have its fair share of quirky personalities to make the place seem truly odd to the players.

ENDING THE GAME

Heaven & Earth becomes hollow without a proper ending. All stories have a beginning, middle, and end; so too must an ongoing series. The exact manner of this ending is up to the Gamemaster, but it should involve humanity's victory

EATING THE APPLE

The climax of *Heaven & Earth* will likely occur when the PCs finally discover what is hidden in Potter's Woods. Once the two trees of Eden are discovered, the inquisitive characters will probably partake of the trees' fruit. This leaves the Gamemaster with the burden of handling this monumental event.

Naturally, the Gamemaster is free to handle this event any way he sees fit. However, a few suggestions follow to provide guidance and spark the imagination.

The first option is the simplest: Eating the apples makes humanity the equal of God and Lucifer. In this scenario, the players have the power to force a stalemate. They will be as powerful as the Almighty and the Devil. To the player's benefit, their characters will outnumber the two divinities, and thus be able to force an end their juvenile contest.

The second option is to grant the player characters a limited degree of omniscience and unearthly powers. In other words, they become the equals of the Host. The PCs will experience a rush of enlightenment and insight upon ingesting the apples. They will know the nature of every soul on earth, and like the Host, no mortal can lie them to.

In this second scenario, the game does not end; it merely changes. Although the player characters will be equals to the Host, they will not have the numbers necessary to fend off the two divinities and their armies. The PCs will have to spread the seeds of the fruits to the rest of humanity to enable a full-scale rebellion against Heaven and Hell. It's also likely that they might have to seek out disenfranchised angels and demons of likeminded conviction to gather an army potent enough to challenge God and the Devil. All of this will take some time and much maneuvering behind the scenes, for if the Host catches wind of what the PCs are planning, things will get very ugly in a hurry.

Once the characters have marshaled enough power to their side, they will be able to storm the gates of Heaven and Hell. Their victory will set humanity free, and mankind will begin its journey into the uncharted waters of true freedom, unshackled by the dark destiny forced upon them millennia ago.

over God and Lucifer. There are many ways to accomplish this, and here are a few suggestions:

1. The most obvious means of ending the contest lies with the two trees of Eden. If the player characters can discover the existence of the two trees in Potter's Woods and partake of their fruit, they would be equals to the Host. With the trees, this power could spread to others, and humanity would be able to rise up against Heaven and Hell, rewriting its own destiny.
2. The combined might of the Gifted, channeled against the Host and their masters, may be enough to save humanity. Since each of the Gifted possesses only the smallest spark of divinity, a great number of them are required to successfully take the battle to Heaven and Hell. Thus, Christ has gathered all his descendants in one place, Potter's Lake. Once enough of them are present, the Gifted can rise up and force God and Lucifer to abort their contest.
3. Certain strains of Jewish mysticism hold

that uncovering God's true name grants the power to make and unmake creation, as well as dominion over Twawe the Almighty himself. This same weakness applies to Lucifer, meaning that if the characters can find the true names of the two beings poised to destroy their world, they can stave off Armageddon, if not blackmail the divinities into leaving them alone. If this solution seems radical or implausible, consider the possibility that the God of *Heaven & Earth*, while powerful, is not omniscient. If he was, the juvenile nature of the contest would be unnecessary or beyond the concerns of a being with infinite capacity for reason and love. Instead, the God of *Heaven & Earth* appears callous, even brutal, and shortsighted in his pursuits. Seeking out the true names of God and Lucifer would be an epic in and of itself. Obscure and ancient texts would need to be sought out, magicians and others of similar knowledge would need to be consulted, and the Goetia would need to be bound and interrogated. These are but a few examples of the lengths characters will have to go to accomplish this monumental goal.

4. Iophiel is a potential ally and one of several angels and demons who have somehow freed themselves of God and Lucifer's ministrations. If he can be persuaded to stand with humanity, others of his kind might join the cause. An army of rebel angels and demons might just have enough power to storm Heaven and Hell, forcing their masters to end their contest.
5. The final suggestion for saving humanity is to combine all of the above. After all, Christ is smart enough to hedge his bets and is surely pursuing multiple options simultaneously. In fact, it might take all of the above just to win humanity's freedom.

There is no mandatory way to end *Heaven & Earth*. Gamemasters may choose any of the above options or invent one of their own. The five methods presented are suggestions and nothing more. However, gamemasters are advised to use Christ's rebellion as the lynchpin for ending *Heaven & Earth*. Whether he is gathering the Gifted, seeking out Iophiel, hunting for the trees of Eden, searching for his father's true name, etc., the Lamb should be humanity's and the player's guide to ultimate salvation.

MISCELLANEOUS ADVICE

Here are three final suggestions for gamemasters to use or discard as they see fit.

- **The Gamemaster rolls all the dice.** If the Gamemaster does all the die rolling for the players, they will focus more on their character's personalities than their statistics. Hopefully, the players will become more absorbed in the action if they are unencumbered with die rolling and result tallying. Additionally, the Gamemaster will be able to discreetly fudge rolls when necessary (usually in favor of the player). This does not mean the GM has carte blanche to cheat, but if a player has done everything right only to fail a crucial die roll, the Gamemaster should consider fudging

the roll. Likewise, if an important NPC is about to die early in the storyline, the GM can take action to assure he survives. The gamemaster should only fudge rolls when it is absolutely critical to the story.

- **Give the players fair warning.** Sometimes players do not recognize the potential consequences of their actions. The GM should offer the players a chance to reconsider monumentally rash decisions.
- **Ramifications.** There should always be ramifications (good or bad) for player actions. If the gameworld is to feel real to the players, there must be accountability for their actions. Players should reap the rewards and punishments produced by their actions and decisions.

AWARDING DESTINY

The Gamemaster should award all characters one Destiny point after every session. Optionally, the GM can award five to ten points at the end of every story arc. Characters who are the focus of a subplot should receive one additional Destiny point. GMs can award points more frequently for faster character advancement or less frequently for slower character advancement. The GM also has the option of rewarding exceptionally talented or active players with an extra point or two per story arc.

Characters should also receive Destiny points for working towards or completing goals. At the conclusion of each story arc, characters should receive one to five points for actively working towards their goals. Characters who complete a goal should immediately receive five to fifteen Destiny points, depending on the difficulty involved in doing so.

CHARACTER ADVANCEMENT

As mentioned in **Chapter III**, Destiny can be used to alter the outcome of character actions. However, it also serves as a measure of experience for the character. Increasing a character's Rank in any Attribute, the level of expertise

A NOTE ON DESTINY

There is only one Destiny pool for *Heaven & Earth*. Raising abilities and altering die results both draw from this same pool. That means players will have to carefully consider how many Destiny points they're willing to spend on die rolls, for doing so means those points can no longer be applied to character advancement.

A REMINDER

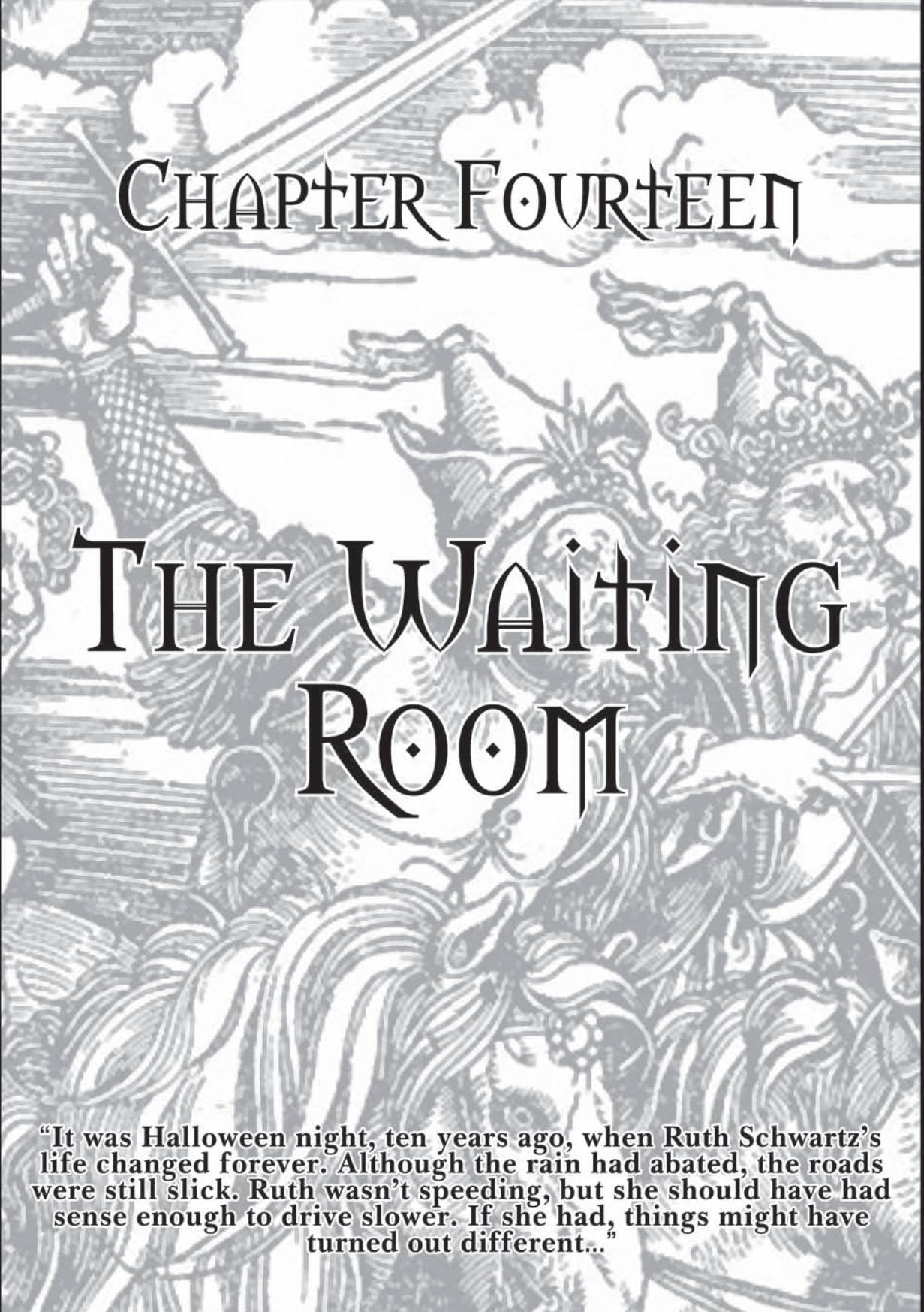
In *Heaven & Earth*, the characters are ordinary people. As such, gamemasters should not allow character advancement to get out of hand. Unlike some roleplaying games, characters should not become supermen, skilled at nearly everything. A Rank of 4 in any Attribute should be rare, and a Rank 5 should be seen only once or twice during an ongoing series (and even that would be stretching things).

with his occupation and Extracurricular Skills, and purchasing new abilities is done with the expenditure of Destiny points.

- **The cost for improving an Attribute is 20 Destiny points per Rank.**
- **The cost for improving the current expertise level of an occupation is 20 Destiny points per level.**
- **The cost to improve any existing Extracurricular Skill is 10 Destiny points per level.**
- **The cost to buy a new Extracurricular Skill at the rookie level is 10 Destiny points.**
- **The cost to buy a new occupation at Rookie level is five times the star rating of the desired occupation.**

Raising an Attribute is a difficult thing. People simply do not become more perceptive, stronger, or more charismatic that easily. It requires hard work and considerable time. Some Attributes may be nearly impossible to increase. Gamemasters are encouraged to be highly critical when players want to raise an Attribute Rank. This should be done rarely and needs to be justified by the character's actions over the course of one or more story arcs.

This advice regarding Attribute increases applies equally to raising a character's level of expertise with any Extracurricular Skills or his occupation. However, gamemasters should be more lenient in allowing players to raise these abilities than Attributes.



CHAPTER FOURTEEN

THE WAITING ROOM

“It was Halloween night, ten years ago, when Ruth Schwartz’s life changed forever. Although the rain had abated, the roads were still slick. Ruth wasn’t speeding, but she should have had sense enough to drive slower. If she had, things might have turned out different...”

The Waiting Room” is a character driven adventure designed to introduce players to the world of *Heaven & Earth*. Although intended to be a stand-alone session, it can easily serve as the beginning of a story arc or ongoing series. The adventure is structured as an outline to allow the Gamemaster room to customize the specifics as needed.

It is recommended that the GM read the entire adventure thoroughly so he is completely familiar with the specifics of the story. This will allow the GM to fully understand the motivation of the NPCs involved and alter any scenes to better cater to his players’ tastes and their characters’ personalities.

OVERVIEW

“The Waiting Room” is a character drama. Strange circumstances and Mother Nature’s wrath conspire to trap the player characters, and a handful of NPCs, in Potter’s Lake Memorial Hospital for an evening. While sequestered, tensions mount as various characters come into conflict with one another. The players will encounter some of the more interesting characters in Potter’s Lake as a woman is forced to come to terms with her past.

PLAYER CHARACTERS

The adventure is designed with four players in mind, but it can easily accommodate as many as necessary. As a character drama, “The Waiting Room” is more about social interaction than skill application. As such, the player characters may possess any occupation they wish.

NON-PLAYER CHARACTERS

The player characters will meet several important NPCs

during the course of the adventure. A brief summary of each one is provided below. With the exception of Ruth Schwartz, Raymond Walker, Reginald Grey, and Randy Bridegroom, a more detailed biography for each NPC can be found in **Chapter V**.

- **Florence Abrams:** Born armless, Florence is a sickeningly chipper woman in her early fifties who owns and operates a local florist shop.
- **Sheriff Daryl Bowman:** A tobacco chewing cynical lawman numb to the strangeness of Potter’s Lake.
- **Randy Bridegroom:** A tow truck driver with a large chip on his shoulder.
- **Father Gorrard:** A fiery ecclesiastic at St. Anselm who is deeply concerned with his parish’s spiritual well being.
- **Reginald Grey:** A lawyer who suffers from acute claustrophobia.
- **Quinn Harker:** A police deputy who suffers from multiple personality disorder.
- **Ed Miller:** The most popular physician in Potter’s Lake.
- **Martha Moynihan:** A lady who professes the ability to communicate with cats.
- **Ruth Schwartz:** A former citizen of Potter’s Lake who is returning after ten years away.
- **Devin Sinclair:** A columnist for the local

FOR LARGER GROUPS

In the case of larger groups of player characters, the GM will only have to alter events slightly. There are two easy ways to include additional PCs:

1. One or more of the PCs can be volunteers assisting Sheriff Bowman. In this scenario, the GM should invent an extra scene for each player character where the sheriff approaches him or her for assistance.
2. One or more of the player characters can be friends with the PC who scuffles with Randy Bridegroom at Deke’s Bar & Grill.

These are just two possible means of incorporating extra player characters into “The Waiting Room.” Gamemasters are free to invite other means of doing so if neither of these are to his liking.

GAME MECHANICS

“The Waiting Room” was designed as a rules-lite adventure. Very few mechanics are found in this chapter. Even so, gamemasters are free to decide whether or not Action Checks are required. For example, the GM may allow a Q & A session with an NPC to flow naturally through roleplaying alone, or he may call for an appropriate Check from the players to ferret out answers. However, game mechanics should always be a secondary concern – crafting an engaging story should always come first.

newspaper, the Dailey Sentinel.

- **Raymond Walker:** A twenty-year-old hospital orderly.
- **Kyle and Lucas Wolf:** Twins who both work as paramedics for Potter’s Lake Memorial Hospital.

BACKSTORY

It was Halloween night, ten years ago, when Ruth Schwartz’s life changed forever. Although the rain had abated, the roads were still slick. Ruth wasn’t speeding, but she should have had sense enough to drive slower. If so, things might have turned out different.

Ruth saw the pack of trick-or-treaters, five in all, walking along the side of the road even as her car spun out of control. She did her best to veer away, but the car hydroplaned right into the children. Two received minor breaks and contusions; three died.

Ruth was convicted of vehicular manslaughter and served seven years in a Kansas state prison. After her release, she couldn’t bear the thought of returning home to Potter’s Lake. She feared the reception that might await her, the looks she would have to endure from the townsfolk. The memory of that horrible night crippled her for life. The event has replayed itself countless times in her dreams, robbing Ruth of a good night’s sleep for the last decade. She promised herself that she would never go back to Potter’s Lake. Yesterday, she was forced to break that promise.

Ruth received word that her father, her only living direct relation, lies dying. Cancer has been killing him slowly for years, but his end is fast approaching. Daniel Schwartz is on his deathbed. Mustering all the courage she had, Ruth bought a bus ticket for a nearby town. From there, she hitchhiked to Potter’s Lake. As “The Waiting Room” begins, Ruth has arrived at Deke’s and is preparing to make her way to Potter’s Lake Memorial Hospital. Over the next twenty-four hours, she will be forced to confront her inner demons in the town that represents the life and future she has lost.

Raymond Walker, an orderly at Potter’s Lake Memorial Hospital, knows that Daniel Schwartz is dying, and he

expects Ruth to return to say her final goodbyes. Raymond was one of the two children who survived the accident that Halloween night, and the three who lost their lives were his best friends. Although, a decade has passed, Raymond has never forgiven Ruth Schwartz, and he will use her return to exact vengeance.

OPENING SCENES

The adventure takes place in the springtime. The player characters are all recent transplants to Potter’s Lake. Some may have returned home after considerable time away, and others may be new to the town. Exactly how long each PC has been in town is up to the GM, but it should be less than one month and preferably only a week or two. Ideally, “The Waiting Room” should serve as an introduction to some of the peculiar and important characters who call Potter’s Lake home.

At the start of the adventure, it is unnecessary for any of the player characters to know one another. The events that transpire over the next few hours will acquaint them with one another, not to mention a few of the town’s more colorful individuals. Each character will be center stage in his own opening scene, devoid of the presence of the other player characters. That means that the other players will be uninvolved in the drama when the spotlight is not on them. Each of the opening scenes is short in length (five to ten minutes of roleplaying time per scene) to keep the others from getting bored while waiting their turn to play. Hopefully their curiosity about what is to come, and the storytelling skills of the GM, will keep them engrossed in the unfolding drama.

All of the opening scenes begin at approximately 10:00 pm.

1. **Hallucinations (Part I).** The first PC has just been in a car accident, although this should not be immediately clear to him. The character is groggy and in considerable pain, with blurry vision and a slight numbness in his extremities. Two angelic figures, bathed in a white light, hover before him. They are speaking, but their words are indecipherable. As

the character's vision comes into focus, their appearances shift and become more human. They now appear as they actually are: paramedics (Kyle and Lucas Wolf) who are in the process of helping the character. The fact that they are identical twins may cause the PC to think that he is seeing double or still hallucinating. Almost immediately, feeling begins to return to the character's extremities, and for the first time he realizes that it is raining quite heavily. The Wolf brothers are helping the character into an ambulance, keeping the character immobile while moving him gingerly. Kyle informs the PC that he has been in a car accident but assures him that everything will be okay. Lucas is strangely silent the entire time. Once strapped in, the ambulance speeds off for Potter's Lake Memorial Hospital. The PC now begins to drift in and out of consciousness. As he does, he can hear Kyle talking. Kyle appears to be having a conversation with Lucas, but the character can hear only Kyle's words. The character loses consciousness.

2. **A situation at Deke's.** The second PC is enjoying some relaxation time at Deke's Bar & Grill. At the Gamemaster's discretion, he may be alone or cavorting with friends or coworkers. It is raining heavily outside, and Deke's few patrons are waiting out the storm. The rain comes down heavier with each passing moment, and the lights are beginning to flicker on and off. At a nearby table, a burly man is accosting a middle-aged woman. Hopefully, the PC realizes that this is his cue and gets involved in the matter. The woman is Ruth Schwartz, and the man is Randy Bridegroom. How this confrontation unfolds is determined by the PC's actions. He may try to persuade Randy to behave or he may come out swinging. Regardless, Randy reacts belligerently, swearing up a storm, and threatens the player character before ultimately leaving Deke's in a fit of rage. Ruth thanks the character for his help and introduces herself. Although Ruth feels awkward asking the character for additional help, she mentions that she is looking for a ride to Potter's Lake Memorial Hospital. Ruth tells the PC that it's a matter of life and death. If the player character refuses to help, Ruth will explain that her father is dying and this is

her last chance to see him. If needed, the GM can have her break into tears or have the power go out to force the PC's hand. Hopefully, such tactics will be unnecessary. After paying their tabs, Ruth and the player character depart the establishment.

3. **A visit from Dr. Miller.** The third PC, who should be the most affluent of the player characters, is at home. The wind is whipping the trees against the siding and windows, making a horrendous racket. The character hears a knock at the door, but it's almost inaudible compared to the fury of the storm outside. The character's neighbor, Dr. Ed Miller, is the late night visitor. Ed apologizes for bothering the character so late, but his car is in desperate need of a jumpstart. The storm has bred an unusually high amount of accidents, and the staff at Potter's Lake Memorial Hospital is swamped. To make matters worse, downed trees and power lines, and flooded roads are keeping many of the night shift employees from reaching work. The hospital called Ed because he only lives a few miles away, hoping the doctor



could help them out tonight. Needless to say, without a jumpstart, Ed is going nowhere. After a few minutes in the rain, both characters realize that the car will not start no matter what they try. Ed briefly curses under his breath before asking the character for a ride to the hospital. Moments later, the two are on the road.

4. **Trick-or-treat.** The fourth PC is also at home. As the scene begins, the power to the house goes out. The GM should allow the character to fumble around in the dark for a few minutes before finding a flashlight and/or candles. Once that is done, he hears a gentle, almost inaudible knock at his front door. At the door, three costumed trick-or-treaters begging for sweets greet the PC. This should strike the character as odd. Firstly, it's after 10:00 pm. Secondly, a fierce storm is underway. Thirdly, it's springtime. If the children are questioned, their only response is, "Trick or Treat!" They say nothing else, but they will giggle intermittently. If the character tries to shoo them away, the children refuse to budge. If he attempts to forcefully remove them from the property, they run away laughing. If the character invites the three inside, they accept the offer, quickly darting into the house. Once inside, each makes a mad dash in a different direction, disappearing from view. No matter how long the character searches, he can find no trace of the children. They have disappeared into thin air.

SECOND SCENES

The next four scenes feature more one-on-one roleplaying. Each PC continues to receive center stage treatment while the others patiently wait their turns. These scenes should be brief so the interest of those not playing doesn't wane.

1. **Hallucinations (Part II).** The injured PC from Opening Scene 1 is hallucinating. He finds that he is clothed as a hospital orderly, standing in a deserted graveyard. As he looks around though, he realizes that he is not entirely alone. A dozen or so cats are perched atop nearby gravestones, silently watching the character. The PC then notices a faint sobbing coming from deeper in the graveyard. If the character begins to

move in the direction of the crying, the cats begin to leap from tombstone to tombstone in silent pursuit. If the PC approaches any cat, it will jump off its perch, into the darkness. Once the character reaches the source of the sobbing, he finds a widow dressed head to toe in black with a translucent veil obscuring her face. She stands before three gravestones whose names are unreadable. Her trembling right hand tightly clutches a pistol. After turning towards the character, she raises the pistol to her temple and fires. At this moment, the PC regains consciousness. He is on a gurney being wheeled into Potter's Lake Memorial Hospital.

2. **Ruth to the hospital.** The second PC is driving Ruth to the hospital. The rain is coming down in buckets now, limiting visibility. While driving, they notice that over half of the town is cloaked in darkness. Garbage cans are blowing about, trees are downed all over the place, and the wail of sirens permeates the air. During the car ride, Ruth explains that she has just returned to Potter's Lake after a decade away. She tells the PC that her father is dying and not expected to survive the night. There is a terrible sadness to her voice. Ruth begins wringing her hands while she relates her anxiety about returning home after being away for so long. She never mentions what drove her away ten years ago even if pressed on the subject. Ruth will make idle conversation, asking questions about the character's life and family. The GM can use this moment to allow the player to flesh out his character a bit.

3. **Roadblock.** Some casual chitchat flows between the third PC and Ed Miller as they make their way to the hospital. During their conversation, a plastic garbage can bounces against the car, startling the two. The weather is getting worse by the minute, and poor visibility is forcing the PC to drive very slowly. Once the pair is within a mile of the hospital, they discover a fallen tree blocking their path. There is no way around this obstacle. They are forced to backtrack and take another route. While heading down the other road to Potter's Lake Memorial Hospital, they realize that this route is impassable as well. The storm

has flooded the road so badly that the car has no chance of making it through. Any attempt to do so will get the car stuck. Ed gets out of the vehicle, proclaiming that he will head out on foot. He thanks the PC for the ride and asks if he will come along. "I'm sure they can use an extra hand tonight," the doctor adds, hoping to entice the PC. More than likely, the character will head out with Miller. If not, the GM will need to find another way to involve the PC

4. **A visit from the sheriff.** The fourth PC is still at his home. He can hear the children giggling in the dark of the house, even if they ran away down the street. No matter how thoroughly the character searches, he can find no trace of the trick-or-treaters. After a few minutes, his search is disturbed by a knock on the door. The PC may assume the trick-or-treaters are responsible, but this proves to be incorrect. Sheriff Bowman is at the door. The sheriff introduces himself and apologizes for dropping in so late. Bowman tells the character that he is looking for a few able-bodied men and women to assist him tonight. Power lines are down, roads are flooded, and the amount of weather related accidents is staggering. Bowman is short-handed and needs all the help he can get. Upon the PC's acceptance the two hop into the sheriff's 4x4 and drive off.

THIRD SCENES

The next four scenes feature more one-on-one roleplaying.

BOWMAN'S ASSISTANTS

Sheriff Bowman has two nameless volunteers helping him at St. Anselm. If neither of these individuals is an extra player character, the GM needs to determine their identities. They can be NPCs created by the Gamemaster or ones taken from **Chapter V**. They have been included so gamemasters can incorporate characters of their own choosing into the adventure. The roles they play in the drama are entirely up to the GM. If the Gamemaster desires them to be significant NPCs or important to the events of "The Waiting Room", he will need to amend some of the hospital scenes to better incorporate these two characters.

Each PC continues to receive center stage treatment while the others patiently wait their turns. These scenes should be brief so the interest of those not playing doesn't wane.

1. **Concussion.** The first PC is feeling much better now. Except for a minor headache, there is no pain or physical damage. The character is in a hospital room talking to a doctor who informs the PC that he has suffered a minor concussion, but every test has come back negative. The doctor wants the PC to lie down for an hour or so just to be safe. Normally, the hospital would ask the character to stay overnight, but the storm has filled the hospital to capacity, and every available room is needed. The doctor warns the PC that there may be some lingering aftereffects such as headaches, dizziness, and possibly even mild disorientation or hallucinations. He also tells the character that a cab can be called for him if needed. The doctor then departs the room explaining that he has a lot of work to do tonight, leaving the character alone.
2. **The Cat Lady.** While on their way to the hospital, Ruth and the second PC spy Martha Moynihan walking down the street. She is struggling to move forward through the whipping wind and torrential rain. Cradled in her arms is one of the many stray cats she calls friend. Hopefully, the PC will offer Martha a ride, which she will gladly accept. If the player character is not so compassionate, the GM can have Ruth suggest that they help. Once in the car, Martha announces, "My cat and I are going to the hospital. Raymond is going to be a naughty boy." If questioned about this cryptic remark, Martha admits ignorance, claiming that is all the cats have told her. After a few minutes, the three arrive at Potter's Lake Memorial Hospital and head inside. Before she leaves to visit her father, Ruth asks the character if he wouldn't mind waiting around for a bit. If the character insists on leaving, a hospital employee chimes in, "Deputy Blaumeister said it isn't safe to head out. The roads are flooding, and he doesn't want anybody to leave if they don't have to." If the character insists on leaving, he won't get very far. The roads are impossible to drive on now, and visibility is zero. No matter what the PC may desire,

he is forced to stay in the waiting room. Meanwhile, two orderlies are attempting to separate Martha from her cat, proclaiming that a hospital is no place for mangy strays. The Cat Lady screams obscenities at the orderlies, fighting them tooth and nail on the issue. After a heated exchange, Martha and her cat are separated. Her anger begets violence, and she begins flailing about, throwing punches at the orderlies. Eventually, they are forced to sedate her and remove her from the waiting room. As she drifts off into drug induced slumber she mumbles, "The cat says things are only to going to get worse tonight."

3. **A Car Wreck.** While the third PC and Ed Miller are trudging through the storm on their way to Potter's Lake Memorial Hospital, they come across a car wreck. A small foreign automobile is smashed against a tree, it's front-end heavily damaged, and its windshield shattered. The driver is still inside the vehicle but looks to be dead. Upon investigation, the driver is merely unconscious. As Ed and the PC carefully pull the driver from the wreckage, he begins to regain consciousness. The driver identifies himself as Raymond (Walker) and thanks the two men. He was on his way to work when he lost control of his vehicle. Raymond is a little beat up but not much

worse for wear. Ed and the PC continue their trek with Raymond Walker in tow.

4. **Flooding at St. Anselm.** The fourth PC is at the St. Anselm campus, not far from the lake. Sheriff Bowman, Father Gorrand, and volunteers from the college are there. The sheriff tells everyone he needs their help moving sandbags and begins barking instructions. The GM and player should roleplay through the process for a while but not too long. After the area has been properly sandbagged, Bowman asks Father Gorrand and the PC if they can help further. The three get in the 4x4 and depart for Potter's Lake Memorial Hospital. The power is out at the police station, so the Sheriff's Department is using the hospital as a makeshift base of operations since it has a radio system and backup generators in place. Along the way, they come across Randy Bridegroom who is towing a tree out of the way (the same tree that blocked the path of Ed Miller and the third PC earlier). Once Randy has pulled the tree clear, the sheriff waves, and the group continues on their way.

CONVERGENCE

In this scene, the player characters all converge on the

KEEPING THE PLAYER CHARACTERS INVOLVED

The Gamemaster needs to constantly involve the PCs in the unfolding drama of "The Waiting Room." In other words, the player characters should not be spectators but active participants. Although the NPCs drive the events of the story, the player characters are the protagonists. This fact should never be far from the Gamemaster's mind.

In most cases, players will have their characters interject and butt in, making the Gamemaster's work that much easier. However, this is far from guaranteed. If the PCs choose to sit passively by, the Gamemaster needs to bring the drama to them. One approach the GM can take is to have some of the NPCs attempt to sway the player characters to their side in one argument or another. A second tactic is to have a few of the NPCs be friends, neighbors, or coworkers of one or more of the player characters. A final technique is to stage additional scenes that require everyone's cooperation. Such scenes can build a sense of teamwork and make the players react to the NPCs as real flesh and blood people, rather than props in the adventure. Tangential roleplaying is an ideal way to facilitate this. The Gamemaster should give ample time for player characters and NPCs to share anecdotes and details about themselves. In this way, the NPCs become fully realized individuals, making it easier for the players to react to them.

Regardless of the means, the Gamemaster must never allow his players to become voyeurs to the events that surround them. If this happens, *Heaven & Earth* ceases to be interactive roleplaying and becomes old-fashioned storytelling, with the players relegated to the role of audience.

waiting room. The following developments occur in the order presented:

1. The first PC leaves his hospital room and heads to the front desk (in the waiting room) to check out.
2. Ruth returns from visiting her father and thanks the second PC for waiting. She tells him that she is going to stay longer and that he should probably go home. Ruth thanks the character for everything he has done.
3. Ed Miller and the third PC arrive with Raymond Walker. Ed asks the character to help Raymond get checked in while he heads off to speak with the hospital's director.
4. Sheriff Bowman, Father Gorrand, and the fourth PC enter the waiting room. The sheriff quickly gets everyone's attention. "Listen up everyone: Under no circumstances is anyone to leave here. Power is out all across town, and things are going to hell out there. Any of you hit the road, provided you get out of the parking lot that is, and you'll only wind up hurting yourself or someone else. Anybody leaves without my say-so, and I'll bring you up on charges of reckless endangerment. So why don't everyone just sit tight, and in no time you'll all be on your way home." After his lecture, the sheriff leaves the room to check in with his deputies, reminding everyone to stay put. He professes to be back shortly.

The following people are in the waiting room at this time: Ruth Schwartz, Reginald Grey, Father Gorrand, Florence Abrams, and the player characters. The GM should allow the player characters time to mingle with one another (and the NPCs) and introduce themselves. The following information should come to light during this scene:

1. Ruth's father Daniel is dying, and she is here to say her final goodbyes.
2. Reginald Grey is a lawyer. He came to the hospital tonight to visit a client.
3. Father Gorrand is the head pastor at St. Anselm.

4. Florence Abrams is a florist by trade who was born without arms. She loves her work, and Florence speaks fondly of her little brother, Adolph.

The following minor events should occur during this scene.

1. Ruth nervously paces about the room, setting a few people on edge (though definitely not Florence).
2. Gorrand questions any non-churchgoing characters about their faith, commenting on their absence from mass.
3. The ever-chipper Florence suggests that everyone should sing a song together to pass the time. Every NPC ignores her. How the characters react is up to them.
4. Father Gorrand believes this storm is the work of God. He claims that the Lord is punishing the wicked and washing away the sins of the just.
5. The player characters take turns talking about themselves. This is another instance for the players to flesh out their characters.

1. Raymond Walker enters the room. Upon seeing Ruth, he flips out. He lunges at her like a Wildman. Although he will grab and push her, he will not throw any punches. Ruth begins screaming, and Raymond must be forcefully pulled off of her. After a few minutes, Raymond calms down, as does Ruth. Neither will comment about what just occurred. Once Raymond's name is known, the second PC might recall Martha's cryptic remark, "Raymond is going to be a naughty boy."
2. Ed Miller enters the room. He tells Ruth her father won't last much longer, and this might be her last chance to speak with him. The doctor escorts Ruth out of the waiting room.
3. Reginald is starting to look anxious. If asked about his visible nervousness, he claims it is nothing. If pressed on the issue,

he becomes more belligerent.

4. Florence again suggests that they sing.
5. The player characters and remaining NPCs swap anecdotes. Father Gorrand goes into gory details about his time in Viet Nam. The GM can use this moment to flesh out the NPCs a bit more, and the players can use it as a chance to develop their characters' backgrounds further.

The following developments occur in this scene:

1. Reginald is becoming more and more anxious. He admits to suffering from acute claustrophobia.
2. Ruth returns to the waiting room, her eyes puffy and red from crying. She is so overcome with emotion that she can barely walk, but Ed Miller is with her, steadying her gait. Raymond unsympathetically chimes in, "Death is a bitch, right Ruth?"



Ed warns Raymond to watch his step, and Father Gorrand asks Ruth, "So what exactly is going on between you two?" After wiping back a few tears, Ruth finally confesses her past to everyone. She details the horrible event that ruined her life. She tells of killing the three children and the effect it has had on her. When she mentions the three trick-or-treaters this should creep out the PC who was visited by three trick-or-treaters earlier this evening. If the PC questions Ruth about their costumes or any details about their appearances, she draws a blank. Raymond Walker was one of the two survivors from the accident, and he despises Ruth because the three children she killed were his friends. He volunteers this information to everyone in the room. Father Gorrand consoles Ruth but some of his remarks are in bad taste. "Perhaps God wants you to suffer for your sins this evening," he tells her in a quiet voice. Ed barks at Gorrand, decrying his remarks as inappropriate. He calls the priest a "small-minded, high-and-mighty, backwoods, redneck preacher." Gorrand, unfazed by the doctor's words, ignores him entirely.

3. Florence suggests everyone should join hands and sing a song. Reginald tells her to shut up, obviously annoyed by the woman.

1. Sheriff Bowman returns. He apologizes for being gone so long, but things are still bad outside. His deputies are doing their best, but there is too much to do. Bowman tells everyone that as soon as things clear up a bit, they can all go home.
2. Raymond badgers Ruth, calling her a killer. She breaks into tears. Gorrand consoles her and Bowman warns Raymond to behave.
3. Florence still wants to sing a song, a fact she incessantly shares with everyone. Fed up with her chipper attitude and burdened by his claustrophobia, Reginald finally snaps. He tells Florence to shut up and runs out of the hospital. Bowman asks the player characters to fetch him. Outside, the storm is getting worse. The PCs can barely see Reginald even though he is only a few yards

in front of them. The characters will have difficulty keeping their footing as they give chase. A lightning bolt strikes a tree only twenty feet from the characters. A boom of thunder accompanies the strike, startling both the player characters and Reginald Grey. In fact, Reginald is so startled that he trips and twists an ankle. He begins howling in pain as the characters help him to his feet. He begs them to let him go, but they refuse. Once inside, two orderlies keep Reginald still while Dr. Miller sedates him. The orderlies depart with Reginald, accompanied by Dr. Miller.

4. Quinn Harker and Randy Bridegroom enter the waiting room. Strangely, the sheriff introduces Quinn as Dirk Strong even though his badge clearly reads “Quinn Harker” to everyone who can see it. Quinn (speaking as Dirk Strong, the stereotypical tough-as-nails cop) tells his boss that Randy has cleared most of the major roads and the weather is starting to abate a little.
5. When Randy notices the PC from the Deke’s encounter, he gets in the character’s face and throws a few punches. After a brief struggle, Bowman and Harker/Strong separate the two combatants. Ruth verbally defends the PC, and Randy retorts with an assortment of colorful pejoratives.
6. The sheriff tells Strong to keep an eye on things here. He is going to check the roads to see if they’re safe for driving.

1. A deafening boom of thunder shakes the whole hospital, while streaks of blue and white lightning illuminate the darkness outside the windows. Within seconds, the entire place plunges into darkness and chaos. People are screaming and running around in terror. After a few minutes the emergency power kicks in. Everyone is in the waiting room – except Ruth and Raymond. Most likely, the PC’s imagination and the tension between Ruth and Raymond will drive them to assume the worst. If not, the Gamemaster should have an NPC suggest foul play. Alert characters may notice that a door to one of the interior corridors is

still swinging slightly (an Awareness Check, Difficulty Challenging). Deputy Strong tells everyone to calm down and orders a search. He divides the room into two parties. Of course, one search party consists of all the player characters.

2. The player characters will have to search the hospital in the near dark. Only flashlights, flickering emergency lights, and flashes of lightning provide any illumination. The GM should allow the group to explore the hospital for a period of time. While conducting their search, they run into Raymond Walker. He asks the players if they’ve seen Sheriff Bowman. When Raymond was in the waiting room, he thought he heard the sheriff screaming and investigated on his own. Raymond has no idea what happened to Ruth, and he hasn’t seen her since the power went out. Of course, Raymond’s story is a lie. During the moment of pitch-blackness, he attempted to kidnap Ruth, dragging her into the corridor. Unfortunately for Raymond, she wrestled free and fled into the hospital. He will kindly offer to help the characters find Ruth, declaring, “I may not like the woman, but I don’t want to see any real harm come to her.” If the characters do not allow Raymond to tag along, he will trail them through the darkness of the hospital.
3. Along the way, during brief flashes of lightning, the characters see children further down the hall. With a successful Awareness Check (Difficulty Hard) the characters will notice that the children are costumed for Halloween. As the characters pursue the children around the corner, a swaying door distracts them. The door leads to the rooftop, and it’s the wind making it sway back in forth. During this distraction, the children vanish.
4. The PCs ascend the stairwell to the roof. The door at the top of the stairs is open as well. When the characters step onto the roof, the first thing they notice is that the rain has abated considerably, though not entirely. The swirling winds, however, are as strong as ever. This makes walking up here difficult to say the least. The GM should allow the players to explore the rooftop a



bit before they notice Ruth. She is standing at the edge of the roof. She appears to be contemplating suicide, but this might not be entirely clear to the players. She will notice the presence of the PCs immediately. Before she can react, Raymond lunges at her, forcing her arms behind her back. Raymond does this whether he is with the characters or trailing them. Raymond has a syringe in his right hand, and it is being pressed gently into Ruth's neck, though he is being careful not to puncture the skin yet. "Back Off!" he exclaims, a glint of malice noticeable in his eyes. "This bitch is going to pay." How this scene unfolds is up to the players. They can try to coax Raymond into surrender, they may rush him, or they may wait him out. Regardless of how the scene unfolds, Ruth should survive. If the PCs do not stop Raymond from injecting her with cleaning solution, she will be immediately rushed to ER after the situation has been diffused. The competent staff of Potter's Lake Memorial Hospital will save her life. Once the situation is under control, Deputy Strong arrives on the scene. He handcuffs

Raymond Walker and escorts him away.

5. Whether now or in a hospital bed an hour later, Ruth thanks the player characters for saving her life. She tells them that Raymond grabbed her when the power went out, but she managed to escape his grasp. Ruth is less clear when asked about what she was doing on the roof. She doesn't fully remember, but she swears that she heard the laughter of children.
6. Sheriff Bowman approaches the characters and informs them that the weather has improved enough for everyone to go home.

DENOUEMENT

The final scene of "The Waiting Room" occurs two days later. The GM is free to include a few optional scenes of tangential roleplaying between **Hour Five** and **The Denouement** if so desired. If the Gamemaster does so, these scenes should focus on the PCs personal lives, and they should have nothing to do with the events of the adventure or any of the NPCs involved with the tale. However, the GM may want to consider involving the PCs in the post-storm cleanup of Potter's Lake. After all, there will be one heck of a mess to attend to. The Gamemaster can use such scenes to forge a deeper bond between the player characters and Potter's Lake, as well as give the PCs a reason to associate with one another again.

Devin Sinclair, a columnist for the Daily Sentinel, approaches the player characters, asking each one if they will partake in a group interview. A front desk attendant at Potter's Lake Memorial Hospital is a friend of his, and she informed him about what happened there during the storm. He's writing a piece regarding the events of that night. It is up to the players whether or not their characters participate. If they choose to cooperate, Devin arranges a time for the group interview. At the interview, the PCs will recount that night to Devin, from their perspective at least.

If the players refuse to participate, they will not be alone. No one else from that night at the waiting room is willing to participate.

Whether or not the players cooperate with Devin, he lets them know that Ruth committed suicide last night. Apparently her grief finally got the better of her. She killed herself with a pistol at the cemetery on the edge of the woods. She was at the graves of the three boys she accidentally killed.

This information should creep out the character who participated in the **Hallucinations (Part II)** scene.

Although Ruth was not dressed as a widow, per Devin Sinclair, there is a definite correlation between the hallucination and the suicide. If this is mentioned to Devin, he becomes more curious but doesn't know what to make of it.

Once the player characters have concluded talking to Devin, he thanks them for their time and welcomes them to Potter's Lake.

SPRINGBOARD

As previously mentioned, "The Waiting Room" can be used as the first session of a story arc or ongoing series. While it does come to a definite conclusion, there are some questions left unanswered, and there are many seeds for future stories planted within.

1. Where did the trick-or-treaters come from? Were they ghosts awakened by Ruth's return? If so, are they sleeping again or will the player characters need to lay them to rest? Perhaps Ruth was one of the Gifted and the children were merely a psychic projection of her guilt. If so, this adventure can lead to investigations into psychic phenomenon and the Gifted which could in turn lead to Project: Grayscale and eventually the Apocalyptic events underpinning *Heaven & Earth*.
2. There is unfinished business between Randy Bridegroom and one of the player characters, at least as Randy sees it. This can lead to interesting encounters in the future or serve as a subplot for the PC involved.
3. The PC who was in the car accident had an unnerving hallucination regarding a suicide at a cemetery. Was this merely coincidence or did he somehow catch a glimpse of the future? If the later is true, what is the explanation? Is the character one of the Gifted? What about the first hallucination? Was that a near death experience, a hallucination brought on from head trauma, or are angelic forces at work behind the scenes?
4. The unusual telepathic connection between Kyle and Lucas Wolf can surface in future play. And what about their angelic appearance during the PC's first hallucination? Was that the working of the subconscious mind, divine inspiration, or is there more to the Wolf brothers than meets the eye?
5. Why did Dirk Strong's badge say Harker when that isn't even his name? Although the truth is nothing sinister, it can lead to an interesting investigation.
6. What is up with Martha Moynihan and her cats? Does this somehow tie into the second hallucination where the cats were present at the widow's suicide?
7. What exactly was Ruth doing on that roof? Was she hiding from Raymond? Was she preparing to jump? And what about the laughter of the children that she vaguely recalls? Were the ghosts of the three children driving her to suicide? If that's the case, was it their influence that drove Ruth to kill herself a day later or was it merely a woman who could not handle the mess her life had become?
8. Raymond Walker is a vengeful bastard, and he will definitely hold a grudge with the player characters. Obviously, the man should be serve time for his crime. However, the Gamemaster can have Raymond get off on a technicality of law or have him escape from prison seeking revenge on the PCs.
9. Was Raymond's anger entirely his own or was something else guiding him? Perhaps a spirit of vengeance?

HEAVEN & EARTH

THIRD EDITION CHARACTER SHEET

✦ IDENTIFICATION ✦

Character Name

Occupation

R P V

Past Occupation

R P V

✦ ATTRIBUTES ✦

Coordination

Strength

Awareness

Fortitude

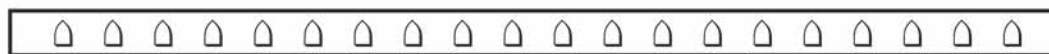
Aura

Knowledge

Defense Value

Destiny

✦ DAMAGE METER ✦



Blunt



Lethal

✦ EXTRACURRICULAR SKILLS ✦

✦ GOALS ✦

✦ HOBBIES ✦

ACTION CHART

Nearly Imp.

d4

Very Hard

d6

Hard

d8

Challenging

d10

Average

d12

Easy

d20

✦ NOTES ✦