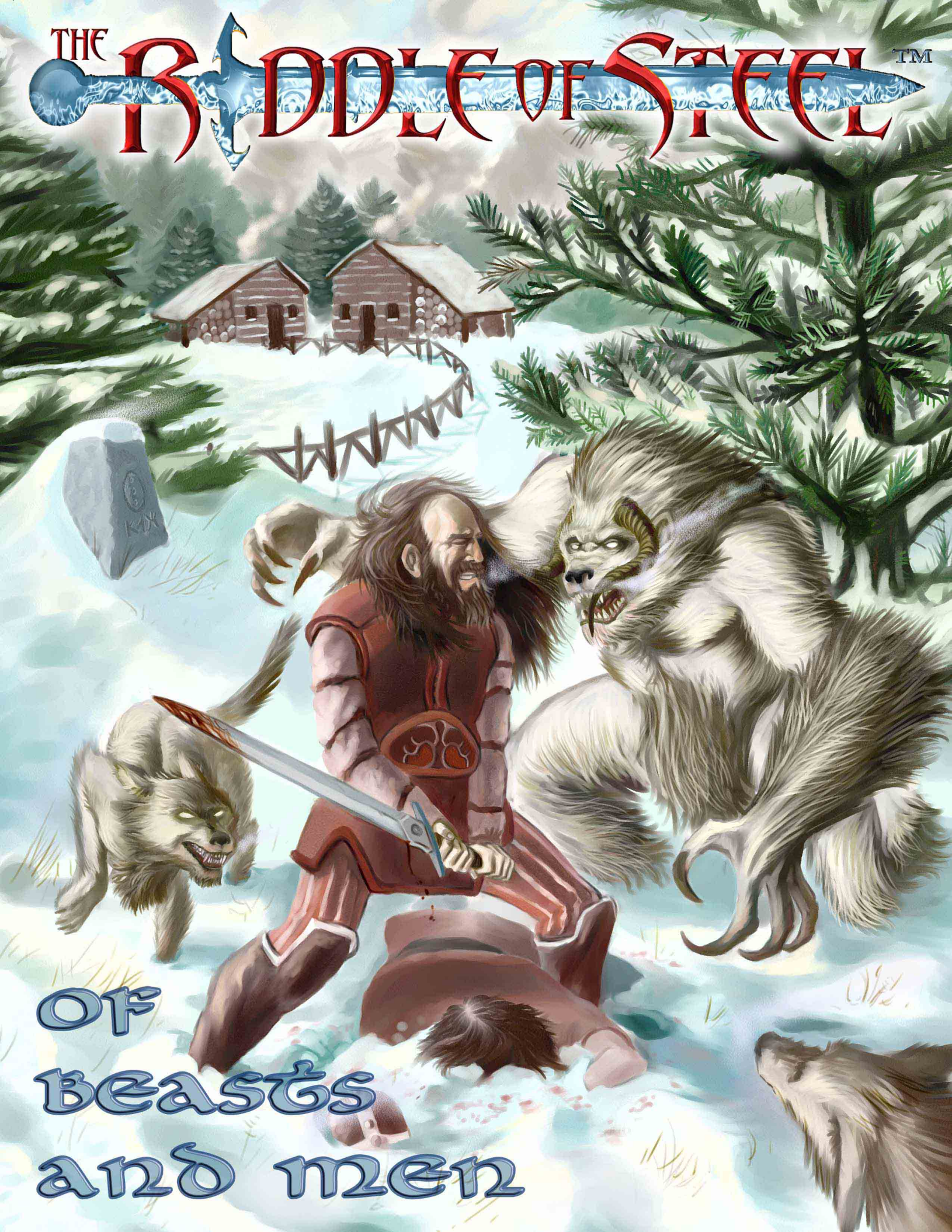


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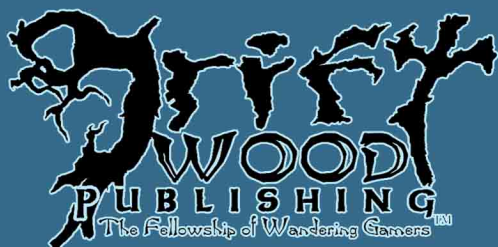


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OF BEASTS AND MEN

A SUPPLEMENT FOR



ROLEPLAYING WITH AN EDGE

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BRIAN'S DEDICATION

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AN INTRODUCTION

THE LITTLE MAN before him paled with the terror one experiences when addressing ones betters, and fidgeted as he worked up the courage to address the Jarl.

“My... my lord. Your brother has not returned from the moot,” he finally managed, drawing gasps and looks of consternation from the crowd of hangers on and toadies.

Sven Tomasson kept his face impassive, and calmly studied the rough calluses on the forefinger of his sword hand while thinking. Jan was nearly five days late from the moot—a gathering of representatives of Savaxen’s mightiest Jarls, called to discuss the allocation of trade rights (a nice way of saying “piracy routes”) for the coming year. Treachery at a moot was not unheard of—thus the use of representatives—but was rare, and if any man should be safe, it would be Jan Tomasson, the brother of the mightiest and wealthiest Jarl, who in his youth was known to be the greatest swordsman in the Savaxen archipelago. This did not bode well.

The general hubbub in the room increased as courtiers and petitioners turned to each other and gossiped. Sven looked to his right, and raised an eyebrow to the advisor who perpetually stood there. The man leaned in close and whispered, “You must see to this personally lord, or you will lose face with the thanes. If your brother has been slain or taken then you must respond with force.”

Sven nodded and stood, raising both his arms for silence and waiting until the noise in the room died down. “Be your friend’s true friend. Return gift for gift. Repay laughter with laughter again, but betrayal with treachery. If they have spilt the blood of my blood, they shall learn to fear me.” Turning, he strode from the room.

A week later, Sven Tomasson found himself walking up the long path to the meeting place, a small collection of huts in the desolate northern wilderness of Savaxen. Dressed in his best furs and carrying only his sword, he surveyed the urrounding area. Known for his battle prowess in his youth, Sven was past his prime but still a wonder with the blade and he feared no man. Still, the eery silence in this place was unnerving, as were the abandoned and empty huts of the meeting place.

Two hundred paces from the front door, he found the first body. The man had been torn apart by wild animals, with not enough remaining even to identify the cause of

death. A little further on he found the second victim, mauled like the first, the pooled blood frozen and black. Newly fallen snow had erased any possibility of tracks, so Sven spread out and began to circle the meeting place, ranging ever wider and looking for signs of life or answers. One by one, he found the remains of many of the delegates; all had been savaged by wild animals, but still with no sign as to what might have caused their deaths in the first place. It was inconceivable that the wild beasts themselves had brought down so many seasoned warriors—wasn’t it?

Some time later, Sven finally found his brother. Face down in a fresh mound of snow, Jan was badly wounded and moaning incoherently. Sven moved to his brothers side to investigate his wounds, and stopped short when he saw the state of his kinsman’s eviscerated belly. Quietly, he waited while his brother breathed his last breaths, then leaned over and softly closed Jan’s eyes for the last time.

It was the silence that alerted him. The wood had gone as quiet as the grave, and Sven calmly stood, gripping his blade in both hands and summoning the mental reserves to battle one or perhaps several men in this biting cold.

He was surrounded—but not by men. A pack of wolves had crept upon him as he administered to his brother, their pure white pelts near invisible against the snow, the blood frozen to their snouts and claws standing out in stark contrast. Sven’s eyes picked out six of the beasts, and then passed beyond to a sight that brought a sudden stream of warmth coursing down his leg—a larger figure, stock white like the rest but standing almost upright, much taller than a man. One of the Hef, bred on this very wolf pack perhaps, hunched and semi-bipedal, but with a cold ferocious intelligence in its eyes.

Sven raised his sword with resolve, and prepared to meet with his God, Wodan One-Eye. In combat he feared no man, but there are worse things in the world than men...

SO YOUR PLAYERS have rolled up their characters, calculated their skills and proficiencies, have maybe even run through a few sample combats, sparring against each other and learning how combat works.



They're probably pretty confident, they know the maneuvers, they know what to expect. If a guy with a rapier comes at you, he'll be doing a lot of thrusts, and he may have a main-gauche in his belt. Mass weapons are best against heavy armor. Arrows and Magic are really deadly as long as you have the time to use them. Yes sir, they're ready, and they know what's coming.

Or do they?

Of Beasts and Men is the first supplement to *The Riddle of Steel* (which, if you don't already have, you're buying things in a strange order – you'll probably get more out of this book if you have read that one, so why not run out and grab it now?). As in most roleplaying games, sessions are far more interesting with a variety of antagonists dogging the steps of the heroes, and generally making their lives difficult. This book is intended to assist Seneschals in running *Riddle of Steel* games by providing notes and guidelines for those antagonists, plus of course a few bones to be tossed to the PC's along the way.

Most RPG's have a monster manual. *Of Beasts and Men* fills that role for *The Riddle of Steel*, but with a different focus – we have opted for quality over quantity, so instead of page after page filled with hundreds of carbon copy monsters (98% of which you've seen in other games and other systems anyway) that are often difficult to integrate into a campaign, we have opted for a smaller selection of creatures (many suggested or submitted by our fans), each with a short piece of fiction introducing it and hopefully giving plenty of good ideas as to how it might be used in a *Riddle of Steel* game. We have broken the book up into several sections:

Chapter One: Men has a lot of sample NPCs. You asked for them, so you got them – any time the characters have attacked someone you didn't expect them to attack, have followed a lead you didn't intend them to follow, or simply walked left when you wanted them to walk right, you may find that you need some NPC stats quickly and don't have time to write them up mid-game. In this chapter you'll find thirty NPC quick entries, covering just about every walk of life you can imagine. You can use these verbatim, or as templates to build your own NPC's from. Additionally, you'll find a small selection of fully fleshed out NPC characters; these could be used as PC's or major NPCs, or simply as examples.

Chapter Two: Beasts, covers the fauna of Weyrth – its animal life. In this hefty chapter you'll find information on lots of different animals, plus information on animal morale, pack tactics, special combat maneuvers animals can employ to surprise your characters, and finally the long awaited rules for barding, horseback combat (including special horseback maneuvers), jousting, and more.

Chapter Three: Sidhe and the Fey, comprises a number of entries with different seelie and unseelie creatures (to be honest, there are more unseelie, but that's what you wanted anyway, right?). Each is introduced with a short piece of fiction, to give you some ideas as to how to incorporate them into your games, and is followed by the stats block and game information.

Chapter Four: Beasts of Legend, details the fantastic and heraldic creatures of the world of Weyrth. These are the beasts that knights go on years-long quests to hunt down, either through a sense of duty or pride, or simply because it makes for a good story at the end. Although many commoners probably don't even believe in most of these creatures, they're at least familiar with them due to their common usage on standards and coats of arms.

Chapter Five: Trollspawn, has expanded entries for the Gol and Hef, both of which are very popular among our fans. Additionally, we've added a new kind of Trollspawn, who may seem familiar at first, but on reading deeper you'll find they have their own special slant in *The Riddle of Steel*. Like most of this book, each entry is introduced with a short piece of fiction.

Chapter Six: The Other World, contains a selection of entries for the inhabitants of, well, The Other World (surprise!), and the results of bringing them to Weyrth. Each entry is prefaced with a short piece of fiction, and most contain sample rituals that might have been used to summon them to Weyrth – see Chapter Six of the main rulebook or Sorcery and the Fey for more information.

The **Appendix** contains the hit location tables for the beasts and animals presented in this book. These are of a format similar to the human hit location tables in the main *Riddle of Steel* rulebook.

So, loosen your sword in its sheath, ensure your armor is buckled on properly, and mount up. We're going for a ride...



BOOK ONE: MEN

BANDIT

MAN IS THE MOST POPULOUS BEAST on the world of Weyrth. This chapter will provide Seneschals with sample human NPC's for use in *Riddle of Steel* games. The first section, NPC Templates, provides a number of briefly described NPC's that will fit into almost any situation, useful where the Seneschal quickly needs statistics for a character he perhaps did not expect to need statistics for (player characters are an unpredictable bunch), or as templates to build NPC's from. The second section, Rogues Gallery, contains a small number of fully-fleshed out characters that may be used in your games as antagonists or even as PCs.

SECTION ONE: NPC "TEMPLATES"

This section is intended to give the Seneschal a ready list of sample NPC's from all walks of life. These may be used verbatim, or may be viewed as samples or templates for the Seneschal to use in the creation of his own Non Player Characters. It is up to the Seneschal to decide which (if any) Spiritual Attributes would be suitable for each NPC.

The NPC examples are split into four sections: Peasants/Commoners, Freeman, Lords and Militia/Fighting Men. The sections are logical groupings only; it's quite acceptable to use an NPC from the commoner section as a lord, for example.

PEASANTS/Commoners

Every country and region has commoners – those who through accident of birth or poor misfortune occupy the lowest rungs of society. Some live with their lot in life and do the best they can to survive, while some turn to preying on others to support themselves and their families.

Bandits travel and live in groups, preying on the roads and highways of Weyrth, waylaying travelers and separating them from their valuables. Bandits tend to fight bravely only when backed up by their fellows, and if a fight is going against them are likely to slip back into the forest or countryside and hide. Many bandits favor ambush attacks from cover, to soften larger groups of potential targets before moving in for the kill.

Statistics:

ST	5	WP	4	Ref	5
AG	5	Wit	5	Aim	5
TO	4	MA	4	KD	5
EN	5	Soc	3	KO	6
HT	4	Per	5	Move	7-8

CP: 8-10 (Cut & Thrust likely)

MP: 8-10 (long or shortbow)

Skills: Woodsman package at 6-7

Thief package at 7-9

BEGGAR

Beggars are ubiquitous throughout Weyrth – in all lands and cultures there are the wretched who have no means to support themselves and live on the generosity of others. Beggars are often lame, diseased or otherwise outcast by society, and as often are ex- or escaped convicts who have run out of options.

Statistics:

ST	3	WP	3	Ref	3
AG	3	Wit	4	Aim	3
TO	3	MA	3	KD	3
EN	3	Soc	2	KO	4
HT	1-2	Per	2	Move	4

Combat Proficiency: none, CP: 3

Skills: Thief package at 8-9, with

Sincerity and Persuasion at 7-8



CUTPURSE

Markets and shopping districts are havens for more than simply traders – charlatans and pickpockets work together to relieve the unwary from their purses, and at night dark figures slip through alleyways and into inn windows to pilfer belongings while their owners drink at the bar below. This entry is necessarily broad, and is intended to cover catburglers, cutpurses and the like.

Statistics:

ST	4	WP	4	Ref	5
AG	5	Wit	5	Aim	4
TO	4	MA	4	KD	4
EN	3-5	Soc	3-5	KO	6
HT	4	Per	4-5	Move	6-7

CP: 7-10 (Cut & Thrust or Dagger)

MP: 4-5 (Thrown dagger)

Skills: Thief package at 6-7, with
a couple of specialties at -1 or -2

FARMER

In most countries, this class of farmer would not be a landowner, but rather a more competent serf controlling a farm for the local lord, perhaps with a small staff of workers (Peasant/Laborers or other Farmers) under his command. The higher values below indicate this “farm manager”, while the lower range indicates his staff.

Statistics:

ST	4	WP	4	Ref	3-4
AG	4-5	Wit	3-4	Aim	4
TO	4	MA	4-5	KD	4
EN	5	Soc	4	KO	6
HT	4	Per	4	Move	6-7

CP: 4-6 (Farm implements such as scythes or hoes)

Skills: Craftsman package at 8-9, with
Farming and/or Herding at -1 to -2

PEASANT/LABORER

Peasants are only slightly higher up the ladder than beggars. Peasants usually live on a lord's land, and eek out a living while paying taxes that keep the landowner rich (or at least comfortable). This category would also cover basic hired labor, anybody who is not good enough at his job to be considered any kind of specialist, but who does “the grunt work” for more specialized workers. In countries such as Tengoku, workers in the rice paddies would fall into this category.

Statistics:

ST	3-4	WP	4	Ref	3
AG	3-4	Wit	3	Aim	4
TO	4-5	MA	4	KD	4
EN	4-5	Soc	4	KO	6
HT	3-4	Per	4	Move	6

CP: 4

Skills: Peasant package at 8-9, or
Laborer package at 8-9, with
one craftsman skill at -1

STREET ENTERTAINER

Popular at street fairs and markets, street entertainers entertain the crowds by juggling, singing, playing instruments, or with impressive displays of acrobatics. These performances may be solely for the joy of the art (plus to earn a few coppers for a meal) or may be a distraction for the cutpurses working the crowd. This entry would also cover traveling minstrels or bards.

Statistics:

ST	4	WP	4	Ref	4
AG	4	Wit	5	Aim	4
TO	4	MA	4	KD	4
EN	4	Soc	5	KO	6
HT	5	Per	5	Move	6

CP: 5-6

Skills: Entertainer package at 6-9, with
one specialty at -1 or -2





THUG

Wherever one travels in Weyrth there's always somebody looking to pick a fight, whether it's hired muscle for a nervous trader, a gang of thugs "defending their turf" against foreigners, or simply a belligerent drunk at a bar. Thugs tend to be brave only in numbers, and are usually fighting for money or because they like it - in neither case are they prepared to put their lives on the line which means they will often flee as soon as a fight becomes serious.

Statistics:

ST	5	WP	4	Ref	4
AG	5	Wit	4	Aim	4
TO	4	MA	4	KD	4
EN	4	Soc	2	KO	6
HT	4	Per	3	Move	6-7

CP: 6-8 (Dagger or Pugilism/Wrestling)

Skills: Laborer, Thief or Peasant/Craftsman package at 8-9

FREEMEN

Freemen are the "middle class" of Weyrth. Although not slaves or serfs, they are still likely to have to work for someone else in order to make a living.

ACADEMIC

Often hired as teachers for the children of High Freeman or Lords, or involved in personal research in musty old libraries, academics are often learned people far more interested in their books and scrolls than in interaction with other people. This entry might also cover a ruler's councilors/wise men.

Statistics:

ST	3	WP	5	Ref	3
AG	3	Wit	5	Aim	3
TO	3	MA	5	KD	3-4
EN	4	Soc	2-3	KO	4-5
HT	3	Per	4	Move	5

CP: 3

Skills: Academic package at almost any skill rating, and

Courtier package at 7-9



BOUNTY HUNTER

As a hunter makes his living by bringing down prey, so does a bounty hunter. The difference is the prey, for a bounty hunter is a man hired to track down a person, (oftentimes from across the continent) and to bring them back to the point of origin for justice, simply to collect moneys owed, or sometimes to kill them. Excellent investigative skills are needed, as are patience and cunning. Given that a bounty hunter would not be needed if the target wished to be found, a good sword arm does not go amiss either. Adjust the values within the ranges below to vary the skill level of the bounty hunter required - as a general rule, the better the bounty hunter the more he costs to hire.

Statistics:

ST	4-5	WP	4-5	Ref	5-6
AG	5-7	Wit	5-7	Aim	5-6
TO	4-5	MA	4-5	KD	5-6
EN	5-7	Soc	4-5	KO	8-9
HT	5-6	Per	5-7	Move	7-9

CP: 10-16 (tending toward lighter, more easily portable weapons)

MP: 8-14 (shortbow or crossbow)

Skills: Bounty Hunter package* at 4-8, and Ranger package at 6-9

NEW SKILL PACKET: BOUNTY HUNTER

Sneak
Camouflage
Body Language (read) +1
Scrounging -1
Persuasion +1
Streetwise
Disguise +1
Tracking -1
Intimidate +1

BUTLER/MANSERVANT

Most noble houses have a large staff of manservants, maids, gardeners and so on to tend to the property and manage the household. The most important position is the butler, because he is the servant who controls and administers all of the other servants. This entry might represent any household servant, with the more favorable ranges belonging to the more competent/important staff.

Statistics:

ST	4	WP	4	Ref	4
AG	4	Wit	5	Aim	4
TO	4	MA	4	KD	4
EN	4	Soc	4	KO	6
HT	4	Per	5	Move	6

CP: 4-5

Skills: Courtier package at almost any skill level, and

Academic package at 9, or

Laborer package at 8-9

CLERGYMAN

The Church of the Three-Gods-Become-One is still very prevalent and powerful in the south of Mainlund, and their priests are devout and focused. The further away from the Seat of the Xanarian Empire the priest is found, the more relaxed he is likely to be regarding the teachings and practices of the church.

Statistics:

ST	4	WP	4	Ref	4
AG	4	Wit	4	Aim	4
TO	4	MA	5	KD	4
EN	4	Soc	5	KO	6
HT	4	Per	4	Move	6

CP: 5-8

Skills: Clergyman package at almost any skill rating, and

Academic or Courtier package at 6-8



COURTESAN

The oldest profession... "Street" workers are likely to have lower stats across the board, while classier prostitutes are well groomed and educated ladies who can converse intelligently and provide mental as well as physical stimulation.

Statistics (Street worker):

ST	3	WP	3	Ref	3-4
AG	3	Wit	3	Aim	3-4
TO	3	MA	2	KD	4
EN	4	Soc	3	KO	6
HT	2	Per	4	Move	6

CP: 6-8 (Stiletto dagger)

Skills: Thief or Entertainer package at 7-9

Statistics (Court worker):

ST	3	WP	4	Ref	3-4
AG	4	Wit	3	Aim	3-4
TO	3	MA	3	KD	4
EN	4	Soc	7	KO	6
HT	4	Per	4	Move	6

CP: 5-6 (Dagger)

Skills: Courtier package at 6-8, and/or
Thief or Entertainer package at 8-9

CRAFTSMAN

This entry covers all professional craftsmen – tailors, blacksmiths, innkeepers and the like. Generally, a friendly demeanor is vital to such a character, but this may be overcome by extreme competence in his or her chosen profession.

Statistics:

ST	4	WP	4	Ref	4
AG	4	Wit	4	Aim	4
TO	4	MA	5	KD	4
EN	4	Soc	5	KO	6
HT	4	Per	4	Move	6

CP: 6-8

Skills: Craftsman package at 6-8, with
One craftsman skill specialty at -2

DRUID

Many countries, particularly Ehld, and much of the northwest and centre of Mainlund still have strong druidic traditions and nature worship. Their domain varies from respected elder to ruler (or at least upper-echelon council member) depending on the country in question. Across most of the rest of Weyrth, however, they are viewed as little better than fools or charlatans.

Statistics:

ST	4	WP	5	Ref	4
AG	4	Wit	5	Aim	4
TO	4	MA	4	KD	4
EN	5	Soc	3	KO	6
HT	5	Per	4	Move	6

CP: 5-7

Skills: Druid/Ritualist at almost any skill
rating, and
Academic or Courtier at 8-9

HUNTER

Hunters make a living through tracking and hunting the beasts of the wild. Kills can be cut up and sold as different parts – furs to clothiers, teeth and claws to collectors of such things, and of course the meat from many animals can be consumed as well.

Statistics:

ST	4	WP	4	Ref	5
AG	6	Wit	4	Aim	5
TO	4	MA	5	KD	5
EN	5	Soc	4	KO	6
HT	4	Per	5	Move	7-8

CP: 6-10 (Any, but tends to be light weapons)

MP: 7-12 (Any kind of Bow)

Skills: Woodsman package at 6-8, and
Peasant package at 8-9

MERCHANT/TRADER

Wherever there are towns and cities,
there are shops, markets, stalls and trad-



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ers. Extremely adept at haggling, merchants usually always manage to buy cheap and sell at a profit, but a cunning character may be able to out-talk the professional talker and receive a good deal.

Statistics:

ST	3	WP	5	Ref	5
AG	4	Wit	6-7	Aim	4
TO	4	MA	5	KD	4
EN	3	Soc	6-7	KO	6
HT	4	Per	5	Move	6

CP: 6-8 (Dagger or Cut & Thrust)

Skills: Craftsman package at 6-9, with
Persuasion and Sincerity at -1 or -2

tion ships at will, as long as they share the booty with the crown.

Statistics:

ST	4-5	WP	4	Ref	4-5
AG	4-5	Wit	5	Aim	4-5
TO	5	MA	4	KD	4
EN	5	Soc	4	KO	7
HT	4	Per	5	Move	6-7

CP: 8-12 (Cut & Thrust, Rapier or Case of Rapiers)

MP: 7-11 (Shortbow or thrown Dagger)

Skills: Sailor package at 6-9, and
Thief or Swordsman at 7-9

SAILOR/PIRATE

Life at sea is a hard one, and it builds hard men. Merchant ships sail up and down the coasts of Weyrth, trading from port to port, or sometimes falling on hard times and preying on other ships to obtain goods and wealth. The essential difference between sailors and pirates is one of outlook, rather than skill. In times of war, monarchs may issue letters of marque to independent ships, basically giving them royal/legal permission to plunder opposi-

SORCERER

Magic is very rare in Weyrth, and sorcerers go to great pains to hide and disguise their sorcery, lest they be burned at the stake by a wild mob or hunted down by self-proclaimed witch-hunters. Sorcerers who actively participate in society are also rare, because the aging effects of using magic are almost impossible to hide or explain away. The only current exception to this is in the country of Gelure, where the emperor Uglub has proclaimed a safe haven for all sorcerers.

Statistics:

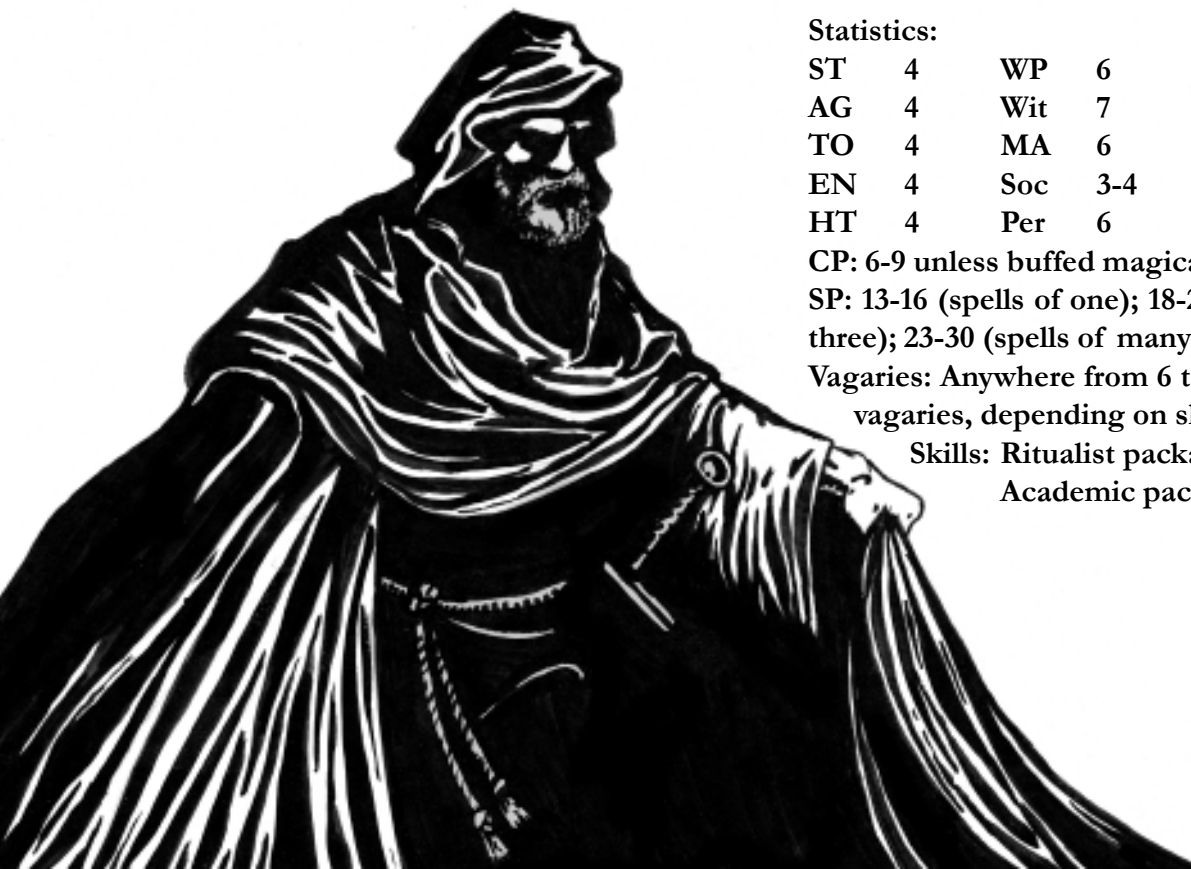
ST	4	WP	6	Ref	5
AG	4	Wit	7	Aim	5
TO	4	MA	6	KD	4
EN	4	Soc	3-4	KO	6-7
HT	4	Per	6	Move	6

CP: 6-9 unless buffed magically

SP: 13-16 (spells of one); 18-22 (spells of three); 23-30 (spells of many)

Vagaries: Anywhere from 6 to 20 points of vagaries, depending on skill level

Skills: Ritualist package at 5-8, and
Academic package at 6-8



LORDS

Many lords are landowners, collecting taxes and tributes from the peasants and serfs who live on and work their land, and in turn paying taxes and tributes to their regents or other forms of rulers. Second (and later) sons who do not stand to inherit often turn to freelancing, traveling the world on their fathers wealth, or simply hanging around court socializing and trying to curry favor with other lords and find a wealthy spouse.

COURTIER

Courtiers are attendants at court. Usually, they are the younger sons of important lords who have no place in their fathers' household and are seeking a partner among the elite. Oftentimes they are lavish spendthrifts who earn extra money by working at the court to support their expensive habits. As the sons of lords, such people are usually well versed in martial swordplay during their youth.

Statistics:

ST	4	WP	5	Ref	5
AG	5	Wit	6	Aim	5
TO	5	MA	5	KD	4-5
EN	4	Soc	7-8	KO	6-8
HT	4	Per	6	Move	6-7

CP: 10-14 (most likely Rapier or Case of Rapiers)

Skills: Courtier package at 6-7, and Academic or Swordsman packages at 6-8

KNIGHT

Some lords are born into their wealth, while others earn it on the battlefield or tourney fields by catching the eye of an important figure - In many countries, lands and title are awarded for combat prowess or simply by doing the right favors for the right people. Of course, the pendulum swings both ways - in times of trouble knights are expected to take up

arms once again, gather fighting men to themselves from their serfs and guards, and ride to battle.

Statistics:

ST	7	WP	6	Ref	6-7
AG	7	Wit	6-7	Aim	5-6
TO	6	MA	6	KD	7
EN	6	Soc	5	KO	8
HT	6	Per	5	Move	10 (-AR pen)

CP: 12-18 (or as low as 7-10 with armor, likely Sword & Shield style and/or Lance)

Skills: Knight package at 6-8, and

Courtier or Swordsman package at 6-8

Note: Knights, particularly those of "old money" (inherited) wealth are proud and stubborn men, and will not ride to tourney or battle without their armor. This is likely to consist of a suit of full plate, chainmail coif, full helmet and a large shield, all adorned with their heraldic symbol. Knights are also excellent riders, and love charging their heavy horses fearlessly into battle (see the section on mounted combat in Chapter 2).

NOBLE PATRIARCH/MATRIARCH

Most lords come by their wealth and status through inheritance, but they retain and maintain it through intrigue, cunning and guile. Crossing the head of a noble house (even through an unintended slight) is foolish in the extreme.

Statistics:

ST	3-4	WP	6	Ref	4-5
AG	3-4	Wit	8	Aim	4-5
TO	3-4	MA	7	KD	3-4
EN	3-4	Soc	8	KO	3-5
HT	3-4	Per	6	Move	4-6

CP: 8-10 (likely to be dueling weapons, such as Rapier or Cut & Thrust)

Skills: Courtier package at 4-6, with

Diplomacy, Ridicule, Intrigue and

Etiquette at -1 or -2, and

Academic package at 5-8





SQUIRE/PAGEBOY

Although not usually lords themselves, squires may well be considered “lords in training”. Their duties involve dressing a knight before a battle or joust, maintaining his armor and weapons, and acting as his ‘gofer’ while learning to be a knight. Until he learns all of his lessons and passes various tests, a squire will never be promoted to knight status (especially if he is not of noble blood), and so older squires, even middle aged ones are not uncommon.

Statistics:

ST	3-4	WP	3-4	Ref	3-4
AG	3-4	Wit	3-4	Aim	3-4
TO	3-4	MA	3-4	KD	4
EN	3-4	Soc	3-4	KO	6
HT	3-4	Per	3-4	Move	6

CP: 6-10

Skills: Knight package at 8-9, and
Courtier package at 8-9

MILITIA/FIGHTING MEN

Nobility and rulership are not without their dangers. Quite apart from the threat of violent incursion by foreign countries, the establishment must deal with local dangers – riots, popular uprisings and assassination attempts, as well as the necessary day to day policing of the population. Guards, Soldiery and Militia fulfill these requirements. Outside of Mainlund (and the feudal system), things may be very different. In many countries, there is no central rulership - bands of Warriors may roam the countryside at will, taking what they wish and acting as a form of de facto police, while in many of the eastern and southern countries the population are kept in check through fear and subjugation.

ASSASSIN

In many countries assassinations are commonplace, and in some, such as Ahr, they are the form of police. Assassins have many faces – they must be able to stealthily sneak into a bedchamber or across a rooftop, however they must be equally capable of infiltrating an organization and fitting into almost



any social situation, such as might be required to get close to a target.

Statistics:

ST	4	WP	4	Ref	5
AG	6	Wit	6	Aim	5
TO	4	MA	6	KD	5
EN	5	Soc	5	KO	6-7
HT	4	Per	5	Move	6-7

CP: 9-15 (light, concealable weapons)

MP: 10-16

Skills: Thief and Courtier packages at 4-7, with

Disguise and B&E at -1 or -2

Notes: Assassins are very likely to utilize poison in their work, either by coating the point of an arrow or edge of a blade, or by slipping some ingestible poison into a targets food. See p.29 in the beasts chapter for some ideas as to the effects of poisons that might be used. Assassins are likely to utilize neurotoxic poisons, as they have a greater chance of knocking out the target earlier, making the assassins job easier. In general, poison covering the point of an arrow has a maximum potency of 1-2, while poison coating a blade has a maximum potency of 2-3. Poison slipped into food or a beverage can be of any potency, up to the maximum of 5.

BERSERKER

Berserkers are wild, savage warriors who charge lightly armored into battle and mindlessly attack opponents, heedless of any risk to themselves. The word itself comes from bare-sark, sark being an ancient term for armor (thus bare of armor, i.e. unarmored). Berserkers are often capable of great feats in combat, fighting long after normal men would have fallen down and surviving to the end of the combat, only then dropping dead from mortal wounds they may have received but ignored. Berserkers tend to live short lives, but glorious and violence filled ones.

Statistics:

ST	5	WP	3	Ref	4
AG	5	Wit	4	Aim	3
TO	7	MA	3	KD	5

EN	6	Soc	4	KO	8
HT	5	Per	3	Move	8

CP: 9-15 (heavy, often two-handed weapons)

Gifts: Berserker

NEW GIFT: BERSERKER

The Berserker gift may be selected either as a major gift or as a major flaw. In both cases, it provides the following benefits:

Whenever a character spends at least ten minutes concentrating and focusing his breathing before a combat, he may enter a berserk rage. While berserk, all Blood Loss results are reduced by 4, all Shock is halved, and the character only receives 1/3 of the Pain die loss (remember to record the actual pain received, as this is used later to determine how debilitating the wound really is). However, the character may not be wearing any armor heavier than leather. Additionally, the character may only ever make attacks, and may not declare defensive moves except Duck & Weave (this makes his only possible defense an evasive attack, a simultaneous block/strike or a duck & weave). The character must always attack the nearest opponent, even one who has surrendered or is running away. A strike that instantly kills the berserker (such as most level 5 wounds to the head or torso) will kill the character immediately unless the berserker can succeed in a WP/15 roll. This roll must from that point on be made at the start of every combat round, or the character instantly drops dead. At the end of the combat, apply full Pain penalties, and of course if the character has been resisting a mortal wound through WP rolls he will then die.

The main difference between taking this as a gift or a flaw lies in the control the character has over his or her berserk rage. When taken as a gift, the character may elect to end the berserk rage at any time, although he will need a minute to recover for every combat round he was berserk (so don't end it while there are still opponents around!). If this is taken as a flaw, the character must succeed in a WP/15 roll at the end of combat, or continue to fight – attacking innocents or even companions as he struggles to gain control of his berserk rage. This WP roll must be made at the start of every combat round (the difficulty reduces by one each round, however) until the berserker finally regains control and stops fighting. Additionally, when taken as a flaw the berserk rage may be sparked at any time, even without concentrating on it. Whenever a character takes a wound in combat while not raging, he must succeed in a WP/Wound Pain Level roll or immediately enter a berserk rage with all of the bonuses and penalties described above.



CAVALRY

Cavalry units are among the most important units in any army. Few foot troops can withstand the charge of a unit of heavy cavalry, and less-disciplined troops (particularly militia) will often scatter when faced with a cavalry charge. Because of their importance, cavalry troopers carry more status within an army than regular foot troops, and are usually better paid and cared for. See the mounted combat section of Chapter 2 for more information.

Statistics:

ST	5	WP	4	Ref	5
AG	6	Wit	4	Aim	4
TO	5	MA	4	KD	4
EN	5	Soc	4	KO	6
HT	5	Per	4	Move	6-7

CP: 10-14 (Spear and/or Lance)

Skills: Swordsman package at 6-8, and
Soldier package at 6-8, with
Riding at -1 or -2

GUARDSMAN

Most town guards and constables are more interested in getting paid and causing trouble than getting in a real fight that they might die in. They always travel in small groups and will never start a fight they're not sure they'll win. The higher range of numbers below indicate an Elite Guardsman, who usually lead groups of guards as captains or lieutenants, and due to their presence may inspire the guardsmen into greater bravery and fewer acts of self-indulgence. The guards protecting the inner sanctum of a castle or noble house will generally be of this elite type.

Statistics (Guard):

ST	5	WP	4	Ref	4
AG	5	Wit	4	Aim	4
TO	4	MA	4	KD	4-5
EN	4	Soc	3	KO	6-8
HT	4	Per	5	Move	6-7

CP: 7-10 (usually longswords or polearms)

MP: 6-9 (shortbows or crossbows)

Skills: Swordsman package at 7-9, and
Soldier package at 7-9

Statistics (Elite Guard):

ST	6	WP	4	Ref	5-6
AG	6	Wit	5	Aim	5
TO	5	MA	4	KD	4-5
EN	6	Soc	4	KO	6-8
HT	5	Per	6	Move	6-7

CP: 9-14 (usually longswords or polearms)

MP: 7-11 (shortbows or crossbows)

Skills: Swordsman package at 5-7, and
Soldier package at 5-7

MERCENARY

Mercenaries, being paid warriors, are not the most loyal of followers. They can, however, fight valiantly and savagely – if, of course, your pockets are deep enough to handle the strain. Their weaponry is varied and is sometimes changed to better meet certain enemies. Better (and therefore wealthier) mercenaries may well be able to afford leather or even chain armor.

Statistics:

ST	5-6	WP	4	Ref	5-6
AG	5-6	Wit	6	Aim	5-6
TO	5	MA	4	KD	5
EN	5	Soc	4	KO	7
HT	5	Per	6	Move	6-8

CP: 11-14

MP: 11-14

Skills: Swordsman or Warrior package at 6-8

MILITIA

Unlike soldiers, units of militia are not part of a standing army, but rather are conscripted commoners, brought together as a fighting unit during times of war. As such, they are far less disciplined or structured than soldiery, and are commonly used as shock troops or “arrow fodder”, to protect more important troops and keep them the most effective. Units





of militia are far more likely to break and flee in combat than soldiers.

Statistics:

ST	4	WP	3	Ref	4
AG	4	Wit	4	Aim	4
TO	4	MA	4	KD	4
EN	5	Soc	4	KO	6
HT	4	Per	4	Move	6

CP: 7-8 (polearms or spears, most commonly)

MP: 5-6 (crossbows)

Skills: Peasant/Craftsman or Laborer at 8-9

Statistics:

ST	4	WP	4	Ref	4
AG	4	Wit	4	Aim	4
TO	4	MA	4	KD	4
EN	4	Soc	4	KO	6
HT	4	Per	4	Move	6

CP: 6-7 (sticks, scythes, clubs)

MP: 3-4 (slings and maybe bows)

Skills: Laborer or Peasant/Craftsman package at 8-9

MOB

Farmers and peasants with sticks can be, if sufficiently roused, a force to be reckoned with. They will always run if faced with an obviously superior force, don't like to attack fortifications, and will, in general, riot like a mob. They usually lose to any sort of army because of leadership, organization and battle experience (or lack thereof), but are effective against guards.

SCOUT

Picked for their fitness and excellent eyesight, Scouts are used in the military to move ahead of the main force, checking the upcoming terrain to ensure that there is adequate room to move the troops through, foraging for enough food to feed the army, and looking out for the warning signs of approaching enemy troops. Other scouts travel to the sides and rear of marching armies, keeping watch for flank attacks and ensuring that deserters cannot escape.



Statistics:

ST	4	WP	4	Ref	4
AG	4	Wit	5	Aim	5-6
TO	5	MA	4	KD	4
EN	5	Soc	4	KO	6
HT	4	Per	6-7	Move	6-7

CP: 8-12 (light weapons only)**Skills: Woodsman/Ranger package at 5-7, and Soldier package at 7-8****SOLDIER**

Soldiers differ from guardsmen in that they are generally not used for guarding or policing duties, but are trained and kept as part of a country/regions standing army. They are extremely disciplined and ordered, and have been trained to fight well as a unit and follow orders to the letter without questioning them (thus the low Willpower score). Higher ranges in the attributes below indicate soldiers higher in the chain of command, corporals, sergeants, and the like).

Statistics:

ST	5	WP	2-3	Ref	5
AG	5	Wit	6	Aim	5
TO	6	MA	5	KD	4-5
EN	5	Soc	4	KO	7-9
HT	5	Per	5	Move	6-7

CP: 8-16 (depending on armor and rank/training)**Skills: Soldier package at 5-9, and Swordsman package at 6-9 or (for leaders) Knight package at 7-8****SECTION TWO: ROGUES' GALLERY**

Many of these characters are the creations of the actual play of TROS players around the world, submitted to us for this book. Now they're yours to use, alter, play, or kill off. Each entry below is a little different, left largely in the form it came to us. Who are we to tamper with someone's genius?

CURTIS ROTH*Tengokan Monk***Statistics:**

ST	4	WP	3	Ref	7
AG	7	Wit	7	Aim	6
TO	5	MA	4	KD	5
EN	6	Soc	5	KO	6
HT	4	Per	5	Move	8

Combat Proficiency: 12 (Polearms - quarterstaff), CP 19**Skills: Courtier package at 6****Academic package at 7****Spiritual Attributes:****Destiny: To become "one" with nature and live the remainder of his life in harmony with it****Faith: What is the Matr... sorry... *Riddle of Steel*.****Drive: To learn the secrets of the cosmos, and understand "all"****Conscience****Luck**

Curtis Roth is a westerner born and bred in the rice paddies of Tengoku. His parents fled to the small island nation of Tengoku from persecution in the west. It took a great deal of time to become accepted by the Tenkokans, but slowly, over many years the family became integrated into the society.

Curtis had a great deal of trouble growing up. Because he "looked different" children would pick on him, shunning him and not allowing him to join in their games. He became a lonely, isolated young man who would go in weeks-long "walks" through-



out the countryside. For years, he went through life in this way, directionless, until one day he stumbled across a monastery hidden in the wilds of Tengoku's mountainous regions. The monks were Riddle Seekers, delving into the secrets of the world and attempting to answer "the question" through meditation, prayer and martial prowess. The color of one's skin was irrelevant, and for the first time in his life, Curtis found acceptance.

Curtis trained with the monks for fifteen years, until he had learned all of their secrets. The order urged him to stay and learn the truth through meditation, but Curtis was an active young man, and determined to instead learn the truth through travel. Promising to return, he left the monastery and began to wander throughout Weyrth, seeking his answers. Curtis is a very non-materialistic man, his only possessions the clothes on his back and his beautiful oaken quarterstaff, honed and polished to perfection through hundreds of years of owners – a gift from the monastery when he departed.

Much of Curtis' travel has been through Mainlund, particularly Angharad and recently Picti. He has begun to find the truths he seeks through meeting with the Druids of those places, their worship and reverence of trees – easily the oldest form of life on the continent – appealing greatly to him, and he has begun to see that to truly understand the answer to 'The question' – one must look within nature as well as within one's self.

DUR GARON

Stahlnish Rock Dwarf

Statistics:

ST	6	WP	2	Ref	4
AG	5	Wit	4	Aim	4
TO	7	MA	3	KD	5
EN	4	Soc	2	KO	8
HT	5	Per	4	Move	7

Combat Proficiency: 10 (Mass Weapon - battleaxe), CP 14; 4 (Dagger), CP 8

Skills: Warrior package at 6, Craftsman package at 6 **Craft:** Weaponsmithing 4, **Craft:** Armorsmithing 5

Spiritual Attributes:

Destiny: To regain his birthright – to be allowed home into the clan.

Drive: To find and rescue his daughter

Passion: Lys Ander – a blood oath to protect and serve him

Passion: Hatred for his cousin, Ceirek

Passion: Hatred for Gols

Dur Garon is a rock dwarf from deep below the IronTooth Mountains in Stahl. His clan lives in a deep cave network high in the range, coming out rarely to hunt for game but far preferring life in the darkness. A centuries-long ongoing battle with a large tribe of Troglodytes drove the clan to shallower caves however, where they began to suffer attacks by the Gol.

It was during one of these attacks that the clan was betrayed. For reasons known only to himself, Dur Garon's cousin, a dwarf by the name of Ceirek alerted a particularly large group of the Gol to the clan's presence, and showed them the way into the caves. Many dwarves were slain, and many of the survivors were convinced by Ceirek that Dur Garon was the traitor. For several years, internal conflict tore at the clan as sides backing Ceirek and Dur Garon fought tooth and nail, and eventually both were banished, forced to flee and told never to return until one could prove the duplicity of the other. To add insult to injury, Dur Garon's wife had been killed in the battle and his daughter gone missing – thought to have been taken by the Gol.

Dur Garon spent many years hunting Gol, using guerilla tactics to weaken the clans, always searching for the one that he believed had taken his daughter. Eventually, his private war caught up with him and he found himself badly wounded and left for dead by the Gol. It was only the actions of a passing Fey-siehe by the name of Lys Ander that he survived at all, and Dur Garon immediately swore a blood oath (a binding, lifelong contract for Rock Dwarves) to serve and protect his Elvin savior.

Today, the two travel together. Both are outcasts from their respective societies and find human affairs difficult to understand, and even more difficult to integrate into. Dur Garon's overriding goal is to seek information that



might lead him to his daughter, and to his hated cousin, Ceirek.

Dur Garon is a splendid weaponsmith, his blades are of extreme quality and are well sought after. With the assistance of Lys Ander, his greatest forging is a wicked dagger by the name of Kinslayer – a weapon forged in his own hearts blood that would surely slay his cousin immediately should it ever strike home.

GARRICK SUNESON

Xanarian Missionary

Statistics:

ST	4	WP	6	Ref	4
AG	4	Wit	5	Aim	4
TO	5	MA	6	KD	4
EN	4	Soc	7	KO	7
HT	4	Per	4	Move	6

Combat Proficiency: 6 (Sword & Shield), CP 10

Skills: Clergyman Package 6, Courtier Package 7, Diplomacy 4, Etiquette 5, Leadership 5, Theology 4, Sincerity 5
Spiritual Attributes:

Faith: The Three-Gods-Become-One

Faith: The Seven vows of the Prophet

Destiny: Die at the hands of Xanar Shard-Finder himself(!)

Passion: The Three-Gods-Become-One

Passion: The Seven vows of the Prophet

Garrick Suneson is a somewhat enigmatic wanderer, who chooses to serve two religions, and subsequently is not wholly accepted by either. He is a tall, imposing man who wields a mighty bastard sword that was supposedly once blessed by Xanar Shard-Finder himself, and wears white scaled plate armor.

Born second to a wealthy family of Ouestenreich, Garrick followed the local tradition of the firstborn son entering politics and the second serving the

church. For several years, he traveled in the service of the Three-Gods-Become-One, bringing the word to the downtrodden of Gelure, the godless of Stahl, and the “heathen” Wodan One-Eye worshipers of Savaxen. Garrick is a well spoken and affable man who would make friends easily and foes seldom. Almost single handedly, he turned entire villages to the worship of the Three-Gods-Become-One and taught thousands of the All Seeing Eye, The Righteous War and the Merciful Hand.

After years of successful missionary work, Garrick turned his eyes to the east, with a desire to bring the word of the Three-Gods-Become-One to the followers of the prophet. He spent five years traveling through Tegaarn, most particularly Krym-Khanan and Otarmarluk. Initially, Garrick spent his time in these regions attempting to turn the populace from the path of the Prophet to the Three-Gods-Become-One. Over time, however, he came to realize that at their core, there was actually little to differentiate the two religions.

At this realization, Garrick suffered a minor crisis of faith. When he came through it, however, he realized that his true calling was not to preach one religion over the other, but rather to unite the two wayward factions. For two years now, he has traveled the continent, bringing the word of the Prophet to the west, and the words of the Three-Gods-Become-One to the East. Acceptance has been slow, but Garrick is a patient man...

And presently, he's got one eye on the Thayrists...

JAHEIRA BINT BAHIR AL KIBAR

Ahrish Assassin

Statistics:

ST	4	WP	5	Ref	6
AG	6	Wit	6	Aim	6
TO	5	MA	3	KD	5
EN	4	Soc	4	KO	8
HT	3	Per	7	Move	7

Combat Proficiency: 4 (Short Sword), CP 10
5 (Short bow), MP 11

Skills: Thief Package 7, Courtier Package 7, Herbalism 5, B&E 6, Sneak 6



Spiritual Attributes:**Faith:** The seven vows of the prophet**Destiny:** To poison the Uv'Ahr of Arah, altering the destiny of that city**Drive:** Concoct the perfect, untraceable poison**Luck:** Well, you know. Nobody's perfect...

Jaheira Bint Bahir al Kibar was born into the physician's caste in Ahr. It was noticed at a very young age that she had a natural affinity for herbalism, however, and she was quietly removed from her intended path in life and retrained by the guild of assassins. Life as a trainee assassin was not easy – the variety of skills needed is vast, and the training is necessarily brutal and harsh – mistakes on assignment are not to be tolerated and are usually fatal, so they are ironed out mercilessly at a young age.

Jaheira specializes in poisons. Her *modus operandi* is to meet with an intended target, become friends with him and engender his trust, then poison him and sit with him, comforting him while he dies. Jaheira works both within the law (assassinations are the legal form of police within Ahr...) and without (...but not always, particularly when the target is of a higher rank than the employer). She is slim and attractive, intelligent and well educated; as at ease in a social situation as crawling around a dank sewer in the dark.

Jaheira prefers to concoct her own poisons, using her extensive herbalist skills and by capturing snakes and other poisonous creatures and extracting their venom. She often tests minute samples of her poisons first on rats and then on herself, as a result she is extremely resistant to poisons and venoms (Seneschals discrimination). Assume that at all times she has a quantity of Hematoxic and Neurotoxic poisons on her, with varying potencies. She will sometimes coat her sword blade or arrow points, but prefers to get close to the target and slip the poison into his wine or meal.

JULIANOS VAINSTEEL*Farrenshire Fop***Statistics:**

ST	4	WP	3	Ref	5
AG	7	Wit	3	Aim	5
TO	6	MA	4	KD	5
EN	4	Soc	5	KO	7
HT	3	Per	4	Move	7

Combat Proficiency: 8 (Rapier, Case of Rapiers), CP 13**5 (Longbow), MP 10****Spiritual Attributes:****Drive:** "To be the greatest swordsman alive."**Passion:** Farrenshire**Faith:** Imperial Church of The Three-Gods-Become-One**Gifts:** Good Reputation (minor)**Flaws:** Addiction (alcohol - minor), Phobia (rats - minor)**Skills:** Swordsman packet & Courtier packet at 8**Bonus Skills:** Acrobatics, Survival, Riding, Combat/Weapon Art all at 8

Julianos Vainsteel was born and raised in the wine country near Denaille, in the kingdom of Farrenshire. His mother died during his fifth year, a victim of the Grinning Sickness (a rare form of tetanus). His father, a vineyard owner and wine merchant was wealthy enough to afford a formal education for his only son. Unfortunately, Julianos lacked the discipline of a true scholar and was soon unwelcome in any university in Farrenshire. But, in the course of his scholastic pursuits, Julianos discovered the thing he had the most talent for - the rapier. Soon, he began to seek out teachers wherever he could find them. When he was able to defeat one master, he would move on to the next. So it was in this way that young Julianos went from boy to man.

After his father's death, Julianos assumed control of his father's vineyard. While not as capable a merchant as his father, he maintained a respectable profit. Unfortunately, he developed a fondness for wine that goes beyond a healthy appreciation. Over time, this alcoholism even



began to threaten his ability to manage his father's business.

With the rise of the threat from Gelure, he's seen his chance to make something of himself. Hiring on a trusted former schoolmate to manage the family vineyard, Julianos has set out to search the world for those to aid Farrenshire in it's time of need.

Julianos Vainsteel is a foppish dandy. Fond of silks and suede leather, he dresses in flamboyant colors and the most modern styles. His high boots are black leather, always polished to a high sheen. His breeches are of cotton or silk, generally dyed purple. He wears a purple suede vest over a white silk blouse. Atop his head sits a large hat of the same suede with an enormous feather arching from it. His black hair is worn in long curls and a thin mustache and goatee adorn his face.

First and foremost in his life is fun. Julianos is fond of parties of any description. Be it a royal feast or a harvest festival, as long as there is wine (and women) Julianos will be there. Popular with the ladies, his fondness for their "company" has gotten him in trouble on several occasions. Generally, the marital status of his conquests becomes of less importance as the night, and the wine, passes by. It's a far too common thing for Julianos to awaken with a headache, not knowing where he is or who he is with.

But, though many times this has led to trouble for him, he is always unafraid. He is convinced that his skill with rapiers is greater than most, if not all, swordsmen in the land. His (somewhat arrogant) regard for his skill is not without good reason. He is a great swordsman, which is one reason why he is still alive. This talent with rapiers has begun to gain him a reputation as duelist of some regard. In his heart, Julianos truly believes that he is almost, if not already, the greatest swordsman alive.

While his skill with his rapiers keeps him out of danger, there is one thing that can break his nerve. This is something he has been careful to keep to himself, but he does have a weakness. He is mortally terrified of one creature: RATS. Upon sighting a rat, he is set upon by an irrational and unexplainable fear.

He'll do much to avoid them, even at the risk of his life.



LYS ANDER

Gifted Sidhe Sorcerer.

Statistics:

ST	3	WP	6	Ref	6
AG	7	Wit	5	Aim	6
TO	4	MA	4	KD	5
EN	5	Soc	3	KO	7
HT	4	Per	5	Move	7

Kaa	7
Form	5
Art	4
Disc	5
Draw	4

Combat Proficiency: 4 (Rapier), CP 10

1 (Crossbow), MP 7

Vagaries: Sculpture 2, Movement 3, Growth 1, Vision3, Conquer 2

SP 12 (spells of one); SP 16 (spells of three); SP 21 (spells of many)

Skills: Ritualist Package at 6, Academic Package at 7, Arcane Theory 4, Meditation 4, Research 5, Ritual Magic 3

Lys Ander is a fey-siehe sorcerer living in human society and pretending to be human. Physically, Lys Ander resembles a human, as long as you don't get too close a look at his face or head, for he has the epicanthic folds to his eyes and slight points to his ear tips that would herald him something not quite human. The ears he hides with long hair, the eyes he passes off as the result of having had a grandmother from Tengoku.

At a very young age, Lys Ander was driven from his home by his father. His mother had enjoyed a brief affair with a passing noble from another sidhe house, and Lys Ander was the result of that affair. His father could not bear the shame that would follow from this becoming public, so settled for finding an excuse to despise his "son" and drive him from sidhe society. Lys Ander adapted very well, living among humans as one of them, even breaking his name (Lysander) into two parts to maintain the illusion of having a family name and thus a family.

Lys Ander is a powerful sorcerer, but keeps his abilities as secret as possible, so as not to draw attention to himself. He is careful to keep his spellcasting – and thus his aging – to a minimum, but ensures that he ages at least a little now and then so as not to maintain a permanently youthful appearance that would alarm those in the society he makes his home.

Lys Ander has only two long term companions, his familiar Kestrel – a small winged lizard from the rolling plains of Svarastra (that looks somewhat like a tiny wyrm) and an outcast seelie – a rock dwarf by the name of Dur Garon who finds it even harder to pass unnoticed in human society than him. The two have been bound since Lys Ander saved the life of Dur Garon some years past, and a blood oath was sworn between them.

TIBERIUS DAMARISK

Stahlnish Bounty Hunter

Quote: "You're wanted dead or alive, so it matters little to me. Lucky you... You get to choose."

Statistics:

ST	5	WP	4	Ref	5
AG	6	Wit	4	Aim	5
TO	5	MA	4	KD	5
EN	4	Soc	2	KO	7
HT	4	Per	5	Move	7

Combat Proficiency: 8 (Cut & Thrust, Brawling, Dagger), CP 13

3 (Crossbow), MP 8

Spiritual Attributes:

Passion: Law and Order

Drive: Always gets his man

Passion: Hatred of Trollspawn

Gifts: Accuracy (minor)

Flaws: Sleep Disorder (major)

Skills: Bounty Hunter packet and Ranger/Woodsman packet at 7

Bonus Skills: Tracking (now 5), Sneak (now 5)

Equipment: Short Sword, Arming Glove, Stiletto, Crossbow, Chain vest w/ Leather sleeves, steel bracers, and the aforementioned arming glove.

Tiberius Damarisk was the youngest of several children born to the Damarisk family, a line of free-man farmers with lands north of Theoricsthorne. However, when he was only 8 years old, a band of Hef attacked the farm. His mother hid him away in the cellar, where he watched, afraid and crying, as the Hef broke into the house and slaughtered or kidnapped his entire family. There he stayed in the cellar until a patrol of Stahlnish soldiers came by the farm and found him. He was taken then to the city of Theoricsthorne, where he was placed into an orphanage.

Tiberius was never adopted due to his surly manner and withdrawn ways, and was eventually pushed out into the world at 13 winters. He worked odd-jobs all over the city until he caught the eye of a city watch recruiter during a robbery incident at an inn where he worked as a porter. His quick reaction, easy grasp of violence, and lean, muscled physique convinced the recruiter that this youth was a likely candidate for the watch.

During his years in the watch, his already strong respect for law and order grew into a fervor that his fellows found disturbing. He allowed no crime to pass unpunished, no matter how trivial. He was also central to exposing a smuggling arrangement involving several of the senior members of the city watch. The revenge of those members would have ended the young Tiberius' career in a dank alleyway, but for his quick reflexes and still growing skill with weapons. However, the dislike and distrust of the remaining watch members soon forced him to leave the city watch.

Perhaps by destiny, it was around this time that he met Duram Braun, a bounty hunter of some reputation throughout Stahl and its neighboring provinces. Duram saw the young man's potential, and took him under his wing, teaching him further in the ways of the sword, and in tracking criminals across the wilds and cityscapes.

Now, many years later, Tiberius Damarisk is known and feared by the criminal element across Mainlund. His determination to always bring down a bounty, his hatred of crime and devotion to Law have combined to make him a truly relentless foe to those who would flaunt Law and Order.



Tiberius stands at 6 feet, 7 inches tall, and weighs in excess of 200 lbs. His steel grey eyes and brooding demeanor mark him as an unapproachable figure- which is how he likes it. Lacking quite severely in people skills, he makes up for it only with strength of purpose and an integrity which those few who know him well enough know will never surrender. He is coldly polite at the best of times, and icily hostile at the worst. Beneath this frigid demeanor, however, lies a boiling rage that is barely contained by a rigid self-control. Fear and happiness seem to be equally foreign to him, from first examination. He seems to take pleasure only in the defense of law, and in the accomplishment of a job well done, and has never been seen to act afraid of anything. He also rarely loses control of his temper, except in some few rare occasions, all of which involved either a blatant breach of the law, or encounters with Trollspawn, which he seems to believe are the physical embodiment of chaos and lawlessness.

WILLIAM “WILL” THENRILL

Picti Halfling wanderer

Statistics:

ST	6	WP	5	Ref	5
AG	5	Wit	6	Aim	4
TO	7	MA	4	KD	5
EN	4	Soc	2	KO	9
HT	4	Per	4	Move	7

Combat Proficiency: 9 (Sword & Shield), CP: 14

12 (Greatsword/Longsword), CP: 17
8 (Mass Weapon & Shield), CP: 13

Spiritual Attributes:

Drive: To find and rescue his mother.
Destiny: To have his greatest triumph at the moment of his greatest defeat
Passion: Love for his Mother, Beth Luck
Conscience

Skills: Swordsman package at 7,
Woodsman/Ranger package at 6

Will Thenrill was born on the island of Picti. He never met his father, but his mother used to tell him tales of him as he went to sleep at night. One night, his father would be a prince in a feyrie court, the next a bold adventurer battling pirates on the high seas. He was never quite sure what the next tale would be, and which – if any – told the real truth of his patronage.

When he was very young, Will was forced to flee Picti along with his mother. She would never tell him the true story of why they had to leave so quickly, but she was careful to make him promise always to keep his hair long, so as to hide his curiously pointed ears – people wouldn’t understand, she would tell him, they would think you strange.

For several years, Will and his mother traveled across the continent, never staying in one place too long. Finally, they met up with a desert caravan battling the sandy seas of Krym-Khanan. For a year they stayed with the caravan, traveling from oasis to oasis as they made their way across the sands. Will spent the time learning his letters and sums, and learning how to fight. He was a natural with a long blade, and the caravan weapons master taught him every trick he knew. Will was so skilled with the long blade that he began to experiment with wielding two of them simultaneously, as much as this seemed an unwieldy and unusual configuration. Over the year, his left arm grew to be as strong as his right, and he became proficient in fighting with two long blades at once.

Then, one day the caravan was attacked by desert raiders. They destroyed most of the caravan, slaying and scattering the waggoner’s and taking all of the women captive. Will fought well against them, but their numbers were too great and he found himself tied to a stake and left for the brutal desert sun, a gourd of water tantalizingly just out of his reach. For three days he fought against his bonds, finally breaking himself free but in the mean time his skin had been blistered and cracked, left red and black and hardened, a state from which it has never recovered.

These days, Will is a wanderer. He travels from town to town, plying his skills as a mercenary and always keeping one ear open for any word of a band



of desert raiders who may perhaps have sold some female slaves. His greatest desire in life is to locate his mother and free her from whatever hell she is currently living in.

YSSIR ABU AL JAPHRA IBN MUKKAF (YA-SIR ABOO AL JAF- RA IB-IN MU-KAFF)

Ottarmarluk landed Noble

Statistics:

ST	4	WP	5	Ref	5
AG	5	Wit	5	Aim	5
TO	5	MA	5	KD	4
EN	3	Soc	8	KO	7
HT	3	Per	5	Move	6

Combat Proficiency: 9 (Cut & Thrust), **CP:** 14 (reduced by armor to 9)

Spiritual Attributes:

Drive: "Defend the Weak in the name of the Prophet."

Destiny: Become a general of legend

Faith: Seven Vows of the Prophet

Gifts: True Leadership (major)

Flaws: Vows: Abstinence from wine and women (minor)

Skills: Soldier packet and Clergy packet at 8

Bonus Skills: leadership, tactics (x2), surgery, language: Hellenic

Equipment:

Full Plate mail (fine quality: reduced CP cost and +1 AV)

Full Helm (fine quality: reduced CP cost and +1 AV)

Buckler (fine quality: reduced DTN)

Scimitar (fine quality: reduced ATN and DTN)

Falchion (fine quality: reduced ATN and DTN)

A fine Charger

Various travel supplies (tent)

Fancy wardrobe worth more than 50 gold by itself

Hired soldiers (20-30)

Yssir was never expected to inherit his father's lands. Born a fourth son, he was considered far enough down the line of succession that he was sent to be raised in a monastery as a priest. There he stayed for 8 years, studying theology and literature. The sect he was raised in was somewhat more idealistic than most, believing that it was the duty of the faithful to defend all of the innocents (believers or not) from the Darkness with the credo "Lead gently the unbelievers, towards the truth; not with the ruthless whip of the taskmaster, but with the stern but kind hand of a father guiding a wayward child."

These lessons were firmly ingrained in young Yssir by the age of 14, when his father and older brothers were killed in a brutal series of battles with Taveruun mercenaries in the West. Suddenly the only heir to the estate, he was quickly whisked away from the only life he had known and thrust into the politics and intrigues of one of the most militaristic houses in the Sulta'an's domain.

Much to his advisor's delight however, Yssir took to leading men with an almost supernatural ease. His calm self-assurance, quiet devotion, and decisive manner quickly earned the respect and loyalty of the remains of his father's shattered forces. Throwing himself wholly into his role, he rallied his men to repel the mercenary incursion. Since this early victory, he has pushed himself to train in the arts of war; trying to make up for being nearly a decade of training behind his peers.

His sedentary, academic childhood has left him more frail and sickly than most young men his age (now 17), but his advisors expect him to fill out quickly, especially in light of how hard he has been driving himself.

While lacking in skill and experience Yssir is a walking showcase for some of the finest equipment makers in Ottarmarluk. The armor smith Maphala considers the suit he made to be one of his finest masterpieces, and Yssir's blades bear the mark of the legendary Estaff al Fisha'an.

Yssir understands and respects the reasons for the infidels Crusades (it is the Shard of Xanar after all), but fights them without hesitation. Unlike many of his countrymen however, he does so objectively and without malice, preferring to minister to prisoners of war, rather than torture them.



BOOK TWO: BEASTS OF THE WILD

THIS SECTION OF THE BESTIARY is intended to provide Seneschals with all the information they need to bring animals fully into their games. Below, you will find information covering several of the most common types of animals (particularly man's best friend and his method of locomotion; dogs and horses), combat maneuvers various animals might employ, information regarding fighting from horseback (including barding), and hit location tables for common classes of animals, to be used in conjunction with the animal critical hit tables in the Appendix of this book.

The information in this chapter is intended to be general enough that it may be applied to any beast. Seneschals should use their discretion and extrapolate from the information below when determining hit locations and combat maneuvers for the six legged lion-headed centaur (or whatever) they wish to create for use in their own campaigns.

ATTACKING ANIMALS

The damage tables in the main *Riddle of Steel* rulebook are fine for calculating damage to humanoids, but there is a fair amount of extrapolation required when attacking a non-bipedal figure using those tables. The following rules were developed to assist Seneschals in determining what happens when their players attack (and are attacked by) various other types of animals.

The Appendix of this book contains the **Animal Damage Tables** and **Animal Hit Location Tables**. At first glance, you'll notice that they differ slightly from the standard damage tables. The standard damage tables are broken up into general attack locations, and are then narrowed by the roll of a D6. The animal tables are already broken into specific areas (such as the Neck and the Knee) and the D6 roll is made before the table is consulted. This is because a similar

swing may strike totally different areas of different animals due to their differing sizes and physiques. Below, you will find hit location diagrams for the most common animals; however Seneschals are encouraged to use these diagrams as examples, to allow them to use the Animal Hit Location Tables for any creatures they may wish to create for their games.

QUADRUPEDS AND KNOCKDOWN

Quadrupeds are a lot more stable on their feet than we bipeds are. As such, they're harder to knock over. Knockdown rolls generated from bodily attacks are handled as directed in the damage tables. However, knockdown rolls generated from attacks to the legs or leg joints (knee, shoulder, and pelvis) are made at +3 for the first leg affected as most animals will simply favor the other three limbs. The second leg affected is rolled as normal. If a third leg is damaged (or a second leg on the same side as the first), the knockdown roll is made at -3 and the beast is almost certain to flee at the first opportunity.

MORALE

Animals do not fight to the death. Despite what is portrayed in films and on television, it is an extremely difficult task to train an animal to ignore its wounds and continue attacking an enemy at all costs. It is also fairly rare in nature (with two notable exceptions – nursing animals have been known to fight to the death in defense of their young, and alpha male superiority battles have been known to end in death, although the general result is that the weaker of the two will flee). Consult the following values to see when an animal will break and attempt to flee combat (or collapse and cease fighting if unable to flee). Most animals will fall into the first 2 categories.

If the animal is **untrained/indifferent/defensive/badly outnumbered** (e.g. street dog that's not hungry), then it will roll WP/8 or flee as soon as any wound is taken. Will always flee as soon as it takes any wound to the head, face, neck or belly, a level 2 wound anywhere else, or 3 total levels of wounds across the body.



If the animal is **marginally trained / mildly hungry (and not badly outnumbered)** (e.g. a wild dog that hasn't eaten in a while or a house dog/family pet), then it will flee as soon as it takes a wound to the head or face (especially snout) or a level 3 wound anywhere, or 5 levels of wounds total. For all other situations above roll WP/8 or flee.

If the animal is **well trained / very hungry / aggressive (and only slightly outnumbered perhaps)** (eg. wild bitch defending her litter), then it will roll WP/6 against any of the situations listed above, or flee. It will certainly flee if a level 4 wound is taken anywhere, or 6 levels of wounds total.

If the animal is **superbly (and expensively) trained / famished/ extremely aggressive (and probably in a pack)**, then it will roll WP/6 or flee if level 3 wound to the head or face (especially snout), level 4 wound anywhere else, or 8 total levels of wounds.

These values are not an absolute; they are intended merely as a guide to assist the Seneschal in determining when it is likely an animal will flee. Pack mentality has a large effect on an animals morale – when backed up by others it's easy for an animal to be brave, and packs of dogs or large cats often work together, backing off when injured but remaining in the fight to confuse the opponent and assist pack mates in bringing it down.

COMBAT MANEUVERS

The following maneuvers may be employed by animals (wild or trained) during combat. Unless otherwise specified, most animals attack with a range of 'Hand'.

Note also that animals do not tend to use defensive maneuvers, other than evasive moves (especially Duck and Weave). Enraged animals, especially, will tend to repeatedly attack, meaning that simultaneous attacks are likely to be far more common. This can make it very dangerous for characters fighting wild beasts – there is little joy in successfully skewering a wolf if it rips your throat out as you do it.

BITE/CLAW

Most animals use either (or both) bite or claw attacks. Unless otherwise noted, the DR of a bite attack is Strength (plus attack successes, as usual) piercing damage, while a Claw attack is Strength (plus attack successes) cutting damage.

EVASIVE ATTACK

Many animals use their own version of the evasive attack, timing their leap or bite so as to make the attack while avoiding a blow from their foe. The attack is otherwise calculated exactly as described in *The Riddle of Steel* rulebook.



WORRYING

Certain animals, particularly canines and large felines, have extremely strong jaws. Once a canine or large feline has made a successful bite attack on an opponent, it may be able to worry the attack (meaning that it locks its teeth and shakes its head). On the exchange following a successful bite attack, the animal may assign any number of dice to “worry the attack” (this counts as an attack). A contested roll is made: the animal rolls Str vs opponents Str, the opponent rolls Str versus the animals Str + half the number of assigned dice. If the opponent is successful, he has broken free, and steals initiative as normal. If the animal wins, it deals damage as per the margin of success (plus Strength and Bite DR, less Armor and Toughness as usual) and may worry again every exchange until the opponent breaks free or is dead (or the limb comes off...). The attack location remains the same every exchange until the grip is broken, of course. The opponent’s only option other than hoping for a win in the Strength contest is to declare an attack, and hope to steal initiative as a successful damaging attack on the animal will break its hold. Unfortunately, if initiative is not successfully stolen in this case, the opponent may not roll Strength to reduce the animals worrying margin...

RAKING

Felines are especially fond of this maneuver. Any feline or similar creature that successfully grapples an opponent may make full claw attacks while grappling by raking the opponent with its hind legs.

SWOOPING

Swooping attacks are a favorite attack for birds and other, sometimes larger, airborne attackers. Essentially, the animal may make a terrain roll to swoop down and attack the target in mid flight. This means that the combat round will only last for a single exchange, after which the momentum has carried the avian attacker past the target. The TN of the terrain roll is determined

by the Seneschal based on the readiness of the defender – TN3 if the defender does not know of the imminent attack, right up to TN7 or TN8 a couple of rounds later when the target is aware and ready for the attack. If the terrain roll is successful, the swooping attacker automatically wins initiative for the exchange, leaving the target with the options of defending, or simultaneously attacking and having to attempt to buy initiative (often a costly maneuver given that airborne creatures often have very high Per scores). If the terrain roll is failed, the two opponents determine initiative normally, but the round is still only a single exchange. On a botched terrain roll, the round lasts the usual two exchanges and the swooping attacker loses initiative automatically.

STAMPEDE

Certain animals (such as bullocks) are able to attack opponents by charging and goring them, or running right over them. This requires a run up, and on a successful attack roll not only deals double damage (double the margin of success before adding strength or subtracting toughness and armor) but also forces the opponent to make an immediate knockdown roll at -1 per point of (unmodified) margin of success. Note that an evasion is the only possible defense against a stampede attack, although the defender may declare an attack and hope that he successfully steals initiative.

CONSTRICTING

Some animals kill their prey through constricting them. Examples include many forms of snakes and the (in)famous bear hug. The beast must make a successful grapple attack on an opponent. Once the grapple is established, the animal may make a constricting attack each round. Make an opposed roll: the beast rolls its strength vs the opponents toughness, and the opponent rolls agility vs the beasts strength. If the opponent is successful, it has broken the hold and slipped free (stealing initiative). If the beast wins the contest, the opponent takes bashing damage to the attack location (for a bear hug,



HEMATOTOXIC VENOM**STAGE - DESCRIPTION - EFFECT**

- I - Soreness and itching at site of sting/bite - Pain 1, Blood loss = attack successes.
- II - Victim starts to sweat, pain is increasing - Pain 3, EN -1
- III - Extremely painful. Wound is large and puffy. Victim feels faint - Pain 6, EN and HT both -1
- IV - Victim babbles incoherently and is in constant, extreme pain - Pain 10, ST, TO, HT, WP, Wit all -1
- V - Victim is unconscious and will die if this roll is failed again- Pain All, all attributes -1

NEUROTOXIC VENOM**Stage - Description - Effect**

- I - Soreness and itching at site of sting/bite - Pain 1, Blood loss = attack successes.
- II - Victim starts to sweat, breathing becomes more rapid - Pain 2, HT and EN both -1
- III - Victim is hyperventilating and suffering mild heart murmurs - Pain 4, HT and EN both -1, Make knockout roll at -3
- IV - Victim stops hyperventilating and has trouble breathing. Panic sets in - Pain 6, HT and EN both -2, Make knockout roll at -5
- V - Victim suffers heart attack and may die. Will certainly die if this roll is failed again - Pain All. Roll (modified) HT/10, failure means death.

upper chest; for a snake most likely leg(s) or lower abs).

TAKE DOWN

Some animals are especially adept at bringing an opponent “down to their level”. This achieved by the animal launching an attack on the opponent, and using its weight to try to force him to the ground. The animal makes a standard attack, but declares it as a take down attack. The opponent may evade or block, but cannot parry. If the defender wins, he steals initiative as usual. If the attacker wins, the defender must make a Knockdown roll (difficulty 8), with a penalty equal to the attackers success margin. More than one animal may combine forces to Take Down an opponent, their combined attack success margins are the penalty on the defenders Knockdown roll. Because of the weight of the animal(s) forcing him down, the defender should roll for a 5' fall, as per the falling rules in Chapter 5 of the main *Riddle of Steel* rulebook.

VENOM

Some animals rely on venomous attacks to bring down their prey (without exception, such animals are immune to their own venom). A successful attack from a venomous animal is treated in a special way. The actual attack damage is usually negligible, and as such is not applied to the opponent. However, the victim of the venomous attack must determine how impaired he is by the poison. There are two main types of venom, hematoxic (affecting the blood, causing local tissue breakdown and often a great deal of pain, such as found in pitbull snakes and rattlesnakes), and neutotoxic (often painless but directly affecting the respiratory system and the heart, such as found in cobras and most types of scorpions).

The Seneschal should determine the relative strength of the venom (on a rating from 1-5) and add half the number of attack successes (not the margin of success). This is the potency of the venom. The affected victim must make an immediate HT/Potency roll, and continue making the roll once per hour (or more



often if engaged in strenuous activity, Seneschals discretion) until medical attention has been received or the victim has died. Each time the roll is failed, the victim moves up one step on the following chart (a botched check moves the victim two steps). Some venomous creatures do not have strong enough venom to kill certain opponents, so the Seneschal will determine the maximum level the venom can take the victim to on this chart. Attribute losses are cumulative, but are not permanent. They will be restored only after bed rest and medical attention (treat the same as the time required to heal a wound of the same pain level). To attempt to use First Aid on a poisoned character, roll Wit/First Aid and tally successes until they equal the potency of the venom, at which time the body has been flushed. Only one check may be made per hour of attention.

PACK TACTICS

Many animals naturally tend to form communities. Very strong ties are often formed in the case of wild dogs (including wolves, dingo's, jackals and the like) and wild cats (tigers and leopards, especially). Such animals will tend to work together to bring down foes. It is suggested that in the case of equal (or mostly equal) numbers, the battle be handled normally (combatants form up in pairs) but where there are a surplus of animals, the extra ones will usually pack together to attack the weakest looking target, to bring it down quickly. The following optional rules may be employed by Seneschals to represent pack tactics in battle, where more than one animal is attacking a single target.

PACK TACTICS: SWARMING

Animals fighting in packs are extremely good at surrounding an opponent, and attacking him from different sides at the same time. Up to four medium sized animals (such as dogs) may attack an opponent, rather than the usual limit of three as outlined on page 77 of *The Riddle of Steel* core rulebook.

In addition, opponents attempting terrain rolls to restrict the number of animals he

faces has a +1 difficulty on the roll per animal in a pack attacking him. If some animals are unable to attack during an exchange because of a successful terrain roll, the Seneschal selects which ones attack and which ones will not (in this way, wounded animals can fall back out of the fight, leaving unharmed or fresh allies at the forefront).

PACK TACTICS: BAITING

Animals fighting in a pack work together extremely well, particularly considering their inability to discuss tactics beforehand. Maneuvers such as Stop Short are very useful when multiple animals are attacking the same opponent, and baiting is very popular as well. Baiting is similar to feinting, and works as follows:

The animal declares an attack. The opponent declares a defense. The attacking animal now reveals that its attack is a bait, spends one die to initiate this maneuver, and then may add additional dice on a one-for-one basis (unlike the two-for-one in the case of a feint). If the defender wins, he takes initiative as normal. If the attacker wins, no damage is dealt but the defender is considered to have "fallen for the bait" and flinches away from the attack, receiving a CP penalty equal to the attackers margin of success at the start of the next exchange. If several attackers perform bait attacks, it's not unlikely that an opponent could find himself starting a new combat round with no dice in his CP...

MOUNTED COMBAT

Mounted combat is a popular image, and jousting knights and cavalry battles come quickly to mind when we think of medieval times or fantasy worlds. Presented here are some ideas regarding mounted combat, and some new maneuvers. The historical validity of some of these maneuvers is hard to verify – it's quite possible that horses were never really trained to rear up and strike foes in battle, for example, so Seneschals who are concerned with historical accuracy/plausibility may wish to ignore some of the following horseback combat maneuvers. We



suggest you keep them, simply because they add something to the enjoyment of roleplaying horseback combat.

While fighting from horseback, a character receives the following benefits/penalties:

CP penalty from leg armor cancelled.

CP penalty from other armor halved.

+2CP per round height bonus (against ground-based opponents only). This bonus varies with the quality of the horse ridden (check the horse breeds section, below).

AG/Ride checks may be made instead of spending CP on terrain rolls.

The mounts barding CP penalty applies to the characters CP while he is fighting mounted.

All attacks come from the characters CP, not the mounts CP. (The mounts CP is only used if it is fighting by itself, without a rider).

MOUNTED COMBAT: COMBAT ROUNDS (OR "RIDE-BY ATTACKING")

When facing ground based opponents from horseback, the trick is to use the horses speed as a form of defense. It's possible to make attacks from horseback while the horse is at a canter or even a full charge. This requires a terrain roll (as noted above, this roll is made with AG/Ride rather than by spending CP). A successful roll limits a combat round to a single exchange, usually one where the rider attacks and the opponent merely defends (of course, the opponent may declare a simultaneous attack). If the roll is failed, the round lasts two exchanges as usual (potentially allowing an opponent who has successfully blocked or parried an attack to retaliate) before the horses momentum carries the rider past. A botch on this roll means the rider has lost his concentration and toppled from the horse.

When two horsemen battle, rounds last two exchanges unless one or both are moving at speed (and not in the same direction), in which case those moving must make AG/Ride rolls as outlined above, and the round lasts only one exchange (red/red probably). This is essentially what happens in jousting (see the Mounted Combat: Jousting section below).



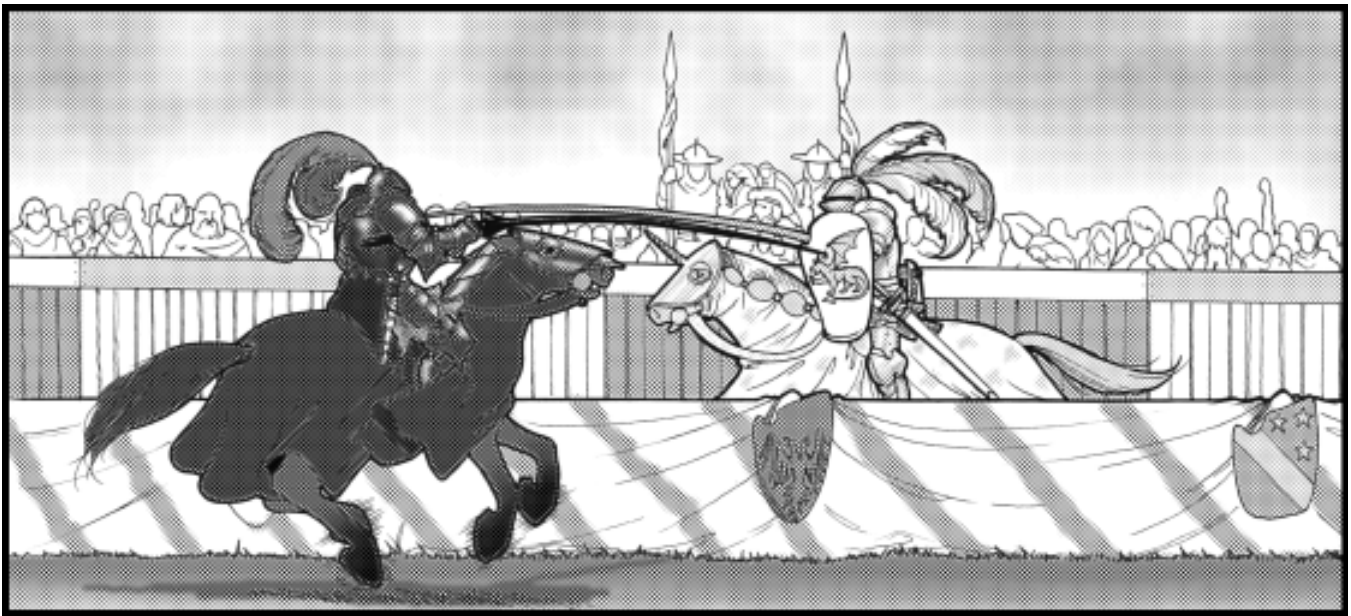
MOUNTED COMBAT: HIT LOCATION

Rather than providing an entirely new set of hit location charts for mounted combat, the player(s) and Seneschal are encouraged to use common sense when assigning or determining hit locations. The following points should be kept in mind:

* A mounted figure may not attack a foe directly in front of his mount, unless he is using a weapon with a very long (8' or greater) reach. Attacks must be made at opponents to the side or rear of the mount. Swiveling around to attack an opponent to the rear is tricky, and carries an additional +4CP activation cost per attack.

* When attacking a ground-based opponent from a mount, lower bodily targets are inaccessible. As a general rule, swinging zones 3,4,5 and 7 are available, as is any thrust target above the belly. Consideration as to available attack zones must be made by the Seneschal if the target is not a humanoid.





* Defending from horseback is very difficult, and nearly impossible if the target of the attack is the horse itself. A mounted character may use a partial evasion to have the horse dance back from an attack, but may generally not duck and weave or use any form of block, parry or counter versus attacks to his mount. Full evasion is only useful when leaping from a mount to avoid an attack against the rider. Essentially, the best horseback defense is a strong offense or good barding.

* Attacking a mounted opponent from the ground is tricky. If attacking from the front or rear of the mount, the rider may not be attacked unless a weapon with a very long (8' or more) reach is used. From the side, either mount or rider is a fair target. The Seneschal must decide which parts of the target are accessible based on the range and the reach of the weapon (it's just not possible to thrust a dagger at the head of a mounted opponent). Swing attacks must be adjudicated on a case by case basis, remembering that many swing attacks (particularly zone 4 or 5 type swings) will probably still hit the mount even if they miss the rider.

MOUNTED COMBAT: JOUSTING



Jousting is an extremely popular sport in many regions, and is the main entertainment and source of gambling revenue for

the nobility. There are three parts to each pass in a joust, handled as follows:

The Charge – First, the combatants must make an opposed ride skill check (each rolling Agility versus his own Ride Skill) to make a good, fast and straight charge. This check is made at +2 dice if the knight is riding a Destrier, or -2 dice if his mount is a Palfrey (see the section on Horse Breeds, below). The two results are compared, and the combatant with the larger number of successes receives the difference as a CP bonus for stage two, the Clash.

The Clash – When the two jousting knights meet, each splits his full CP (less penalties for armor and barding, as usual) into attack and defense portions (very like a Simultaneous Block/Strike maneuver). Each combatant then makes a contested roll of his attack versus the others block, attempting to get a successful strike which might unseat his opponent, while remaining seated himself.

The Check – If either Knight has been struck, he must make an AG/Ride check with a penalty of 1 die for every point in his opponents attack margin of success. Failure indicates that he has been knocked from his horse. Tourney lances are designed to splinter on impact, therefore no actual puncturing damage is taken, however damage must be calculated for a 10' fall and applied as per the falling rules in chapter 5. Note that it is not unlikely that both Knights may be knocked from their steeds. This usually requires another pass, until there is a clear winner who

has unhorsed his opponent but remained seated himself. Depending on the local rules, a double knockdown may instead be settled through melee combat, usually using blunted weapons.

MOUNTED COMBAT: REARING

Although it's hard to verify historically, the image of a horse rearing up in combat to strike an opponent is a popular one. This maneuver may only be attempted versus a ground-based opponent directly in front of the mount. It uses the attackers CP, not the horses CP, and counts as an attack. On command, the horse rears up and attempts to strike the opponent with its front hooves. This attack may be evaded or blocked, but cannot be countered or parried. The ATN is the attackers ride skill. If the attacker wins, the Seneschal should determine the actual location of the strike randomly (any target from the chest upwards is possible, including the arms) and damage is double the attack success margin plus the horses strength, less toughness and armor. This is applied as bashing damage.

If the defender wishes, another option to counter a rearing attack is to declare an attack and attempt to steal initiative. If successful, the stomach is a valid target, and if attacked there the horse receives only half its toughness score for defense because of the extreme vulnerability of its stomach. If the horse is injured in this way, the mounted combatant must make an AG/Ride check with a penalty of 1 per level of damage taken, or fall from his horse (incurring damage as from a 10' fall).

Rearing attacks are considered to have Long range. They may not be made during a "ride-by attack" (i.e. when the horse rider is attempting to limit the combat round to a single exchange by keeping his horse at speed). This limitation applies to the Kicking and Pivoting maneuvers described below as well.

MOUNTED COMBAT: KICKING

Kicking on horseback is very similar to rearing, but the attack is made at an opponent to the rear of the horse. The rider declares the kick attack; the de-

fender may evade or block, but cannot parry or counter. Bashing damage is the Horses Strength + 3 + margin of success. The actual hit location should be determined randomly by the Seneschal, any target above the waist (including the arms) is valid.

Kicking attacks are considered to have Medium range.

MOUNTED COMBAT: PIVOTING

Pivoting consists of the rider causing his mount to swivel on its front legs, swinging its rump around and striking an opponent standing at the side of the horse. This maneuver is paid out of the riders CP rather than the mounts, and counts as an attack. The attack is declared, and the defender must evade, he may not block, parry or otherwise redirect the attack. The ATN is the attackers Ride skill. If the defender is successful, he steals initiative as normal. If the attacker is successful, the DR is the Horses strength + 3 + success margin, and is distributed to the defender as falling damage. Additionally, the defender must make a knockdown roll with a penalty equal to the attack success margin or be thrown to the ground.

Pivot attacks may be made at any range from Short to Very long, and only suffer a range penalty of +1 attack activation cost if the current range is Hand or Extra Long.

ARMORED ANIMALS

Very few animals will consent to wearing armor (or even clothing) of any form, they find it uncomfortable, and dislike the way it constricts their natural range of movement. The most obvious exception to this is of course barding worn by horses in battle, and some war dogs are trained to accept small amounts of armor as well.

HORSES AND BARDING

Barding is the armor used on horses, to protect them in battle. Refer to



the table below for the level of protection and CP penalty each piece provides, then refer to the individual descriptions below the table to determine which parts of the animal they cover.

All forms of barding provide some protection to the mount. Because of their encumbrance, most enforce a Move penalty, plus a penalty to the CP of the mount (if it is unriden) or to the CP of the rider (while fighting on horseback). These penalties are additional to the CP cost to the rider for his own armor. Barding must be fitted to a specific mount, in the same way that armor must be fitted to its wearer. Improperly fitted barding should penalize at least -1 CP and -1 Move per piece, on top of the normal penalty. The exceptions to this rule are Caprisons, which are essentially just blankets and will fit on any horse.

CRINET

The Crinet is a chain or lobstered plate covering for the neck of the horse. The chain version is not particularly encumbering, but the plate restricts the horses head from its full range of movement, imposing a -1CP and -1 Move penalty. It protects the neck only.

CHANFRON

The Chanfron is a plate “face mask” with eye holes. It protects the upper and lower head and face of the horse, but imposes a -1 CP and -1 Move penalty due to the restricted vision it provides.

PEYTRAL

The Peytral hangs down from the Chanfron and/or Crinet and provides protection to the breast of the horse (most attacks from the front are going to hit the breast if they don’t hit the head or neck) and the “Shoulder” joint (the tops of the front legs). Either Chain or Plate versions are available, both will restrict movement slightly due to the extra weight pulling down on the neck, but the Plate will also impose a -1 CP penalty.

CRUPPER

The crupper is essentially a leather or chain covering for the rear of the horse, attached to the saddle and hanging down the flanks. It imposes a -1 Move penalty due to the extra weight. A Crupper provides its listed protection to the Pelvis, Groin and rear Thighs. A Crupper cannot be fitted without a Saddle.

ARMOR/BARD (HORSES)	AV VALUE	PENALTY
Crinet	Chain 3-4	-
	Plate 5-6	-1 CP, -1 Move
Chanfron	Plate 5-6	-1 CP, -1 Move
	Chain 3-4	-1 Move
Peytral	Plate 5-6	-1 CP, -1 Move
	Chain 3-4	-1 Move
Crupper	Leather 1-2	-1 Move
	Chain 3-4	-1 Move
Flanchard (both sides)	Leather 1-2	-
	Chain 3-4	-
Saddle	Leather 3	-
Caprisons	Heavy Cloth 1	-1 CP, -2 Move
	Leather 1-2	-2 CP, -2 Move
	Chain 3-4	-3 CP, -3 Move
Cuissart or Demi-Cuissart (set of 4)	Plate 3	-1 Move
Greviere or Demi-Greviere (set of 4)	Plate 3	-1 CP, -1 Move
Hoof Blades	Plate 2	-1 CP, -1 Move



FLANCHARD

The Flanchard are protective coverings hanging down the sides of the horse, and protecting the sides and back. They do not impose any penalties, but require that a Saddle, Crupper and Peytral be present for them to be attached to.

SADDLE

The Saddle sits on the back of the horse and is what the rider sits on. Saddles are made of thick and tough leather and provide an AV of 3 versus attacks to the animals back. They do not cover the entire back, so the Seneschal should determine if a blow to the back would have hit the saddle or not (assume roughly a 50% chance).

CAPRISONS

Caprisons are a blanket-like covering for the horse. Usually made of heavy cloth, but possibly also in tough leather or chain, the Caprisons covers the entire horse, hanging down as low as the knees, with a hole for the horses head. The saddle is usually attached over the Caprisons, although in the case of chain a hole may be made for the saddle. Heavy and encumbering, they impose both a CP and movement penalty, but protect all of the following areas: Breast, Shoulder Joints, Pelvis, Groin, Back, Sides, Thighs, Knees and Belly (unless the animal is rearing, in which case the Belly is exposed).

CUISSART, GREVIÈRE / DEMI-CUISSART, DEMI-GREVIÈRE

The most vulnerable part of a horse are its legs; although very strong, they are somewhat fragile and can be damaged easily by a callous or desperate opponent. A Cuissart is a metallic plate that covers the upper legs of a horse (the “thighs”), while a Grevière covers the lower leg (the “shin”). They come in sets of four and must be carefully attached to the horse’s leg. With two or more legs covered, Cuissart sets

impose a -1 Move penalty, while Grevière sets impose -1 Move and -1 CP. Very thin plating must be used, thus the AV is only 3. Demi-Cuissart and Demi-Grevière are terms that describe half-versions of the same devices; they consist of a plate at the front, held on by a strap across the back. Demi-Cuissart and Demi-Grevière are cheaper than the full versions, but only protect the fronts of the legs, so the Seneschal must adjudicate when the protection will apply and when it will not. Neither type of protection guards the knee or hoof.

HOOF BLADES

It is possible to have a blacksmith hammer thin blades into the front of a horses front hooves. These provide minimal armor (AV 2) to the hoof, but are most useful during Rearing attacks, when the hoof blades add +1 to the damage. A second set may be attached to the rear of the rear hooves for rear Kicking attacks. Each set provides the full penalty listed in the above table.

CANINES AND ARMOR

It is extremely difficult to put armor on dogs, because of their fierce independence. Only a well trained war dog can be induced to accept any form of armor, and what’s available is quite limited. See the table below for the armor forms, bonuses and penalties, and then see the individual descriptions following the table.

LEATHER BODY SUIT

Only well trained war dogs can be induced to wear a leather suit, and it must be specifically designed and fitted to the animal. Such suits cover the Neck, Shoulder Joint, Back, Sides, Belly and Pelvis of the dog. The Groin is left open to allow the dog

ARMOR (DOGS)	AV VALUE	PENALTY
Leather body suit	Leather 2	-1 CP, -1 Move
Plate shoulder guard (set of 2)	Plate 4	-1 CP, -1 Move
Chanfron	Plate 5-6	-1 CP, -1 Move
Spiked Collar	Leather 2	N/A



to perform bodily functions, and the head and legs stick out as well.

PLATE SHOULDER GUARD

Plate shoulder guards must attach to a leather body suit (the AV values do not stack), and provide the animal with an extra measure of protection versus attacks from the front. They protect the Shoulder Joint and Breast, but hinder the animal giving a -1 penalty to its CP and Move.

CHANFRON

A Chanfron for a canine is designed differently from one designed for a horse. Because a dog's main attack form is its powerful bite, the lower part of the face is left open. The Chanfron therefore covers just the upper head and 50% of the face (Seneschal's discrimination). Because of the limited head movement and vision, the dog receives a -1 penalty to its CP and Move.

SPIKED COLLAR

A spiked collar is designed to protect the most vulnerable part of a dog – its neck and throat. As well as providing armor protection to the neck, the spikes ensure that foes will think twice about targeting that part of the animal. Any successful attack against the neck/throat of a canine wearing a spiked collar from another animal or a punch/kick/etc will potentially damage the attacker – calculate damage of 2+attack successes against the hand/foot/whatever of the attacker, subtracting attackers armor and toughness as usual. If the result is a positive margin, then the attacker takes a puncturing wound of this level.

OTHER BEASTS AND ARMOR

Most animals other than Dogs and Horses are too independent to accept wearing armor. The Seneschal has final say over whether it is possible to put armor on another type of animal, and should determine the properties of that armor using the above tables as a guide.



COMMON ANIMAL STATISTICS

Unlike many RPG's, it is not our intention to provide statistics for every animal imaginable (do you really need to know what an Antelopes MA is? We didn't think so). Below you will find statistics for horses and canines, and then a selection of common animals to be found in the wilderness of Weyrth. Seneschals are encouraged to use these statistics as examples in determining stats for whatever animals they wish to use in their own campaigns. There are further samples of animal statistics to be found in Chapter 7 of *The Riddle of Steel* rulebook.

HORSES

There are five main "classes" of horse breeds; below you will find descriptions of these classes and sample statistics. Although horses are given a rating for their CP, remember that while they are ridden in combat, the riders CP is used for all purposes (man and horse are treated as one entity).

DESTRIER

The Destrier is the most rare and expensive kind of horse available. Extremely well bred and trained, Destriers are used as war or tournament horses. Due to their high cost and training, they are not generally used as riding horses, and certainly not as pack horses. Riderless mounts will usually not continue fighting after the death or unseating of their rider, however Destriers are intelligent (and trained) enough to calmly leave the scene of the battle, rather than panicking or standing and waiting to be stolen or killed. While fighting mounted on a Destrier, a rider receives an additional +3CP per round, rather than the usual +2CP height bonus. The extra point of bonus represents the training and intelligence of the mount.

Statistics:

ST	14	WP	6	Ref	6
AG	6	Wit	6		
TO	6	MA	3	KD	10

EN 6 Soc 3 KO 9
HT 6 Per 3 Move 12 / 24 /
36

Combat Proficiency: 6, CP 12

Notes: -2 TO when legs attacked.

COURSER

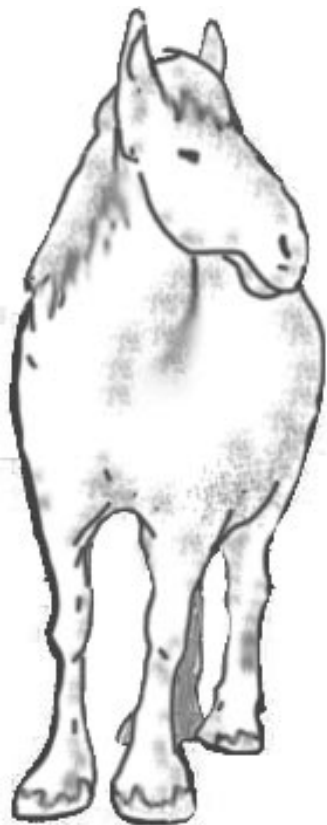
The Courser is the “standard” battle horse. Although not quite as well bred or trained as a Destrier, a Courser is a good sturdy horse, built for bravery, speed and endurance. They are also substantially cheaper than Destriers.

Statistics:

ST 10 WP 5 Ref 6
AG 8 Wit 5
TO 6 MA 3 KD 9
EN 9 Soc 3 KO 8
HT 6 Per 3 Move 13 / 26 /
39

Combat Proficiency: 3, CP 9

Notes: -2 TO when legs attacked.



PALFREY

Palfreys are general purpose horses. Built as riding steeds, they are reliable and hard working, but they are not generally any good in a battle situation as they are not trained to handle the stresses and noises of combat. If used in mounted combat the rider must make a successful terrain roll (TN4) at the start of every round, or be thrown from his mount (take damage as a 10' fall – horses are tall!) and watch in despair as his mount flees. In addition, a rider only receives +1CP per round, rather than the usual +2CP height bonus, this represents the skittishness of the horse and the extra effort needed to control it.

Statistics:

ST 9 WP 3 Ref 4
AG 5 Wit 3
TO 5 MA 2 KD 7
EN 5 Soc 2 KO 6
HT 5 Per 2 Move 9 / 18 / 27

Combat Proficiency: 1, CP 5

Notes: -2 TO when legs attacked.

ROUNCY

A Rouncy is a common grade horse, of no particular breeding. Rouncies are work horses, draft horses, and riding horses for peasants or low free-men. A Rouncy will automatically flee in terror from a battle, and as such should not be ridden into one, nor may they be used in jousting.

Statistics:

ST 9 WP 2 Ref 3
AG 4 Wit 2
TO 4 MA 1 KD 6
EN 4 Soc 1 KO 5
HT 4 Per 1 Move 8 / 16 / 24

CP 3

Notes: -2 TO when legs attacked.





GARRON

The Garron is sometimes thought of as a pony, but in reality it is a horse, albeit one with very short legs. Although neither fast nor particularly brave, Garrons are popular in hilly or mountainous areas because of their surefootedness and steadfast natures.

Statistics:

ST	7	WP	2	Ref	3
AG	5	Wit	2		
TO	5	MA	1	KD	6
EN	5	Soc	1	KO	6
HT	5	Per	1	Move	8 / 16 / 24

CP 3

Notes: -2 TO when legs attacked.

CANINES

There are far too many different breeds of canines to list them all here or provide statistics for them all. Below, you will find sample statistics for regular dogs (such as house/holding dogs), war dogs (well trained fighting dogs that may wear canine armor, see above), and wolves. All three use the same hit location table (medium sized quadrupeds) if attacked.

REGULAR DOGS

This entry covers most non-trained dogs; although they have natural fighting tendencies and will defend themselves or possibly their masters, they are not particularly effective against trained warriors.

Statistics:

ST	4	WP	3	Ref	4
AG	5	Wit	3		
TO	4	MA	2	KD	4
EN	6	Soc	3	KO	4
HT	4	Per	6	Move	7 / 14

Combat Proficiency: 2, CP 6

WAR DOGS

Trained from birth to be fearless and brutal, war dogs are usually Mastiffs, Dobermans, Rottweilers, Shepherds or Terriers. War Dogs may be trained to wear canine armor and to fight to the death. They are trained to fight well with their packmates, and packs of War Dogs will readily utilize the pack tactics listed above to bring down a foe.

Statistics:

ST	5	WP	4	Ref	7
AG	8	Wit	6		
TO	5	MA	4	KD	6
EN	8	Soc	4	KO	6
HT	5	Per	7	Move	10 / 20

Combat Proficiency: 5, CP 12



WOLVES

Although not actually the ancestor of the domesticated dog, Wolves are very close cousins (like Humans and Apes, they came from a common ancestor rather than one evolving or being bred from the other). Wolves mate for life, and travel in packs of anywhere between 2 and 15 members (much depends on the litter size and how many survive to adulthood). Wolves are not scavengers, and will hunt using pack tactics to bring down prey. A Wolf will not usually attack a human, but may if it is very hungry and/or if its pack outnumbers the human(s).

Statistics:

ST	5	WP	3	Ref	7
AG	8	Wit	6		
TO	5	MA	3	KD	6
EN	8	Soc	1	KO	5
HT	5	Per	8	Move	10 / 20

Combat Proficiency: 6, CP 13

Notes: Wolves tend to be slightly larger than their domesticated cousins. As such, the DR of a wolves bite and claw attacks is ST+1 rather than the usual ST.



OTHER ANIMALS

BEAR

There are many different types of bear. The following is a sample set of statistics for an average to large sized one. Wise riddle seekers will run the other way when confronted by an angry bear.

Statistics:

ST	12	WP	3	Ref	6
AG	7	Wit	5		
TO	8	MA	2	KD	9
EN	6	Soc	1	KO	9
HT	6	Per	4	Move	10 / 20

Combat Proficiency: 8, CP 14

Notes: Bears favor claw attacks and constricting "bug" attacks. They are vegetarians (except fish), and will not attack through hunger, but may do so if they feel threatened or if goaded or in pain. Bear attacks are considered to have a range of long, but they suffer no penalty for a shorter range.

CAMEL

Camels are used in dry regions instead of horses. This is due to the camel's unique ability to drink vast volumes of water and store it within their bodies, so that they can go for long periods of time between oases. They are also rather fast (although not as fast as a good Courser), have great fortitude and are relatively easy to train. Camels provide the usual +2CP height bonus when fighting from horseback (or camelback, in this case); however they may not use barding and may not be used in jousting (unless it's against other camels).

Statistics:

ST	7	WP	5	Ref	5
AG	6	Wit	5		
TO	6	MA	3	KD	6
EN	12	Soc	3	KO	9
HT	6	Per	3	Move	12 / 24 / 30

Combat Proficiency: 2, CP 7





EAGLE

Eagles are highly elegant birds, existing by preying on small animals and vermin. Sighting an eagle in flight is considered a good omen in many Weyrth nations, and hunting or harming eagles is often outlawed for this reason.

Statistics:

ST	3	WP	3	Ref	6
AG	8	Wit	5		
TO	2	MA	2	KD	5
EN	4	Soc	3	KO	3
HT	3	Per	7	Move	7 / 21 fly

Combat Proficiency: 1, CP 7

ELEPHANT

Only rarely to be found in the wild, Elephants are generally mind mannered creatures, however they are quick to protect their young and females, and due to their size and strength are exceedingly good at it. Some armies have been known to breed the largest elephants, for use as transport, mobile battering rams, archers' platforms and mounts - an oncoming elephant charge is a terrifying sight for any army.

Statistics:

ST	16	WP	5	Ref	3
AG	2	Wit	4		
TO	15	MA	2	KD	9
EN	10	Soc	2	KO	17
HT	7	Per	3	Move	14 / 28

Combat Proficiency: 3 (wild) or 8 (trained), CP 6 (wild) or 11 (trained).

Notes: Elephants attack by stampeding (which considering their base strength is a terrifying thought) or by grappling with their trunks and slamming their foe repeatedly to the ground. A charging elephant cannot easily change its direction, so any evading foe gains +1 success on his evasion roll. Elephants are too slow to use evasion in battle, but may parry thrusting or bashing attacks from the front with their trunks at an activation cost of +2CP.

CROCODILE

Crocodiles hunt for prey along the banks of rivers. Sluggish on land, they are very graceful in the water, and will often snatch prey and drag it into the deep water to drown, or will worry a snatched limb, twisting their bodies to damage the prey as much as possible so it cannot fight back while the crocodile drowns it.

Statistics:

ST	8	WP	3	Ref	3
AG	3	Wit	3		
TO	4	MA	2	KD	n/a
EN	5	Soc	2	KO	5
HT	4	Per	3	Move	4 / 15 swim

Combat Proficiency: 2 (on land), 8 (in the water). CP 5/11.



FALCON

In the wild, falcons like to nest on cliff systems overlooking bodies of water. Their preferred prey are smaller birds or rodents. Falcon eggs are a valuable commodity almost anywhere in Weyrth, as the young may be reared as hunters' companions and as trackers. Falcons are invaluable in warfare (and especially siege warfare), as they are used to intercept and kill messenger pigeons sent to coordinate attacks or summon reinforcements.

Statistics:

ST	4	WP	3	Ref	6
AG	8	Wit	5		
TO	3	MA	4	KD	6
EN	4	Soc	3	KO	4
HT	4	Per	9	Move	8 / 24 fly

Combat Proficiency: 3, CP 9

GREAT APE

There are many forms of great apes in Weyrth, Gorillas, Chimpanzees and Orangutans being the most common. The entry below is concerned with the larger apes, some of which become very violent when their territories are "invaded". As such, Gorillas are a favored target for hunters keen to prove themselves and their valor. Some bull Gorillas have been found weighing up to 500lbs (220kg).

Statistics:

ST	12	WP	5	Ref	7
AG	9	Wit	5		
TO	7	MA	4	KD	10
EN	6	Soc	4	KO	9
HT	5	Per	6	Move	13

Combat Proficiency: 6, CP 13.

Notes: Great Apes are very agile and strong. When subduing foes, they prefer to grapple with the opponent, and then hold him down while they bash his head repeatedly with their extremely strong arms. Some apes will also wrap their arms around an opponent, and literally crush the life out of him (using the Constricting attack). Because their legs end with hands and are almost as agile as another set of arms, the ATN for apes grap-

pling is 3. When attacking an ape, use the humanoid hit location tables in the main Riddle of Steel rulebook.

GREAT CAT

There are many different types of great cat. The following statistics are meant to represent an "average" great cat such as a tiger or leopard.

Statistics:

ST	8	WP	3	Ref	7
AG	9	Wit	6		
TO	4	MA	3	KD	8
EN	6	Soc	1	KO	5
HT	4	Per	5	Move	Special

Move: 11 (can run at 22, can climb at 5. Some cats can sprint at up to 66 for brief periods of time)

Combat Proficiency: 6, CP 13

Notes: Great cats favor leaping attacks, and raking or taking down opponents (see Combat Tactics section). Their claw DR is ST+1.

HERD ANIMALS

This entry is intended for use with most forms of herd animals; buffalo, bison, caribou and so forth. Such animals travel in vast herds, keeping close to water sources but trying to avoid predators, who also keep close to water sources knowing that the herd has to drink eventually. When attacked, the herd will usually scatter, however the herd mentality keeps the animals scattering in roughly the same direction, so the herd will generally reform shortly afterwards, albeit short a few slower, older or infirm members.

Statistics:

ST	7	WP	3	Ref	3
AG	4	Wit	3		
TO	7	MA	3	KD	5
EN	4	Soc	3	KO	8
HT	4	Per	2	Move	7 / 14

Combat Proficiency: 1, CP 4



KOMODO LIZARD

Komodo lizards inhabit the sultry southern climes, particularly Savari's humid jungles and Svaresta's mountains and forests. Little is known about these huge lizards, which grow to as long as 10' (~3m) and can weigh up to 300lbs (~140kg). Komodo are carnivores, and are savage predators, hunting prey through stealth and cunning. They can briefly sprint at up to 20 kilometers per hour for small stretches. When they attack, Komodo do so blindingly fast, and lock their nasty serrated teeth on an opponent, worrying the attack for as long as possible. Often the prey will escape, only to collapse a few hours or days later from the virulent bacteria found in the saliva of the Komodo (treat as a neurotoxic venom with a potency of 3), and will then be devoured by the Komodo which has been tracking the dying prey. Komodo are long and squat, the medium quadruped hit location table is probably the closest match, but the Seneschal should make allowance for the extra length of the body.

Statistics:

ST	8	WP	5	Ref	7
AG	6	Wit	8		
TO	8	MA	5	KD	7
EN	6	Soc	2	KO	10
HT	6	Per	4	Move	10 / 40 run

Combat Proficiency: 5, CP 12.

SHARK

Sharks are the ultimate water-borne predator. Unparalleled in the water, they are little more than killing machines, swooping in for the kill when they detect prey. In the open ocean, sharks can detect one part of blood in one million parts of water, from half a kilometer away.

Statistics:

ST	9	WP	4	Ref	8
AG	14	Wit	3		
TO	8	MA	1	KD	n/a
EN	7	Soc	1	KO	16
HT	6	Per	16	Move	15 swim

only

Combat Proficiency: 8, CP 16.

SNAKE, CONSTRICTING

Constricting snakes tend to be larger on average than their venomous cousins. They attack by making grappling attacks and then crushing their victim (see the Constricting notes in the Combat Tactics section).

Statistics:

ST	6	WP	3	Ref	4
AG	4	Wit	5		
TO	3	MA	1	KD	n/a
EN	4	Soc	0	KO	4
HT	3	Per	3	Move	7

Combat Proficiency: 4, CP 8

SNAKE, POISONOUS

There are many varieties of snake in the world. The follow statistics are meant to represent an average sized poisonous snake such as a rattlesnake or an adder.

Statistics:

ST	3	WP	3	Ref	4
AG	4	Wit	5		
TO	2	MA	1	KD	n/a
EN	4	Soc	0	KO	4
HT	3	Per	3	Move	5

Combat Proficiency: 4, CP 8

Notes: See the section entitled Combat Tactics for information on how venomous snake bites are treated. Common potencies of venom would include: Rattlesnakes (Hematotoxic, potency 3-4), Cobras (Neutotoxic, potency 4), Coral (Neurotoxic, potency 2), Pitbull Snake (Hematotoxic, potency 2-3).



STAG

they are very deadly if they can get into melee range with a hapless hunter.

Popular both as a source of venison, and because their racks make great trophies, deer are hunted right across the continent of Weyrth. A good trophy has anything over 12 points (that's the number of "ends" to the antlers), with exceptional trophies having upwards of 30. Skittish, the beasts will generally run instantly away from a source of danger, but some bull stags have been known to fight back –

Statistics:

ST	7	WP	3	Ref	5
AG	6	Wit	4		
TO	5	MA	2	KD	6
EN	9	Soc	3	KO	6
HT	4	Per	7	Move	11

Combat Proficiency: 3. CP 8.



BOOK THREE: SIEHE AND THE FEY

This chapter presents some interesting fey and Sidhe creatures and personalities to bring into *Riddle of Steel* games.

BAOBHAN SITH (PRON. BAA'-VAN SHE)

IT WAS CHILLY the day
the three of us set
out. Donald had
business in
the city

you see, and Pol was on some errand for his father. I was just after a bit of a break – milling isn't the easiest of professions and my master would seldom spell me for a break.

We spent two or three days winding our way through the countryside, touring the inns and likely leaving the village girls with some future headaches, if you take my meaning. We were always assured a warm welcome; I'm no slough with the lute, while Pol has, well, I should say had a fine singing voice. Besides, any kind of traveler is an event in small villages such as those – in the middle of winter news of the outside world comes seldom and these folk were eager to hear of the latest fashions and customs. For the girls, I imagine the thrill of being with someone they hadn't already seen every day of their lives helped hike up their skirts.

It was when we arrived at the woods, you see. Oh, the old ladies will tell you tales of witches and demons and ghosts, but we were three likely lads; young and dumb, and quite assured of our own immortality, you know how it is to be that age. No scary fables were going to send us off



on a four day detour around the forest, so we set our caps at their appropriately fashionable angles and rode on in.

It was the second night. I remember it as clear as if it were yesterday. We had drained three skins of fine red wine, dined well on a small fawn that happened to cross our path, and were relaxing by a large fire. I was plucking away on my lute some, and Pol and Don, they got up and began to dance about the clearing. It was kind of fun, but it didn't take long before we began to mourn the lack of female companionship, three lads in the woods, there wasn't much else on our minds, you understand.

At the very moment that I opened my mouth to voice this opinion, these three young lasses strode out of the woods nearby, as bold as you please. Young and pretty they were, all with cornsilk hair and large brown eyes a man could drown in. All three were dressed in green silk, and smiled as lovely as the sun. Two of the lasses strode over to my friends, and began to dance with them, twisting and turning around the flames, lithe as bobcats and pretty as hell. The third came over and sat beside me, humming along with my songs and smiling at me in that inviting way I had come to know so well.

Maybe an hour passed, perhaps two. To be honest, it's hard to tell – much of the night flashed past in a haze of red wine, song and innuendo. In fact, that's what I thought it was at first – red wine, dripping to the earth around the fire where my friends and their paramours intimately danced. In my befuddled state it took me a while to realize that it wasn't wine (for our only remaining skin was sitting in my lap at that time), but blood that was falling to the earth. Everything is a bit muddled after that, I recall dropping my lute, and feeling the blood rush from my face. I have a vague recollection of turning to the lass beside me and seeing her truly smile for the first time, her lower lip distended around her long canines. I can remember shouting, but what I shouted I cannot say. She was grasping at me, calling to me, trying to plant her kisses on my neck, but those were kisses I wanted not. Unsteadily I ran from her, her mocking laughter ringing in my ears as she lightly ran after me, calling sweet promises and undying devotion. I came across our horses, and leapt be-

neath their legs, blind with terror and hoping somehow that they could shield me.

I'm not sure, but I think it was the iron. As country horses unaccustomed to paved wagon roads, our horses were shoed, and she seemed unable or unwilling to approach them, even as her eyes burned with hunger. For the rest of the night, she circled around and around the mounts while I sobbed with terror and eyed my blade, ten feet away which may as well have been a mile.

With the crowing of a wild cock she fled at last, glaring with hatred at me and melting away into the woods, her skirts lifted to step over tree roots and revealing cloven hooves where her feet should be. I waited nearly an hour before venturing out from beneath the horses, and cast my eyes around for my friends. Donald I found near the tree line, while Pol was lying beside the fire. Both were as white as marble and I knew without even looking that not a drop of blood remained in either...

Statistics:

ST	4	WP	6	Ref	5
AG	5	Wit	5	Aim	5
TO	4	MA	5	KD	5
EN	5	Soc	8	KO	6
HT	4	Per	6	Move	7

Combat Proficiency: 6 (Pugilism/Wrestling), CP 11

Vagaries: Conquer 2, Glamour 2 (SP 12)

Baobhan Sith (literally meaning "Spirit Woman") are mysterious unseelie who haunt the forests of Weyrth (but especially Angharad and Picti). They may in fact be the entities who have spawned vampire myths and legends, for in many ways they are similar to the legendary Nosferatu.

Baobhan Sith like to seduce men at night and drink their blood. Physically, they appear as stunningly beautiful women, but with cloven hooves instead of feet. To hide this fact, they wear long green silk dresses. Often, several Baobhan Sith will appear in a group. They have some minor magical ability, and like to use Conquer magic such as Lure of the Glass, Mesmerize and Transfixion to pacify their intended prey so that they can





feast on him, using their long canine teeth to tear into his neck and draw his blood forth.

In combat, Baobhan Sith use their Wrestling skills to pin an opponent and force him to the ground, where they can either begin to feast on him while he is pinned, or keep him still while they utilize their Conquer magic to mesmerize him.

The victim of a Baobhan Sith does not rise as in vampire myths, they are merely dead. However, Baobhan Sith will always attempt to kidnap young girls (pre-pubescent) unharmed. These children are never seen (alive) again, and it is assumed that they become new Baobhan Sith.

The main weakness of the Baobhan Sith is iron – they cannot approach it without

great distress, and iron weapons ignore their toughness statistic. Baobhan Sith will naturally not approach any person wielding an iron weapon, but will even be repelled by a far smaller quantity if it is available (assume any quantity greater than half a cubic foot, or 8 horse shoes).

DOPPELGÄNGER

Alexander, my dear mentor and friend, is dead, and I fear that my time is running out, too. The creature, the false baron, has followed me for eleven days now. No matter where I turn, no matter how I try to escape, he is always on my track, relentlessly pursuing me in what I can only guess to be a fanatical quest to end my young life. I wish I had a god to pray to now. But alas! The only thing I have is this parchment and quill,

which Alexander taught me to use, and with them I will tell whoever finds this of our fate. I can do no more, I cannot run any longer.

It was the first time that Alexander took me to accompany him to an assignment - my first assassination. Our target was Baron Heinrich von Greifenfels, an influential nobleman and master swordfighter. He believed himself safe and sound in his mountain castle, which was indeed well-guarded, but that is why Alexander, one of the most successful, feared and sought-after bounty hunters and assassins of Stahl was contracted.

Getting inside Castle Greifenfels was not easy, but we finally made it into the baron's chambers with-



out alerting his guardsmen. My task was to make sure no one would disrupt my master while he was sneaking into the baron's bedroom to kill him with one precise cut of a poisoned dagger. I was hiding in the shadows, pressed to the wall in a corner of the main hallway; I could hear the heavy rain outside and feel my blood pumping at my temples, when I heard the noise coming from the bedroom.

I was frozen in place at the first moment, but the worries for my master finally made me rush into the baron's chamber. Nothing could have prepared me for what I witnessed there. I saw von Greifenfels, crawling from his bed towards me, which meant that Alexander had not hit him properly, but white foam was dripping from his mouth, indicating that at least some of the poison was in his blood and that he would not survive the night.

Then I looked up, only to see... Heinrich von Greifenfels. Another Heinrich von Greifenfels - looking exactly like the one dying at my feet - locked in a fight with my master. This other baron hit Alexander with a deadly blow of his sword, and I stood there in shock. Then he turned his frenzied eyes to meet mine and came at me.

I don't remember how I managed to escape him and the castle guards, but somehow I made it. It seems that my luck has run out in the meantime. The false baron is chasing me.

A wise woman in one of the villages I traveled through told me that what I was facing was a Doppelgänger, a Siehe shapeshifter, and that he was hunting me with such a wild passion, because I harmed his beloved favored one, the man he chose to look alike. Now I am no man to believe the ramblings of old women, but I have no other explanation, and I —

Someone - something - has arrived outside the barn I'm hiding in. It is him, I can feel it. My sword is here at my side. The time has come to meet my fate...

Statistics:

ST	Special	WP	8	Ref	Special
AG	Special	Wit	9	Aim	Special
TO	Special	MA	8	KD	Special
EN	Special	Soc	8	KO	Special
HT	Special	Per	5	Move	Special

Skills and Proficiencies: vary/special

Doppelgängers, a rare kind of Siehe, are the most perfect shapeshifters of all Weyrth (their shapeshifting abilities are so great, in fact, that no one can even guess what their true form is). The greatest, all-encompassing desire of a Doppelgänger is to find a "favored one," a human of their choice, with whom they form a very strong spiritual bond (which closely resembles a strong love) and change their appearance to look exactly like him or her. Their powers are so strong that they not only flawlessly copy the form and the Temporal attributes of their favored one, but also their skills and proficiencies, and learn to imitate the favored one's behavior perfectly over time, as well. They cannot duplicate Vagaries or other magical or supernatural capabilities, or Mental Attributes. After a Doppelgänger has found a favored one and assumed his or her appearance, they do not alter their shape again until the bond is broken (see below). No one knows for what reasons a Doppelgänger chooses a certain individual, but they seem to have a preference for famous people or those of noble blood.

Besides shapeshifting, a Doppelgänger has some other innate abilities:

Firstly, he can remain unseen, even in close proximity to and in direct line of sight of potential on-lookers. This is not true invisibility however, but rather an ability that causes the Doppelgänger to be overlooked and simply not perceived by others. To see a Doppelgänger that doesn't want to be seen requires a very difficult Perception test (TN 12); the Seneschal should only allow this if the character is actively searching for a hidden or magically veiled person. With a success margin of one, the character notices that there is something, but cannot tell exactly what it is. Two successes are required to perceive the Doppelgänger clearly (until it leaves line of sight again) and three or more successes allow the character to see the Doppelgänger without problems for a prolonged period of time. If the Doppelgänger undertakes an action that could attract the attention of others, they are allowed to notice it with a considerably easier perception test. For example, if the Doppelgänger picks up a document from



a table to put it in his pocket, the TN should drop to 8; opening a door to enter a room could result in a TN of 6. Taking a violent action or speaking out loud always results in the Doppelgänger becoming visible, no roll needed.

This ability is active at all times, if it is not consciously suppressed by the Doppelgänger (this can also be done only for selected individuals). It allows the Doppelgänger to be near its favored one nearly at all times.

Secondly, a Doppelgänger can feel if its favored one is scared or feels pain, even if he or she is somewhere else. All that is required is a successful Perception test (TN 8). If the favored one is very far away (e.g. in another city), the test is more difficult (TN 10). Such a perception test can also be used to feel in which direction the favored one is located.

After a Doppelgänger has bonded with a favored one, it usually stays near him or her most of the time, but it also gains another, driving desire: to impersonate its favored one and act or interact with others in his or her stead. This can lead to all kinds of interesting and unpleasant situations for the favored one, e.g. when the Doppelgänger of a merchant signs a contract or gives away secrets after a few drinks at the tavern. A Doppelgänger normally does not reveal himself to his favored one (only by accident, e.g. when becoming visible while trying to save the favored one from a life-threatening situation). Those with knowledge of Siehe lore whisper that you can force your Doppelgänger to show itself by walking all around a graveyard twelve times at night.

The strong emotions a Doppelgänger feels for its favored one causes it to protect him or her, almost becoming an invisible bodyguard who tries to keep harm away. Should the favored one die in spite of everything, it is always a traumatic experience for the Doppelgänger. Some of them seek revenge, some of them move to the next favored one after some time of mourning, and some of them never get over it, becoming lost in constant sorrow and grief, never to change their shape again. The supposed ghost of the murdered princess haunting an old castle could

be a Doppelgänger who is still grieving the loss of its favored one.

The bond between a Doppelgänger and its favored one can only be broken if

the favored one dies or the Doppelgänger is driven away. The latter one is possible by actively banishing it from the company of its favored one constantly for seven days. A Doppelgänger can be repelled by pure iron, clothes worn inside out and prayers (the lack of faith amongst the Stahlnish nobles and their discouraging of religion often makes them preferred favored ones); additionally, Doppelgänger's cannot cross lines of salt, and are always afraid of a certain kind of animal (Seneschal's choice as to what animal).

Seeing one's own Doppelgänger is considered a bad omen by the superstitious of Stahl. In some regions it is considered a death token, foretelling your own imminent demise.

Doppelgängers are most often encountered in Stahl, probably having their origin in the Iron-Tooth Mountains. Because they follow their favored ones wherever they travel, many Doppelgängers have found their way to foreign countries, and possibly even to other continents. Curiously, Doppelgängers that currently do not have a favored one often travel in the form of the animal that they fear.

SPIRITUAL ATTRIBUTES:

A "free" Doppelgänger (without a current favored one) has Drive 5: "Find a favored one."

This changes when a Doppelgänger bonds. He loses the Drive and gains Passion 5: "Spiritual bond with favored one." This Passion can be used as a bonus for any actions to protect the favored one from harm, to help him in desperate situations etc. The spiritual bond and the Passion affiliated with it will grow stronger over time, so a Doppelgänger who was bonded to a favored one for some time might have a Passion of 6 or higher. If the favored one is harmed severely or even killed, the Passion is likely to change into a hatred and desire for revenge directed at the person who committed the act against the favored one. Additionally, a bonded Doppelgänger receives the Drive 4: "Impersonate favored one when possible."

ADVENTURE IDEAS:

An enemy of the characters has a Doppelgänger who protects him. Suddenly, they have to fight two foes instead of one.



An ally or noble to which a character is loyal has unwittingly attracted a Doppelgänger, which can lead to all kinds of surprising situations. E.g. the ally's Doppelgänger could make a promise to the characters which is not fulfilled ("Yes, I will bribe the guards that they let you pass."), or the noble's Doppelgänger could insult a foreign diplomat and the characters must clear up the situation to prevent a war.

One of the most interesting possibilities is to have a Doppelgänger pick one of the player characters as its favored one. This can be both beneficial, when the Doppelgänger saves the character from dangerous situations, but it could also be unpleasant, e.g. when the Doppelgänger of the player's nobleman agrees to a marriage. Endless roleplaying possibilities abound. (If the Senechal approves it, a character's Doppelgänger could even be played by a guest player; it would also be a good role for someone who cannot attend the roleplaying sessions regularly.)

DRYAD

Woodcutting wasn't the easiest of jobs, but it was something Stefan was actually good at. They tried his hand at butchering, but he loved animals too much and kept letting them run out of the back of the shop. What about farming they asked, but he couldn't keep it clear in his mind which fields he'd already sown and which were yet to do. They even tried him a stint at guarding, but he was too gullible, and thieves and drunkards were too good at talking him out of his duties.

Woodcutting now, that proved to fit right in. All alone in the big outdoors, nobody to know he was simple, nothing to do but swing those big arms of his at a tree (and hope he'd remembered to bring the axe), and carry those logs to the river where they'd just float right back into town. Yes sir, it seemed perfect all around.

That is until the day the trees stopped arriving. They left it half a week, just to make sure Stefan hadn't simply taken ill and decided to rest up some, but eventually they had to face the fact that he wasn't chopping trees and someone needed to do something about it.

And that's where I come into the story. Gervus, that's my name. They sent me up to the woods to check on Stefan and make sure he was ok. He hadn't much in the way of food, but he'd proved pretty good in the past at foraging for his dinner, so they weren't too concerned that he might have starved himself to death. Unfortunately, about the only alternative that left was that he'd gone and had himself an accident. Wasn't likely to be pretty either, or he'd have been able to cling to a log and float his way into town, which is why they sent me – I don't scare easy, see.

A couple of days are all it took to get to the area. Stefan had made quite a clearing, nearly five acres in fact. At one end nearest the river, he'd made himself a little hut to sleep in, right nicely made it was too – they should have tried him at carpentry. He wasn't there though, so I went into the woods to see if the animals had left anything for me to find. The felled area was long and thin, winding some. It seemed he had followed the line of firs. I took my bow in hand, made sure my sword was loose in its sheath and went wandering. At the end of his clearing I found the most curious sight I ever did see. There was a Fir, large and majestic right in the path he'd been felling. At the base of the tree was a small pool of water, couldn't have been more than 3 inches deep or more than two feet across, but sure enough Stefan was face down in it, drowned in a pool of water that wouldn't have killed a baby.

Even more curiously, he hadn't been dragged away by animals. All along my walk I had seen wolf spoor, and the occasionally signs of other scavengers. Stefan had been missing at least a couple of days, and no animals had found him? That was unfathomable.

Until I noticed the girl. See, at first I thought she was a trick of the light, but the harder I looked the more I could see her shape, hidden among the rough bark and roots of the tree, beautiful and sad looking, and then I knew.

I tell myself she was just protecting her home, like any of us would. I tell myself that it must have been quick for Stefan in the end. Why, she probably begged him for days to leave her tree, and when he stubbornly refused she probably just smiled at him and he willingly



lay down in that pool for her – men will do funny things for love, especially when it's magical. I tell myself all of these things, but I also tell myself that Stefan was my friend, and deserved better. That was why I ignored her cries and set fire to her tree, not letting her catch my eye. I sat there for hours and listened to her screaming as the tree went up. It wasn't pleasant, but it was necessary.

Kind of wish I hadn't done it now, though. Seems the forest didn't like it much, and it closed in around me as I watched. Now I can't for the life of me see a trail leading back home, and by the noises in the darkness I guess those wolves have come at last.

Statistics:

ST	4	WP	4	Ref	4
AG	4	Wit	5	Aim	4
TO	5	MA	4	KD	4
EN	5	Soc	9	KO	6
HT	4	Per	4	Move	6

Combat Proficiency: 4 (pugilism/brawling) or 8 (sling), CP 8, MP 12

Vagaries: Glamour 2, Conquer 2 (SP 12)

Dryads are among the forest dwelling Siehe, and are known as protectors of the woodlands and the ancient holy places, lost to the memories of man, within. Each Dryad has a specific tree that is her home, and her link to the world. Should she ever stray too far from the tree, or should the tree die, then the Dryad will die also, and in great pain. For this reason, the usually benevolent Dryads will not hesitate to kill in the defense of their tree.

Physically, Dryads are stunningly beautiful women with dark brown skin and light brown or reddish hair. They may walk into or out of their tree at will, and while standing before it are almost invisible due to a mild chameleonic effect (Roll Per/9 to spot her unless she specifically wants to be seen). Dryads are shy, but highly intelligent and may be convinced by a wily woodsman to reveal secrets of the wood (flattery works especially well). If a Dryad believes that someone wishes harm to the wood

however, or is in danger of locating a holy or forbidden place, she will use magic to confuse him and drive him from the wood, or in the case of especially stubborn or resis-

tant folk, kill them to protect her charges. The Dryad must make eye contact with the target to get into his mind with her Conquer magic, and favors Repression effects to make the target forget his path through the woods or the existence of a forbidden place he is heading for, then Implant magic to affect his emotions, and if all else fails Control magic to cause him to flee or kill himself. Dryads do make aging rolls when using magic, but the magic ages the tree rather than the Dryad herself, which is of less concern given the extreme lifespan of trees.

If all else fails, Dryads will engage in combat, but do not utilize weapons and prefer to attack from a distance using a sling or similar ranged weapon.

GREMLIN

Cewrin stumbled through thick underbrush of the dark forest. It all seemed familiar, yet at the same time, so alien. He was sure this was the forest of his birth. If only he could find the Court, and his mother. He had been wandering for a full day now, he was sure to stumble upon it soon.

"Stop halfling! What you want in my forest?"

Cewrin stopped and looked about in confusion. He saw no one.

"Down here, stupid!"

He looked down and saw a small green creature with five eyes. It couldn't have been more than a foot tall, but it still tried to look menacing with its tiny spear. A Gremlin.

He knew of these unseeleie - bluster a bit and clearly display your strength. The little coward would obey him out of fear for its own life.

"Take me to the court of Ellowill, little fiend, or I kill you here," he snarled, hefting his staff menacingly to add to the threat. It looked surprised at his defiance, then cringed and nodded, sullenly setting off through the trees. They walked silently for a few minutes until the little creature turned back to address him.

"Why you want to go to Ellowill?" It asked.

"I was born there. I have important news for my mother. It's a matter of life and death."

"You already spent your season there?" It asked curiously, stopping in its tracks.



"Yes," he replied impatiently. "Not that it is of any concern to you."

"They won't want you back." It said with a smug tilt to its head.

"I know that, but it's of the utmost importance that I see her again. I'm willing to pay the price of my actions, if I can just speak to her and tell her my tale!"

"They won't want you back. And they won't care what we do to you..."

The little creature began giggling to itself as it away dashed into the underbrush. Cewrin took a step after it, and then stopped. He would never find the beast in this thick underbrush, and would likely get himself even more lost, if that was even possible.

As he moved to set out again, he felt a sharp impact against the back of his head and stumbled. He managed to spin about, still smarting, and saw the gremlin, or another just like it, perched on a branch about head level, hefting a small rock in clear declaration of what it had just done.

Cewrin felt a rush of indignation and took a step forward to teach the little creature a lesson, but stopped short as three more like it seemed to appear out of nowhere. With a growing feeling of dread, he began to notice dozens more materializing all about him. They smiled wicked smiles, and hefted small rocks and other weapons.

He turned to run, but there was nowhere to go.

Statistics:

ST	3	WP	5	Ref	8
AG	9	Wit	7	Aim	7
TO	3	MA	2	KD	6
EN	3	Soc	5	KO	5
HT	3	Per	5	Move	7

Combat Proficiency: 4 (thrown rocks, tiny spears), CP 12, MP 10

Vagaries: Glamour 2 (SP 11)

Twisted, impish creatures with foul language and fouler habits, gremlins inhabit the dark and twisted parts of the forests, making their homes amongst the fungus and rot. They possess dark green skin, black eyes, and a thick mop of dark blue hair. They seldom grow over a foot in height, but specimens up to two or even three feet in height exist (often

the result of interbreeding with larger Unseelie such as goblins). Perhaps their most unusual feature is their eyes, of which they possess any number between one and five. As the number of eyes equates to social status in gremlin society, conflict amongst them are usually ended when a party loses an eye in combat (and thus becomes subservient).

In combat, Gremlins wield tiny daggers made of bits of bone or rock. Against larger folk, they typically attack in swarms, with dozens of the vile little creatures clinging and stabbing until their victim succumbs (see the section on Pack Tactics, in Chapter two). They also enjoy attacking with small thrown objects to taunt or soften up their prey. Due to their small size (little flaw), Gremlins fight as if their weapon was 2 length categories shorter.



HEARN AND THE WILD HUNT

I tell you, I saw 'em! Listen here, I ain't no youngling to go startin' at shadows. Fact is, 'fore that night, I was a good Stahlrish Atheist. Now... Well, don't let it get back to my mates, but I think there's more to the stories of magic and them druids in Angharad than we ever knew.

It started same as any other night... I was on patrol with my squad, right on the main trade route through Angharad to Oustenreich then my rawest recruit stopped dead. I was about to chew him up for stopping in file when I heard what he had.

It was a long, mournful note, only barely audible above the winds across the plain. It fell silent, then came again, and I recognized it as the voice of a hunting horn, sounded a long ways off. Just as I was about to tell the



boy to get moving, I heard another sound, as of yelping hounds.

Well, ‘fore I could say a blasted thing, the boy bolted down the road. If I’d have known what he did, I’d have followed him, and damned the patrol route. But I din’ know, and doomed my boys to whatever fate found ‘em that night. We just cursed the lad, and I vowed to place him on some odious detail when I found him next. Then we continued along our route like the good soldiers we were. Feh! Lambs to the slaughter, morelike.

The yelping got louder after that, but we didn’t hear that horn for quite some time. Matter o’ fact, it was as if them bayin’ dogs was just over the hill when we heard the horn again. It sounded a lot closer also, so we looked in that direction, expectin’ to see some nobles out chasin’ a fox or somesuch.

That was when I saw ‘im. The huntsman his ownself. He was silhouetted ‘gainst some clouds which was lit up by the full moon, but he didn’t look like what we expected. For one, though he was man-shaped for the most part, his head looked a tad bestial, and the obvious thing was a great rack of horns, like the mightiest hart you ever saw. Only it was the hart that was doin’ the huntin’, this night. Then his hounds came with their bloodthirsty yelps and bay-ing...

I never saw my lads again after that night. I don’t rightly know how I survived, only that I was found in some farmer’s haystack some time later. I’ll never forget how the huntsman’s eyes gleamed gold in the moonlight, though. No sir, I never shall.

Statistics (Hearn)

ST	6	WP	10	Ref	10
AG	10	Wit	10	Aim	10
TO	13*	MA	2	KD	n/a
EN	9	Soc	4	KO	n/a
HT	n/a	Per	10	Move	7

Combat Proficiency: 12, CP 22

**Hearn’s TO is 13 for the sake of deciding a fight. If he takes even a level one “wound,” then he will begin to withdraw with his hunt, having been “defeated.” He is not actually wounded in any way.*

into physical conflict, though he avoids this and prefers to let his hounds take down the prey. He is also mounted; consider the horse a Courser with standard stats, but which is likewise immune to injury.

Hearn and the Wild Hunt are spoken of with reverence and awe even in the courts of the Fey. Exactly what or who Hearn is remains a fact unknown even to them, but amongst the Fey speculation is rampant. What they do know is that the Wild Hunt consists of Hearn, mounted on his courser, and his Hounds. The Hounds of the Wild Hunt resemble large wolfhounds with ghost-white fur and blood red ears and eyes. They come to the sounding of Hearn’s hunting horn, and will pursue whatever they find until it has escaped to sanctuary, is pulled down, goes mad, or dawn breaks. Very few have ever been outdoors during the night of the Wild Hunt and lived to tell the tale. What is known or commonly believed, however, is that you are safe during the Hunt if you stay indoors or in a holy place, such as the standing stones which dot the landscape of Angharad.

Hearn is a supernatural being, and while it is possible for him to be defeated, he cannot be injured or killed. He is a Greater Siehe from neither the Seelie nor Unseelie, and as such is feared by both. He is neither good nor evil, and has no goals or agendas. He exists only for the Wild Hunt, which happens one night per year, beginning in Angharad, and straying into other lands before dawn. At dawn Hearn and the Hunt disappears, leaving the world in relative peace for one more year.

For Hearn’s hounds, use the statistics for Wolves in chapter two. The Hounds are supernatural creatures, but can be defeated and even killed. However, they are rarely encountered individually, as the Wild Hunt consists of hundreds of these Hounds.

LOUP GAROU

“Sit yesel’ down now, and I’ll tell ye th’ tale of Jared Sarason an’ th’ cow what done him in. Y’heard the name then, I kin sees it in your eyes. Yep, ol’ Jared, he were the best hun’er ‘n’ tracker in these parts, t’warn’t a creature alive under the three-and-one he couldna tamed if’in he had a mind ter. H’use



Hearn uses a short bow and a long hunting knife (shortsword) if ever he gets



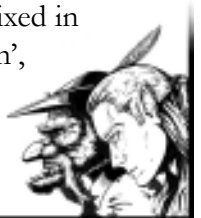
to haunt ol' Ginties tavern – you know th'place – showing off his lates' kill or selling some outa townner a win'er wolf pelt or somesuch. Why, one time h'even... well, ol'right, I'ma getting tae it, you never yo'mind ma roun'about way a'talkin', damn young'uns today got no patience!"

"S'anyways, one day Jared comes himself into Ginties wi'a young fancy bit on his'arm. Doe-eyed an' pertie as all hell, she war'a frail litt' thing, but he been makin' sweet eyes at 'er an' we'all thought she was jus' fine for our boy Jared. From some place down South she were, don' rightly remember whar exac'ly. So Jared, he takes her tae hi' little cabin jes up th' hill there – tha's right boy, jus' up thar – and they makes a home fer thay'selves."

"But one day, ol' Jared he come to me, see, n'sais as 'ow 'is lady is sick 'n all, seems he done found her that marning a'layin' in some kinda ring o'toadstools 'n she's all weak 'n frail n' such – yeah, well, even more than she were usual. I took me up thar w'him

and took a looksee at the lit'l lass, she war' all white and shakin', but still a fine looker 'n I'm ashamed t'say I did peek unda th' blanket some when Jared were out gettin' som' water. Well son, I resigned me to stayin' th'night and put some cold compress' on her forred jus' like I showed you how t'do. Must'a fallen asleep though, 'cos I woked me up to a crash, an' a'hollerin' an'a cryin', an' I sees th'bed empty an' th'door off its hinges, 'n ol' Jared runnin' up th' mountain screaming to his love who he supposed had run out into th'night."

"Well, I took up me bow an' my dagger, 'cos you don' ever rightly know what you're a'gonna find in th'dark, an' I ran me out and followed him up th'hill. I stumbled around in th'dark for a while an' t'was then I heard th' scariest noise I ever did hear – 't'war like the lowin' o' th' cows, but loud, 'n'mixed in with a high-pitched scream, like. Chillin', y'might say. T'was then I come 'round th' path an' I sees Jared go down t' th' cow.



Big ‘n black it war’, an’ I swear t’you as sure as this is m’dying day, it’s eyes war’ red ‘n’ it done laughed with th’voice o’ a woman as it gored him. Near tore him in two, only beast I ever did see didn’t drop ‘n’ show its belly when Jared did ask.”

“Well son, I ‘aint ashamed to say I ran for m’life ‘n’ leapt onto the roof o’ ol’ Jared’s hut. Sat there all night ‘n’ watched that beastie crash into the wall again ‘n’ again tryin’ t’get t’m. Come sunup though, it kinda thrashed a’bit ‘n’ strike me down if I lie – turned into Jared’s lady, all pink ‘n’ naked her’sel’. I cud’ still see ol’ Jared’s body bleedin’ not too far off, like, so I took up m’bow ‘n’ did what any good man would.”

“Buried ‘em together I did. I think ol’ Jared woulda liked that. I never done told a soul that story boy, ‘n’ I kin see you don’ believe a word. But that’s ok, finally I kin go to my death with a clear heart.”

Statistics:

See “Game Information,” below.

Throughout Weyrth, the Fey are scoffed at as myths, or as stories told to amuse and scare children. From common peasants to knights and lords, few have anything but scorn for tales of elves and fairies. Even the mildly superstitious among them often have a strong belief in werewolves however, and will regale you for hours on the properties of those lycanthropes - their full moon transformations, the dangers of being bitten and contracting the disease, and their nemesis’s – silver and fire.

They’re wrong, of course, but not as wrong as they might hope.

Loup Garou are humans who have been cursed by the Fey. Nobody knows what transgressions one must make against them to earn this horrible curse, but once stricken it is binding for a period of 101 days. During this time, the victim is transformed into a crazed animal every evening. The animal type is the same every night, but varies from curses to curse; occasionally a wolf, certainly, but horses, wild cats or even cows have been known as the animal type for unfortunate victims of the Loup Garou curse.

During the day, the victim returns to human form, but is weak and sickly, and beset by

horrible visions and half memories of haunting the darkness.

There are only two known ways to cure somebody of the Loup Garou curse – firstly, one may beseech the Fey to remove the curse. This would of course necessitate knowing who placed the curse in the first place! The second is for somebody to somehow recognize the crazed animal as really being human, call them by name, and then draw some blood. This will nullify the curse immediately; however neither the victim nor the rescuer may mention the curse, even to each other, until the original 101 days are up, or else both will suffer the effects of the curse for the remainder of the period.

GAME INFORMATION

The Loup Garou curse is a variant of the Animal and Transform rituals described in Chapter Six of *The Riddle of Steel* rulebook. Any person beset with the curse will transform into a rabid animal as soon as the sun goes down (whether she can see it or not at the time), and will return to human form as soon as the sun comes up the following day. No clothing or possessions are retained during the transformation; these will tear or break and fall from the body when the change occurs. When the curse is placed, the Seneschal should determine what animal form the curse will inflict on the victim. Pick one of the beasts from chapter two of this book (or make up your own) and modify the statistics as shown below:

Temporal: all as base animal +2

Mental: WP and Wit: no change, MA and Soc: 0, Per -2

Combat Proficiency +2, Reflex +1 (therefore CP +3)

Knockdown +2, Knockout +2, Move +3

While in animal form during the evening, the character is controlled by the Seneschal, and will blindly and wildly attack anything living, even if inhabiting a usually nonviolent form (such as a cow). During the day, victims are returned to human form but are weak and sickly (-1 to all attributes) for the entire duration of the curse.



SWAMP SPRITES

Gothrick tried not to struggle, that only made him sink faster. The thin branch he clung to was his only chance to escape the quicksand he had stumbled into.

A high pitched tittering set his nerves on end. The swamp sprites had been taunting him since he first became mired. They were perched on the trees all about him, watching in amusement as if his death was a spectacle. Occasionally, one would fly by close to his face, as if daring him to release his tenuous grip on the branch to attack them. He was beginning to consider accepting their dare. His efforts to pull himself out had proved futile, the branch was just too flimsy. But if he could inch along it another half-foot, there was a thick vine he could reach which might prove more useful.

He steeled himself to ignore the vile little creatures, and continued to steadily and gently pull himself along. It seemed like an eternity, but his patience paid off as he wrapped his hand about the vine and gave it a gentle tug. It seemed secure enough.

Until it moved.

The vine wrapped itself about his wrist, and a tiny forked tongue emerged from the end, which he could now see as a small, triangular head. Gothrick screamed and flailed about, trying to free himself from the serpent. The sprite's laughter reached a crescendo as they watched his antics.

Gothrick stopped struggling and realized with horror that he had sunk down to his chin. He glanced about in panic and saw the vine, out of reach again - just a vine, after all. He began to sob in despair as the tittering laughter continued.

Statistics:

ST	1	WP	3	Ref	n/a
AG	9	Wit	5	Aim	n/a
TO	1	MA	2	KD	1
EN	1	Soc	3	KO	n/a
HT	1	Per	5	Move	5 / 15 fly

Combat Proficiencies: n/a, CP n/a

Vagaries: Glamour 2 (SP 7)

Swamp Sprites appear as something of a cross between an insect and a humanoid. Their bodies appear mostly human, but with long antennae and a hunched back featuring a beetle-like carapace and wings. Seldom leaving the swamps and the bogs of their birth, they take great delight in "entertaining" visitors. Those unfortunate to encounter swamp sprites will quickly find themselves led astray by illusory magic - common tricks include impenetrable fogs and false trails that result in the traveler to arrive back where he started, or worse.

Due to their extremely small size, Swamp Sprites are unable to engage in combat.

TROGLODYTE

It had seemed like a deserted cave. There was no indication that anything else used it - I searched it pretty thoroughly for bear signs or wolf spoor, and made sure there was no sign of Gols nearby. Basically, I was confident that it was an empty cave, of no use to anybody. Seemed like a perfect place to hold up until the heat had died down.

I didn't mean to kill her, really I didn't. But she just wouldn't stop screaming, even after I told her I was only after her purse and maybe a kiss. And I meant it too. Well, maybe a kiss has a way of spreading into something else, if you know what I mean, but I wasn't going to kill her, honest. If only she would have stopped screaming.

Luckily, I can run faster than her fat father or brothers, and I figured a couple of days in this cave and the heat would die down long enough for me to leave the area and find better pickings elsewhere. I swear it seemed empty. Not a sign of anything, except perhaps a small hole at the back, big enough for a small animal to clamber into, but not even big enough for a man, let alone anything that could threaten me, surely.

I think it was the third night or maybe the fourth when they came for me. Horrible little impy things they were, no more than three feet high but with leathery black wrinkly skin as if they were really old. They carried these nasty little spears, short but with a hell of a sting to them, and after I got poked a couple of times



the pain got to me and I just did what they wanted me to do.

The little fiends dragged me down through the tiny tunnel into some kind of large cave underground. I wouldn't have believed it was possible to get a big man like me down that tiny hole, but it's amazing what a few jabs from a stingy stick can inspire you to. It was pretty frightening, but I figured I could find a way out of it; I have this knack of always getting out of things, just like with fair Mauve and her mad brothers.

It's been nine days now. I can't understand a word they say, they keep yammering to me but it's not like any language I ever heard. Still, at least they've been feeding me – thick vegetable stews and some kind of meat I can't quite identify. Nice and filling too, I hadn't had much to eat previously in the cave – I've even been putting on weight!

Tonight's meal looks to be even more special. They've taken me into some kind of audience chamber, instead of the cell where they've fed me in the past. They have a huge pot bubbling over on one side of the room, and on the other side three of them are chopping up what look like carrots and sweet potatoes.

I wonder what's for dinner.

Statistics:

ST	3	WP	3	Ref	4
AG	5	Wit	3	Aim	5
TO	3	MA	3	KD	3
EN	3	Soc	3	KO	4
HT	3	Per	5	Move	5

Combat Proficiencies: 5 (tiny spear, range: Short), CP 9

Sometimes known as Coblynau or Duergar, Troglodytes are thought to be distant cousins of Rock Dwarves and Goblins.

Tiny, wrinkly and black, they inhabit the deep cave systems beneath mountainous areas of Weyrth.

Troglodytes are highly carnivorous, eating vegetables and fruits only to vary the flavor of the meat they crave. Although animal flesh will suffice (and other Troglodytes, if they come from an opposing tribe or have died – there is not so much a funeral as



a feast upon the death of a friend) they crave above all the flesh of men, and always go to great lengths to obtain it, often keeping the victim(s) alive for several days, fattening them up and feeding them specially prepared vegetables to soften, tenderize and flavor their flesh.

Although individually weak, Troglodytes are formidable in numbers, using pack tactics and maneuvers (see chapter two) to confuse and overwhelm opponents, subduing them if possible but killing them as a last resort (they prefer their meat very fresh, if you know what I mean...)

Troglodytes' other main passion is the rearing and breeding of cave snakes. The snakes are kept as pets, matched against each other in "cock fights", and generally coddled much as people keep dogs. It is also from these snakes that the Troglodytes harvest the venom they use to coat their spears – the snakes produce a weak Hematoxic venom (potency 2, cannot take a victim past stage two on the chart on page 29). Spears coated in this manner will only retain their toxicity for a single attack, but with several Troglodytes attacking simultaneously with poisoned spears, this is usually enough to convince the victim to cooperate or even make them collapse with pain so they can be trussed up and carted off.

Troglodytes live in tribes, each ruled by the strongest and toughest tribe member (ST and TO 4). Intra-tribal relationships are complicated, some tribes being allies one week and bitter enemies the next. About the only thing they can agree on is the cessation of hostilities when more important matters (i.e. the capture of humans) are afoot.

YR TAIR Y CLEDDYF: THE THREE SWORDS

We had been told not to go into the north woods. We had been told twice not to wander near the old shrine of Morrigan. And three times we had been told not to even be near the woods after nightfall.

We did it wrong, though it took a while to realize it. The shrine was beautiful, even if it was old and covered in vegetation. Davin really wanted to see it...he said he had something to ask the old god-

dess. We prayed by the crumbling shrine, left some fruit and a hare for an offering, and turned for home. That was about noon, I think.

Within the hour we were lost, and within two the sun had set. At two o'clock, the sun set...and it was dark. The summer warmth of the woods turned to a chilly, autumn cold, giving life to our foggy breath. And we realized then that Morrigan must not like rabbits.

First, the sensation of being followed. Then, the sound of cloth dragging through the leaves and underbrush sitting beneath the birch trees. "To the right," Davin said, and I looked. A single figure, not quite 5 feet tall, glided through the leaves some 20 yards off. Looking to the left we saw another, and our blood ran cold.

"Run," I said, and we did. We ran as far as we could, until we were sure that the forest should have ended by now, and that we should be standing amidst crops and scarecrows. But there were no rows of wheat—only the ghostly white trunks of birch trees.

We turned to the rear, and saw one drifting through the undergrowth, exactly centered behind us. He seemed tall, despite his height. Perhaps it was his head, longer than a man's and a bit narrower. His head, bald as a stone, seemed to reflect the moonlight and canopy shadows coming through the forest roof, his ears shot upward like daggers on the sides of his skull, and his half-round eyes shone dimly and white. The wind blew up behind him, sending ripples through the long black cloak that even then dragged leaves behind it. He wore a sword on his back, and the pommel gleamed in the moonlight.

Davin and I began backing away. I wanted to run, but knew it would do no more good against this little man than it would against the wind itself. My only consolation was that Davin was here with me, and we both came armed.

But there were two more I had forgotten. They came up behind the one in the center, leaves stirring about their black cloaks, and took their place behind him on either side. Three of them, all identical, all with the same long swords across their backs. Davin drew his weapon and I followed—if they carried swords, perhaps they could be killed by them. We stood silently, preparing ourselves and muttering prayers to whatever



gods or spirits ruled these woods—though I believed that perhaps we stood now to face them.

The one on the back left reached forward and grabbed the leader's sword by the hilt, and slowly spun around, unsheathing the weapon. His twin on the back right took the spinning one's sword, and set into rotation himself. Finally, the one in the front grabbed the second's sword at the tail end of the spin, himself never having turned—never having taken those ghastly eyes off of us. All three of them now held the sword of one of their brethren.

That's when the fighting started.

Statistics:

ST	5	WP	7	Ref	9
AG	9	Wit	9	Aim	n/a
TO	5	MA	1	KD	6
EN	8	Soc	1	KO	8
HT	2	Per	6	Move	10

Combat Proficiency (Longsword*): 8, CP 17

Skills: Thief & Woodsman packets at 7; Sneak 4

Vagaries: Glamour 3 (SP 14)

In the language of Angharad, Tair y Cleddyf means “the three swords.” The Stahlners call them Die drei Schwertekin, or “the Three Sword-Kin.” These powerful and wordless killers haunt the enchanted woodlands of the world, always near the dilapidated shrine or temple of some abandoned or forgotten god. They are often attached to Morrigan, the old Celtic goddess of death; some say that they are her children, sent to tend the graves of dead gods and spirits.

They move almost soundlessly until they wish to be seen, move with lighting alacrity, and always travel in a group of three. They use their glamour magic whenever possible to scare and unnerve their “prey,” whom they work very hard to prevent from leaving their protected forest or lands alive, if at all. Very few have been able to make it out of the Sword-Kin's territory before dying, but enough have that the story is well known in lands where the Sword-

Kin stalk. If you can get out of their woods, though, they will not follow so long as you have taken nothing from their chosen shrine or holy place.



The Sword-Kin will never leave the corpse of one of their brethren behind, though they will retreat and return for it if they are grossly outmatched. Patient and methodical, the Three have decimated small armies bit-by-bit in order to regain one of their number. If all three are slain, other Siehe (seelie and unseelie) will come for the bodies sooner or later.

**The swords carried by the Three are exceptional, with a -1 to both ATN and DTN due to fine quality and mild enchantment. The drawback is that they cannot be drawn by the same person who is wearing them. Thus one character can draw the sword from his friend's back or side, but not from his own back or side. Anyone but the wearer can draw one of these swords, making the Three Sword-Kin exceptionally vulnerable when alone, as an enemy might be able to draw the sword, but they cannot.*



BOOK FOUR:

BEASTS OF LEGEND

This chapter contains entries for the kinds of beasts that epics are written about; that inspire knights and warriors to great battles in the name of bravery and honor. These beasts find their way onto standards and banners, sigils and coats of arms. They are the stuff of legend and, in most cases, are best left alone...

COCKATRICE

WHEN I ARRIVED, there were armored five men, bows nocked and drawn and pointed at the mine entrance, ready in case anything should emerge. One had a rank insignia stitched roughly to his shoulder, so I addressed my questions to him.

"What's the story?" I asked, eying the mine warily.

"It's the princess, sir. Apparently she chased a chicken into the mine. I sent three men in after her." He motioned at a body lying nearby, and continued "only one came back out, and he didn't live long. Now I can't get any of the men to go in after her, not by threat nor reward."

I sighed. As seneschal to the princess, it fell to me to follow her into the darkness and fetch her out. I accepted a blade from the apologetic guard and entered the mine, barely knowing which end to hold. The floor of the mine was slippery with droppings; eying the roof I saw no sign of bats, so it must be from chickens. The runs were obviously too close to this abandoned mine and the chickens had been straying in here; by the look of the amount of dung on the floor, probably for years.

Ten or fifteen feet in, I found the second guard. He had been running toward the exit, and like the first had died choking. I paused long enough to wet a rag and wrap it around my mouth and nose, and then continued on.

After a few moments searching, I discovered the third guard; he was lying against the frame of a doorway, his face purple and distended, and his throat

raw. Taking a deep breath, I prepared myself for the worst and walked through the doorway. The room was full of old and putrid eggs; chickens had clearly been laying here for years, the eggs left unattended to rot. The princess was trapped in the corner of the room, clutching the errant chicken to her bosom and staring, terrified at the beast that would not let her past. Perhaps two feet long, it appeared at first to be a snake, but I could see the weak light reflecting off small wings protruding from its back. It turned and hissed at me, and I could see that it bore the head of a rooster, complete with a blood red comb. As I stared in horror at the apparition, it spat at me, and a fetid green mist wafted over my head. Relying on the wet rag to protect me, I held my breath and sprinted past the creature, throwing the princess across my shoulder and darting from the room. The beast pecked at my ankle as I ran past, but did not deign to pursue me.

I made it most of the way back to the mine entrance as my leg began to throb. The girl was sobbing down my back and my vision was fading, but I managed to stagger at least to within sight of the exit before succumbing. At my urging the princess ran, crying, out of the cave and into the arms of the guards as I lay face down in chicken manure and felt my heart slow...

Slow...

Sl...

Statistics:

ST	3	WP	3	Ref	6
AG	8	Wit	5		
TO	4	MA	4	KD	n/a
EN	5	Soc	0	KO	5
HT	4	Per	5	Move	8

Combat Proficiency: 6, CP 12

The Cockatrice, sometimes known as a Basilisk, is a bizarre creature created under highly rare and unusual circumstances. As hens get older, they lay fewer and fewer viable eggs. Occasionally, a very old hen (at least seven years old) will lay an egg with a slightly rubbery surface rather than the usual crisp hardness of the shell. These eggs prove unviable if fertilized by a rooster; however in the highly unlikely circumstance



that they are fertilized and hatched by a snake, they will occasionally prove viable, birthing neither a chicken nor a snake, but a hideous combination of the two – a Cockatrice.

Cockatrices are usually around two feet long, and serpentine. They have no limbs, but their scaly body does sport a tiny pair of wings, not large enough to allow sustained flight, but enough to levitate the creature for small periods of time or allow quick maneuvering. The head resembles a scaly rooster's head; complete with a bright red comb, and the rest of the body is either green or black.

Cockatrices are mean and viscous creatures, killing anything that comes near them. Although they do not have fangs, their beak is extraordinarily sharp

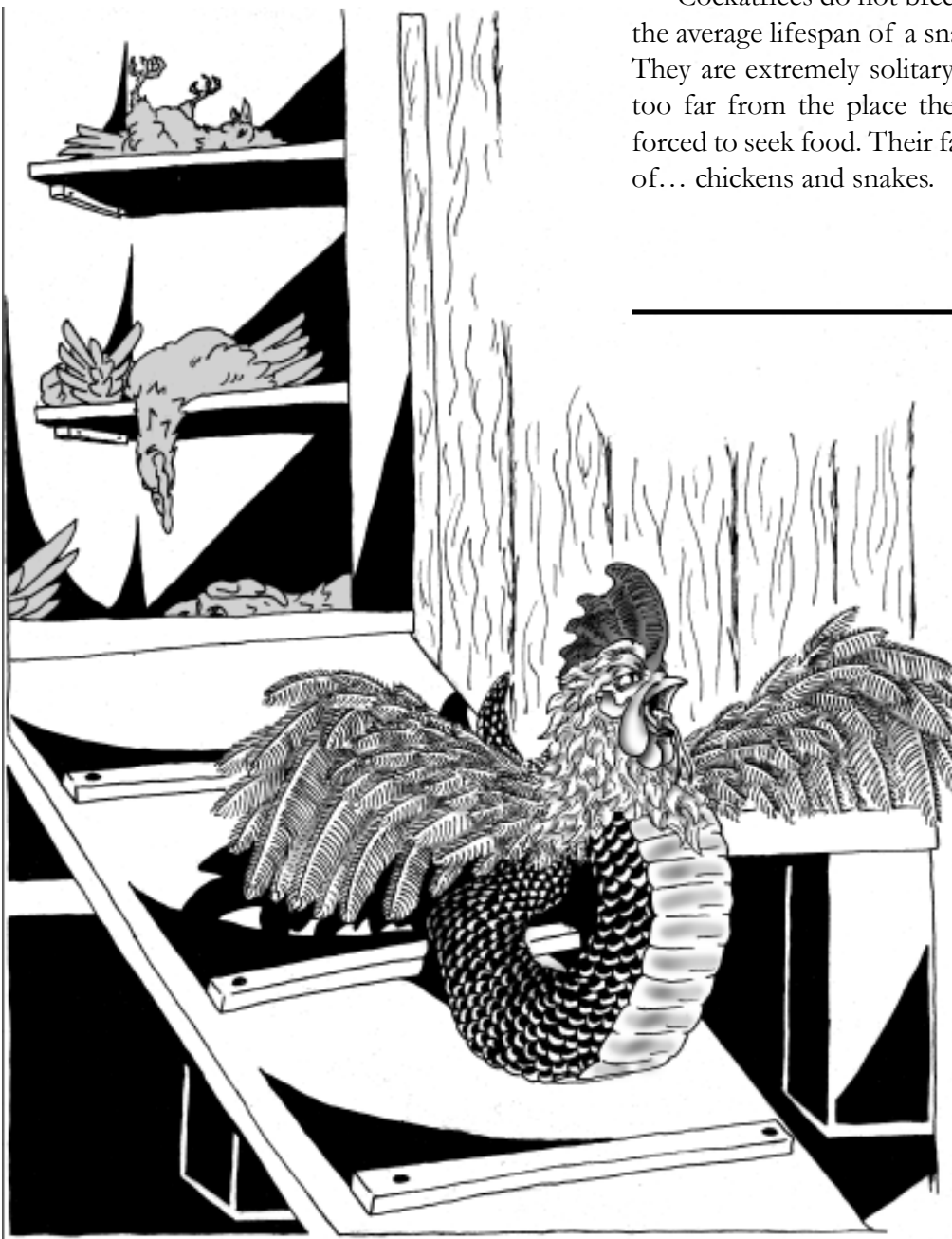
and they have small venom sacks that can deliver this venom on a successful peck. The peck does negligible physical damage, but delivers a Hematoxic venom, potency 4 (see Chapter Two for details). The Cockatrice can also breathe this venom out in a cloud, reducing its potency to 3, but allowing more opponents to be affected if they are unlucky enough to breathe in the tainted air.

Cockatrices do not breed, and they only live for the average lifespan of a snake, around 15-20 years. They are extremely solitary, and tend not to travel too far from the place they were hatched, unless forced to seek food. Their favorite diet is comprised of... chickens and snakes.

GARGOYLE

"I see you have had some new stonework done, father," the odd delivery boy who had introduced himself as Iain said as he studied the stonework crenellations lining the roof of the old abbey. "Very fancy work indeed, does it mean anything?"

The old priest smiled. "It's called a gargoyle, Iain. According to legend, they protect old buildings from intruders and whom-ever would harm those who live within."



Iain smirked. “That’s a funny thing to have on a church, father, looks like a demon to me.”

“Oh, not at all,” the priest replied. “Quite the opposite, in fact. The All-Seeing-Eye sends them to us that we may be protected and safe in our devotions. Or so the legends say, I think it looks rather handsome up there, actually”

Chuckling, the two men wandered into the opulence of the church, and the priest signed the evidential document proving delivery. He gave the young man a generous tip, and sent him on his way. Iain paused on the way out to admire some of the elegant gold trim and crystal chalices on display in the church, then tipped his hat to the priest and departed.

Late that evening, a rock hefted from behind a nearby gravestone shattered one of the fine windows of the abbey. A small figure dressed all in black darted up to the wall, paused to listen for the sound of disturbance, and then slipped through the hole in the window. Working by the light of the full moon streaming in through the window frame, it began to move around the room, filling a small sack with golden candlesticks, silver sigils and crystal goblets.

All of a sudden, the light was snuffed out, and the room plunged into blackness. The figure dropped expertly to the ground, looking about warily for the cause of the sudden darkness. A dark shape filled the window frame, hazily outlined by the moonlight streaming past it. It was a large, bulky shape, not immediately identifiable.

“F.father?” muttered the figure. “Is... is that you? It’s me... Iain. I... I heard someone breaking in, so I came to take a look. They... they must have run away, but look, I found this sack full of, err... stuff.”

He slunk closer and closer to the window. “Father...? Is that you?” he repeated, stealthily slipping the knife out of the back of his belt and palming it, ready for the throw. “I found a...”

He never finished. He barely even had time to gasp as the figure launched itself across the room at him, floating swiftly and never touching the ground. It landed on him, crushing him to the floor as heavy as stone, and wrapped its wings around them both as the boys screams began.

The old priest sighed with consternation when he found the corpse the next day. He had hoped he had misread the young boy, but at least he now knew that the thousand crowns he had paid the old wizard had been well spent. As he carried the body out to the graveyard at the back of the church, he glanced up at the roof, where the gargoyle was back in its place. You wouldn’t have even noticed its fractionally different posture unless you were really looking for it.

Statistics:

ST	8	WP	3	Ref	3
AG	3	Wit	3		
TO	14	MA	2	KD	5
EN	12	Soc	0	KO	n/a
HT	n/a	Per	12	Move	11 / 22 fly

Combat Proficiency: 9, CP 12

Gargoyles are stone statues, animated to become guardians for buildings. They are usually created to look menacing – large imp-like bodies sporting fangs, nasty claws and large wings. When created, Gargoyles are given the task of protecting the site they have been animated in, and all who dwell within it. They have infinite patience and never need to eat, sleep or drink; they simply watch, impassively, day after day, until they are needed, at which time they will detach themselves from their perch, slay the intruder, and then return to their spot, pretending once more to be unremarkable statues.

Gargoyles are not agile, and move as if they were made of stone (which, ironically...). They are exceptionally heavy, which does not affect their ability to fly, and in combat they like to use their weight to crush opponents. A Gargoyle will use a swoop attack to fly into an opponent, and then land on him, crushing him with a DR of 10 (distributed like falling damage, described in Chapter Five of *The Riddle of Steel* rulebook). After this, the Gargoyle will attack the victim brutally, simultaneously inflicting a slashing attack (DR ST+1) and a bludgeoning attack (DR ST-1) to each location struck. Few opponents survive an attack from a gargoyle. Additionally, because they are fashioned from stone, Gargoyles never bleed, only suffer half the pain and shock penalties from all attacks,



and ignore all puncturing and slashing attacks (bludgeoning attacks are the only way to damage them. Slowly.)

As far as anybody knows, Gargoyles exist forever, or at least until destroyed.

SPELL: CREATE GARGOYLE

Spell of Many (Ritual)

CTN = 10 (casting time: 10 hours)

T: 1 (Stone); **R: 1** (Touch); **V: 3** (A typical Gargoyle statue is up to 300-400 pounds); **D: 0** (Instantaneous, made permanent – see *Sorcery and the Fey*); **L: 5** (3+1+1+1+1-2)

Vagaries: Sculpture 3, Movement 2, Conquer 3, Summoning 2, Imprisonment 2

Effects: Sculpture creates the body of the gargoyle from raw stone (note that a pre-carved statue is not sufficient as the joints and limbs will not be to the exacting proportions and specifications needed). Movement animates the body. Summoning summons a spirit to inhabit the body, and Imprisonment forces it to stay there. Finally, Conquer forces the spirit to obey the will of the caster, and perform the guard duty it was created for.

HYDRA

The three men huddled in the back of the punt, crouching over their bowstrings to protect them from the light drizzle as the guide poled them through the swamp. It was a sticky, humid day; the blowflies and mosquitoes buzzing about frenetically, delighted at the feast, while alligators tailed the boat silently, only their eyes showing above the muddy water.

The guide occasionally glanced back at the three men, apparently nervous at their complete silence. He could not know that after four years in each others company, the three no longer needed words to communicate, each was acutely aware of the other two at all times. Now and then the scream of a dying creature or perhaps the croak of a tigerfrog

would sound from elsewhere in the swamp and, as one, the three would flick their

eyes in the direction of the sound, then return to studying each others faces.

After perhaps an hour, the guide thought to recognize the area, and slowed down the craft. As the only survivor of a party of seven, and the only man alive to have seen the beast and lived to tell of it, he was daring but not stupid.

“This is as far as I’ll be going, sirs,” he rasped. “You’ll find what you seek perhaps a mile or two yonder.” He motioned vaguely in the direction they had been traveling and brought the craft to a halt near a tuft of solid land. The three men nodded and stood, departing the craft. Without breaking stride, the third slipped a blade from behind his back and drew it across the neck of the sweating guide, letting the body fall into the water and sink tracelessly below the surface. No witnesses.

As silent as ghosts, the three slipped into the trees, moving swiftly but leaving no tracks in the soft peaty earth. Each held a wickedly serrated dagger in a low grip, ready for a thrust or a toss at a moments notice, and a shortbow. Within half an hour, the murky clearing they had been warned of appeared through the foliage. Slowing, one scuttled up the nearest tree, while a second fell to earth and the third slipped into a nearby estuary of the ever-present swamp. To an onlooker, had he blinked, the three would have simply appeared to have vanished.

The clearing was strewn with debris – old rusted weapons, shattered shields, broken armor. Skeletons littered the area as well, at least 20 bodies worth. The beast had quite an appetite, it seemed. The three studied the clearing for a time, noting the absence of the creature, and at last moved in. Through unspoken agreement, they covered a third of the clearing each, inspecting the discarded items and bodies. At last, one hissed in pleasure, holding aloft the long sought signet ring triumphantly, and then vanished – sucked down into the moist ground so quickly he might as well have turned invisible.

The other two had just enough time to flinch in alarm before the ground beneath their feet erupted into a seething mass of movement. Seven.. eight.. finally nine serpentine heads had burst from the peat, each attached to the same mammoth body hidden below the muck. The heads hissed in unison, exhaling a fetid green mist that caused one of the figures



to drop retching and finally collapse. The other stabbed one of the heads and held a second at bay, but was brought down by two more that struck from behind, their venom coursing so swiftly through his veins that he was dead before his body struck the ground. The heads paused to feed briefly, then retreated back down into the filth, awaiting the next unwary visitors...

Statistics (the body):

ST	n/a	WP	7	Ref	n/a
AG	n/a	Wit	5		
TO	12	MA	4	KD	n/a
EN	9	Soc	0	KO	15
HT	7	Per	12*	Move	4

Optional/Extremely Rare: Vagaries: Growth 2, SP 21

Statistics (heads):

ST	4	WP	n/a	Ref	6
AG	7	Wit	n/a		
TO	5	MA	n/a	KD	n/a
EN	6	Soc	0	KO	5
HT	3	Per	4*	Move	Special

Combat Proficiency: 4, CP 10

Fond of inhabiting swamps and marshes, Hydrae are cunning and vicious predators, comprised of a very large body supporting multiple serpentine heads. Hydrae like to bury their bodies under the boggy ground of the swamp, and hide their heads as well as possible. When likely prey presents itself (often attracted by the remains of previous meals littered about), the Hydra's heads will emerge, surrounding the victim(s) and attacking them. Hydrae have nine heads.

Hydrae heads are not heads in the true sense of the term, they are more like limbs. The intellect of the creature is contained within the body itself, each head contains only senses (two eyes and a sense of smell) and a mouth, used to attack and devour victims. Use the "limbless" template in Chapter Two to determine locational hits on a Hydra head. Any head that is badly injured will be retreated by the creature so as to preserve it. Any head that receives a "killed" result or any level 5 slashing wound is considered chopped off. The creature will regrow one in its place,

but this process will take several months. Destroying heads will not defeat the creature however, as only the death of the body itself (usually protected by several feet of earth and muck) can do this. If all heads are destroyed, however, the Hydra will probably die through starvation before a head can be regrown to feed with.

Hydra heads move quite quickly, but are hampered by being attached to the body below the ground. Although they may make evasive maneuvers, they have a +2CP activation cost for such maneuvers because of this limitation. Each head of a Hydra fights independently, as if they were a number of different creatures. The heads attack by biting, which wounds an opponent (DR ST+1) and also injects a Hematoxic venom, potency 4 (see Chapter Two for details). Some Hydrae are capable of breathing this poison from their heads as a breath attack; however it is only potency 2 when used in this manner. The Hydra ignores all shock results from wounds in combat, and pain die loss only affects the head struck. If the body is somehow attacked however, all pain and shock results to the body affect all heads, cumulative with their own pain penalties. Similarly, blood loss only affects the head that incurred the bleeding wound, but blood loss to the body affects the creature as a whole.

Hydrae reproduce in a manner similar to earthworms – when one feels the need to breed, it will detach one of its heads (the head chosen must be perfectly healthy and uninjured). This head will slither away, and in time will begin to form a new body at its base. Once this body has developed, new heads will begin to grow as well, and eventually a completely new Hydra will have formed.

It is rumored that there exists a magical form of Hydra, perhaps one blessed by the Fey or with roots in the unseelie. This magical version of the beast is capable of using Growth magic to instantly regenerate lost or damaged heads or wounds to its body, even during combat. Such a creature would be fearsome indeed, and extremely difficult to kill.

** Individual Hydra heads have a perception of 4. As long as there are two or more heads active, however, the creature as a whole is considered to have a perception of 12, because it can see (and smell) in multiple directions at the same time.*



MANTICORE

It was the sweet scent of blood that first drew its attention, pulling it out of a nice deep sleep. The tiger cub stirred, turning slowly and sniffing the ground to catch the scent. It rose from its haunches and began to push through the long grass, sniffing the delightful tang and following it as surely as a trail.

The smell quickly strengthened as it forced its way through the undergrowth. That meant that the blood was very close, or that there was a great deal of it. The cub began to involuntarily drool at the thought of such a delicious feast, for where there was blood – it had irrefutably learned – there was fresh meat.

The jungle was damp, and the occasional rainfall masked the scent. The maddeningly aromatic smell came and went with the rain, but always came back a little stronger than it had been when it vanished – surely it was close now. At last it pushed through a final piece of undergrowth and into a small ravine. The foliage closed together overhead, darkening the area and letting only a small amount of dappled light in through gaps in the leaves. The cub’s eyes would adjust almost immediately to darkness, but this half-life frustrated it, its eyes constantly attempting to adjust to the changeable lighting conditions as it passed from shaft of light to darkness to shaft of light. Fortunately, its nose led the way. At the bottom of the ravine just below, was the source of the blood.

It was man-things. Many of them were in the ravine. The cub studied the closest for several moments – no, they were not moving. A sense of self preservation took over, and it began to study the surrounding area. Better to know what predator had slain the man things than gorge oneself and be caught sleeping it off by that same predator. Sniffing warily about, it jumped down and padded over to the mouth of the ravine to track the progress of the man-things.

It sniffed around the clearing at the bottom of the ravine, confirming its suspicions. The man-things had approached this place from three directions. These three had fallen first, pierced by spines thrown hard and fast that had not been stopped by the toughened cow skins they wore. Next, those two had been leapt upon and rent limb from limb by powerful claws – a third almost simultaneously having had its throat torn out by the creature’s teeth. Fi-

nally, these two near the middle had attempted to sneak up on the creature as it had dispatched the second three, and had been stung – their backs were arched from pain and the potent venom in their veins smelled strong enough that the cub would not dare feasting on those bodies.

It knew the scent of that venom! Whining, the cub began to back away from the carnage. It would not steal these kills, to even be found here was to be slain out of hand. It snuck back into the foliage and then bolted, desperately hoping it had not been seen or scented.

The maddeningly loud roar from behind was the last thing it ever heard.

Statistics:

ST	9	WP	4	Ref	9
AG	11	Wit	7	Aim	10
TO	8	MA	4	KD	10
EN	8	Soc	0	KO	11
HT	6	Per	9	Move	14

Combat Proficiency: 8, CP 17

Missile Proficiency: 5, MP 15

The Manticore is one of the nastiest, most violent creatures in nature. It has the body and head of a very large lion, blood red in hue. Its tail is several times longer than a lion’s however, and features a nasty sting similar to that of a scorpion. The tail is also studded with nasty spikes along its entire length, and the Manticore is able to whip this tail about, shooting the spikes like arrows at attackers.

In combat, the beast likes to split its considerable CP to battle several attackers at once, biting and tearing at foes to the front (DR ST+2), and stinging foes to the side or rear with its venomous barbed tail (Neurotoxic, Potency 5; see Chapter Two for details). It will often also split a few dice from its CP to flick a tail spike at an opponent standing further back once per round (DR ST-3). If there are no opponents in melee range, the Manticore uses its MP instead of its CP and will flick one to two spikes per round. They also like to utilize the Take Down, Raking and Worriying tactics described in Chapter Two. The skin of a Manticore is extremely tough, giving the beast a natural AV of 3. If harvested, this skin can be cured and fashioned into



extraordinarily hard leather, giving the same AV of 3 if used to fashion armor.

Manticores are solitary creatures, avoiding all contact with other beasts except to hunt and breed. They are capable of breeding with any great cat, the resulting offspring having a roughly 50/50 chance of being a Manticore or whatever breed the mother was. If the baby is a Manticore, the mother never survives the experience – the Manticore will kill her assuming she survived the birthing process in the first place, then take the child away and raise it for a year or so, at which point it abandons the child, deeming it old enough to fend for itself.



PEGASUS

A little after sun up, he ran into my office panting from his long ride, his face flushed with shame and disappointment.

“How many?” I asked with a sigh.

“Seven,” he replied, crestfallen. “I’m sorry Da, I must have fallen asleep.”

I grunted with annoyance. For four nights in a row now, mares had been vanishing from my eastern ranch. At first I had thought it was poachers, but guards set at all the roads and thoroughfares had put an end to that theory. When the horses had kept vanishing on the third night, I had put my son Darin to personally guard the herd, but he had somehow fallen asleep and allowed seven more to escape. At this rate, my business wouldn’t last another week and as it was I would have to head out and round up some more wilds, and begin the long task of training again.

“Right,” I said, standing and reaching for my bow, “tonight, I guard the herd, and may the Merciful Hand watch over anyone I find stealing my mares.”

We set out around mid afternoon, just Darin and me, and set up a small camp inside the mares enclosure, keeping our bows strung and our whips and pikes close by. We built no fire to warn the poachers, but

instead fed on cold roast beef and talked softly. I wanted to ensure that there was no chance of either of us nodding off, but at around two in the morning, in mid sentence, Darin suddenly fell backwards, asleep, and I felt the weight of the world strike my eyelids. I struggled to maintain consciousness, shouting at the top of my lungs and slapping myself in the face. At last I felt it pass, and I stood, looking over the herd to see what was afoot.

As I watched, a gorgeous piebald stallion leapt the eight foot high enclosure fence as if it were knee height. It rode in among my mares, weaving backwards and forwards, working them up into a frenzy, then turned and leapt back over the fence, and to my amazement, five of my finest followed it. Shouting to Darin, I leapt onto the nearest horse and followed, not daring to try the implausible jump but maneuvering out through the dead-stop and giving chase.

We rode for miles. I had picked my fastest stallion and kept it close to me through the night, knowing that I might need its speed, and it did me proud. Within minutes I had caught up to the rearmost mare, and as I reached her she seemed to come to her senses, shaking her head and looking about as if confused. I left her and rode on, gaining on the others one by one and finding them recovering their senses and slowing as I reached them. I left them for others to pick up; I wanted that piebald.



It led me on quite a merry chase, across my fields, through a glen, a mighty leap over the Yahgi river that I only just managed, and finally it headed toward the peninsula overlooking the gulf. I smiled to myself then, knowing that it was trapped and would have to stop.

It didn't. It charged right up to that cliff without slowing, and threw itself off, dropping swiftly into the darkness below. Astonished, I reined in and ran to the cliff side, looking down and expecting to see its broken body on the rocks. It was still falling, and as I watched, mighty wings burst from its sides, snapping out with the crack of a whip and slowing its descent. I stood dumbfounded as it took the breeze, and used the momentum of its fall to gain speed, rocketing out to sea and vanishing in the darkness.

I never did see that piebald again. I guess it went on to worry someone else's ranch. But I still dream of it some nights; the glory as its wings unfurled and the pure pleasure it clearly took in flying. It looked exhilarating, and I know that for a moment, just for a moment, I had wanted to throw myself after it.

Statistics:

ST	14	WP	8	Ref	9
AG	8	Wit	10		
TO	8	MA	6	KD	11
EN	9	Soc	6	KO	12
HT	9	Per	6	Move	15 / 30 fly

Combat Proficiency: 5, CP 14

Varagies: Glamour 2, SP 20

Pegasi are noble equine creatures, distantly related to the Unicorn and, of course, to horses. Physically, they look much like an ordinary horse (albeit a magnificent, flawless specimen) but with the addition of a large pair of feathered wings that match the coloration of the body. These wings are rarely seen, for while not in flight the Pegasus uses a minor Glamour effect to hide the wings and appear as an ordinary horse.

Like the Unicorn, Pegasi are shy, and avoid showing themselves to humans. They have been known to reveal themselves to protect innocents however, perhaps carrying a maiden out of danger or attacking a creature threatening some children. Pegasi are magical creatures. They use their Glamour magic to hide their wings when being seen

by humans, and also to put other creatures to sleep so they will not witness the Pegasus if it is not in a position to hide.

Pegasi breed with ordinary horses. To those horses, they are the epitome of virility; ordinary mares will flock to a Pegasi stallion, vying for its attention, while ordinary stallions will battle to the death for the honor of breeding with a Pegasi mare. Only one in ten such offspring will breed true and be born a Pegasus. A Pegasus foal would be invaluable to the person who managed to capture and sell it, or better yet, breed it; however the parent Pegasus would fight to the death to prevent this.

It may be technically possible for a Pegasus to breed with a Unicorn. What the resulting offspring would be is completely unknown, however.

PHOENIX

"I wrestled it for three hours, you know. It put up a devil of a fight, but I finally got its measure," he boasted. "Then this one..."

I let my mind wander, and drifted away from the group. The baron had been regaling us for nearly an hour now on all of the beasts he had killed. We wandered about the room making the appropriate "ooh" and "aah" noises at the many heads and racks of horns he had mounted on his wall. At one end of the room was even a nine foot tall bear, stuffed and made to stand upright, forever growling and glaring at onlookers with its murky glass eye. I guess I had been mildly interested at first, but there's only so much pomp and boasting one can take.

And then I came upon an interesting display. A single feather, bright red and glowing softly in the sunlight, mounted in an overlarge frame. It was beautiful and yet... so plain beside the many stuffed heads that adorned the walls. I called the Baron over and asked him the history behind the feather; my interest finally piqued at last.

"Ah, yes," he exclaimed, swirling his brandy snifter. "Such a magnificent bird you will never see. It was glorious — an eagle, but with the most beautiful red and gold plumage. I came across it while I was traveling through Sarmatov a few years ago. This wonderful creature was just sitting on a tree branch, almost as if it



were waiting for me. Of course I had to have it – one does not spit on chance, you know. I pulled my bow from my back and nocked an arrow before it could fly. Took it right in the breast too, a spectacular shot considering the wind that day.”

“Then where’s the rest of the bird?” someone asked.

“Well, the blighter didn’t die,” the Baron responded. “Instead it took flight and headed for the nearby mountains. I almost let it go, for I had been in a hurry at the time, but I wanted that bird, so I leapt back on my horse and took off after it, tracking it from the ground.”

“I followed that bird for three hours, if you can credit it. Running when the way became too rough to ride, then walking when it became too rocky to run and finally climbing when it became too steep to walk. Climbing isn’t my specialty, you understand, but of course I am rather good at it so it didn’t take me long to navigate the cliffs and find the beasts nest.”

“And?” I asked.

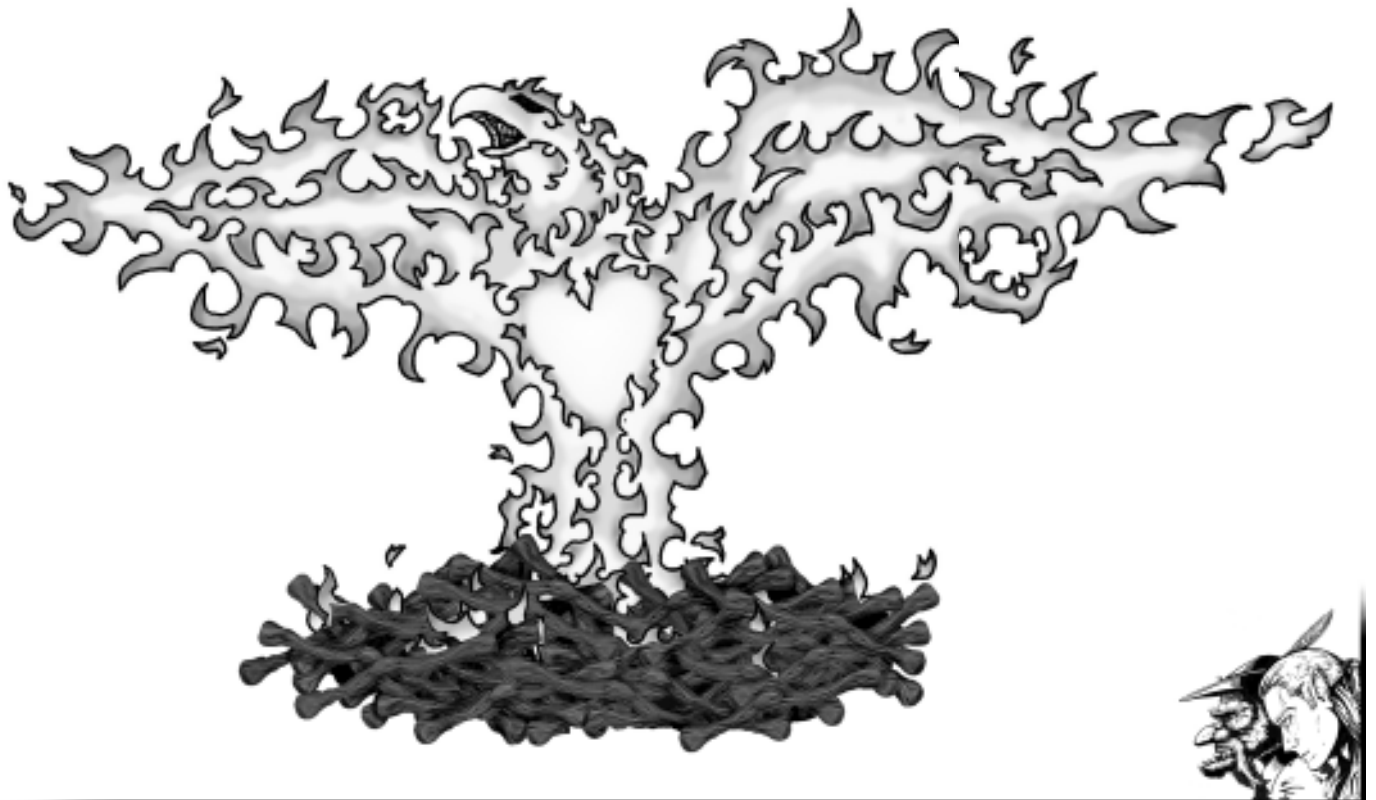
“Well, the next bit is rather unfathomable,” he responded, clearly delaying and perhaps regretting having begun to tell this story. A quick glance around confirmed that everybody was hanging on his words, however, and nothing emboldens a boaster like an attentive audience.

“There was a lot of blood, you see. Clearly I had done for the beast, but as I arrived on the ledge where it made its home it was crawling into its nest, perhaps preferring to die there. But what it did next...” he paused for effect. “The bird put its head down and died. And just when I was thinking to crawl over and claim my prize, it burst into flame. Into flame, if you can credit it. Not just the bird either – the whole nest was blazing. I was somewhat flabbergasted, and not quite sure what to think, and then the truly miraculous thing happened...”

“The flames started to move. They formed into the shape of a bird.”

People were muttering now, passing smiles back and forth and wondering when the baron would reach the punchline. I wasn’t so sure that he was joking, however. I’m a good judge of character and his face was very earnest.

“The flames...” he whispered. “They made a bird. And as I watched, it lifted off and flew upwards, cawing to the wind. It circled the mountain a couple of times, and then the flames died away, revealing the same beautiful plumage – red and gold. I waited for hours, but it never came back, I guess it made a new nest elsewhere. All that was left were the burned remains of my arrow, and that single, perfect feather.”



I was never really sure if I fully believed the Baron's story or not, but I guess when it comes down to it I must have. I've spent the past four years traveling through Sarmatov, searching for the bird in the Baron's story. And I'm going to find it, too, you see if I don't.

Statistics:

ST	4	WP	4	Ref	5
AG	6	Wit	5		
TO	12	MA	4	KD	5
EN	10	Soc	6	KO	14
HT	12	Per	9	Move	10 / 20 fly

Combat Proficiency: 3, CP 8

The Phoenix is a mysterious bird, and very little is known of their origin. Physically, they resemble an eagle, but with bright red and gold plumage. They feed on mice and other small vermin, avoiding contact with larger creatures.

Phoenix breed by hiding an egg (all Phoenix are egg layers) in the nest of another bird. The egg is then nurtured and reared by the other bird, and the young Phoenix is raised along with its chicks. Phoenix reproduce in this way only very rarely, else the world would be full of them, for Phoenix seldom die, at least permanently.

What sets the Phoenix apart is the manner in which they reproduce themselves. A Phoenix will always make its nest in as high and inaccessible place as possible. The nest is interwoven with certain spices – cinnamon, spikenard and myrrh. As long as the Phoenix is able to return to this nest before dying, upon its final breath its body and nest will ignite, the flames destroying the bird and nest utterly, then forming into the shape of a new, younger bird. After a few moments, these flames will die down and a new bird will be left, with all of the memories of the bird that had died. Whether this is an odd form of reproduction or some kind of resurrection is unknown.

The feathers of the phoenix are extremely rare, and are as precious as rubies in Sarmatov, where it is said that an arrow fletched with phoenix feathers will never miss its target. It is whispered that the current king has a captive Phoenix kept in a cage in his private quarters, that he harvests feathers from on occasion to present as gifts to those who are close to him.

The man trembled. I could see that he didn't know the answer and was stalling for time. The beast waited placidly however, flicking its tail back and forth and purring softly.

"Err.. seven?" he tried.

"Wrong!" the creature whispered, and pounced. To give him credit, he did fight – he was heavily plated, carried a tower shield and a pike, and fell back to a dagger when the beast was within his pikes reach. It didn't help though; I don't even think he scratched it.

That meant it was my turn. Drawing a deep breath I stepped forward and prepared to die.

It was the last thing we had expected. My brother's wife had written and asked that we come to visit with them, so my sons and I had put our affairs in order and set out. The journey through Numeria had been pleasant for the time of year, and the regular supplies of their famous blood wine didn't hurt either. The crossing into Taz'Hamun had been easy enough, and we had so far managed not to run afoul of any of the Divine (although we were questioned a few times). But while traveling along the ancient carriageway, we had come across this creature.

It looked much like a lion, but had the upper face of a woman and huge pendulous breasts. Its snout was distinctly lion-like however, as were its claws. Its very existence seemed so utterly counter-intuitive, for the people of this place worshipped Gods with human bodies and animal heads, not the other way around! As we arrived it had waylaid a caravan before us. The first man tried to run, which handily taught us the futility of that move – the beast had a prodigious leap to it. The second was asked a riddle, and promptly slain when he proved incapable of answering it. That had been the fate of the third as well. The fourth was me.

"At night they come without being fetched, and by day they are lost without being stolen," the beast whispered to me, then sat purring as I considered my answer. Once again it had changed the riddle, asking each man a fresh one so that he would not have had time to consider the riddle while the previous man was eaten. My hand stole involuntarily to the hilt of my weapon, not because I truly believed I could defeat the creature, but because I wanted to go down trying.





I stalled as long as I could, desperately thinking but not coming up with an answer. I knew that by dying I was dooming my sons also, and so I brought up my sword and stepped forward. I never stood a chance, it was just too swift. Within seconds I was thrown to the ground and gored. As my vision began to fade I looked over the beast's shoulder to the sky above. Night had fallen and the stars were out in all their glory.

There were stars in the sky...

... stars, there were...

... stars...

"Stars!" I whispered to myself as the beast leaned in to tear at my throat. "Of course!" But it was too late...

Statistics:

ST	10	WP	12	Ref	16
AG	12	Wit	20		
TO	12	MA	11	KD	11
EN	14	Soc	7	KO	18
HT	12	Per	12	Move	18

Combat Proficiency: 18, CP 34

The origin of the Sphinx is a mystery to Weyrth scholars. Nobody is even sure if there really is more than one, for two reasons. Firstly, no more than one has ever been seen in the same place at the same time,

and secondly, the few people who have survived one encounter with a Sphinx have resisted all attempts to convince them to meet with a second to verify if it is the same beast or not.

What is certain is that the first Sphinx must have been the result of magical experimentation – it bears the body of an implausibly large lion (standing twelve feet tall), but has the upper facial features of a woman, and large breasts protruding from its chest. In addition, the Sphinx is extremely intelligent and seems capable of speech in multiple languages – every person who has encountered one has reported being addressed in their own native tongue. It is remarkably agile for a creature of such bulk, and can leap prodigious distances to attack fleeing victims.

The Sphinx seems to enjoy tormenting those who encounter it, asking cryptic riddles and slaying those who cannot provide the correct answer. It is impossible to predict when or where a/the Sphinx might suddenly show up, waylay several travelers and test them, then vanish as quickly as it arrived.

To slay and display a Sphinx would be the ultimate trophy. Given its unpredictable nature, however, tracking it down is a task almost as difficult as killing it would be.





UNICORN

Ailla pushed her way through the bushes with growing despair. Her brothers, Wella and Seleven had scoffed when she had said she was going to walk alone in the woods – they hadn't believed that a mere girl could be capable of finding her own way and not become hopelessly lost. Then there was the danger from beasts and bandits, they had said. They had even had the audacity to laugh when she had brandished her knife and proclaimed her ability to defend herself, so of course that had cinched it and she had to go.

At first, things had been fine. Most of the wood immediately surrounding her father's estate was familiar to her, and she had even considered simply hiding out there for a while and then returning, but the fear that her brothers may have followed her and would discover her ruse put an end to that plan, so she set out to explore the northern wood. Finding the way back south would be easy, surely she couldn't possibly get lost.



That was three hours ago. On some level, she was amused at just how lost a person could get in only three hours, but it was starting to get late and she had heard a few noises in the woods in the past few minutes that were making her nervous. She kept walking, checking her progress by the sun to ensure she was heading in the right direction. The sun sets in the West, right... or was it the East?

Suddenly, a twig or small branch somewhere off to her right snapped, the sound echoing loudly in the quiet stillness of the forest. Ailla spun about, whipping out her knife, but could see nothing through the trees. Humming softly to herself to try to keep her spirits up, she kept walking, keeping one eye out to the right where the noise had come from. Another crack sounded, louder this time, and she fancied she could see movement deep within the now darkening wood – a blur of whiteness.

Stifling tears, Ailla turned and began to run wildly, pushing through bushes and low branches, scratching her arms and face and sobbing with sudden fear. She wasn't even sure which direction she was running in, only that it was away from the noise. She had her head turned away from the scratching branches, and her eyes only half open, which was why it took her a moment to notice that she had run into a clearing. She pulled up short, and turned her survey the clearing, which was when she noticed the bear.

It was huge. A black bear, perhaps heading back to its cave after a day's fishing in the nearby gurgling stream. It stank of the fish it had consumed, and its snout was caked with gore and fish guts. The bear noticed her at the same moment she noticed it, and began to growl, standing up on its rear legs and issuing a challenge.

Ailla's legs refused to hold her upright and she collapsed backwards, sitting on the hard packed earth and holding the knife in front of her in defiance. She sobbed and prepared to die, considering even drawing the knife across her own throat, to ensure it was quick.

The bear started forward, and at that moment the wood behind her exploded, a gorgeous pure white stallion charging out of the trees, and leaping over her to-

ward the bear. A spiral bone-white horn nearly two feet long jutted from its forehead and unerringly targeted the neck of the rearing monster. As the two beasts clashed, Ailla felt reason leave her, and she fainted.

She never quite forgave herself for having passed out that day. It meant that she didn't get to experience the ride back home; she could only ask her brothers to explain, again and again, how the magnificent unicorn had borne her unconscious body back to the house and deposited her gently at the gate, its horn and hooves stained red with the blood of the bear it had slain to save her.

She longed to see the beast again. She longed to thank it, to love it, even just to touch it. But she just couldn't make herself enter those woods again.

Statistics:

ST	15	WP	10	Ref	11
AG	12	Wit	10		
TO	12	MA	12	KD	13
EN	12	Soc	15	KO	17
HT	12	Per	15	Move	20 / 60

Combat Proficiency: 8, CP 19

Vagaries: 12 Points, SP 35

Noble and regal, Unicorns are respected and adored by all who encounter them, and are known as the true rulers of the forests of Weyrth. They avoid all contact with humans, preferring to keep hidden and observe things from afar, but will not hesitate to reveal themselves to aid those in need, as long as the needy are truly deserving of their aid.

Unicorns are fearsome in combat, charging fearlessly and impaling foes on their long horns (see the Stampede maneuver in Chapter Two), and making Rear- ing and Kicking attacks. Although they prefer to drive opponents out of the woods alive, when they do commit to combat they will not hesitate to slay a foe as quickly as finally as possible, concentrating on a single opponent until it is out of commission, then moving on to the next. As magical creatures, Unicorns also have access to sorcery, and do not have to make aging rolls.

Unicorns naturally move very fast, but when aroused can move at incredible speeds, darting through the thickest forest without needing to slow down to maneuver around obstacles.

Unicorn horns are rumored to have fantastic and magical properties. It is said that a unicorn can purify water by dipping its horn into it, thereby allowing other animals to drink. Only a very cruel and hardened man would consider killing a Unicorn, much less be capable of it. Should one successfully do so however, it is said that the horn, hollowed out and drank from, protects the drinker from all diseases and infections, and cures all wounds and infirmities.

WYRM (DRAGON)

It was with no small measure of trepidation that we passed from the ancient paved roads of Taveruun, across the Galadonian river and onto the wide open plains of Svarastra. Not that we really believed in Wyrms, of course – not then – but the central steppe of Svarastra is home to plenty of less mythical but no- less deadly creatures – great cats, the Komodo, wild elephants – this was their domain and we were well and truly out of our depth.

Two weeks travel to the south east cost me two men, one to heat exhaustion and one to the bite of a scorpion. Near the foothills I sought, we found the first evidence that the old mans ramblings might have had some substance – over an acre of scorched grassland, filled with the desiccated and scorched remains of a herd of buffalo. I had seen some wild things in my life, but never the power to cause such wide-scale death and destruction. Perhaps these Wyrms did exist, and that meant that I could pay the chief's price – a piece of dragon scale to buy back my daughter. None of my men were too happy though, perhaps they had expected this journey to be more of a pillage and less of a hunt for a possibly real Wurm.

Finally, we reached the foothills of the main mountain range, and I fished out the arrow the old man had given me. I had paid thrice my weight in gold for that arrow, and had promised to return and plant it in his liver should it not work as promised. Per his instructions, I knocked the shaft, drew back and let it fly directly at the sun. The arrow flew high, up and up, higher than I had ever seen a shaft fly, and suddenly turned a flaming crimson, twisting and streaking toward the mountainside, leaving a glowing purple trail behind it as it spent itself near



the mouth of a cave perhaps four hundred feet up the sheer wall of a cliff. Three of my men swore and deserted at that moment, cursing the old man for a warlock and turning their mounts for home. It was with a weary heart that I cleaned their blood from my blade.

Three more men were lost in the climb up the cliff. We had not brought enough rope, and were at last reduced to climbing the sheer face with only our pitons to support us. I had tied the men into pairs for security, but after one slipped and dragged his partner screaming down the cliff with him, we gave that up and climbed solo, losing only one more man on the way.

At last we reached the cave, dark and moist, and smelling strongly of sulfur. We had been forced to leave our armor with the horses, but we hefted our weapons with us, and so armed, entered the cave. After that, it all happened too quickly to react – there was a huge blast of heat, and I saw the men in front of me, well, melt is the best term I can think of. I dived into this side corridor and the next blast took out the men behind me. I thought they had screamed, but now I think it was too quick for them to have felt anything, it was probably just superheated air exploding from their lungs.

I never even saw the Wyrms. It knows I'm here though. We're kind of stalemated; it can't get at me, and its breath just blasts down the passage beside me without backwashing into this little cave I found. On the other hand, I can only lick moisture from the wall for so long before I'll need real water and food. It's a waiting game.

I'll need to pick my moment carefully. I wonder... do Wyrms sleep?

Statistics:

ST	20	WP	10	Ref	11
AG	12	Wit	10		
TO	12	MA	1	KD	16
EN	14	Soc	10	KO	17
HT	12	Per	12	Move	22

Combat Proficiency: 6-9, CP 17-20.

Optional: Vagaries: 18 points worth, SP 23

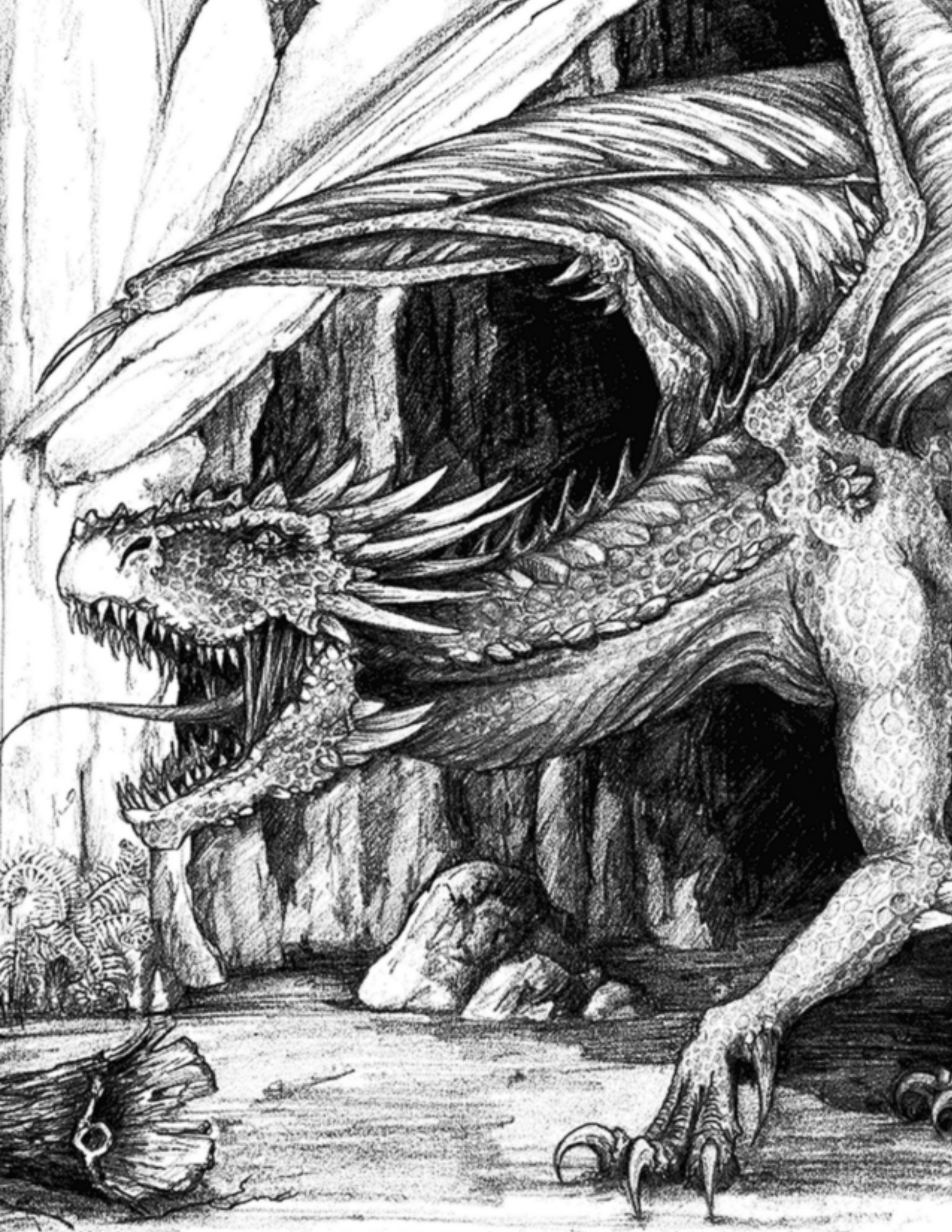
Seldom seen, and believed by most to be little more than fables or myths, Wyrms inhabit the darkest caves and remotest regions of Weyrth where they sleep away the ages, emerging occasionally to feed and then returning to their lairs to sleep again.

Wyrms vary greatly in physique – some have four legs, some have two, some have wings and can fly, while others have no wings or, in many cases, have wings but are incapable of flight. There have even been Wyrms that were entirely limbless. Coloration varies from a brown so dark as to be almost black up to pale beige. Many, but not all, are capable of exhaling superheated gas from their bellies; this is quite capable of boiling a man in his armor or, in the case of some older Wyrms, melting him alive. Young Wurm breath has a DR of 6-10 while older ones might be as high as DR12-16. Some Wyrms are born gifted, and may develop sorcerous abilities over the course of their lifetimes.

Wyrms are asexual egg layers, but they do not nurture the egg nor rear the young. Only very rarely will a Wurm feel the need to reproduce, at which time it will gorge itself on meat, stuffing itself as much as possible (at other times they need to eat only rarely) and then hibernate for a period of several months. During this time the egg will be produced and laid, and the Wurm will then leave its cave and find a new one. The egg hatches some months later, and the hatchling will keep and use the cave it was born in until it feels the need to reproduce itself, starting the cycle again. Hatchling Wyrms are around 8-9 feet long, and they grow quite rapidly, never stopping that growth for their entire lives – ancient Wyrms have been known to reach 100 feet long or even more.

Popular myth and children's fables teach that Wyrms like to hoard wealth, which occasionally leads foolish and headstrong individuals to attempt to hunt them down, believing that if they can slay the beast untold wealth can be theirs. Sadly, this is far from the truth – most Wyrms have little love of treasure, and the only wealth likely to be found in a Wyrms lair are the remains of previous treasure-seekers.





BOOK FIVE: TROLL SPAWN

In this book we revisit some of the trollspawn first mentioned in the main *Riddle of Steel* rulebook. Gol's (die Golen) and the Hef have been very popular among our fans, so below you will find expanded information on these two races. We've also added a third type of Trollspawn, familiar and yet with its own *Riddle of Steel* slant. Also, because the "Troll" is the progenitor of the Troll Spawn, we've included the entry for this important and horrific creature first. Enjoy.

AN ANCIENT TROLL...

It was the earthquake that uncovered it. Damn near half the city collapsed and most of the rest burned down or was destroyed in the looting that followed. I was captain of the team sent in to investigate the remains of the city and see if it was suitable to be repopulated. 'Course there were squatters 'n all but we chased most of them out in the first few days and then set out to see how usable the city would be in the future. The pay wasn't brilliant, but there was plenty the looters had missed of course, so we felt nicely compensated.

Most of the buildings were wrecks – those that didn't collapse were gutted by the fires or shattered in the aftershocks. His nibs' palace was just a pile of useless rubble, although we did find three nice gold goblets and a diamond the size of my fist. I let the boys have the goblets but took the diamond myself – rank has its privileges, you know.

We found the chasm on the sixth day. That is to say, the chasm found us – it took out three of my men as they were investigating an unusual smell coming from one of the derelict buildings. Rotting corpses we were used to, but this was more like weeks-old eggs and sulfur, real gut-wrenching stuff.

An aftershock hit while they were still in the ruin, and the whole building just kind of slid sideways into this pit that appeared

beside it. It was pretty deep, took a while for all the rubble and bodies to hit the bottom but when it did it threw up the foulest smelling cloud I ever did see. I only caught the edge of it, one whiff and I was spewing my lunch all over my shoes, but a couple of my men closest to the hole choked up their stomachs and died, it was that bad.

Well sir, I was still pretty curious in those days, hadn't learned better by then, and I was pretty hot to know what could be making a smell bad enough to kill a man, so I had the boys rig up some ropes and we made to grapnel down into that hole. We wrapped wet rags around our faces, strung lit lanterns around our necks, and set on down for a look.

Even through the rags we could smell that fetid stench, but it was diluted enough as not to make us nauseous. The pit turned out to be some thirty feet deep, but about halfway down we weren't pushing off rock walls anymore, but a strange green kind of mould or fungus that was growing on the bare rock itself, moist and a tad spongy. Kind of uncomfortable to the touch – sort of puckery and burning, like a hot spicy pepper on the tongue. At the bottom we found the remains of the buildings and my men, and a cleft heading deeper; seems the pit had opened over an old subterranean cave system. The smell was really bad down there, but once again I let my curiosity get the better of me and I bid the men continue on down.

The next shaft was near 80 feet deep, the walls several feet thick in the strange fungal growth. By the time I got to the bottom, young Trevor was breathing hard and complaining of sore lungs. I scoffed at him for a weakling, but that turned out to be my second mistake. The ground down there was thick with the stuff, and it was moving back and forth slightly, as if there were a soft wind flowing both ways through the chamber. Hefting our lamps we moved into a side cave and then we could hear it – soft and deep, like a huge bellows blowing out then in, and with each wave a burst of that stench. I sent Douglas on ahead to scout, and directed the boy Matthew to hacking some of the moss down from the walls. That's when he started to scream – the moisture on it was real strong down here, and it was burning his skin like acid. As I watched, he tripped and fell to the ground, then screamed all the more



loudly as his arms and face came into contact with the burning fluids. The men began to panic, and Douglas chose that moment to scream from the next chamber. I ran to the entrance and saw... a thing – huge it was, bulged, misshapen but clearly bipedal, and near thirty feet long. It was green, its wet skin glistening with the acidic moisture and its breath spewing forth the putrid mist that had slewed the skin from poor Douglas. I panicked and ran, passing the men and shouting for them to follow as I headed for the ropes. I could start to feel wet heat on the souls of my feet as the acid we were walking in finally broke its way through the leather of my boots, and I saw a man go down beside me, screaming as his legs gave way and he fell face first into the deadly acidic growth.

I'm not sure how I made it up those ropes, but I was the first and – Merciful Hand protect their souls – the only one to make it. Somehow, I crawled out on what was left of my legs and shouted for help. We filled in the hole of course, and leveled what was left of the city, declaring it uninhabitable.

But there are nights I dream, and I find myself in that deep chasm again. I look at the hideous bulk

and I smell its stench, and I always wake screaming, with just the memory of the smell wafting through my head.

And I fear.

I fear for my family, I fear for my city, I fear for all people, everywhere.

I fear the day that thing wakes up.

Statistics:

ST	20	WP	20	Ref	12
AG	5	Wit	20	Aim	17
TO	20	MA	20	KD	12
EN	40	Soc	0	KO	30
HT	30	Per	30	Move	22

Combat Proficiency: 20, CP: 32

Varagies: All, SP: 60

It is said that millennia ago, eons before Xanar Shard-Finder battled the Dark Betrayer, before the world was shattered and moons filled the skies, before even the time of the Three-Gods-Become-One or the Prophet, Trolls walked the world.

Trolls are truly massive and hideous beasts, so large as to dwarf the giants themselves, and power-



ful beyond imagining. Their breath is a highly corrosive acid, teeming with corrupted life, such that obscene foliage grows wherever they breathe and all things – flora and fauna – are corrupted and destroyed by the touch of their vile black blood.

It's possible that the trolls were defeated by an unknown foe ages ago, or that their time was simply up and it was the turn of mankind. It's possible that they predate known history by so far that answers may never be discovered. Whatever the truth, they no longer stir, but sleep in caves and caverns far below the surface of the world, safely divorced from the peoples and societies of Weyrth. Should the Trolls ever awaken, all of Weyrth would be in serious strife.

It is believed by scholars that most of the Trollspawn races originated from Trolls (as the name would suggest). The animal headed Trollspawn in particular, such as the Slassk, Vilkolak and Minotaurs are thought to have been the result of experiments by Tez'Hamun sorcerers, thousands of years ago. Somehow, it is believed, these sorcerers obtained a measure of Trolls blood, and used it in vile experiments in an attempt to personify their animal-headed gods on the surface of the world. Perhaps those experiments escaped, or perhaps they were merely cast out when they proved un-divine, either way the sorcerers of old Tez'Hamun have cursed Weyrth with the scourge of those Trollspawn which have bred and survived to this day.

ABOMINATION

Leanne was not your typical lady. While the other girls played with dolls or learned their needlework, she was out sparring with the boys, wrestling them, or learning the staff or bow. While the young ladies of the court were dressing themselves in silk and lace, she was more comfortable in leather and chain. Proper ladies bathed every day, and adorned themselves with delicate perfumes; Leanne bathed only when forced into a tub, and her natural fragrance was anything but delicate.

Over the years, Leanne grew into a capable young woman, and moved into a position with the guard. There were

grumblings from the men of course – for a woman to be in the castle guard was unthinkable, but she eventually won them over through her courage and stubborn perseverance. Within two years, she had risen to sergeant, and three more saw her a captain. Mostly, this was why she found herself leading the guard the night the district lost its beloved baron.

It was peacetime, so although the portcullis was down, the bridge had not been retracted. The two guards on the gate were very dead, so there was little chance of asking them how it had got in, although the bent and twisted iron portcullis rather spoke for itself anyway, as did the trail of bodies leading up the rear staircase to the shattered kitchen doors.

Sending men to round up the peasants and keep them back, Leanne picked three of her best guards and cautiously entered the kitchen, following the trail of carnage. The door to the servants' staircase was off its hinges, and a crimson river had flowed down the steps to pool at the bottom, filling the room with the sticky, coppery stench of blood. A few bodies lay about, some hacked to bits and others seemingly torn limb from limb.

Exchanging looks of consternation, Leanne and her troupe moved to the staircase and gingerly ascended, being careful to step in as little blood and gore as possible. All four drew their blades, and moved out of the stairway onto the third floor, where they found the remains of the castle night guard. There was blood everywhere, and nearly twenty dead men leading right up to the shattered remains of the door to the master bedroom, where the Baron's elite bodyguards lay dead, one neatly dismembered and the other impaled on a torch sconce. From the room ahead, they could hear a low growling.

Motioning the guard behind her, Leanne slipped into the room. Inside, she discovered the body of the baron, his head twisted right around on his neck so that although he lay on his back, his face studied the cold stones of the floor. On the bed lay the young baroness, her dead body being subjected to all manner of despicable acts by a twisted creature that stiffened and spun around as it heard the entrance of the four guards.

It was grotesque. It had the torso and legs of a large man, but at its trunk a second torso sprouted at almost a right angle, each containing a head. The



first torso had but one arm, but the second had two and a fourth grew from the neck of the second torso as well, sticking upwards and ending in a twisted, clawed parody of a hand. Both of the creature's heads were than of men, but bloated and disfigured, and one had but a single eye beside its nose while the other sported tusks.

The creature laughed, both heads rocking with mirth, and it picked up its weapons from beside the bed. One arm wielded a cleaver, while two held a pole axe between them. The fourth arm remained unarmed, but flexed its claws menacingly as the creature strode forward.

Leanne felt rather than heard one of the guardsmen behind her turn and flee. The other two spread out on either side of her and tried to flank the creature. It was phenomenally fast and apparently extremely strong as it impaled one of the guardsman to the wall with its pole axe while hacking an arm off the second with its cleaver. The beast stank, and was covered with blood and filth, but there was a keen intelligence in its eye and it knew well how to fight.

Almost before she could react, the creature had finished with her guards and turned to her, one of the heads licking its lips and the other grinning maniacally. Hefting her sword and shield, Leanne gave the beast the salute to a foe, then moved in for the attack.

Statistics:

ST	Varies	WP	1-2	Ref	Varies
AG	Varies	Wit	2-3	Aim	Varies
TO	Varies	MA	1-2	KD	Varies
EN	Varies	Soc	0	KO	Varies
HT	Varies	Per	Varies	Move	Varies
Combat Proficiency: Varies, CP: Varies					

Deep below Weyrth, hidden away in caverns and forgotten temples sleep the Trolls – once mighty beings of incredible power. It is said that the breath of a Troll is acid and its blood, well, its blood is something far more terrible.

Occasionally, a poor unfortunate will somehow accidentally stumble across the prone body of a sleeping Troll. Such figures usually die – in much pain – but occasionally will survive long enough to

instead be corrupted by the breath and/or blood of the Troll. Their bodies warp and mutate, and the result is a grotesque abomination.

Abominations may be of any base “race” (Human, Fey, other Trollspawn or even animals). Usually, their race is recognizable but horribly changed – often extra limbs will sprout from the body, it will twist back on itself, it will take on characteristics of other forms and sometimes two or more creatures will even be merged into one. Luckily, 9 out of 10 of these mutations dies, if not instantly then very soon afterwards. Unfortunately, some are stable enough to survive and live, albeit in a great deal of constant, unrespired pain.

Abominations tend not to be terribly intelligent or predictable. Regardless of their intelligence before the change, the constant pain drives them insane, resulting in short, pitiful lives spent taking out their pain and frustration on those less unfortunate than themselves. Abominations' statistics vary, but they are invariably very strong with high endurances, but of low agility and health. Abominations tend to be slightly tougher than average for their race and their perception is based entirely on what senses they have left at their disposal after the change (which may be very good, in the case of multiple eyes and/or heads).

Multiple limbs is a common mutation among Abominations, and whichever weapon skills they may have had in life will often be remembered, leading some to wield several different weapons at once. Such creatures may split their CP up among multiple limbs each combat round, perhaps attacking several opponents at once, or making multiple attacks on the same opponent, even while parrying an incoming attack. For this reason, as well as their lack of fear of death (which would, after all, be a blessed release from their constant pain,) Abominations are very dangerous creatures in battle.

DIE GOLEN (GOL)

After several long days of marching, It was allowed to stop and rest. Raising its head, It sniffed the air – fresh water nearby, and a hint of game. This was a good spot; it



might last the tribe as many as three moons before the next march. Three moons, It mused. That might be long enough. Long enough to earn a name.

Yes, It decided. It was ready for a name. It was now among the largest of It's brothers, the bigger ones having earned names and left the brood, or having died in the attempt. Weaklings, It decided. Foolish enough to pick the wrong tester, not seeing that what the tribe really needed were Warriors, and what it needed the least were Elders – those too old to fight as Warriors and who instead cared for the Brood or ministered to the Warriors and Scouts. The rite of passage to earn a name was surely meant to weed out those Elders, not to cause the death of a perfectly useful Warrior.

Yes, It must pick its tester carefully. Not so weak as to make Its ascension meaningless, but not so strong as to risk all for a few moments of glory but more likely be slain in the attempt. It had learned Its lessons well - It had spent Its entire lifetime in this brood, watching the Elders and Warriors spar and battle, observed from safety the raids on other tribes, and It had even joined in the fun of the slaughter – as a larger broodling it had had the pleasure to join in the massacre of two other tribes broods. Ah, such fun.

A delicate balance, to be sure. Not too weak and not too strong. Very well, it must be one on the verge then. One who was still a Warrior and had not lost his name yet, but who was very close to that terrible age when ones name was stripped and one became an Elder. One who was still a Warrior, but only just. It thought long and hard, discounting several possibilities until It considered V'altak. At 29 cycles, V'altak was still perhaps 20 moons from losing his name, but It knew that he had been slowing lately. In the last battle, It had even seen V'altak pause briefly for breath – a sure sign that he was weakening. With luck, no Warriors had noticed this fact; it would make Its ascension all the sweeter if they believed It had defeated a fully capable Warrior.

Yes, V'altak then. And it must be soon, before any of It's brood brothers considered V'altak and stole It's ascension from It. Taking up the longest spear It could find in the Brood, it stood up, striding past the fussing Elders and

marching over to V'altak, ready to earn a name.

Statistics – Warrior:

ST	6	WP	5	Ref	3
AG	4	Wit	3	Aim	4
TO	6	MA	3	KD	5
EN	6	Soc	3	KO	8
HT	4	Per	5	Move	8

Combat Proficiency: 5-10, CP 8-13

Statistics – Scout/Hunter:

ST	4	WP	5	Ref	4
AG	6	Wit	3	Aim	7
TO	5	MA	3	KD	5
EN	6	Soc	3	KO	7
HT	4	Per	8	Move	7

Combat Proficiency: 3-6 (melee) or 5-10 (bow or sling), CP 7-10, MP 12-17

Statistics – Captain:

ST	7	WP	6	Ref	6
AG	7	Wit	6	Aim	6
TO	6	MA	3	KD	7
EN	6	Soc	3	KO	9
HT	6	Per	6	Move	9

Combat Proficiency: 8-12, CP 14-18

Gols are a hardened military race of Trollspawn who inhabit the higher mountainous regions of Weyrth, but especially the Irontooth range in Stahl (where they are thought to have originated). Males and females fulfill quite different roles in the tribe – the women are the hunters and scouts, who range out far and wide, bringing food into the camp and finding new areas for the nomadic tribe to live. Males are the “regular army” forces among the Gol, spending their days training and fighting and occasionally raiding other nearby tribes for food and slaves.

All Gol are heavily built and tall, ranging from 6 feet to 8 feet tall and averaging 300 pounds. Skin tone varies from grey/green to brown, and facial features can include hair and/or small horns, plus a heavy underbite complete with tusks. Males tend to be stockier and shorter, while females are taller and leaner and have far better eyesight. Weapons and armor are captured during raids or fashioned within the tribe, and thus are likely to be piecemeal and not



necessarily top quality (although weapons are cared for very carefully).

Gols are not a long lived race; the average lifespan (which is usually cut short, violently) is around 40 years. Young Gols are occasionally birthed by females who have been injured or are otherwise unable to perform their scouting duties, but most commonly from slave stock, captured in raids on other tribes and kept for that very purpose. For this reason, wars and battles between Gol tribes are very common, for without a handy stock of female slaves from other tribes, a tribe is unable to propagate enough new members to fill the holes caused by constant war-ringing.

All of the young are kept together in a kind of crèche, called The Brood. Male and female children are kept together and trained together (by elders and male warriors) in the ways of fighting and obedience to the clan chief. A young Gol never leaves the brood until it is ready to do so; this is heralded by the young Gol choosing another Gol (a Warrior for the males or a Scout/hunter for the females) and killing it in personal combat. Although some head-strong broodlings pick Warriors or Scouts in their prime (and often are themselves killed instead), most pick Elders – Gols who are deemed to have passed beyond their “useful” age – and kill those, thus the tribe is kept young and lean, without too many non-combative mouths to feed. This “rite of passage” is very important to the Gols, for this is when they first earn a name, which is picked by the tribal chief depending on how impressive the battle to earn it was. On occasion, when a tribe has been whittled down in numbers through many battles, the requirement to kill to win a name is relaxed, and a simple non-lethal defeat is acceptable.

Having become Warriors (male) or Scouts (female), the young Gol now fills its intended role in the tribe, and can look forward to around 20-25 years in that position (most mature and earn a name at about 8-10 years of age). By the early to mid 30's, however, the Gol will have begun to slow down, and then loses the right to a name, from that moment on simply being known as “Elder” – those who tend camp, train the brood, fashion weapons and armor, and perform the menial tasks beneath the dignity of Warriors or Scouts. This will last until the early 40's

or so when the Gol would die of old age, except that Gols never die of old age – they will have been finished off in battle or by an upcoming broodling long before this point is reached.

Leadership within the tribe is not inherited, but earned through divine might. Larger and stronger Gols act as captains and generals, and the tribal chief is the Gol (male or female) who can beat all challengers to keep the position. Wily leaders will ensure that the number of challengers is kept to a minimum by constantly moving around the mountains, looking for other armies and tribes to battle, keeping the subordinates occupied and far too busy to think of challenging for leadership. It is not uncommon for a stronger tribe to completely overtake another tribe, subsuming its members into itself (but usually killing its brood), thus the survival of the strongest is continued from an individual level right through to a tribal level.

Gols have a sense of personal honor, but they're not stupid (well, some aren't...) Knights and men-at-arms who expect Gols to battle honorably and accept personal challenges are often surprised to find themselves quickly and efficiently slain ‘dishonorably’ – it's the result that counts. Their life-long obedience training lead Gols to instantly obey the orders of their superiors, and those captains and generals are intelligent creatures with a good grasp of battle tactics and morale. To fight against an army of Gols is (usually) to know serious defeat.

GOREM

The young lordling looked up at the tall man as he glided into his study. At near seven feet, folk had called him “The Giant” in his heyday, and although he was really past his prime there was no denying he still had presence.

“Please Jared, sit,” he smiled, pouring wine and motioning to a nearby chair.

Jared Scotson, known as The Giant, sat eying the son of his former master with some distaste. As a young man, he had been taken in a raid by a slave caravan. For twelve years he had trained and fought in the arena, pleasing the crowd with his strength and his prowess



with twin long blades. In his time in the fights, The Giant had never lost a battle, although his chest and arms were crisscrossed with scars as mementos of numerous close shaves. Finally, seven years ago, he had managed to win enough to buy his freedom and had left the gladiatorial life, but had remained in the city where his fame could still earn him free drinks whenever he should choose to walk into a bar.

"I have little time," he grumbled, sweeping back his thick black hair. "Say your piece and let me be."

"Well, it's like this, uh, Jared," the young lord stammered. "I want you to come back to the arena to fight one last fight. You know – the undefeated champion returns to defend his title in his greatest match ever, that kind of thing. I could... well, lets just say it would be worth your while."

Jared's eyes narrowed. "You're a more stupid man than your father if you think I would ever set foot on your sands again," he spat. "Give me one reason

why I shouldn't simply kill you now, you and your bastard sire."

"I can give you three." He counted on his fingers, "there's pride, there's the thousand fist purse in it for you, and of course there's Sarah. By now my men have taken her. Harm one hair on my head and she dies." He smiled. "So, can I count you in?"

Jared Scotson surged out of his chair, one hand on the hilt of Left, his sapphire blade. "If you harm her, I'll..."

"What? Kill me? And damn Sarah? Oh, do grow up, Jared. Nobody needs to get hurt here. I just need the best. I have a, well, special fight and only the best gladiator will do."

Jared sighed. It seemed he was fated never to be free of the life chosen for him. From the eager look on the young lords face they had probably captured another Gol. No matter, he had killed two Gol during his long career. He was far from the shape he



had been in at its height, but he was quite confident he could take down one of those pig faced warriors. “Alright, I’ll fight. But if Sarah is harmed I’ll hunt you down and hang you by your own entrails. And I’ll need two thousand fists.”

The day of the fight dawned three weeks later. News of the return of the popular champion had spread, and the arena was packed as it had never been before, tens of thousands of fans screaming for The Giant. At the appointed time, Jared strode onto the sands, his twin longswords Left – the Sapphire and Right – the Ruby already drawn. He eyed the cage at the other side of the arena and waited for the Gol to make its appearance.

It wasn’t a Gol. The thing that bowled into the arena was far, far taller, standing nearly nine feet at the shoulder, dwarfing “The Giant” himself. It had the face of a beast, long snout and sharp teeth with a prehensile tongue. Its arms were almost as thick around as Jareds waist and it bore a tree as a smaller man might heft a club. Its skin was almost black, leathery and shining in the hot noonday sun and its red eyes fixed on Jared with a palpable hunger as it snorted and charged at him, apparently spurred on by the roar of the crowd.

Jared swore, and brought his blades up in a defensive cross. Afraid to block the mighty club he began to move backwards, evading the beasts swings and throwing the occasional thrust or low slash to slow it down. The creature never even deigned to notice his attacks, its thick skin turning his weak thrusts aside easily as it concentrated on finding his head with its club. Out of the corner of his eye Jared could see the crowd screaming for blood, and the owners pavilion, where he spied Sarah sobbing and reaching out for him. He was utterly outclassed, and already beginning to slow. In his peak, he might have been able to bring down this beast, but it was just too tough for him now. So, smiling to himself, he determined to go out spectacularly and have his final revenge.

Spinning, he threw both blades with all his might. Superbly balanced, they each spun once and then stabilized, flying point-first unerringly toward their targets. Jared smiled as he watched them strike home – the Sapphire embedding itself in his old masters heart while the Ruby crushed the forehead of the

son – just as the club struck home and he felt the back of his head cave-in. As his vision began to dim he watched his hated enemies collapse and the men he had stationed storm the pavilion to save Sarah from the stunned guards. He looked back up at the beast and locked eyes with it, smiling, as it brought the club down once more.

Statistics:

ST	9	WP	2	Ref	3
AG	3	Wit	4	Aim	3
TO	9	MA	2	KD	6
EN	3	Soc	2	KO	10
HT	9	Per	4	Move	7

Combat Proficiency: 5-9, CP: 8-12

Gorem, sometimes known as “half giants” are thought to have originally been the result of a giant-ess breeding with some other form of Trollspawn. The offspring somehow bred true and has evolved into what is today known as the Gorem – vicious, brutal killing machines. They are very tall, usually ranging from eight to ten feet tall, have tough leathery skin, and bestial faces with long tongues.

Gorem are very solitary creatures, seeking out others of their kind only once every few years, for the purposes of mating. They prefer to live in desolate, mountainous areas, hunting for food among wild animals, and occasionally Gol scouts caught unawares. Gorem are able to eat almost anything, but prefer fresh meat.

In combat Gorem are brutal, attacking swiftly and mercilessly with little regard to defense – they rely on their extremely tough skins to protect them. They favor large, heavy weapons such as clubs and greatswords or halberds purloined from previous kills. Gorem attack without finesse – always going for the head or neck for the quick kill. Although immensely strong and tough, they tire quickly as their massive frames require a lot of effort to move about (gain a point of fatigue every EN rounds of combat – see the Fatigue rules in chapters 4 and 5 of the main rule book for more information). For this reason, the best way to defeat a Gorem is to fight defensively, hoping that it will begin to tire before you do.



It is said that some Gorem occasionally become bored with their lonely existence and seek out companionship. Such a beast will capture a lone traveler and keep them in its lair, usually within a cage. It views these as pets, and will not harm them, although they do not often last long as the Gorem will eventually forget to feed them.

HEF

LET ME TELL YOU BOYS about what hunts up there in the northern wastes. Some of you wander around up there seeking glory. That's good and fine, but there's something that you should know about the true hunters of the mountains. When I was a boy much of the clan lived up that way. Despite the winters, hunting was good, and fishing was better.

But see, that's what they think, too. They would come in the coldest part of the season, generally, when man is sluggish and vulnerable. Never more than a dozen, I think, but a dozen was more than enough.

Hef, sons, Hef. Maybe nine, maybe eleven – we were never really sure. Huge beasts, twice as high as most of you lads, with black claws, black horns and black eyes. Aye, 'tis true – horns like the southern bulls, long and lethal, and talons like a bears on the end of mannish claws. They're all covered in shaggy white fur that blends into the snow and granite – only carelessly might a horn be seen when they ambush. Some of them – the older ones, I think – wear the skins of men as trophies, or maybe for armor, and wield our longest swords and pole axes like daggers and hatchets. The rest kill with their claws, and gore with their horns.

The worst thing, though, was getting close to one – smelling its breath and looking it in the eyes. Predator's eyes, but more intelligent. They know what they're doing is terrible somehow. Their whole wretched expression shows it, all mounted on the face of a bear or a wolf. Terrifying.

The Hef would come every few months or even weeks in the winters, killing the warriors for meat and for skins, and kidnapping the women – only those of birthing age – to drag back to their camps or villages or wherever they

live... maybe back to the frosty layers of the Betrayer's prison.

So when you're older, sons, you'll be going back up north into the mountains. You'll be going up there to hunt them, and to take their skins back here to old Juergen, to show and to tell stories of great bravery. Maybe one day you'll find their camp or their lair, and you'll be able to return with your older sisters, your mothers, your aunts, and your grandmothers, if they're still live.

Or maybe, lads, you'll just barely manage to come back at all.

Some of you, that is.

* * * * *

AS FAR AS THE PEOPLE OF THE NORTH are concerned, the Hef seem to bridge the line between myth and reality. They are fabled creatures from the stories of their own greatest heroes, come to life. Although tales of the Hef have always been told, only now do they seem to come raiding every village of the most northern reaches.

Hef are intelligent and social creatures. Many northern fables feature talking Hef. A few (a very few) claim to have seen Hef conversing amongst one another, often in the language of the land, but in an older form.

The Hef raid human villages for a number of reasons: food (both the winter stores and the villagers themselves), tools and skins (again, both those that the village-men have acquired, and those that can be made from the bones and skins of the village men), and – perhaps most importantly to the Hef – women.

In battle, Hef use surprise and ambush tactics to great effect, hiding themselves deep in snowdrifts on paths often traveled by men. They are brave and aggressive, but not foolhardy, and will retreat if things look bad for them. Despite a certain degree of practicality in their willingness to flee should things get bad, Hef warriors also seek glory. They will attack any size party armed in any fashion, if they feel that the battle will be glorious and go in their favor. They will hit hard at night, on the flanks, or at any other time. Like men, they function best in the day, but

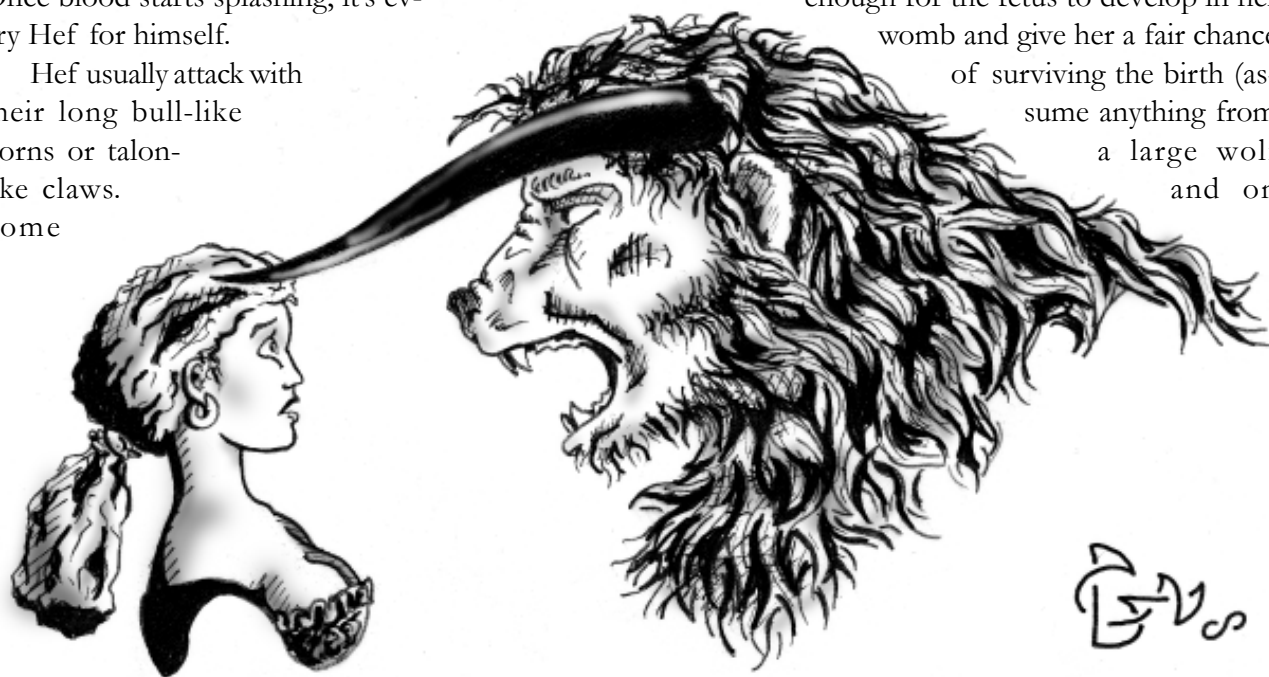


find (also like men) that night is the best time to raid a village.

Beyond these simplistic tactics Hef have no advanced concept of warfare. They do not assemble into armies, make treaties, exist politically, or even use group maneuvers or tactics. Once blood starts splashing, it's every Hef for himself.

Hef usually attack with their long bull-like horns or talon-like claws. Some

Hef are very short lived, growing into old age after only 10 or 12 years. Again, the potential for a Hef-wife to outlive many "mates" presents them with an interesting opportunity for power within the tribe or clan. These Hef-wives may be of almost any creature, as long as the potential mother is large enough for the fetus to develop in her womb and give her a fair chance of surviving the birth (assume anything from a large wolf and on



have weapons taken from raids on villages, which they use as a sign of valor.

If captured, a Hef will refuse to talk at all, playing the role of a beast. They will never reveal the location of their camp, nor can they be reasoned with in any attempt to regain stolen women.

A Hef's fur is worth a small amount of money in the north, but is considered a sign of great courage (anyone wearing or otherwise displaying a Hef-coat will be treated as if they had the "Good Reputation" minor Gift by northmen and others who live near Hef), as are any scars gained in a battle with Hef on their own ground beyond the village.

The Hef, it is said, can breed with man or beast; in fact, Hef must breed outside of their kind, as there are no females. Human women old enough and stout enough to make "Hef-wives" are taken first in any raid, and then are spirited off to the Hef's camps or villages. Those that survive the first child are highly valued, and may find place amongst Hef society.

up). If Weyrth medicine men had any concept of genetics, they would understand that Hef cells contain a variable number of chromosomes, almost all of which are dominant, making offspring predominantly Hef with some small traits contributed by the mother. Lacking such knowledge, scholars fall back on the old maxim "Hef breed Hef", which amounts to the same thing. To determine the attributes of any particular breed of Hef, take the base (average) statistics of the mothers breed (there are many animals in chapter Two), and apply the modifiers listed below. The offspring will be a Hef – large, shaggy and white with black claws and fangs, but will share attributes of the mother; for example, quadruped mothers will develop semi-quadruped Hef (that drop to all four feet to run but may stand on the rear legs to fight; exactly like a bear), but semi-quadruped or bipedal mothers will produce bipedal Hef. It is up to the Seneschal to determine exactly what properties the breed of the mother



will contribute to the make up of any particular Hef.

Statistics Modifiers:

ST	+4	WP	+1
AG	+3	Wit	+2
TO	+4	MA	-1
EN	+5	Soc	=3 (or 1, when dealing with non-Hef)
HT	+4	Per	+3

Additionally, all Hef have vicious claws (DR SR+1) and horns (DR SR+2). Hef do not have missile proficiencies (but may occasionally throw things using their base Aim), but have Melee Proficiencies of 6-12, depending on the age and experience of the creature in question. Many Hef pick up weapons from vanquished foes, and wield them using the same weapon proficiency, but are not afraid to drop the weapon and charge into combat, grappling and rending limb-from-limb a hapless opponent. Some Hef have been known to cure the skins of opponents, fashioning crude leather armor (AV1-2) from them.

Below, you will find a small selection of sample Hef, bred from different base creatures. These are intended to give Seneschals ideas as to how to incorporate interesting and unique Hef into their games.

Human/Hef

ST	8	WP	5	Ref	6
AG	7	Wit	6	Aim	7
TO	8	MA	3	KD	7
EN	9	Soc	3/1	KO	11
HT	6	Per	7	Move	12

Combat Proficiency: 6-12, CP 12-18

Hef bred from humans are the “default” Hef type. The main contribution the human mother adds to the mix is the intelligence and adaptability of humans; thus Hef bred from humans are the most likely to be intelligent, tool users and thus are the most likely to survive. For this reason, humans are a popular favorite as Hef-wives among the tribes.

Wolf/Hef

ST	9	WP	4	Ref	9
AG	11	Wit	8	Aim	n/a
TO	9	MA	2	KD	10
EN	13	Soc	3/1	KO	13
HT	9	Per	11	Move	16

Combat Proficiency: 6-12, CP 15-21

Wolf-bred Hef are terrifying carnivores that are far more impulsive than human-bred Hef but far more vicious. They are semi-quadrupeds, able to stand on their rear legs for brief periods of time to fight, but far preferring all fours, especially while running (Wolf-born Hef may charge into combat with Move 32). They have an acute sense of smell and are extremely hardy and dexterous.

Great Ape/Hef

ST	16	WP	6	Ref	9
AG	12	Wit	7	Aim	10
TO	11	MA	3	KD	14
EN	11	Soc	3/1	KO	14
HT	9	Per	9	Move	19

Combat Proficiency: 6-12, CP 15-21.

How could this happen? Only through the “selective breeding” of a twisted mind. Hef bred from great apes are unbelievably strong and tough creatures, with very broad upper bodies and correspondingly smaller lower bodies, mirroring their ape heritage. Their legs end in prehensile “hands”, and they are quite capable of climbing trees and even swinging from branch to branch (although they had better be pretty strong branches...). Ape-bred Hef are likely to employ constricting attacks, grabbing and literally crushing the life out of opponents.

Cow/Hef

ST	11	WP	4	Ref	6
AG	7	Wit	5		
TO	11	MA	2	KD	9
EN	9	Soc	3/1	KO	13
HT	8	Per	5	Move	13

Combat Proficiency: 6-12, CP 12-18

Cow-bred Hef-bulls are semi-quadrupeds with a massive set of horns. Although they can stand up-



right, they prefer charging on all fours (at a Move of 26) and performing vicious stampede attacks, often slaying two or more opponents with a single charge (Horns DR ST+4). They are particularly unintelligent as far as Hef are concerned, but are still capable of out thinking an average man.

Other forms of Hef may exist, even particularly chilling possibilities such as a Hef bred from bears or even from Gol. Should such a terrifying cross-breed truly exist, it would be extremely powerful, and likely a tribal chief.

MINOTAUR

As was usual just after a raid, the camp was a hive of activity. There was money to count, artwork to catalogue, slaves to teach about their new lives (usually forcefully), plus of course long lines outside the tents containing the prettiest female captives.

Tar Junar looked with satisfaction at the bustling action all around him. In three years, he had built up from a couple of cutthroats and a highwayman to a huge organized camp hidden in the Irontooth mountains with contacts right across Stahl and neighboring Angharad, Sarmatov and Ouestenreich. The remoteness of the camp made raids long and difficult, but kept away the lawmakers, and the Gols were too smart to attack such a heavily fortified and well defended camp (although patrols and raiding parties had to keep a careful lookout). All in all, life was good.

During the time immediately following a raid, while there was still wealth to count and the rape tents were up, it was tricky finding enough men to man the watchtowers, so Tar liked to take this time in the battlements himself and survey his domain. The camp was situated in a box canyon, with only one approach – a wide valley with no natural cover for attackers to hide behind, and was quite safe. Tar liked to watch the valley below for signs of life however; occasionally a foolish caravan would make its way through and provide very easy pickings for the men. Presently, it was abandoned except for a large herd of cattle milling about just below the camp. Perhaps he should send some men down to slaughter the beasts for food. He was still musing on these

thoughts when a boulder the size of a horse landed on the man beside him in a gory splatter of blood.

Explosively shaken from his reflections, he spun about wildly, looking for the source of the attack. As he watched, another boulder landed in the middle of the camp, crushing one of the rape tents and spraying the waiting line of men with dirt and blood. Drawing his blade, Tar screamed to the men to form ranks, but there was still no sign of attackers in the valley below, where surely siege weapons must have been set up. At last, finally, Tar turned to the direction from which he least expected attack – the canyon walls above him were over 300 feet high, and were almost sheer on both sides with a very narrow top; there was simply no way to get siege weapons up there.

The ridges above him were lined with men, huge brutes wearing horned helmets, and unbelievably strong. As Tar watched, two of them lifted between them a rock easily the size of a mule, and cast it down into the camp, where it crushed three men. Almost simultaneously, he heard screams of rage and battle cries coming from below. He spun back to the gates, in time to see more of the helmeted men emerge from the middle of the herd of bulls and run toward the camp, brandishing clubs and rocks. As he watched, most of the bulls seemed to shake briefly, and then stood upright, their bodies slimming down and becoming bipedal to reveal more of the men, who Tar could now see were not wearing horned helms, but in fact had the heads of bulls.

With a crash, the first of the attackers slammed into the gates below, having charged it just as a bull would. As Tar watched, more and more of the attackers struck the gate, and he could hear the wood begin to splinter and break. The camp below was in panic; men ran screaming in all directions looking for their armor, their weapons and their comrades. Tar raised his blade above his head and started to call for the men to rally to him, but at that moment he was crushed by the largest rock yet, not only killing him instantly but destroying a section of the fence protecting the camp. Unimpeded at last, the attackers swarmed in...



Statistics:

ST	7	WP	4	Ref	6
AG	7	Wit	6	Aim	5
TO	6	MA	4	KD	6
EN	6	Soc	2	KO	9
HT	8	Per	4	Move	10

Combat Proficiency: 6-10, CP 12-16

Vagaries: Glamour special (SP special)

Seldom seen in their natural form, Minotaur are often dismissed as myths. They inhabit the highlands below major mountain ranges, especially the Irontooth Mountains in Stahl.

Physically, Minotaur are huge, hulking brutes, standing even taller than their cousins, the Gol. Heavily muscled and hairy male bodies support the head of a bull, complete with two nasty curving horns. Minotaur disdain the use of weapons in combat, preferring to rely instead on their natural weapons – a brutal charging attack that will crush an opponent if he hasn’t already been gored to death, followed by pummeling fists as hard as rock. See chapter two for more information on the stampede attacks that Minotaur might utilize. After a stampede, they will begin to attack an opponent with their fists (DR ST+1, because of their size range is considered Medium, not Hand). Another favorite tactic is to grapple an opponent, lifting him into the air and pulling him down onto their nasty sharp horns.

There are no female Minotaur. Instead, Minotaur breed with cows, the offspring having a 50/50 chance of either being a Minotaur or a female calf. For this reason, tribes of Minotaur travel with large herds of cattle, and hide within them – they have a unique Glamour based magical ability to appear as a normal Bull when they want to. In this way, Minotaur tribes travel from place to place and look as if they are merely a regular herd of cattle (but woe betide anyone who tries to hunt THAT herd...)

It is whispered in scholarly circles that Minotaur may in fact be among the last remnants of entire different species’ of animal-headed trollspawn. Far rarer than these bull-headed brutes are the Vilkolak

– wolf-headed trollspawn, for example. Perhaps once, long ago there were many different animal-headed trollspawn inhabiting the world; it is even possible that the Gol are

descended from Boar-headed creatures, it doesn’t take much effort to imagine the link from that to the Gol of today.

SSLASSK

I beg you, my lord. You must raise the banners and ride forth as soon as possible. My wife may yet live, and you can not allow the beasts any more time to strengthen themselves, they will march on us eventually, and if you allow them to grow any stronger, we will fall.

I was traveling through Taveruun – I had some business up in Xanar, and we were to take a boat in Helena across the Sea of Fallen Gods. The way was hard and I had hired the services of a guide to get us up one of the main rivers of Taveruun from Sapphire Bay to a place where we could find a caravan to Helena. As you know, the land there is rather harsh – the rivers run into swamp for much of their length and for parts of the journey you never even see the sun, the foliage is so thick above your head.

It was during one of the dark periods of the trip that the boat was capsized. A snake – must have been 50 feet long if it was an inch – reared up beside the boat and plucked the guide off, just snapped him up like a whip crack. Well, the ladies panicked and screamed as you would expect, and Roberto leapt to his feet grabbing for his rapier, which was how we came to tip. The next I knew I had a mouthful of thick black river water and the boat had flipped and struck me on the head. That’s when I blacked out.

When I came to, I was in some kind of village, deep in the swamp. The buildings were all wicker and fronds from the heavy trees, but there were stone ones as well, including some kind of small step pyramid. The whole place was teeming with snakes; small ones mostly, but here and there a cobra or an anaconda, all just slithering about seeming to mind their own business. I had been tied to a platform of some kind in a clearing in the middle of the village, and those snakes were near calf deep.

And then I saw the village people. The All-Seeing-Eye knows the truth of what I say, my lord, they were common looking folk, but with greenish skin and the heads of snakes! A couple of them looked



even more snake-like, with rough skin resembling scales, and one even had no legs, just a huge tail where his torso ended. They all had stone weapons, and hissed at me a lot, but I couldn't understand a word they were saying.

One of the male ones grabbed me then, pushing me back across the table and holding me down. Behind me, I could see similar platforms where my companions were similarly tied, my wife and her sister being brutally ravaged by snake men, and my attaché being forced to service one of the snake women. I tried to fight them, my lord, but they merely shattered one of my arms to quiet me down, and then I was made to breed with their women repeatedly.

This went on for weeks; they were very adapt at inflicting pain when I should choose to resist, and I was even forced to witness Roberto's death, disposed of when he simply could not perform any longer. He was slit from neck to crotch and they pushed eggs into him, which hatched that night, the tiny snakes that emerged feeding on his corpse.

They had some form of religious belief, and it was during one of their prayer sessions at the pyramid that I was able to free myself. I was spotted and chased, and did not have time to free my wife or sister-in-law. I simply ran into the swamp and somehow managed to lose my pursuers. By blind luck I found the river again and floated down it clutching a log, to be found eventually by a riverboat who nursed me back to health.

I came to you as soon as I recovered, my lord, but it has been months and months – I beg of you, the ladies may yet live. The creatures were breeding us, don't you see? We must find them before my wife... well, before she... hatches.

"Typical" Sslassk Statistics:

ST	4	WP	4	Ref	5
AG	6	Wit	5	Aim	4
TO	4	MA	4	KD	5
EN	5	Soc	2	KO	6
HT	5	Per	3	Move	7

Combat Proficiency: 6-10 (Mass weapon & Shield, or Polearm), CP: 11-15

Sslassk Giant Snake Statistics:

ST	5	WP	3	Ref	8
AG	10	Wit	6	Aim	n/a
TO	6	MA	4	KD	7
EN	4	Soc	0	KO	7
HT	4	Per	4	Move	9

Combat Proficiency: 8-10, CP: 16-18

The Sslassk are an ancient race of Trollspawn that make their homes in the swamps and marshes of Maraiah. Unlike many of the other animal-headed trollspawn, they tend to be closer to the average human height, standing usually just under six feet tall and being very slender. Sslassk have the heads of venomous serpents, and a greenish tinge to their skin.

Whatever the origin of the Sslassk, their blood is strong with the taint that perhaps was responsible for their creation. Many Sslassk are born with serpentine features, such as scales, tails instead of legs, a lack of arms and so forth. Although these "mutations" are respected and honored by the snake-worshipping Sslassk, they are accompanied by a general loss of intelligence and a more temperamental nature. Because these traits are encouraged when Sslassk breeds with Sslassk, but seem to be discouraged through the dilution of the blood when Sslassk breeds with human, the tribes regularly capture human males and females and breed with them to "ease off" on the taint. In this way, by alternating breeding cycles with humans and Sslassk, they are able to keep a happy medium between intelligence and respectable mutation.

Sslassk worship no gods, but instead revere snakes. Their villages teem with serpent life, and to harm a snake is to face ostracism at best or death at worst. Services are held in which snakes are prayed to, and sacrifices are commonly made to them as well. Certain snakes are encouraged in their growth through regular feedings of Sslassk blood, and such snakes have been known to grow to enormous lengths – up to 60 feet long in some cases. These giant snakes are vicious, and their venom is obscenely potent (Hematotoxic, Potency 6, see chapter two for details on how venom works).

In the humid, boggy swamps, wood decomposes quickly and metals are hard



to come by. The Sslassk have adapted by utilizing stone in their construction and weaponry. Sslassk favor heavy, chopping weapons such as hand axes and polearms. Being made of stone, these weapons have +1CP activation cost on all attacks and parries/counters (due to their weight) but add +1 to the usual damage rating of the weapon because of the extra weight. Shields are uncommon, but some wooden shields are fashioned, and armor is made from snake leather, providing an AR of 3 due to its extreme toughness and (often) hardened scales. During combat, Sslassk are fond of dropping their weapons and grappling with foes, pinning and then biting them, injecting them with their virulent Hematoxic venom (Potency 4).

The more “pure” a Sslassk is bred (i.e. when Sslassk breed with other Sslassk rather than with humans), the more bestial they grow, both in intellect and in appearance. Some of the more common “mutations” are listed below. The more mutations an individual Sslassk has, the lower his MA and Wit are likely to be.

- Scales – these vary in coverage and hardness, providing an AR of 1-2 to covered areas.
- Skin Shedder – The Sslassk may shed its skin once a day, reducing all current wounds by 1 level.
- Tail – The Sslassk has a large tail extending from its waist instead of legs. Movement is reduced by a third, but the Sslassk gains +2 dice on all evasive moves because of its ability to sway extremely quickly in any direction
- Armless – The Sslassk has no arms, and may not wield weapons.
- Extremely virulent venom – The Sslassk’s venom is more potent than usual; potency 5.
- Snake Arm – one or both of the Sslassk’s arms are actually snakes, instead of arms with hands. These limbs are very flexible, and gain +1CP on all attacks, but only have Potency 3 venom.

VILKOLAK

They were cunning, I can’t deny them that. They waited until a cloudy night during the new moon, when the fields were at their darkest. See, we like to think that our eyes

can adjust to the dark, but really all they do is widen, allowing more of what light there is to get in. If there’s pretty much no light to begin with, like on a moonless night with clouds to hide the stars, well, we’re as blind as the proverbial bat.

It was mustering time, so I had a lot of hands in to help on the farm. The boys were doing twenty hour days to get through the whole stock, and I was working even longer coordinating them and making sure they got fed, so when I did sleep it was the sleep of the dead, solid and deep. When you’ve gone a week with less sleep than you’d usually take in one night, things tend to get a bit muddled and you don’t quite think straight, especially when you’re woken an hour into what little sleep you’ve allowed yourself by suspicious noises down near the livestock. Shaking the sleep from my head, I threw on a vest and grabbed up my sword and bow and ran out into the night, shouting for the hands as I went.

A couple of the lads less tired than myself had thought to bring lanterns, but we couldn’t see much in the dim light those little things put out. Mandy had been on me to buy some decent oil for months, guess I should have heeded her. The main pen is twenty thousand square feet, easily big enough for a few rustlers to hide in, so we jumped the fence and started to spread out, calling out so as not to lose each other in the dark. In the dim light from one of the lanterns I saw a couple of dark figures move through the darkness – rustlers, or so I thought. I shouted a few curses at ‘em and ran forward, my bow strung and ready for a shot.

That was when I heard the snarling. Not just rustlers then, but rustlers with dogs. I heard a scream off to my right – it sounded like Matt the Fox had been bit by one of those damn beasts, and I could hear the boys panicking behind me. I took a shot at a figure in the dark, but it seemed to flow sideways and my arrow just vanished into the darkness. Before I could think to string another, there was a sudden growl from both sides of me, and I dropped my bow in fright, drawing my sword with a shaky hand. I don’t scare easy, but my tiredness and not being able to see the rustlers and their dogs or wolves was getting to me, and from the noises, to my hands too.

Another scream – that one was “Hard Tony” for sure, and quite close as well. I was sweating badly



by now, figures were moving past me in the dark and there were snarls and cries all around. Suddenly, Franco Ericsson bashed into me and we both went down in a heap. Men were screaming into the night and I saw more being forced toward us – Kurt the damn Ouestenreichen, Stephen Buel, Robert Alderton, even my daughter's young beau, Glenn Mont. That was when it hit me – they weren't poachers, not normal ones anyway, we were being herded together like, well, like sheep I guess.

That's when we saw them. They stepped out of the darkness and into our weak circle of light. They weren't poachers with dogs – they were the dogs. Six feet tall they stood, shaggy like a wolf and with wolves' heads, but the bodies of men and women. Over their shoulders they wore skins cut from the backs of men and they were laughing at us, high pitched like a hyena and filled with terrifying mirth. I guess the Merciful Hand turned his back on us, for that was the moment our last working lantern sputtered and died and we were plunged into blackness just as I saw them crouch down to leap...

Statistics:

ST	6	WP	3	Ref	7
AG	7	Wit	7	Aim	7
TO	5	MA	3	KD	6
EN	6	Soc	3	KO	6
HT	6	Per	7	Move	9

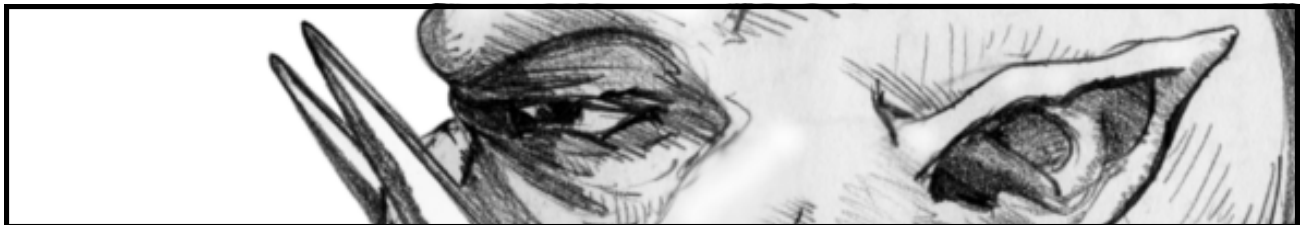
Combat Proficiency: 3-6 (pole weapons or flails), **CP:** 10-13

The Vilkolak are furry Wolf-headed trollspawn who populate many of the wide-open fields, pasture lands and lightly wooded areas of Weyrth. Like their four-legged cousins, Vilkolak are fond of hunting in packs, using ambushes and scare tactics to “herd” pray (which may be just about anything, but is often humans).

Vilkolak do not have any real form of “society”. They are extremely nomadic, never staying long in a single place, but preferring to hunt an area for a while and then move on. They are very cunning, investigating an area carefully before setting up camp, and they always know several escape routes “just in case”.

In combat, Vilkolak prefer to use ambushes, baiting tactics, and “wolf-packing” – this is where several Vilkolak will gang up on a foe, one drawing attacks and merely defending itself, while the others attack quickly and brutally from the sides or rear. This way, strong foes are brought down quickly. Vilkolak are fond of pole-length weapons and flails, but are not particularly brave – if a fight appears to be going against them, they will quickly flee from a battle, often returning later when their enemy least expects it and attacking from ambush again.

Vilkolak may breed with either humans or wolves, but as neither race particularly likes them, humans are their preferred choice – a human may be beaten into submission far easier than a wolf. Vilkolak can breed among themselves (there are male and female Vilkolak) but this is considered somewhat taboo, and only practiced when absolutely necessary. The reason behind this proscription is unknown.



BOOK SIX: THE OTHER WORLD

Another world exists in parallel with Weyrth. It is a world of darkness, and is the source of all fears, terror and things that go bump in the night. This chapter details some of the residents of "The Other World", and in many cases the specific magic used to bring them into Weyrth.

BEAN SIDHE (PRON. BANN-SHEE)

"I'M TELLING YOU, Andrew, it was the strangest thing ever," Josef reported. "That odd woman I found by the stream, she just wouldn't stop crying."



Andrew paced around the room, casually glancing at the windows and door. "Tell me about her, my brother."

"Well," he replied. "I was taking my morning constitutional through the grounds, following the ridge up to the East there. At this time of the year, as you know the junipers are in full bloom and the river is at its fullest. I like to take enough for a snifter or two of the red, and perhaps a chicken leg or portion of roast to break my fast in those beautiful surrounds."

"Anyway, I was riding up one of father's favorite paths, enjoying the morning when I thought to hear the wailing of a woman. Faintly, to be sure, but unmistakable. Now, none of the servants would be out and about at that time of the morning, and I was quite sure that none of the peasants would dare invade my land again – not after I whipped the hide off the last who tried to poach from me – so I was rather intrigued, to say the least."

"Picking up the pace, I rode over the ridge and down into grandfathers gully – you know the one, it has the stream feeding into that small pool where you like to take your ladies. Anyway, down at the river was crouched the strangest woman. She was a washer woman, scraping some bloody rags up and down across her board as if mere water could shift that much blood. And she was wailing, Andrew – like to wake the dead with her caterwauling she was. I rode up behind her and demanded to know her business. I thought to put a mortal fear into her, scare her a little before I rode her down for stealing my water."

"And that was when she turned to me. Andrew, I have scarce seen a more pitiful sight in all my years. Gaunt and pale, she was. With long stringy hair, grey torn rags for clothes, her arms red to the elbows with the blood she was trying to clean from her bundle, and eyes red raw as if she had never stopped crying in all her life. She took one look at me and wailed as if the hounds of hell were after her. It spooked my horse, and I don't mind admitting that it sent a chill down my spine too. By the time I calmed the horse and turned back to give her a piece of my mind, she had slipped

off. I searched for her a time, but couldn't find a trace. That's my tale, brother. Now, tell me what you think of it."

Andrew smiled to himself, as he walked up behind Josef's chair and began to massage his brother's shoulders. "I think you have been visited, brother," He replied. "Have you ever heard of the Bean Sidhe? The locals hereabouts swear by them, sometimes calling them Banshees."

"Actually, I'm quite gratified by your visitation, brother, because it means that this is going to work," he continued, slipping his fingers around Josef's throat. "You see, they only ever appear to folk who are going to die shortly. To hear their cry heralds ones own death."

Josef began to struggle, but could not break his brother's grip. "But for an accident of birth, I should have been the elder," Andrew spat, continuing to squeeze his hands together. "Soon, that accident will be remedied, and the estate shall be mine. I should like to thank your spirit visitor, brother; it's always nice to know in advance that ones plans will come to fruition."

Statistics:

ST	n/a	WP	5	Ref	n/a
AG	n/a	Wit	5	Aim	n/a
TO	n/a	MA	4	KD	n/a
EN	n/a	Soc	3	KO	n/a
HT	n/a	Per	4	Move	20

Combat Proficiency: n/a, CP n/a

The Bean Sidhe, sometimes known as Bean Nighe but most commonly known as Banshees, are harbingers of doom from The Other World. Although they do not directly harm their victim, they are among the most feared spirits across Weyrth, for their appearance heralds the impending death of the target.

Physically, Bean Sidhe appear as old women wearing dirty and torn rags, their hair disheveled and stringy, their skin grey and wrinkled. Often, they appear as washer women, endlessly trying to clean blood from the grave clothes of their soon-to-be deceased victim. They never stop crying, and as such their eyes are red raw and puffed, and constantly weeping tears. Although they appear solid, Bean

Sidhe are incorporeal, weapons and even spells pass right through them if they did not exist. Even mind controlling or altering spells have no effect, for their intelligence is embodied in the other world, and only their shade appears in ours.

Bean Sidhe only appear to those who are due to die shortly. Although companions and onlookers can see the spirit, the intended target is obvious, for the Bean Sidhe looks only at the victim, and as soon as she sees him raises her voice, wailing long and loudly. She will look upon the victim with pity for a short period of time, and then simply vanish, the sound of her crying slowly fading away. This invariably means that the victim is due to die within a day, although on occasion this death has not come to pass – nobody is really sure why. Nor have they determined the criteria the Bean Sidhe use to determine who they will appear to and who they will not; clearly not everybody who has ever died has had a Bean Sidhe visitation first.

GAME HOOK:

One of the characters has a Bean Sidhe visitation and must scramble to find out how he is going to die, and try to prevent it.

GHOST

Diligently, the three young men began to search the manor house again. "The old crow must 'ave 'id the money somewhere boys, only a matter of time before we find it," Vann assured them, prying aside some oak paneling in the study with his dagger. "Stands to reason right, she were a rich old gal."

His two apprentices smiled and moved to their allotted rooms, pulling apart furniture and bashing holes in walls to find the promised wealth. The manor house itself was a little decrepit, but everyone in the small town nearby had boasted of the wealth of the local Lady, even after her financial troubles following the disappearance of her husband. Conning their way into the house for a night had been easy, the old bitch was too trusting and it had been sweet pleasure to draw the blade across her throat and watch her gurgle out her last breath through the blood.



A couple of hours later, Rinaldo was working on the floorboards in the kitchen when he heard the scream from upstairs, cut short by the loud crash. He took the stairs three at a time, arriving at the bed chamber even before Vann. Francisco was dead – he had somehow managed to pull the heavy closet down on himself, presumably while trying to get under it in case there was a trapdoor there. The heavy piece of furniture had silenced him forever by landing on his head and upper chest.

“Curse him!” Vann swore. “Now it’ll take even longer to find the cash. Still, at least it’s only got to be divided two ways now, right?” He smiled, a grizzly sight, and spat at the ladies corpse lying on the bed.

Nodding uneasily, Rinaldo muttered a brief farewell to his companion, and left him, returning to the kitchen to keep working at the floor – he was sure he could detect a hollow space under the floorboards when he tapped, but they were well nailed down. He kept stubbornly working at the floor for several hours, cursing himself for not thinking to bring an axe. Finally, after much work he managed to loosen a board, and shouted out to Vann with glee at the sight of the large wooden box he could see through the gap.

His shout was met with stubborn silence. Puzzled, Rinaldo turned his head in the direction of the study and yelled again “Did you hear me, man? I’ve found the bitches stash!”

Still receiving no response, he strode to the study, complaining loudly. “Look, if you don’t come and help me, this’ll take forev..” his words trailed off as he walked into the room and found Vann. He looked like he must have lay there for some time – his face was purple and his neck was scratched and bleeding where he had tried to free himself. Somehow, he had been strangled by his own cloak, without Rinaldo having heard a thing.

Whipping out his dagger, Rinaldo turned quickly, scanning the room for any sign of Vann’s attacker. There was nobody within sight, but he could feel eyes boring into him. He searched the house quickly, but found no sign of life.

With weakening resolve, Rinaldo determined to return to the kitchen, take his box and leave the house quickly. Some-

thing was not right here! Upon arrival at the kitchen however, he found that the board he had loosened had somehow been affixed back into the floor, nailed down sturdily without any noise. Sobbing with sudden fear, Rinaldo turned and ran for the open front door. Just before he reached it, it slammed shut, and he watched as the bolt slid into place. At almost the same moment, the shutters on the window beside the door snapped shut. With a scream, Rinaldo turned to run for the parlor, but stopped short in horror as he saw the apparition floating down the stairwell at him. It was the old lady, gurgling horribly from the cut at her throat, the bedclothes stained red and blood dripping to the stairs from her outstretched fingers. Rinaldo screamed and slashed out with his knife, but the blade passed right through her body as her fingers brushed out and touched his cheek, icy cold. With a horrified gasp, Rinaldo realized he could see through her, and as his mind tried to cope with this horrifying realization, he felt his heart start to palpitate wildly.

He sunk to his knees, his vision narrowing and blackening as his heart beat frantically, and he looked up into the cold eyes of the murdered woman as she laughed. Suddenly, her eyes widened, and she opened her mouth to reveal sharp teeth as long as knives as she screamed at him. It was all too much; the last thing Rinaldo felt was his heart stop beating in his chest as he died of fright.

Statistics

ST	n/a	WP	5	Ref	n/a
AG	n/a	Wit	5	Aim	n/a
TO	n/a	MA	5	KD	n/a
EN	n/a	Soc	1	KO	n/a
HT	n/a	Per	5	Move	6

Vagaries: Glamour 2, Movement 2 (SP 10)

Ghosts are the incorporeal spirits of creatures that have died with unfulfilled purposes in life. Be it because the creature feels it was unfairly killed, or that it has loved ones in immediate danger due to its passing, or simply because the creature was strong enough of will to keep going even after the death of its physical body, ghosts tend to linger in the immediate vicinity of their body’s death.



The only purpose of the restless spirit is to right whichever wrong it feels has been committed. Perhaps the ghost wishes to avenge itself on its murderers, defend its loved ones from attack, or perhaps assure a decent burial of its remains. Only after these conditions have been met may the spirit rest at last, and pass into The Other World, never to return to Weyrth.

Ghosts are invisible and intangible, thus they are incapable of manipulating solid material, and as such may not engage in combat nor may they be attacked, even with the use of mind altering or controlling spells. They have some magical abilities however, and use their Glamour magic to appear and even talk to mortals, and Movement spells to interact with the real world, opening or closing doors, or perhaps throwing heavy objects at foes. They do not need to make magical aging rolls.

The only way to rid an area of a ghost is to either complete its unfulfilled purpose (thus allowing it to finally rest), or to use magic to banish or imprison it. Human ghosts are considered medium-strength spirits, and so may be affected by Banishment/Spirits or Imprisonment/Spirits magic at level 2 or above. For the purposes of resisting these forms of magic, ghosts are considered to have an ART of 10.

GHUL

As usual, the cheap lock didn't take much work. Kary smiled to himself as his lockpick snicked and twisted sideways with the barest of effort. Just what did these idiots expect? No true follower of Ha'Shalosh would ever steal from the dead, and so it never occurred to the fools to properly secure their graveyards. "Still, one mans burial offering is another mans wealth," he chuckled to himself, and slipped through the mausoleum door.

Opening his sack, Kary began to move around the cramped interior of the small rock building, helping himself to golden bowls and jeweled figurines. The sarcophagi were stacked with care on ledges around the inside of the room, burned offerings and valuables stacked at their heads and feet – easy pick-



ings. By the time he was ready to leave the small tomb, Kary was lugging an extremely heavy sack and panting a bit with the effort.

The doorway opened back into the eerie graveyard, and Kary looked around anxiously before exiting. This was an unfashionable part of the city, and few people ever came here, but on the way in Kary had noticed recent diggings at several of the gravesites, so there was no harm in being cautious. It was a still night, and a thin layer of mist hung over the graves, dampening sound and feeling cold and clammy on his skin. Hefting the heavy bag to his shoulder, Kary moved out among the graves and started to make his way back to the heavy iron gates which, puzzlingly, had been well fastened with a lock far trickier to crack than those of the mausoleums within.

He was half way there when he heard the noise. It was a snuffling, slurping noise, as if a dog was feeding nearby, but Kary could see no animals. Turning swiftly on his heel,



he surveyed the graveyard, and fancied he saw a scrap of movement over by one of the newer graves. He stood silent, pricking his ears for further noise and fearing that the city watch had sent a patrol in after him, but after a few moments the noise ceased.

After several minutes, Kary shrugged and continued his journey out of the graveyard, but no sooner had he started moving than the noise began again - a half-snarl with a low moan underlying it, and the unmistakable noise of an animal worrying and feasting on a carcass. Clearly a dog had followed him into the graveyard and was digging up one of the fresher corpses for its evening repast. Musing that the body might perhaps have been buried with valuables, Kary quietly lowered his bag to the ground and stole over towards the grave, hefting his cudgel and ready to scare the beast away from its meal.

Leaping around the large tombstone, Kary raised his arm and began to shout, but felt the noise die in his throat as he beheld that which was feasting on the body. A naked woman squatted there, sucking one of the eyeballs out of the head of the cadaver. Pale and sickly, her skin wrinkled and raw, and covered with open pustules weeping a viscous yellow fluid, she turned and grinned at him, her face twisted into a hideous bestial mask and a low growl escaping from her lips as she beheld him.

“Fressssshhhh.....” she whispered, and leapt at him.

Screaming, Kary turned and fled from the woman, running blindly between the graves and trying to lose himself in the darkness. Behind him, he could hear the soft footfalls of the woman as she padded her way after him, sniffing the air as if tracking him by his scent. Very quickly, Kary lost his sense of direction, and had no idea where in the graveyard he was. Consequently, he was taken quite by surprise when he accidentally doubled back on himself and tripped over his own bag of treasure, falling into an open grave and landing face first on the hard packed earth six feet below with a sickening crack.

Consciousness returned some time later. Kary was still lying at the bottom of the grave, and something heavy was lying across his legs. He tried to turn over, but a horrible numbness had overcome him – it seemed he had broken his back in the fall, and was unable to move

his arms or legs. Sobbing, he drew in breath to cry out for help, but the cry died in his throat as the weight on his legs shifted, and he realized what it was.

With effort, he turned his head to the side, just in time to watch the woman lift his leg and bite into the meaty calf, green saliva running down her chin as she sighed with pleasure at the rare treat of unrotten flesh. The pain was exquisite, and as Kary began to scream the woman turned and grinned at him again, settling down to enjoy a nice slow feed.

Statistics:

ST	4	WP	2	Ref	5
AG	5	Wit	5	Aim	n/a
TO	8	MA	2	KD	4
EN	4	Soc	0	KO	9
HT	4	Per	5	Move	6

Combat Proficiency: 5, CP 10.

Ghuls are thought originally to have been the result of experiments performed by Tegaarn sorcerors, perhaps in attempts to create vampires or merely to test the effects of binding multiple spirits into a body. Whatever the actual truth of their creation, they are more commonly found in the East than any other part of Weyrth.

Ghuls are created through a ritual that binds several minor spirits into the body of a (living) human. The process drives the target insane, and gives it an insatiable desire to consume the flesh of other humans. For this reason, Ghuls are usually to be found in graveyards or other areas of mass burials, digging up corpses and feasting on them. Ghuls are not terribly intelligent, but are smart enough to avoid other living humans as they can present a danger, however they are not indisposed toward picking off the occasional unfortunate lone traveler if a suitable situation presents itself. Not intelligent enough to carry or utilize weapons, Ghuls attack with their fingernails and teeth, which are grown preternaturally long as part of the creation ritual.

Physically, Ghul's are repulsive. They're not dead, so their body doesn't actually rot, but filth and grime build up over time, and although injuries stop bothering the creature after a time, they never quite seem to close properly, leaving weeping wounds that are



CREATE GHUL*Spell of Many***CTN** = 7 (casting time = 7 hours)**T) 3; R) 1; V) 0** (the spell only affects incorporeal spirits, thus no volume requirement); **D) 0** (Instantaneous, made permanent); **L) 3** (3+1+1-2)**Vagaries:** Conquer 3, Summoning 2, Imprisonment 1**Effects:** Summoning 2 summons multiple minor spirits (usually nearby ones, for this reason the spell is usually performed in the graveyard the Ghul is to exist in). Implant 3 implants the spirits into the body, and Imprisonment 1 forces them to stay there. Finally, Control 2 compels the Ghul to stay in the immediate area but leave certain tombs alone.

often festering and maggoty. Additionally, Ghuls seem to be exceptionally vulnerable to skin diseases and infections, often displaying the effects of such but without being adversely affected by them.

Why anybody would create a Ghul is a mystery solvable only by asking the sorcerers concerned (and they're not talking). It is thought that some wealthy notables purchase the ministrations of a sorcerer to create a Ghul in the graveyard they themselves are to be interred in. As long as their own tomb is impregnable, the Ghul will leave their body alone, but will survive on the bodies of the other inhabitants of the graveyard (plus intruders) and double as a gruesome form of bodyguard.

HAMEH

The door burst open with a resounding crash, startling most of the customers and causing a few to spill their drinks. "Sanctuary!" the swarthy man howled in badly accented Cyrinthmeiran, "It has caught me!" He looked desperately around the room

and went on to babble something else that none of the inn's patrons could understand.

Physically, he was a wreck. The man looked as if he had not rested in months, his haggard face wild with terror and streaked with blood from a wound on the crown of his head, his lips specked with foam from exhaustion, and bloodied feet showing where his shoes had literally worn away from constant running. His aroma as he charged past the tables showed that he had not found the time to bathe for many weeks, either.

Screaming, the man charged past everybody and out through the back door of the inn. A few of the regulars simply went back to their beers, as if tonight's events were commonplace, but most fingered their weapons and looked nervously to the door the man had burst through, perhaps expecting something hideous to appear.

After a few minutes, one of the waitresses shrugged, and walked over to the door to close it. Folk went back to their beer and conversations, and few ever spared another thought for the strange easterner who had caused a few moments excitement.

Had they followed the man, they might have seen him run through several other establishments, crying for help but being ever ignored or shunned by the folk of this small Cyrinthmeiran town. Could any of them understand his native tongue, they might have wondered why he kept crying the word 'Hameh', and babbling about retribution and mercy. The few among them who were most observant might have wondered why a large, blood red vulture was dogging his every move crying *Iskoo 'nee*, and swooping down occasionally to peck at his head.

But they didn't, for they didn't care. His troubles were none of their concern; they had their own lives and affairs to worry about. Although not unfriendly folk by nature, they simply didn't have space in their hearts to care for the fate of a dirty foreigner.

Nor did the town guard who found him the next morning, dead from massive wounds to his head, face and shoulders. They simply shrugged and threw his body on a pyre, and if it burned a little more brightly than usual, well, that was none of their affair either.



Statistics

ST	4	WP	4	Ref	8
AG	12	Wit	4	Aim	n/a
TO	8	MA	4	KD	6
EN	12	Soc	4	KO	10
HT	6	Per	12	Move	12 flying
Combat Proficiency: 5, CP 13.					

The spark that exists in the blood of a man that makes him gifted occurs only rarely. Even rarer are those who are born gifted, and never develop any magical abilities. The power lies within them, but never finds an outlet in the utilization of arcane energy. Over the course of a lifetime, this latent energy builds up like an overfull balloon, and finally only finds release when passed along genetically to ones offspring, or evaporates on the death of the gifted.

Occasionally, however, this energy finds a release in a different form. For when a gifted who has never developed sorcerous ability (or has repressed it) is murdered, the soul cries out for revenge, and this pent-up energy responds, creating a Hameh - a large bone white bird, shaped somewhat like a vulture but sleeker. It embodies the anguish and misery of the deceased, and mercilessly attacks the victim's murderer, seeking revenge for the wrongful death.

Hameh are impossible to escape for long; while they can be outrun or outridden, they are relentless and always know the direction in which their target lies, tracking him flawlessly. The Hameh will continually attack the victim, draining a little of his blood with each attack, slowly changing color from pale white to blood red. In flight, the bird constantly cries "Iskoo 'nee", which means "give me drink" (meaning the victims blood) in Krymean Tataaruk. Additionally, the victim gains a Major Phobia: Hameh until he or the bird is dead. When the victim finally dies, the bird will be fully blood red, and it will cry out its triumph and then vanish to The Other World, never to be seen in Weyrth again. The victims soul is sent on to whatever torment the Seneschal deems worthy.

Hameh are very difficult to fight in combat. With their extremely high agility and preternatural toughness they are not very susceptible to arrows or thrown weapons,

and they like to quickly fly down and make swoop attacks (see the section on Swooping attacks in chapter two) on the victim. If the victim is too well defended, or has barricaded himself into a building or similar then the Hameh will simply wait – they need neither food nor rest and have infinite patience, sometimes dogging a victim for years, never letting him rest or relax, until finally finishing him off.

INFERNAL GUARDIAN

Legends had long told of a vast treasure hidden in these very mountains, and now Bristol was certain he had found it. He'd kept an ear on the gossip, and when a half-mad old man had stumbled into the tavern on the trade-route, raving about caves and treasure, he had been the only one who heeded it. Out in the darkness where disbelieving Tavern-goers had cast him away, Bristol had waylaid the old man and searched his belongings. Sure enough, he'd found a badly scrawled map depicting these mountains with the location marked.

After disposing of the body, Bristol had made preparations and quietly left before the old mans remains could be found. Now, two hard weeks of travel later, he had reached the spot marked on the grimy scrap of parchment. Though it had been more than a month, the trail was still clear, and made his search for the entrance to the caverns all too easy - the madman hadn't even attempted to disguise the route of his exit! Bristol rubbed his hands together gleefully before lighting his small lantern and descending into the subterranean darkness.

After an interminable trip, and about 3 short rest stops, Bristol came around a bend and was struck full in the face by the reek of musty cloth and decaying meat. He gagged at the stench, but his greed knew no bounds as he forced himself to stagger forward toward the smell. He finally fetched up against what was obviously a man-carved doorway, and gasped, despite the strong odor, at what he saw within.

The roughhewn chamber was dominated by a large trestle table, covered entirely with the remains of a feast, long rotten and decayed. The bones of some medium-sized animals were scattered all over the floor, suggesting that this was the sometime lair of a large beast. Bristol clutched at his weapons apprehensively, but



nothing seemed to suggest that the beast was still in residence.

However, it was neither the bones nor the feast which caught his attention. Along every wall were decayed chests overflowing with gold and gems of every sort. Finely wrought weapons and armor, jewelry to astound kings, and the remains of once rich clothes caught the faint light from his lantern. One particular beauty caught his eye – a ring with a ruby the size of a robin's egg, and he stumbled into the room toward it. It was not until he had crossed half the distance to the treasure that he noticed the swirling darkness coalescing behind him...

Statistics:

ST	11	WP	10	Ref	8
AG	8	Wit	8	Aim	n/a
TO	9	MA	1	KD	10
EN	10	Soc	1	KO	14
HT	n/a	Per	n/a	Move	15

Combat Proficiency: 6, CP 14.

Infernal Guardians are demon-like spirits summoned by wizards to guard places of importance. They appear formless, but are quite solid. They are vaguely man-like in shape, although they wither and blend into the darkness as if they were themselves made from it.

An Infernal Guardian uses no weapons, only grappling and wrestling. They always attack, and are utterly relentless, fighting on until their opponent has perished, vanquished them, or has left the area they are bound to. They have a Wrestling Proficiency of 6, and weigh 244 lbs. Once a victim is pinned, the dark fingers of the infernal guardian began strangling. This acts as a bludgeoning blow to the neck (area IV.4); the Infernal Guardian's DR when strangling is ST-2, or 9. No roll is used for this attack. Those being strangled should roll a contest of ST/TN 6 with the creature. Victory means that the victim is no longer pinned, but held (see TROS core rules).

Whenever possible, Infernal Guardians execute their attacks unexpectedly and from the darkness and shadows. The target of such an attack – unless very alert – must roll a surprise check in order to defend on the first round. Subsequent rounds are handled normally.

SUMMON INFERNAL GUARDIAN

Spell of Many

CTN = 8 (casting time = 8 hours)

T) 3; R) 1; V) 2 (The demon takes solid form, weighing 244 lbs); **D) 0** (Instantaneous, made permanent); **L) 2** (2+1+1-2)

Vagaries: Conquer 2, Summoning 2, Imprisonment 2

Effects: Control 2 compels the demon to kill anything coming into the area it is bound to (although it is aware and resentful of this); Summon Demon 2, of course, summons the demon; and Imprison Demon 2 binds the demon to the location.

An Infernal Guardian's only weaknesses are fire and steel. If attacked by weapons not made of steel or dripping fire, they have natural armor to the value of 6 (iron is almost as effective, and only has to deal with an AV of 2). If they are dealt a killing blow, they do not die, but disincorporate for a brief time to recover. This time may be anywhere from 10 minutes to an hour (1d6 x 10 minutes). To permanently destroy an infernal guardian the killing blow must come from a combination of both fire and steel. Infernal Guardians do not bleed, nor do they accrue Pain penalties (though Shock does apply as normal).

Sorcerers have used Infernal Guardians for ages, but very little is known of them, because so few who wander into their domains survive. They are bound within a given area, whether it is a castle, a cave, or a circle drawn on the ground. Once imprisoned in that area, the physical enclosure no longer matters. Infernal Guardians will attack and attempt to kill by strangulation any living creature that enters the area; as such, they are not often used to protect populated areas (or if they are, the area does not remain populated for long). If they are ever somehow freed, they will seek out the sorcerer who bound them and attempt to kill them.



MERE

It is with a sad and weary heart that I pen this letter to you, uncle. I beg you, sit down, and please prepare yourself for something of a shock – your beloved niece, my sister Kristen has died.

Forgive me for my bluntness, but I know not how to soften such a blow. In truth, I am still somewhat in shock myself, but affairs here do not allow me the leisure to travel to Cynrithmeir in person to bring you this news. I would that I could however, for the manner of her passing was unnatural, and you must forgive this unbelievable account, which I attest as the truth, nothing more and nothing less.

Scarce a week ago, Kristen was as hale and full of health as one could wish. Eagerly planning her coming-of-age party, she was as effervescent as always, as I'm sure you recall her. On Wednesday morning, she complained a little of having slept poorly, but I put it down to having eaten too soon before bed, and discounted the affair. Regardless, it took her but an hour to recover, and soon she was her usual self.

On Thursday, I noticed her looking a little peaked, and commented on the same. She responded that she had enjoyed another restless night, and that in fact she was feeling a tad sore about her midriff, as if she had fallen and bruised her ribcage. I must sadly report that I still did not take the matter seriously, and merely assumed that she was overexcited over her upcoming party, so that evening I supervised her repast personally, ensuring that there was nothing that could cause sleeplessness, then tucked her into bed early and waited by her bedside until I observed she was quite asleep, before slipping from the room and going about the affairs of the estate.

On Friday morning she failed to appear at the customary time for us to break our fast, which we do together every day at the same time. I sent a servant to summon her, and it was nearly half an hour before she appeared, pale and looking as though she had not slept in days. Furthermore, she complained of extreme pain in her ribcage. I undertook to examine her myself, and was taken aback to find

bruising to her upper chest, which I was quite confident had not been present the night before. Furthermore, she appeared

extremely pale and febrile. I assumed, as I'm sure you would yourself, that she was sickening for something, so I sent Kristen back to her room, and had the cook send up some soup fortified with brandy. Throughout the day I looked in on her myself, making sure she slept and recuperated. That evening, I ensured a large fire was built (despite it being mid summer), and burned the customary incenses and fragrances to scare out the infection.

It was with some trepidation that I entered Kristen's bed chamber on Saturday morning. To my horror, I found her too weak to even stand, her entire body wracked with shivers and, when I pulled back the bed clothes, covered from neck to belly with black and purple bruises, as if some heavy weight had been rested upon her breast for the entire night. I allowed my affairs to lapse that day and sat by her bedside, personally feeding her tonics and applying unguents. She appeared to rally a little, but was still most grievously ill at the end of the day when I departed to make my evening repast and catch a few hours of sleep.

On impulse, I thought to sleep late and come upon Kristen in the early hours of the morning, to check on how well she was sleeping and whether the ointments, tonics and fragrances had worked their charms upon her. At three of the clock I stole to her chamber, and poked my head through the door. It was at this point that I came upon the source of her distress – you must mark my words, uncle, for I can scarce credit them myself, but the evidence of mine own eyes forces me to believe.

The bedclothes had been pulled back, and a *thing* was sitting upon fair Kristen's chest. It was boy sized, bipedal, but with red eyes, huge ears and rough brown skin. It crouched, perched upon your niece who was moaning softly in distress. The creature was licking at her face and neck, and I fancied I could see a fine mist flowing from her opened mouth into its cavernous maw. I now believe that this mist was dear Kristen's own life being sucked from her to satiate the appetite of the creature. I must ashamedly report that I stood there for some time, horrified but transfixed by the scene I saw before me and seemingly unable to act.

Finally, I found my voice, and shouted with horror at the creature, which started suddenly, appar-





ently not having been aware of my observation. Drawing my blade I leapt forward, but as I crossed the room I saw Kristen's chest collapse as her face relaxed and I knew she had found merciful peace at last. I clove down upon the creature, but it was swift, leaping aside and avoiding my blade as it darted for the open window. I hacked at it as it crossed the sill, and managed only to sever its small curled tail, rather like a pigs, before it vanished into the night.

That was three days ago. I still do not know what kind of creature it was who took Kristen from us. I firmly believe that whatever manner of creature it was, it somehow visited upon her each night, draining her very life from her to feed itself. May the Three-Become-One I will never see the creature again. I enclose with this missive its tail, perhaps your physicians can make more sense of it than I have been able to.

-Your beloved nephew:

Statistics:

ST	2	WP	3	Ref	7
AG	12	Wit	3	Aim	n/a
TO	2	MA	4	KD	7
EN	4	Soc	3	KO	3
HT	2	Per	8/4 special	Move	8 /
24 sprint					

Combat Proficiency: 0, CP 7.

Vagaries: Movement 2, Conquer 2 (SP 12)

Often thought simple fables or stories to frighten children, the Mere is in fact a demonic spirit from the other world that kills folk slowly by draining their very life from them. Because of the weakness of the spirit, it only attacks



at night while the victim is asleep, a process that weakens the victim and gives them horrible dreams; in fact, it is this side effect that gave rise to the term “nightmare”.

Physically, the Mere is a small imp-like creature, standing about four feet high with leathery brown skin, large pointed ears and red eyes. It has a very long forked tongue that is almost prehensile and is used to repeatedly lick the victim while feeding; the saliva of the creature is absorbed through the skin and acts as a mild sedative, ensuring that the victim remains asleep during the attack (roll Per/16 to wake up while being fed on). Mere are generally very observant creatures – they have a PER score of 8, but while feeding on a victim their PER drops to 4 as they put all of their concentration into draining the victim's life force. This makes it easiest to sneak up on a Mere while it is feeding.

The Mere attacks by entering the bedroom of the victim at night and perching on the victim's chest. It then begins to lick the victim, sending them into a deep, haunted sleep while it slowly drains their life energy. The Mere must feed for a minimum of 4 hours each night, and at the end of that time, the victim is drained one point from each of his or her Temporal Attributes. The Mere will return every night, further draining the victim until one Temporal Attribute is reduced to zero, at which time the victim dies. The Mere may gain entry through the use of its Movement vagary (ignoring aging) to open latches, manipulate locks, and so on. The only sure way to prevent a Mere from attacking a victim is to put them in a room without windows, or physically watch over the victim all night, however in this case the Mere will attempt to use its Conquer magic to put the watcher(s) to sleep.

Mere are not particularly adept at physical combat, and will always attempt to flee, attacking only as a last resort. They are surprisingly swift and agile, however, and gain a bonus of +3 dice to all evasive actions. These will be put to good use to dart through an open door or window and escape into the night if discovered.

Victims who escape the clutches of a Mere for even a single night are free from further attacks by the same Mere (as it has gone on and located a new victim). Any lost Temporal Attribute points will return at a rate of one point per week.

THE ETERNAL ONES

Farl dragged his feet wearily, dripping blood. The battle had been fierce, but he would never have set out if he didn't have confidence in his ability to slay man and demon alike. The light ahead grew stronger, surely indicating that the prize was near.

The tunnel opened up into a large cavern. Tables and chairs had been carved from the ice and stone itself, most notably a large stone throne in the center. On it sat a woman the likes of which Farl had never seen. She was beautiful and strong, fully eight feet tall, but her skin was a deep blue, like the evening sky between sunset and darkness. She was stark naked, clad only in a sheen of frost, but the cold seemed not to bother her. Clearly, she had found the prize.

He strode towards her confidently.

“I am Farl. I have bested the challenges and come to claim what is mine!” He declared fiercely.

The woman smiled a cold smile, and gestured to her left, towards a small alcove off the main room.

Farl almost broke into a run towards it, as anticipation seized him. Inside the alcove bubbled a tiny fountain – just a trickle of red fluid flowing into a carved stone bowl, but he knew from the legends what it was.

“The blood of the Gods! At last, I shall have immortality!”

He was so filled with elation that he failed to notice the blue skinned woman step behind him until her heavy club crashed down on his shoulder, shattering it. He tumbled to the floor, almost too dazed to hear her final words before she brought the carved bone weapon down upon his head.

“Did you seriously think I would share it, fool?”

Sample NPC (pre- Gods Blood) Statistics:

ST	4	WP	5	Ref	5
AG	5	Wit	5	Aim	4
TO	5	MA	4	KD	4
EN	4	Soc	3	KO	7
HT	3	Per	4	Move	6

Combat Proficiency: 8-10, CP 13-15

Missile Proficiency: 4-5, MP 8-9

Vagaries: None (not gifted)



Sample NPC (post- Gods Blood) Statistics:

ST	6	WP	6	Ref	6
AG	7	Wit	6	Aim	6
TO	7	MA	5	KD	6
EN	6	Soc	4	KO	10
HT	5	Per	5	Move	9

Combat Proficiency: 8-10, CP 14-16**Missile Proficiency: 4-5, MP 10-11****Vagaries: 2-3 Points; SP 14 (spells of one), 18 (spells of three), 22 (spells of many)**

It is said that in the dark places of the earth where the gods still sleep, one can find places where their blood still flows; eternally bleeding from wounds suffered in the great wars, trickling out from ancient rocks in a red-black stream. Legend has it that drinking from these springs of the Gods grants agelessness and great power to one who can survive the journey to find it. However, unknown to those who seek it, this power comes at a great price: Those who do not die a horrible, lingering death upon drinking the god's blood find that their "immortality" and even their daily existence is solely dependent on being able to drink it fresh every day.

Empowered by the blood of fallen gods, these immortal warriors rank among the greatest fighters that Odeon has ever produced. Each set out in search of ultimate power, and instead found a tortured existence deep within the bowels of the earth. Most have been driven insane by loneliness and their insatiable addiction (which drives them to kill any who come seeking the blood for themselves).

Eternal Ones are unaffected by heat, cold, age or sickness, and no longer require any form of sustenance other than the God's Blood. They gain +2 to all temporal and +1 to all mental attributes. Their blood is also considered gifted, and as such they may begin to learn vagaries, and utilize sorcery (and even sorcery cannot age them). Their immortality only extends to agelessness and immunity from disease or sickness however – Eternal Ones may still be slain. Additionally, if a pint of the God's blood is not consumed every day following the first taste, the Eternal One will immediately die, in a great deal of agony. The blood does not keep for longer than 24 hours, so must be constantly taken from its immediate

source, making the consumption of the God's blood a rather unfortunate error in most cases...

WALKING DEAD

"So this is the tomb of Ghar-khan, is it?" I asked our guide.

"It is, young master, it is. Here they buried the old murderer, along with the bodies of all those he killed."

"Why would they do a thing like that?"

"So that their screams might torment him in the afterlife... and to protect his tomb from intruders like us."

"How could the dead do that?"

"You'll see, young master, but I'll not be going down there with you. I'll be taking my payment right here."

Having passed the ratty little man two Farrenshire shillings, my sword-brothers and I pulled the old iron door open and went inside. All around us lay the half-rotten corpses of dead men, intermixed with the sticky-looking bones of human skeletons. Some of the dead – the freshest, I supposed – looked to have died scratching at the iron door behind us. The others...all the others...seemed to be scratching at them...

"Garet – hold the door open," I told our youngest companion at the back, and began the short walk from the door to the stone coffin at the far end of the tomb. The light from my lantern flickered off of the still wet cadavers nearest the doors.

"Hey Marek," Garet called to me, "Why are there juicy bodies in a tomb that's been locked up for 57 years?"

I would have answered him, except that when I turned back toward the exit I saw a pair of maggot-covered hands grip the iron door and slam it shut on the poor boy, leaving his lower half to fall with a splash in the tomb's belly. He died first, he died fastest.

Then the dead rose around us, soundlessly and without malice coming up from all sides. They fought without arms, without heads, without fear. I prayed the Merciful Hand that I would not be joining them in the slaughter of the next poor fools to seek treasure here...



DECAY LEVEL FOR WALKING DEAD

The TO of a zombie or skeleton directly corresponds to its level of decay. The freshly dead are padded by muscle and sinew, and are rather difficult to kill. Ancient skeletal remains, however, are brittle at best. This (optionally) affects the usefulness of certain weapon types against different kinds of walking dead. The TO (decay level) of a zombie or skeleton can be set by plot considerations, the Seneschal's whim, or by rolling 1d6.

TO (d6) Mods	Decay Level	Damage
1	Ancient bones	Bludgeoning +2 Dam
2	Dry bones	Bludgeoning +1 Dam
3	Juicy, stringy bones	N/A
4	Gross flesh & bones	N/A
5	Quite rotten	Cutting +1 Dam
6	Fresh cadaver	Cutting +2 Dam

Statistics:

ST	6	WP	1-6	Ref	4
AG	2	Wit	6	Aim	3
TO	*	MA	0	KD	4
EN	10	Soc	0	KO	n/a
HT	3	Per	5	Move	9

Combat Proficiency: 4-6, CP 8-10

**See Table "Decay Level for Walking Dead, above.*

The walking dead are not simply cadavers animated with the Movement Vagary of Magic—they are cursed souls, doomed to an eternity in a rotting body. They seem soulless and passionless, but this is not the case. Instead they bear a desire to reclaim the life and flesh that they have lost, and rend the living bit-from-juicy-bit to do so.

A number of important game mechanics surround the walking dead:

The souls of the walking dead cannot be killed or destroyed except by banishment (although this is relatively easy to do – banishing three walking dead is the same as banishing one minor spirit). Their physical forms may be destroyed by fire or by dismemberment, although a severed hand will continue to grip, crawl, scratch, etc.

Because their physical forms are quite dead, they feel no pain and never bleed

(Shock and Pain modifiers from cutting and bludgeoning attacks are all reduced to 1/3, representing the physical damage caused but not the agony of a wound; make no Blood Loss rolls). Piercing attacks can pin a member of the walking dead, but never cause the right kind of actual structural damage to put one out of commission (no Shock, Pain, or BL from puncturing attacks; roll a contest of ST with any walking dead you've successfully stuck to keep them pinned, TN=13-your WP). Beyond this, they are tireless and will follow prey forever, unless bound to a certain area or greater task.

Gifted Characters wishing to create their own Walking Dead (a dark thing to do, to say the least), must imprison a spirit into a dead body. This can be done by imprisoning someone's spirit into their body before they die (and then killing them), summoning a spirit and imprisoning it into a chosen body, or by otherwise imprisoning an "available" spirit into a host body. Unless the Sorcerer in question wishes a particularly special zombie, only a "minor" spirit need be used.

SPELL: CREATE WALKING DEAD (FROM A LIVING SUBJECT)

Spell of Many (Ritual)

CTN = 11 (casting time: 11 hours)

T: 3; R: 1; V: 3 (2000 lbs, assumes the caster is creating as many Walking dead as his MA);
D: 0 (Instantaneous, made permanent – see Sorcery and the Fey); **L: 4** (3+1+1+1-2)

Vagaries: Sculpture 3, Movement 1, Conquer 3, Imprison 1

Effects: Composition 3 (holds the body together), Animation 1 (animates the body), Control 3 (allows the sorcerer to command the zombie), and Imprison Spirits 1 (traps the spirit into the body – the inclusion of a spirit allows the zombie to carry out orders instead of being manipulated like a puppet action-for-action).



BOOK SEVEN:

TRADITIONAL

ADVERSARIES

When we were writing this book, we avoided using certain well known “traditional” fantasy foes because they have been well covered in other Role Playing Games, and besides – we didn’t think they fit terribly well into Weyrth, the official campaign world for *The Riddle of Steel*. Our vision of this game isn’t necessarily anybody else’s however, and we know that some of you are going to be upset if some of those traditional enemies are left out, so here are a small selection of well known faces, to use in your *Riddle of Steel* games if you have a mind to.

GENIE

A vicious storm had blown the caravan far off course, and the persistent winds had stripped the canvas from the wagons themselves, forcing the pioneers to hide beneath the bodies of the wagons or hunker down in the lee of a dune and hope the storm would not bury them.

For thirty hours, the storm ravaged the small troop and when it at last passed, Philippe Gusalt found himself alone in the endless desert. Judging his course from the sun, he strode to the south, knowing that it was nearly 300 miles to the nearest known settlement and that without food or water he was unlikely to make it. Giving up was not in his nature however, and anyway, it was better than simply lying down and dying.

For two days, Philippe trekked across the desert, growing steadily weaker until he happened across the forlorn remains of an ancient attempt to cross the desert – the shattered remains of a wagon complete with the sand stripped and sun bleached skeletons of two wagoners and three horses. Falling on the wreckage with furious desperation, he discovered a chest of coins – useless so far out here in the

desert – along with a small bag of rotten dates and a gourd, tightly stoppered and sealed with wax. Desperately hoping for water, but prepared to accept wine or even vinegar, Philippe hastily smashed the top off the bottle and upended it above his mouth. Instead of liquid, a chalky white smoke poured from the bottle and coalesced before his eyes into the towering figure of a man dressed in flowing white robes, complete with a turban and a wicked scimitar. The faintly translucent man bowed to Philippe and smiled. “Master? What is thy bidding. You may ask of me three wishes.”

Philippe gaped at the man. Like most children he had grown up with tales of genies and leprechauns that could grant wishes, but had always believed them to be nothing more than fairy tales. Overwhelmed with the impossibility of it all, and nearly delirious with thirst and hunger, he quickly blurted out “take me someplace with food and water!” and with a flash, they vanished.

When his eyes cleared Philippe looked around and found himself in a large tent, surrounded by seemingly hundreds of platters of rich food, flagons of wine and mead, and jeweled plates and cutlery. He fell on the food with a purpose, gorging himself on so much red meat and blood wine that he began to feel giddy. He was stuffing gold platters and emerald encrusted goblets into his breeches when suddenly the entrance flap to the tent was thrust aside and a smiling wedding party entered. Philippe halted and stared in horror at the now frowning guests. The groom and his attendants took one look at the ravaged meal and missing place settings and snarled, drawing their blades and leaping at Philippe with murder in their eyes.

Philippe shrieked, dropping most of his booty and running for the rear of the tent, where he spied the smiling genie holding open a tent flap for him. “Someplace else!” he screamed, “Take me somewhere else, quickly!” and grinning, the genie complied.

Looking about, Philippe found himself standing in a large circular disk constructed of woven wicker, high above a chilly mountain range. Sharing the area were a number of massive white oval boulders and Philippe could see no way down from the giddy heights. Furi-



ous, he turned to the smiling genie behind him and shouted “Where am I now?”

Why, you are in the nest of a *Rochaven*, master” The genie replied. “In fact, I think I see it in the distance. What a pity it’s not going to appreciate your disturbance of its eggs. And that’s two wishes. One more and I’m free. We can be off any time you’re ready...” He grinned evilly, and Philippe began to realize the depths of the trouble he was in.

“And what happens when I make my third wish?” Philippe asked, one eye on the rapidly approaching bird, which was easily as large as a house and carrying an entire bullock in its claws.

“Then I am free, master” the genie replied, applying just a hint of sarcasm to the final word. “No longer will I be bound to the dictates of pathetic mortals such as yourself, but free to truly live and take what I desire from this world. For thousands of years I have waited for someone to ask of me three wishes, I had all but given up when by the merest chance you stumbled across me. I was old when Xanar Shard-Finder was a mere babe, and my powers have grown. Now this world shall learn to fear me when, finally, I am the master. Now ask your wish and let us be done, fool.”

“Then I wish I had never found you” replied Philippe. “And may you rot in the middle of the sea of sand.” He smiled at the look of sudden horror that crossed the genies face as his vision blacked out once more...

A vicious storm had blown the caravan far off course, and the persistent winds had stripped the canvas from the wagons themselves, forcing the pioneers to hide beneath the bodies of the wagons or hunker down in the lee of a dune and hope the storm would not bury them.

For thirty hours, the storm ravaged the small troop and when it at last passed, Philippe Gusalt found himself alone in the endless desert. Judging his course from the sun, he strode to the south, knowing that it was nearly 300 miles to the nearest known settlement and that without food or water he was unlikely to make it. Giving up was not in his nature

however, and anyway, it was better than simply lying down and dying.

For two days, Philippe trekked across the desert, growing steadily weaker, until

he eventually succumbed. As his eyes closed for the last time, he fancied he could hear a faint shriek of anguish from somewhere nearby, but he was just too tired to investigate it. Perhaps after a small sleep...

Statistics:

ST	n/a	WP	10	Ref	n/a
AG	n/a	Wit	12	Aim	n/a
TO	n/a	MA	10	KD	n/a
EN	n/a	Soc	6	KO	n/a
HT	n/a	Per	12	Move	30

Combat Proficiency: 10 (Scimitar), CP 18

Vagaries: All at 3 (see below). SP special (see below)

Usually dismissed as fables or children’s stories, Genies are in fact ancient gifted spirits trapped in our world as punishment due to transgressions against powerful other world entities in ancient times.

A Genie is created when a gifted human or fey draws attention from an extremely powerful entity (usually beyond greater demons and the like). This is often the result of the gifted attempting to shortcut the path to power, and attempting to drain spiritual energy from the other world. These individuals are given the ultimate power they seek, but their desire is perverted – giving them the power but putting limitations on its use so as to teach them a lesson. The spirit is bound to an earthly object, often a lamp or a ring and forced to serve whoever releases it from its container, and they must honestly answer any question put to them by their master. Genies may use any vagary at any level, and are considered to have a SP of 30 at all times – this refreshes fully every round. Additionally, aging is meaningless to an immortal spirit, so aging rolls never need to be made. However, the genie may never use its magic on itself or to benefit itself in any way – magic may only be used at the direct request of the genie’s current master.

There is only one way for the genie to escape this form of eternal servitude, and that is for a master to actually ask three wishes of the genie. This seldom occurs however, because the process of becoming a genie warps and twists the mind of the victim (assuming they were not warped and dominated by a lust for power anyway) and eternity in a



small lamp can do funny things to the sanity of a being also – the result is that genies are capricious and wicked, twisting all wishes so as to obey the word of the wish, but never the intent. It is almost impossible to make a wish of a genie that it cannot pervert in some way, usually to its own amusement and/or the detriment of the master. The genie will usually try to structure the wishes so that their masters are forced to use all three simply to save themselves, thus freeing the genie from its ages long imprisonment.

There are no real limits to the power of a genie, save the limits imposed by magic itself; thus a genie may never reverse time, restore life to the dead, make a creature younger, or create matter from nothing, but other than those limits just about anything is possible. There are few who receive gifts from a genie that do not come to regret them however, and Seneschals are encouraged to be as devious and underhanded as possible when adjudicating characters' wishes.

Genies have no physical form, and thus may not be attacked or involve themselves in battle. They are susceptible to mental/magical effects, but may use all 30 SP dice in counter-effects every round, so such attacks are seldom successful (the genie may not retaliate unless given permission by the current master, which of course counts as a wish). While inside their container, genies are utterly powerless, and returning them to the container is as simple as re-stopping the lamp or jug, or rubbing the ring, thus genies are careful to ensure that their master will not be able to get out of whatever trouble they have put him into without further assistance from the genie.

HOMUNCULUS

Pleased to meet you, Tiberius Damarisk is the name. I'm a bounty hunter; a good one too. Folk have heard my name from Stahl right down through Cynrithmeir and Gelure. If you want someone found, I'm your man. If you want him dead, well, as long as the money's good, I'm still your man. I'm not too picky with my morals, see. Just so as we understand each other.

So I'm told you want to know about the Ouestenreich job. Well, about six months ago this man comes to me with a bag of coins – good Xanarian ones too – and starts telling me about this man he wants killed. Reckons the guy is a sorcerer too. Now, just like I can see in your eyes, I never used to believe in all that magic tomfoolery neither, but life as a 'hunter really opens your eyes, and you wouldn't believe half of the things I've seen, so I was pretty much prepared to go with the whole "sorcerer" thing. Plus, it meant I got away with charging him triple, which he seemed pretty willing to pay.

Now, I figured that if the mark really was a sorcerer, stands to reason he would have some kind of magical protection, right? So, I figured that walking up to his house and knocking on the door was out, and similarly sneaking into his place at night wasn't likely to work neither. I figured the best idea would be to lure him out of his place, and kill him somewhere public, where he couldn't use his magic (folk tend to be a bit sensitive about things like that). I had an old buddy in the Stahl army make me up a fake "dead or alive" warrant, so as to smooth over the local authorities when I actually did the deed, and headed off to find my mark.

Turns out he wasn't expecting a thing. Now, I don't know what he did to my employer to warrant being killed – I don't tend to ask questions like that – but he certainly wasn't giving out the aura of a man afraid for his life. When I arrived at the town, he was wandering around the market looking at vegetables, calm as you please. It was pretty easy really, I just stood behind a stall and took his head off as he walked around the corner, never even had time to blink – not too much chance of nasty spells there! I had to fight my way out of the market of course; the guards weren't too happy with me, but once I showed them the warrant and a pouchful of coins it smoothed things over real nice.

I nabbed his head for my employer, but figured that since I had been told he lived alone, I may as well go and investigate his tower. That was my mistake – never ever go beyond the mission scope, just do the deed and get out of there. I had already been paid well enough anyway. But, like a sap I let my curiosity and greed get the



better of me and I headed up there to see what I could find.

I was pretty wary of any lingering spells or other kinds of magic that might go off if I was to break in the door, so I crept in through a window in the kitchen and started to search through the tower. It was full of odds and ends, the kind of strange bric-a-brac you would expect an old guy like him to have collected over the course of a lifetime, but it was in some kind of lab that I found the freakiest thing. It was all full of flasks and bottles, stuff being heated and turned into steam and fed through funny little pipes, you know the kind of thing I mean. Anyway, standing on the table, glaring at me as I enter the room, was the guy I just killed; only he was only about a foot tall! Now that's magic, son. As I walk into the room he starts screaming at me, real nasty stuff and then he starts getting that look in his eye. Now, I once saw a sorcerer kill a man by making his head turn inside out, and when he did it he had that same look in his eye, so I knew he was starting to try to cast some kind of spell.

Well sir, I ran across that room and hurled my sword at him as I moved. It was the throw that saved me I think; just before it hit him I started to feel this itch down my arms and legs and he got this real satisfied look on his little face, but then the blade sheared him in two and that was pretty much that.

I made sure the place was fair burning before I left, you can be sure of that. Damn itch never has gone away though, no matter how much I scratch it. I lie awake at nights, rubbing myself like crazy and wondering, just wondering what might have happened if my sword had missed. I guess I'm lucky in that I'll never know.

Statistics:

ST	special	WP	special	Ref	special
AG	special	Wit	special	Aim	special
TO	special	MA	special	KD	special
EN	special	Soc	special	KO	special
HT	special	Per	special	Move	special

Combat Proficiency: varies/special (see below)

Vagaries: special (see below)

Many sorcerers are Weires, and attract a Familiar – an animal companion they can bond with, sharing thoughts, experiences and bodies. For some sorcerers however, this is not enough. Such wizards often spend years in research and experimentation, until they manage to develop the spell (below) to create a homunculus – a smaller version of the sorcerer created from his own flesh and sharing many of his properties, as well as providing a powerful benefit when it comes to the casting of spells.

A homunculus is created during a twelve hour long ritual, during which the sorcerer must bleed 5 pints of blood and contribute a finger (this finger may never be grown back, even through the use of magic). This places a practical limit on the number of homunculi a sorcerer could ever create at 10, however not more than one may exist at a time anyway, and a fingerless sorcerer would find life tricky (to say the least), so this limit is rarely if ever reached.

The newly created Homunculus is a foot tall, and created with 0 in all of its attributes. However, the sorcerer may elect to sacrifice some of his attributes to improve those of the homunculus. As no attribute may be left at 0, the sorcerer must sacrifice at least

CREATE HOMUNCULUS

Spell of Many

CTN = 12 (casting time = 12 hours)

T) 3; R) 1; V) 2; D) 0 (Instantaneous, made permanent); L) 6 (3+1+1+1+1+1-2)

Vagaries: Sculpture 3, Growth 3, Conquer 3, Vision 3, Summoning 2, Imprisonment 2

Effects: Intricacy 3, Concept 3 and Dividing 3 allow the sorcerer to manipulate the blood and flesh of his own body to grow a small duplicate (Clairvoyance 3 is required to see and thus manipulate the material on the molecular level). Summoning Spirits 2 allows the sorcerer to bring forth a portion of his own soul, and then use Implant 3 to insert it in the newly formed homunculus body, and Imprison Spirits 2 to lock it there.



one point from all ten attributes (and cannot create a homunculus at all if any of his attributes were already at 1). This sacrifice is permanent, but the attributes may be raised again normally through experience. This sacrifice may only be done during the creation ritual and adds +2 to the relevant attribute for every point sacrificed by the sorcerer.

E.g. Ghandul creates a homunculus through the process described above. He decides that he wants the little duplicate of himself to be extremely strong, so he sacrifices 2 points of his own strength (reducing it from 6 to 4), to give the homunculus a strength of 4 – although it's only a foot tall, it's as strong as him! He also sacrifices 2 points of health to give the little creature a HT of 4, and gives it a score of 2 in all other attributes by sacrificing 1 point from each.

The homunculus is created without the ability to cast spells on it's own (although the sorcerer can cast spells through it, see below), but if the sorcerer makes a permanent sacrifice of dice from his SP, the homunculus will gain +2SP for every point sacrificed, and will then be able to cast spells itself – it starts with 1 level in all vagaries the sorcerer has at least one level in. It also has all of the weapon proficiencies of the sorcerer, but at half the sorcerer's skill level in all cases. The homunculus also has all skills the sorcerer possesses, at -2 SR (i.e. two higher). The homunculus is in all ways its own creature, with its own statistics and personality (although initially the personality is a copy of the sorcerer's, it may change over time) and it even has its own SA's – it begins with Passion: Love for <the sorcerer> at 5, and may pick two more SA's that each start at 0. The homunculus from this point on may only increase its attributes, vagaries, skills and proficiencies by earning and spending its own SA's.



Like a familiar, the sorcerer may share bodies with the homunculus, switching back and forth with a moments thought. When inhabiting the body of the homunculus, its own personality is suppressed, however if the homunculus ever has a Wit score high than the sorcerer, its personality becomes the dominant one of the pair. When inhabiting the body of the homunculus, the sorcerer has his own mental attributes, skills, SP and vagaries, but uses the homunculus' temporal attributes and weapon proficiencies. He may cast spells using his own SP, but both sorcerer and homunculus still take half the aging each.

The biggest benefit of a homunculus is that whenever the sorcerer ages through the use of a spell, half of the months aged instead go to the homunculus, allowing the sorcerer to age only half as much from every spell.



However, if the homunculus can cast spells, half of its aging goes to the sorcerer! The other benefit of a homunculus is that the sorcerer may transfer permanently to the body of the homunculus if his real body should ever die. Life as a 1 foot tall duplicate of your own previous body might not be easy, but it's (presumably) a lot better than death!

LICH

Jake and me, we was throwing back ales down at the Proud Stallion, like we do all regular of an evening. He was pretty drunk 'n funny, falling down and all, course I hold my drink better'n him so I was just fine, thank you very much. We was causing a bit of mischief – nothing serious, just silly stuff like knocking over folks drinks or kicking their chairs out from under them as they sat down. Jake was wearing his sword, y'see, and I had my bow strung so nobody said a thing; they just sat and stared and pretended to laugh when they sensed we wanted 'em to.

It was that damn old cripple in the back of the bar what caused all this. He was grey and toothless, and legless in more ways than one, if you catch my drift. Bought us more ale, he did, and beckoned us over for a chat. The All Seeing Eye knows his breath was worse than his face, but free ale is free ale so we gave him a few minutes.

That's when he starts asking us all about magic, and what we had to say about it. Now Jake and me, we's good Three-and-One fearing boys, and don't have no stock with them sorcerors and wizards and stuff, and we tells the old coot that right proper. He smiles then, and starts telling us about some old boy living on the edge of town that, so he said, had been old even when the cripple himself was a boy. Now, Jake and me, we might not be the smartest folk around, but we 'aint stupid neither, and that sounded like magic to us!

Now, bravery was always something Jake and me was good at, but like I said we're not stupid and could see plain the old cripple wanted us to go and kill this old boy for him. Taking on someone who can throw spells didn't sound like a great idea to me, but when the cripple

started telling us the local tales about the wealth in the place, well, we was all dead keen to get up there and do some killin'. I suspect the fact that we was drunk as coons didn't hurt none in that decision neither. We even had a plan – I'm a pretty good shot with my bow, so Jake was going to knock on the door, all proper, and when the old boy appeared I was going to pop up and put his lights out before he could blink. Figured an arrow's faster than a spell any day of the week, we did. And if I was only to wing him, well, Jake was right there with a knife to finish the job.

So anyway, we head on up there and Jake knocks on the door like we planned. It opens up and I see this old boy standing there, so I let fly and damn if it wasn't a plumb shot – right between his eyes it were and through to the other side. Jake and me, we starts a cheering and a hollering, but then we sober up real quick when the old boy calmly reaches up and pulls out the arrow. All his nice clothes and skin and stuff seemed to just melt away and a second later Jake's standing in front of this old skeleton with an arrow in its hand looking all pissed, even without a face to have an expression, if you catch my meaning.

Jake went first, the lucky bastard. The skeleton just looks at him with those glowing red eyes and poor Jake's bones all kind of explode out of his arms 'n legs in big spikes. Guess that was about when I messed up my trousers real bad and then I musta passed out, which is presumably when it nabbed me. Been in this cage for near a week now, plenty of time to sober up and feel right sorry for myself, which I figure was its plan.

I hope it kills me quick.

Statistics:

ST	special	WP	special	Ref	special
AG	special	Wit	special	Aim	special
TO	special	MA	special	KD	special
EN	special	Soc	special	KO	special
HT	special	Per	special	Move	special

Combat Proficiency: varies/special (see below)

Vagaries: special (see below)

Many sorcerers spend vast periods of their lives researching ways to extend their life span, usually by





DECAY LEVEL CHART FOR A LICH

Lich bodies are dead, and pass through the same six stages Walking Dead do, as shown on the following table:

<i>Decay Level (TO)</i>	<i>Lasts for...</i>	<i>Damage Mods</i>
Fresh Cadaver (6)	Three months	Cutting dam +2
Quite rotten (5)	Six months	Cutting dam +1
Gross flesh & bones (4)	A year	N/A
Juicy, stringy bones (3)	A year	N/A
Dry bones (2)	Twenty years	Bludgeon dam +1
Ancient bones (1)	~ Five hundred years	Bludgeon dam +2

This progression is impossible to prevent, and is likely to go by fairly rapidly as the sorcerer continues using magic and aging himself. When his eyes have finally rotted away, the sockets are left empty, but with a faint glowing red light where the pupils used to be. The sorcerer will continue to grow more and more skeletal; once he reaches the Ancient Bones stage, the bludgeoning damage bonus increases by +1 for every one hundred years he exists, until he reaches ~500 years old, at which point the bones themselves become too brittle to hold together, and the lich will finally pass away.



TRANSFORM INTO LICH*Spell of Many***CTN** = 8 (casting time = 8 hours)**T)** 3; **R)** 0; **V)** 2; **D)** 0 (Instantaneous, made permanent); **L)** 3 (3+1+1-2)**Vagaries:** Sculpture 3, Movement 1, Imprison 2**Effects:** Composition 3 (holds the body together), Animation 1 (animates the body), Imprison Spirits 2 allows the sorcerer to imprison his own soul inside his body, so that when the body dies the soul is not released, but remains within it.

At the culmination of the ritual, the sorcerer must kill himself, and make a Wit/10 check. If no successes are rolled, then the ritual has failed and the sorcerer is dead. If even one success is rolled, then the character has become a lich.

attempting to reverse aging (or at least stop it) or transfer themselves into another person so as to keep living in a stolen body.

Some sorcerers however, research the walking dead, reasoning that if it's possible to trap a spirit into a body and animate that body, why shouldn't it be possible with one's own spirit and one's own body. Those who successfully create such a ritual become Liches.

While existing as a lich, the sorcerer is still capable of most things he could do in life. He has no HT score, feels no pain and never bleeds (Shock and Pain modifiers from cutting and bludgeoning attacks are all reduced to 1/3, representing the physical damage caused but not the agony of a wound; make no Blood Loss rolls). Piercing attacks can pin a lich, but never cause the right kind of actual structural damage to put one out of commission (no Shock, Pain, or BL from puncturing attacks). Liches may still utilize magic, and in fact most use illusion magic to disguise the fact that they are nothing but walking (and smelly, for the first year or two) corpses. The remainder of a Liches attributes remain the same as they were in life, except his TO which is determined by the above table.

"Life" as one of the undead is not terribly conducive to the stability of the mentality and sanity of an intelligent, thinking creature. Every year of unlife, a Lich must

make a Wit/10 check or permanently lose a point of Wit (this is similar to the aging rolls humans must make when they are above 40 years of age). If a liches Wit score ever reaches zero, he has been driven insane by the pressures of unlife. From this time onwards, he continues making the roll each year, except it is now a MA/10 check. When his MA reaches zero as well, the lich loses all trace of personality and magic use and simply becomes one of the Walking Dead (see the entry in Chapter 6).

Liches may not have familiars or homunculi, and such will leave them or die when a sorcerer performs the ritual to transform himself into a lich.

MEDUSA

Bruce, Glenn and I, we were inseparable as kids. When we were really young, we made wooden swords for each other and practiced fighting. We didn't know a lot about how to swing a sword back then (which was why Glenn lost a finger, but we don't talk about that much). Later the wooden swords turned into blunt metal swords and finally to real, sharp ones. After years of practicing together, we were pretty good, and complimented each other pretty well while fighting – we were quite adapt at weaving between each other in a fight, confusing our opponents, watching each others backs and each helping the



others out. We were going to be big adventurers we three, traveling together to see the whole world.

We came across the story about of the woman while staying with some tribesfolk in Sarmatov. Seems there was this strange lady who lived in a cave in the nearby hills. They said she would come down once a month or so, heavily cowed, to buy provisions. Nobody had ever seen her face but the locals had this story that she had snakes for hair and that anyone who did see her face would turn to stone. You know the kind of story – someone's cousin's friend's brother's son saw her face and was petrified once, that kind of thing.

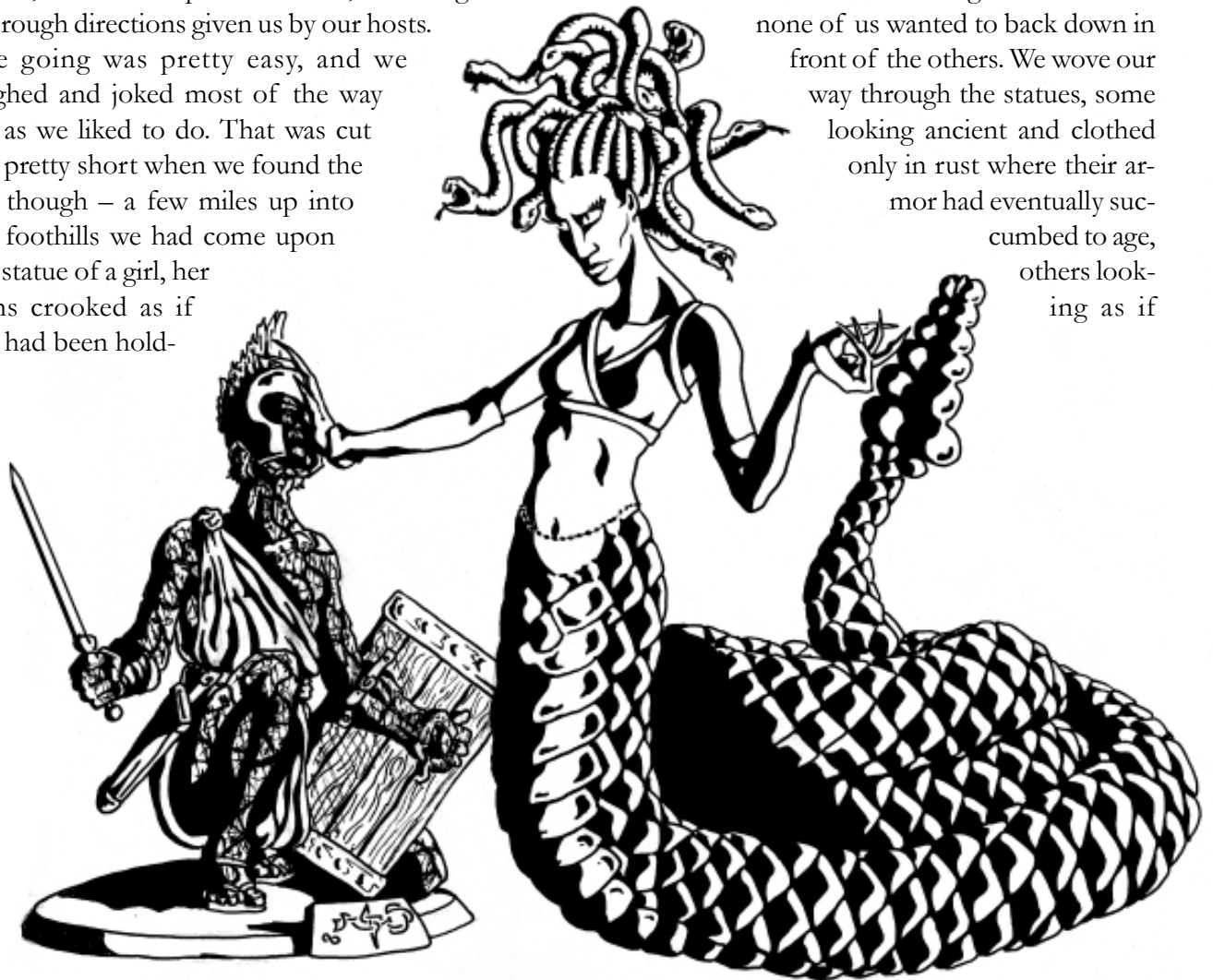
Anyway, the boys and I wanted to check this woman out. We were aiming to see the world, and this was part of the world, right? Besides, we wanted to know where she was getting the cash she was buying her food from, assuming everything the villagers had told us was true.

So, we headed up into the hills, following the rough directions given us by our hosts. The going was pretty easy, and we laughed and joked most of the way up, as we liked to do. That was cut off pretty short when we found the girl though – a few miles up into the foothills we had come upon the statue of a girl, her arms crooked as if she had been hold-

ing a baby and an expression of shock on her face. She was nude, but there were ragged remains of clothing hanging from her frame, and in the grass by her feet we found a pathetic tiny skeleton, still wrapped in rotten swaddling clothes. We didn't joke much after that, and we walked with our swords in our hands.

Further up the path, we found a couple more statues, both men. One was nude like the woman, the clothes having long since rotted away, but the other was still dressed in the rusted remains of the chain shirt he had been wearing, and still gripped a badly weathered sword in one hand. Not far away, we could see a cave entrance, so we took deep breaths and strode in, determined to put an end to this evil creature.

It's all a bit hazy after that. I'm not sure how we truly expected to be able to fight something we couldn't look at, but somehow a surplus of bravado had brought us here and none of us wanted to back down in front of the others. We wove our way through the statues, some looking ancient and clothed only in rust where their armor had eventually succumbed to age, others looking as if



they might have been petrified only the day before. It was Bruce who made the fatal mistake – a noise at the rear of the cave was enough to make him look up and before my eyes his skin washed through with grey and he stopped moving, the look of shock on his face enough to give me nightmares for life. Screaming, Glenn rushed forward, looking only at his own feet and swinging his sword wildly. With my peripheral vision, I saw the figure move toward him. She grabbed him and bent her head forwards, the hundreds of snakes she had as hair biting viciously down on his neck and face. He dropped almost soundlessly and I was the only one left. Desperate, I closed my eyes and swung my sword wildly right and left several times. I felt an impact as I hit a solid body, and then turned and fled.

I have never been back to see if I was successful in hitting the creature or not. It's pretty lonely without my friends, but I know that someday we'll be reunited when I die.

May they forgive me for abandoning them.

Statistics:

ST	4	WP	4	Ref	5
AG	5	Wit	5	Aim	5
TO	4	MA	4	KD	4
EN	6	Soc	0	KO	6
HT	4	Per	5	Move	7

Combat Proficiency: 5-8 (Dagger or similar weapon), CP 10-13

Medusas are women cursed by the fey for being overly vain about their looks. A medusa has the body of a stunningly attractive woman, but a hideous face so ugly that any person who sees it is immediately turned to stone (TO/15 to resist for a quick glimpse, TO/30 for a good look). Generous Seneschals may allow characters an AG/10 roll to avert their eyes quickly without catching sight of the medusas face.

This stony gaze is not the medusas only form of defense, however, for she also sports a head bustling with snakes where her hair should be. A favorite tactic of a medusa is to grapple an opponent, at which time her snake hair will begin to bite the head, face and neck of the opponent. The snakes attack as a separate creature with a CP of 12. This attack may not be parried,

but it may be evaded or blocked with a large enough shield or similar device. The number of combat successes determines how many bites the opponent has received. He is injected with a Hematoxic venom (see chapter 2), with a potency of 5 + the number of successes. Unlike ordinary venoms which can sometimes take a while to take effect, medusa venom is incredibly swift – move the victim up one step on the Hematoxic venom chart for every point he misses the HT/Potency roll by, and repeat the roll every ten minutes rather than every hour.

Medusas are sad, solitary creatures. They invariably remove themselves from society and live out their lives in hiding, afraid of letting others find or see them. They are not turned to stone by their own reflection as some fables claim, but they avoid looking at their reflection as they do not like to see the change that has come over them. The only way to fight a medusa is by avoiding looking at her face (looking at her reflected image in a mirror will still petrify a character), either by keeping ones eyes closed (dividing ones combat pool by three) or by making an effort to only look at her body (CP is normal, but make an AG/8 roll every exchange or accidentally glance at her face).

People turned to stone by the gaze of a medusa are petrified permanently, even magic cannot restore life to them (the spirit has moved on). Such perfectly constructed statues of human and possibly animal bodies might be worth something to an art collector, however...

MERMAID

On August 1st we set out from Port Mendaz. Our cargo was silk, destined for the well-to-do's of some of the larger cities along the cost of the 'seat. Silk's a good cargo if you can get it – it's relatively light by volume, so it doesn't play hell with your waterline and by the time you've filled the hold with boxes you've excess weight spare so the crew can take a few more personal effects and you can justify the extra weight of that not terribly flat-chested cabin "boy".

The first few weeks of the voyage were pretty uneventful. We lost a man overboard in a gale, and I



had two men over the barrel for shirking their duties, but otherwise nothing interesting. The weather was still damn hot and we were looking forward to the temperature dropping a few degrees as we sailed around the south point of the 'seat. From then on it was to be plain sailing – skirting a few reef systems along the way – and into the first port for a tasty profit. Some years they're gasping for silk so bad we don't make it past that first stop before we have to sail home with an empty hold and full wallets.

It was near Perditions Coast that the first man jumped ship. He was at the bow, cleaning the marlin figurehead and apparently, he just up and leapt into the sea. We were nowhere near land at that point, so he wasn't just trying to emigrate to Xanar, either. I questioned those near him, figuring he must have just slipped, but they all swore he had untied himself and leapt into the water, some said looking mighty pleased with himself as he did so.

Now, I don't like losing a man with no good excuse to give his widow, so it weighed pretty heavily on my mind for a time. Still, the ship was in fine trim and we could easily keep to our timetable with the loss, so I soon put it from my mind. Sadly, it turned out to only be the first.

Three days after young Nick had dived from the bow, two other men decided that one way or another ship life wasn't for them and they also jumped into the water, again miles from the nearest land and certainly out of swimming distance. Those who had seen them jump had much the same story to tell as with Nick – they simply dropped what they were doing and jumped into the water, looking for all intents and purposes to be happy about it. I ordered all men to be lashed to the railing while working the decks, and we continued to the first port. The next day, two more men untied themselves and jumped. I happened to be nearby when the second went, and I ran to the railing to see what had happened.

Looking down into the clear water, I saw staring back at me the face of an angel – she was beautiful, with the purest blonde hair streaming out behind her in the water, her full lips smiling invitingly, her ample bosom pushed against the side of the deck and her... legs... she had no legs! Where they should have been there was a long sinuous tail, wrapped in a deathgrip on my man who was flailing about in

panic trying to break the surface and catch his breath. She smiled at me, her luscious lips opening to reveal a set of teeth that would make a shark proud, and then spun, vanishing into the water so fast I could hardly believe I had seen her at all.

And then the singing started. Sweet and melodious, it echoed throughout the ship, tugging at hearts and awakening arousal in men who had not seen a woman in a month. Out on the port side of the ship, a tall spire of reef jutted from the ocean, and arrayed seductively across it were four or five of those heavenly creatures – half fish certainly, but half naked beautiful woman, and I heard my men collectively sigh and begin to run for the rails on the port side. I shouted to them, trying to break the hold these strange women had over them, but most of them gave me no heed, simply dropping what they held and leaping over the side to where more of the creatures waited to draw them into a fatal embrace beneath the waves. I could feel their song getting to me, worming its way into my head as I felt myself become aroused and I knew I wanted them. It was only with a supreme effort of will that I lashed myself to the wheel and steered the ship away from the reef. When it was safely on course, I throw my head at the mast behind me, and slipped into merciful unconsciousness.

It was several hours later when I awoke, the only soul on a triple masted schooner meant to be crewed by 50. I couldn't handle her myself, so I put down the ships dingy and rowed for land. There are still nights I wake up with that beautiful haunting song ringing in my ears, and I wonder what ever happened to my old ship.

You couldn't possibly pay me enough to make me sail out there and find out though.

Statistics:

ST	4	WP	4	Ref	4*/7**
AG	3* 9**	Wit	5	Aim	n/a
TO	5	MA	4	KD	n/a
EN	4	Soc	16	KO	7
HT	5	Per	4	Move	3*/16**

Combat Proficiency: 2*/6 (Wrestling & Pugilism), CP 6* / 13****

* Out of the water.

** In the water.



Mermaids, sometimes also known as Sirens, are the bane of ships and sea travelers everywhere. From the thighs up, they are beautiful women, usually with very long blonde or red hair, pale milky skin and perfect bodies. Their bottom third is that of a very serpentine fish, sporting a tail complete with fins.

The very sight of a mermaid is often enough to throw men into a frenzy, causing them to leap into the water, mad with desire. Resisting this requires an MA/8 roll, although the difficulty is only 5 if the character is aware of the true nature of mermaids, or has seen their teeth or what's left of other sailors who jumped in. Once the character is in the water, the mermaid will move in for an embrace, cuddling and kissing the hapless sailor just long enough to wrap her tail around him, at which point she will dive beneath the water to drown him, and then eat him, using her surprisingly large shark-like teeth.

If a mermaid fails to entice a sailor with her looks, she will pull herself up onto a rock or piece of reef protruding from the water and begin to sing. The voice of a mermaid is beautiful and melodious, and is capable of enticing men even more than her appearance. Unless one's ears are carefully plugged or blocked, anyone hearing the song of a mermaid must make a MA roll against her Soc score (16, in most cases) or head to her unless restrained somehow. Those who know the true nature of mermaids may halve this difficulty. For every additional mermaid singing in a group, the difficulty to resist the song is increased by +1.

Mermaids are evil and capricious creatures, way-laying ships and drowning sailors even when they are not hungry. A group of mermaids will often follow a ship for days, luring the occasional hapless sailor overboard before leading the ship near a reef or small island system where they can use the full power of their voices to "harvest" sailors and (usually) wreck the ship. They are incredibly vain, and have been known to leave ships alone in return for gifts of mirrors, combs and similar personal effects. Due to their nasty natures however, they are just as likely to accept the gifts and still wreck havoc on the ship.

Mermaids have no natural enemies, although they are considered a delicacy by sharks, who like to hunt them and who are im-

mune to their songs. It is whispered by some that the hair and/or scales of a mermaid may be used by an alchemist to create love potions; sensible people scoff at such fancy tales however.

MUMMY

This piece? Yes, it's quite a beauty, isn't it. Actually, there's quite a tale behind its acquisition, but I'm sure you're in a hurry, so... Oh, really? Well, I'll warn you, it is rather a long story, but if you're sure...

Very well, but don't say I didn't warn you. You won't believe it anyway. In fact I'm not sure if I even believe it, and I was there, albeit rather young at the time. Take a seat over here – no, just there, that's fine – and I'll begin.

My father was something of a famous explorer for his time – Inida'an Neso, perhaps you've heard of him? No, well, it's of no matter; he was well known for his little trips around the world, particularly Marai'ah. He would go away for eighteen months or a year at a time and return with fantastic tales of far away places, and trinkets and souvenirs that he would lavish on me in an attempt to buy my... well... let's just say he was generous with gifts when he was present.

Anyway, it was around my tenth naming day when my father planned his trip to Tez'Hamun. He had long been fascinated by their animal headed gods and *Egis dizeb nedi* – six black pyramids in the middle of the desert, thought by most to be a place of "evil". I begged for weeks to be entitled to accompany him, and for the first time in his life he acquiesced, with the condition that I travel in the kitchen caravan and not bother him unduly. Elated, I agreed and three months later we set off into the sultry southern deserts.

My father had nothing as ambitious as *Egis dizeb nedi* planned for this first foray into Tez'Hamun, but rather planned to explore the tomb of a lower ranked divine from some point in the past – I forget the exact date – who had been interred and promptly forgotten; my father had come across the information in some ancient texts, but was confident that the site of the tomb was remote enough to be uninhabited.



Several weeks journey found us at the location of the tomb, which my father and his men swiftly cracked open and began to explore. I was allowed to examine the entrance after my father and his team had moved into the tomb proper. I remember being fascinated by the damasks and the iconic depictions of animal headed men and women. There was also an inscription in a very old form of the language, which I had just been starting to learn. It was some kind of warning, but beyond my translation skills and I promptly dismissed it and snuck further into the tomb. Entering the burial chamber, I hid behind a pillar and watched my father and his men pries open a sarcophagus amid the jeweled splendor of the inhabitants' mortal wealth, locked away with him for all eternity – or at least until we arrived.

At first I thought it was some form of joke, that perhaps one of my fathers' men had snuck in here earlier and lain in wait in the sarcophagus. But the emancipated figure that sat up looked too ancient and filthy to have been one of his men. It reached up – tearing away the cloth that had been used to bind it – and grabbed one of father's men, snapping his neck with one easy movement. Someone screamed then – I think it was me – and mayhem struck; father and his men drew their blades and began to hack at the creature as it ponderously extricated itself from its coffin and stood up, casually reaching out with both hands and twisting the head off another of fathers' men. It seemed to ignore the blows raining down on it; it was so ancient there could be little left under the rags but bone and dried up skin, but it seemed eerily resistant to the weapon blows it was receiving. Two more men died in the brief tussle before my father snatched up a torch and thrust it at the creature, which immolated almost immediately, throwing its head back as if to scream but remaining utterly silent as the flames consumed it.

My father didn't travel much after that, and on the few trips he did go on he never agreed to take me. He never returned from the last one, I suppose he pushed his luck one time too many. I still have most of his belongings, of course, and yes, this is the very sarcophagus I mentioned in my tale. I can see in your face that you don't believe my story, but I swear by the All Seeing Eye that it is wholly the

truth, as far as a ten year old mind could conceive it. What was it that we found in that dusty forgotten place? A restless spirit? A guardian? I suppose we will never know, but I will tell you that I have never returned to Tez'Hamun, and that I keep this coffin securely locked away at night while I sleep, lest the guardian return.

Statistics:

ST	8	WP	4	Ref	3
AG	2	Wit	4	Aim	n/a
TO	11	MA	1	KD	5
EN	6	Soc	0	KO	n/a
HT	n/a	Per	2	Move	8

Combat Proficiency: 8-10 (Wrestling & Pugilism), CP 11-13

Mummies are created through an elaborate ritual designed to allow a deceased person to guard their own grave. First, the body is embalmed; it is carefully prepared with oils and unguents, all of the internal organs are removed (including the brain, which is pulled through the nose with special hooks), and the body is wrapped in several layers of cloth. This process ensures that the body is well preserved, allowing it to last many hundreds or even thousands of years without decaying (the final part of the ritual involves sealing the body in an airtight sarcophagus, which helps as well, of course).

The ritual binds a minor spirit into the mummified body, with instructions to destroy any intruder who opens the sarcophagus. Mummies move very slowly, but due to their extreme toughness they are excellent guardians for a tomb. As soon as the sarcophagus is opened, the mummy will sit up and attack any living creature present, using their supernatural strength to grapple opponents and snap necks or tear off limbs. Their bodies are not only extremely tough, but they do not bleed (no Blood Loss) or feel shock (ignore all Shock results in combat), and all Pain results are reduced to 1/3, representing the actual damage but not the agony of a wound. Additionally, puncturing attacks do not harm them at all, but may pin them (see the Walking Dead entry in Chapter 6 for more details).

One thing that does work extremely well against mummies is fire – their an-



cient dry skin and cloth wrappings are very susceptible to flame damage, and mummies take full Pain (although still not Shock or Blood Loss) damage from burning attacks. Additionally, flames will spread to all adjacent areas every round and continue damaging the mummy. *E.g a Mummy is struck on the knee with a burning torch and fire damage is rolled as normal. The following round, the damage not only applies for the knee, but also for the shin and thigh. On the third round, the foot and lower abdomen are on fire as well, and so on.*

SUCCUBUS / INCUBUS

I can feel it growing inside me.

It's funny really, I'd always wanted to be a mother. When I was young I would play with dolls and imagine them as my children. Boys perhaps, sparring with sticks and dreaming of glory—or maybe girls, sweet and innocent, full of life and love.

But not this... this thing. Merciful Hand protect me, what did I do to deserve this?

It began when She came for my brother. A vision of loveliness, pretty and pert and perfect. Slim where a man likes a woman slim and full where he does not. She smiled at him with her ruby lips and whispered sweet things into his ear and he was smitten. I had never seen Kelvin fall so heavily for a girl before but I could certainly see his attraction – she had the most astonishing azure eyes. It wasn't long before he brought her into our home, and soon enough into his bed.

For weeks, I seldom saw him. I never saw her – she would wait in his chambers while he snuck out to carry trays of sweetmeats and flagons of wine back for her. At night I could hear them giggling, moaning, crying out in pleasure and I wept with frustration and loneliness. Why should he be so happy, when I had no one?

And then she was gone, without a trace. Kelvin would ride for days without pause, showing travelers a sketch of her face and searching far and wide, desperate to reclaim the love he had lost. I stayed at

home in case she returned while Kelvin was out, undecided as to which I wanted more – her return thus ensuring his happiness; or her continued absence, ensuring mine.

That was how I met Him. He simply arrived at the house one morning, striding purposefully into my life. He was fine and handsome, muscular and bold and he looked at me with longing. I couldn't help myself, I invited him into my home and together we banished the cold. We languished for days; he had the most incredible stamina and a way of holding me that made me feel the luckiest woman alive.

I should have known. It was his eyes you see – the deepest azure. His eyes and his ruby lips.

Now he's gone too, but I can feel his bastard growing within me. His – or perhaps in some twisted mystical way my brothers. Either way I don't want it. It grows larger by the day, faster than any babe should, and somehow... somehow I know I won't survive his birth.

Tomorrow. I'll end it tomorrow. I can't allow this creature to grow another day within my womb. I mustn't.

Tomorrow.

Or perhaps the next day...

Statistics:

ST	4	WP	4	Ref	6
AG	5	Wit	8	Aim	6
TO	5	MA	5	KD	4
EN	4	Soc	12	KO	n/a
HT	6	Per	5	Move	6

Combat Proficiency: 4-6 (slim blades or pugilism), CP 10-12

Vagaries: Conquer 2, Glamour 2 (SP 13)

Succubi/Incubi are actually two manifestations of the same creature. Thought to have originally been a demon from the Other World, the first Succubus/Incubus somehow crossed into Weyrth at some point in the past and they have propagated here ever since. The demon first appears to a target in female form, known as a Succubus. The Succubus is a stunningly beautiful human (apparently) woman. She uses her natural charm and (if necessary) Glamour spells such as *Mesmerize* to bend the target to her will, causing him to fall deeply in love with her. She will stay with the target for a matter of days or weeks, having sexual intercourse with him repeatedly, and storing his seed within her body. Once she has stored enough, the Succubus will vanish, leaving the victim lovestruck





and desperate, usually leading him either to suicide or to spending endless years searching for the woman he lost.

The second form of the demon is the Incubus, a handsome and muscular male version of the same creature. The Incubus will pick a female target to entice much as it did the male target when it was a Succubus. Often, the target picked will be known to or even a friend or family member of the previous target. Using his charms and magic, the Incubus will worm its ways into the affections of the target and impregnate her, using the semen collected from the male target, corrupted so that the resulting offspring will actually be another Succubus/Incubus demon. Once impregnated, the woman is abandoned as the man was. She does not usually go insane or suicidal as the male victim does, but she will not survive the birth of the baby, and the Incubus will return to collect it from her dead body. The fetus grows very rapidly, coming to term in just over four months, rather than the usual nine, and although the mother may know something is wrong or dangerous about the developing baby, she will find herself unable to harm it or herself until she gives birth.

The demons natural charm and Glamour magic only work on targets of the opposite sex (male, while the demon is a Succubus, and female while it is an Incubus). Other people of the same (current) sex

of the demon often harbor feelings of ill will, jealousy and even outright hatred toward the “perfect guy” or “perfect girl” they see someone else with. This is especially pronounced if the target is someone they would like to be romantically involved with. The demon is quite capable of defending itself, preferring light, slim blades if combat becomes necessary. This is the best way to bring out the demons true nature, however, for its blood is a greenish-grey color. Any target – present or previous – that sees the blood of a Succubus or Incubus is instantly cured of any lingering feelings for the demon (if male) or of the desire not to harm a developing fetus (if female). The demon itself, now exposed, will flee and is not likely to be seen by those particular people again.

WEREWOLF/LYCANTHROPES

“And she refused to answer your questions?”

“Yes sir, she claims to have heard and seen nothing.”

I sighed deeply and rubbed my chin. The young girl my men had brought in was the only possible witness to a hideous triple murder. She had been found just this morning hiding naked in the field beside the house, but



of course she had refused to name the young boy who had taken her there and presumably scampered just before the guards arrived. There wasn't a spot of blood on her and she was far too small a thing to have been capable of what they found in the house, but I was mighty keen to talk to her beau, if you get my drift.

What was in the house was enough to make a man lose his lunch – three bodies hideously torn apart and half the house wrecked. Sure, it had been made up to look like a wild animal attack, but there are no wolves hereabouts and the last bear died off years ago. No, this was the work of a man – a particularly violent and brutal one, to be sure – and I meant to have him.

“Let her stew then. Tell the men there's no cause to be too gentle with her, if you take my meaning, and throw her into the coldest cell we got. She can watch the sun go down and sit in the dark for a time, thinking about her bruises and how damn cold the nights are in here. She'll be ready to squeal when I'm ready for her”. The man nodded and left, and I hummed to myself, watching the flames as I waited for night.

A couple of hours after dark I stirred myself and headed down to the cells. There was still an hour or so until the moon would rise, so the night was at its darkest, and I completed the image by dressing all in black and carrying a razor strop into the cell with me in case some encouragement was needed.

She was curled in the corner, still naked and covered with bruises from the lash the men had enthusiastically applied over the course of the afternoon. I hefted the strop and gave her a few strokes on principle before I began questioning her about her lover. She warded the blows off with her forearms, wincing at the pain, but seemed far less cowed than I had expected her to be.

I strode around the room, barking questions at her in my best military voice. I badgered her, contradicted her, thrashed her hard and often, but she refused to break. By the time the moon rose over the distant mountains, shining through the bars in a soft yellow wash, she was a mass of bruises, blood and welts.

Then she saw the moon, and smiled. She said the only words to me that I was

ever to hear her say - “Now captain, you shall have your answers”.

The girl started to tremble, gently at first but with ever increasing fervor. As I watched, hair began to sprout on the backs of her hands, from her armpits and from her face. She began to grow, standing taller and taller in the small cell and I heard the crack as her knees snapped inwards and reversed themselves, like the rear legs of an animal. She was laughing now, laughing and her voice grew deeper and more bestial as she underwent her transformation. With a shaking hand I drew my sword and backed off into the corner of the room, holding the weapon between myself and the huge – thing – in front of me. Faster than I could react it flew forwards and sunk its teeth into my thigh, tearing at the meat before bounding to the window and shattering the weakly fixed bars, then vanishing into the night.

I wasn't able to explain to my men what had happened - I was unconscious for several days as the maesters tended to my wound. They searched the countryside but found no trace of the strange girl. I had to kill a few of them to stop the story getting out, but I think I managed to keep it all quiet.

That was nearly a month ago, and as the nights grow lighter I find myself uneasy at the peak of night, my body aches and my hands itch and I find the light of the waxing moon painful on my eyes – I hate to think how it'll seem in a few days when it's full.

And on top of all that, I've got some kind of stomach bug – all I can keep down is very, very rare meat...

Statistics (Werewolf):

ST	9	WP	specialRef	7
AG	8	Wit	7	Aim n/a
TO	7	MA	2	KD 8
EN	12	Soc	1	KO 9
HT	8	Per	8	Move 14 / 28 run

Combat Proficiency: 12-15, CP 19-22

Skills: Climbing and Tracking at SR5.

Werewolves are humans or fey who have been inflicted by a terrible curse – the curse of lycanthropy. For three nights every month, during the period of



the full moon, such characters are transformed into savage beasts, doomed to hunt the night, slaying and devouring all manner of creatures unfortunate enough to encounter them.

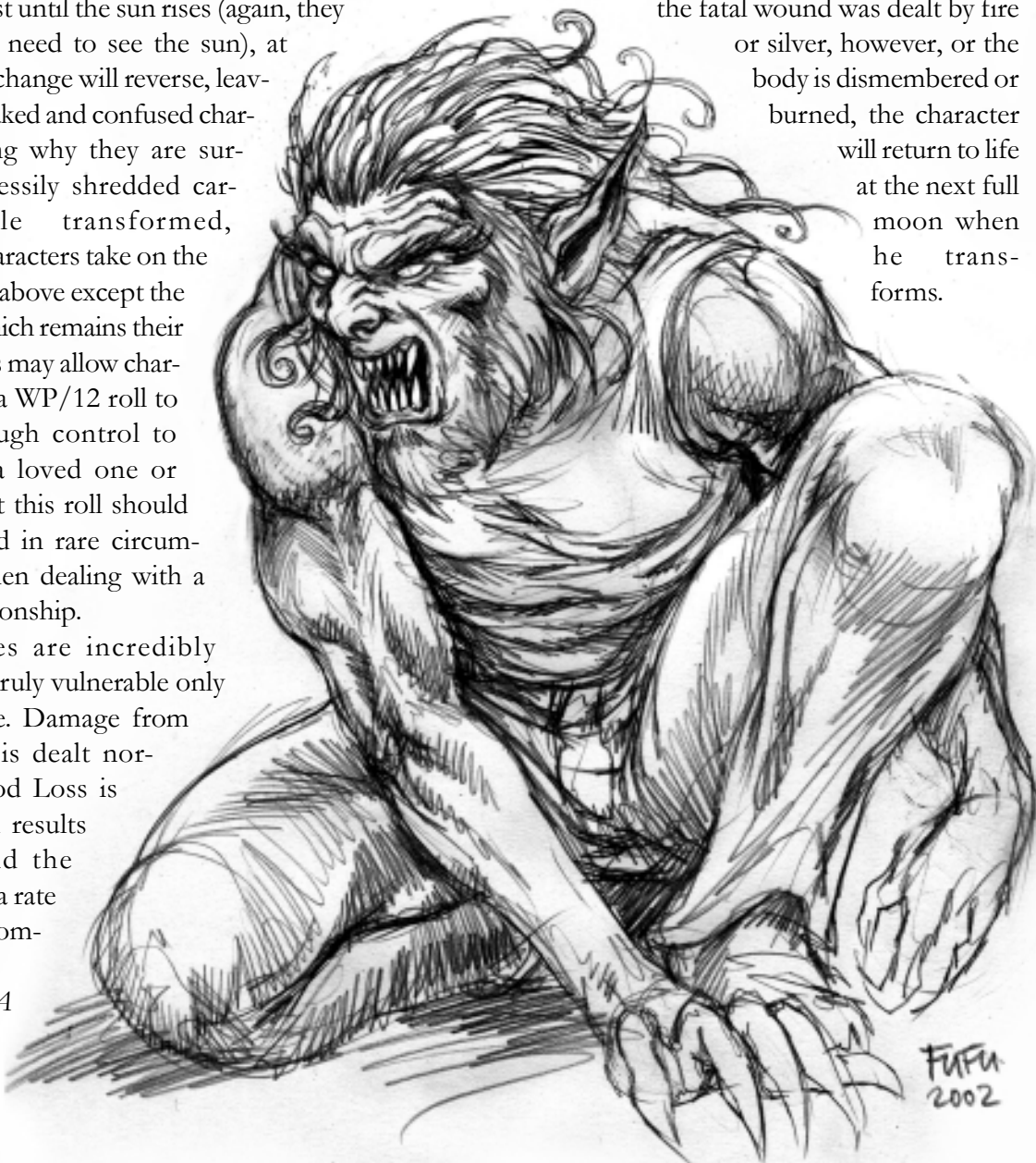
This transformation occurs regardless of whether the afflicted character can actually see the moon or not. As soon as the moon rises over their location, the change will begin. The full change takes around a minute – they grow to around 8 or 9 feet tall (tearing clothes and even armor), hair sprouts over their entire body, the face and head change to that of a savage wolf and massive teeth and claws grow. The actual mentality and personality of the character is suppressed and it is overcome by a wild insatiable desire for fresh flesh and blood. This condition will persist until the sun rises (again, they do not actually need to see the sun), at which time the change will reverse, leaving a (usually) naked and confused character wondering why they are surrounded by messily shredded carcasses. While transformed, lycanthropic characters take on the attributes listed above except the WP attribute which remains their own. Seneschals may allow characters to make a WP/12 roll to exert just enough control to avoid slaying a loved one or companion, but this roll should only be allowed in rare circumstances and when dealing with a very close relationship.

Werewolves are incredibly tough, and are truly vulnerable only to silver or fire. Damage from other sources is dealt normally, but Blood Loss is ignored, Shock results are halved and the wound heals at a rate of 1 Pain per combat round.

E.g. A werewolf is struck on the shoulder with a steel

longsword. The result is a level 4 wound (BL 8, Shock 8, Pain 10-WP "Broken bones, serious blood"). Assuming the character has a WP of 4, the result is BL 0, Shock 4 and Pain 6. Over the next six combat rounds, the Pain level of the wound drops by 1 each round, until round six when the wound has vanished entirely.

Wounds from fire or silver deal damage normally to the creature. When a character transforms into a werewolf, any existing wounds that were not caused by fire or silver will heal at this rate as well, and when transforming back, all wounds heal fully except, again, those caused by fire or silver. A werewolf may be slain, by the application of an instantly fatal wound (such as most level 5 results to the torso or head), and will then return to human form, dead. Unless the fatal wound was dealt by fire or silver, however, or the body is dismembered or burned, the character will return to life at the next full moon when he transforms.



Anyone wounded by a werewolf (but not killed), risks contracting lycanthropy. Such characters should make an HT roll for every wound received; the difficulty of the roll is the Pain level of the wound. This difficulty may be reduced by 2 if wolfs bane or belladonna is applied to the wound while it is still fresh. Seneschals may wish to make this roll in secret, so that PC's will not know if they have contracted the disease or not.

It is whispered in some circles that some werewolves may over time begin to be able to control their transformation. The exact specifics of this are up to the Seneschal, but it is suggested that characters might be able to make a WP roll against a difficulty of 30 minus the number of years they have been a werewolf to be able to force the change at a time other than the full moon (this difficulty should bottom out at about 8, however). Once transformed, they have no more control over their actions than under a full moon transformation, but it might be useful in some situations. Additionally, for every 5 years a character has been a werewolf, the difficulty of the WP roll to avoid attacking a companion or loved one might reduce by 1 also.

Werewolves are extremely rare. It is rumored that there are other forms of lycanthropes that are rarer still – those based on animals such as rats, tigers and even bears. Possible transformed attributes for such animals are suggested below.

Statistics (Wererat):

ST	6	WP	special	Ref	9
AG	11	Wit	8	Aim	n/a
TO	5	MA	3	KD	8
EN	8	Soc	1	KO	7
HT	5	Per	8	Move	12 / 24 run

Combat Proficiency: 8-10, CP 17-19

Skills: Climbing and Tracking at SR3. Tactics at SR7

Wererats are far smaller than Werewolves in their transformed state, standing 6-7 feet tall. Their bodies tend to be covered with very short, downy hair and they have long tails and whiskers. Wererats are far more agile and cunning than Werewolves, and may use scare tactics to harass and confuse foes before moving in for the kill. The HT

roll to avoid infection from wounds from a Wererat is at +2 difficulty as the Wererat carries other diseases that weaken the body's immune system toward the lycanthropy disease.

Statistics (Weretiger):

ST	8	WP	special	Ref	9
AG	10	Wit	8	Aim	n/a
TO	8	MA	4	KD	9
EN	10	Soc	1	KO	10
HT	7	Per	10	Move	14 / 28 run

Combat Proficiency: 12-15, CP 19-22

Skills: Climbing and Tracking at SR4.

Weretigers are the most “sociable” lycanthropes. They get on well with other tigers (even in human form) and in neither form would ever harm a Great Cat. When hunting, Weretigers are often accompanied by several normal tigers (see the entry for Great Cats in Chapter Two), and they will use pack tactics such as Take Down, Baiting and Raking to help the Werecat bring down foes. Because of the strong pack mentality of the Werecat, the difficulty of the WP roll to resist attacking companions and loved ones is reduced by two. Werecats are quadrupeds, unlike other lycanthropes that are bipeds, and usually stand at least 10' long.

Statistics (Werebear):

ST	15	WP	special	Ref	5
AG	6	Wit	4	Aim	n/a
TO	12	MA	2	KD	11
EN	12	Soc	1	KO	14
HT	10	Per	6	Move	16 / 32 run

Combat Proficiency: 12-15, CP 17-20

Skills: Tracking at SR5.

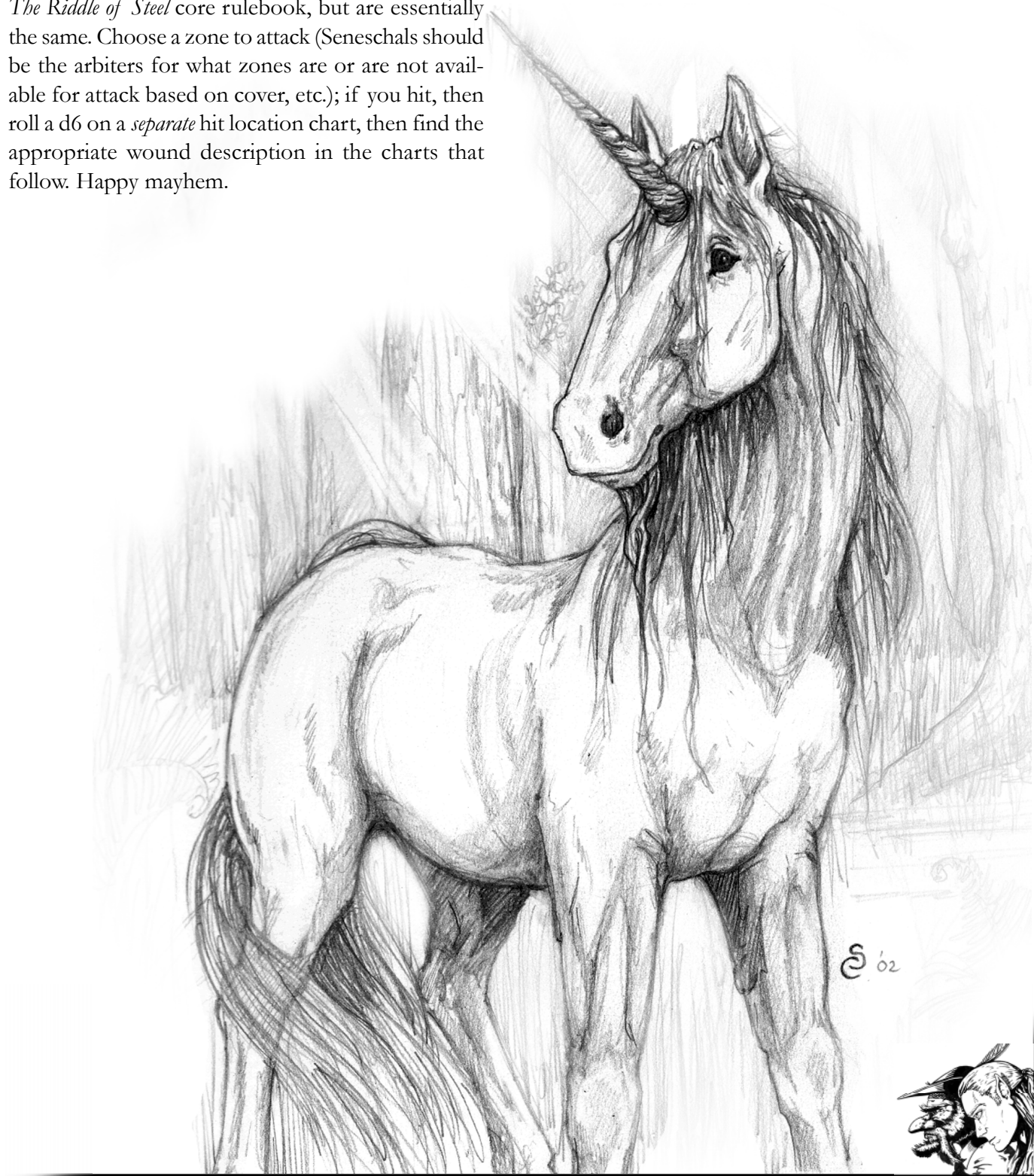
Werebears are the largest and strongest lycanthropes. Significantly stronger than even the strongest human, they are a force to be reckoned with in combat, as a single blow from one of their mighty paws is usually instantly fatal. Werebears stand easily 12-15 feet tall, and their howls can be heard for miles. Werebears are very solitary, as all other animals flee in terror from them, and any person so inflicted can usually be found living in extreme solitude in a cave or shack deep in the wilderness.



APPENDIX: ANIMAL DAMAGE TABLES

PART ONE: ZONES & HIT LOCATIONS

The following tables are organized a bit differently from the damage tables in the Appendix of *The Riddle of Steel* core rulebook, but are essentially the same. Choose a zone to attack (Seneschals should be the arbiters for what zones are or are not available for attack based on cover, etc.); if you hit, then roll a d6 on a *separate* hit location chart, then find the appropriate wound description in the charts that follow. Happy mayhem.



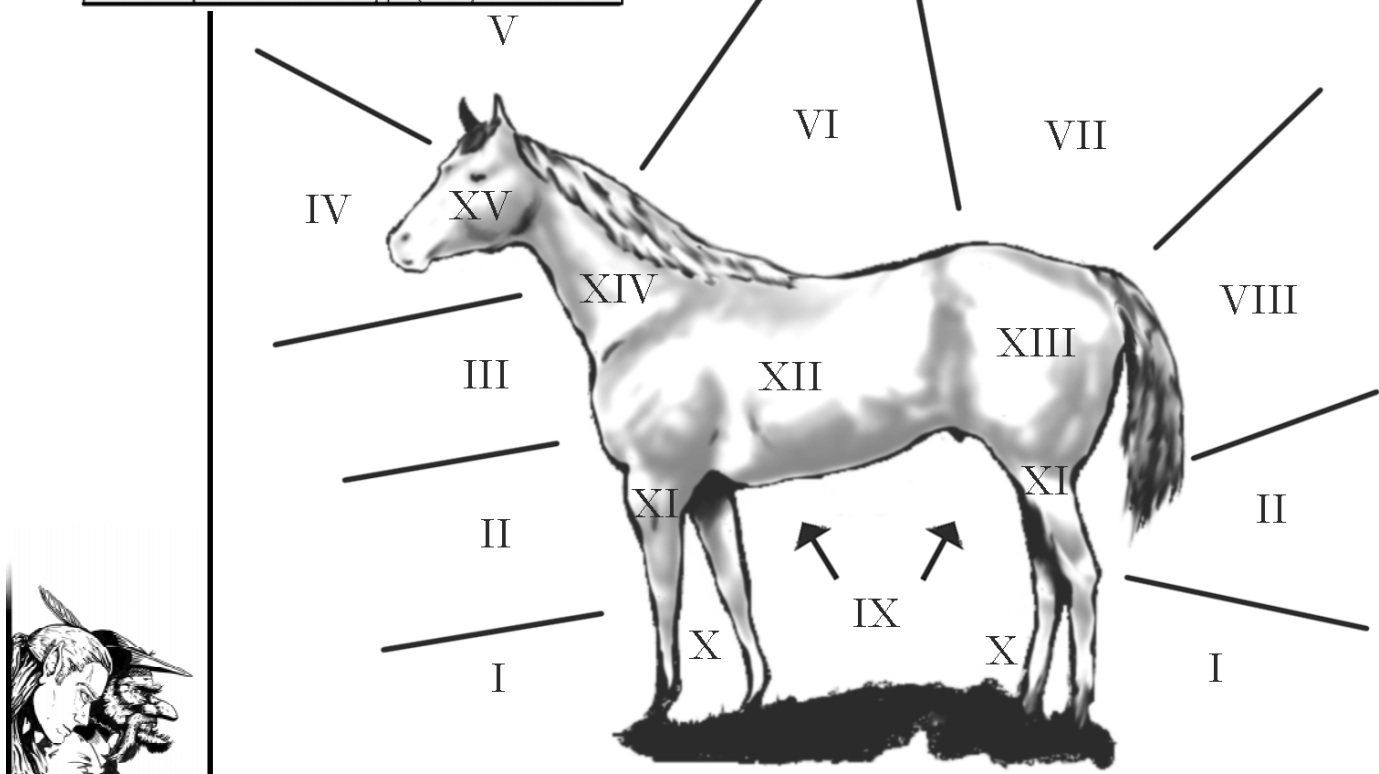
LARGE QUADRUPED: SIDE ATTACKS

SWUNG ATTACKS

Zone	D6 Location detail
I	1-2 – Foot/Hoof 3-5 – Lower Leg / “Shin” 6 – Knee
II	1 – Knee 2-4 – Upper Leg / “Thigh” 5-6 – “Shoulder Joint”
III	1 – “Shoulder Joint” 2-4 – Breast / Upper Ribcage 5-6 – Neck
IV	1-2 – Neck 3-5 – Head, lower 6 – Head, upper
V	1-3 – Head, upper 4-6 – Neck
VI	1-2 – Neck 3-6 – Back/Spine
VII	1-2 – Back/Spine 3-5 – Pelvis 6 – Groin
VIII	1-4 – Pelvis 5-6 – Groin
IX	1 – Inner Thigh (front) 2-4 – Belly 5 – Groin 6 – Inner Thigh (rear)

THRUSTING ATTACKS

Zone	D6 Location detail
X	1-2 – Foot/Hoof 3-4 – Lower Leg / “Shin” 5 – Knee 6 – Missed altogether
XI	1 – Knee 2-3 – Upper Leg / “Thigh” 4-6 – “Shoulder Joint”
XII	1 – Back / Spine 2-5 – Abdominal / Side 6 – Belly
XIII	1 – Back 2-3 – Abdominal / Side 4-6 – Pelvis
XIV	1-3 – Face / Head 4-6 – Collar / Throat
XV	1-2 – Collar / Throat 3-6 – Face / Head



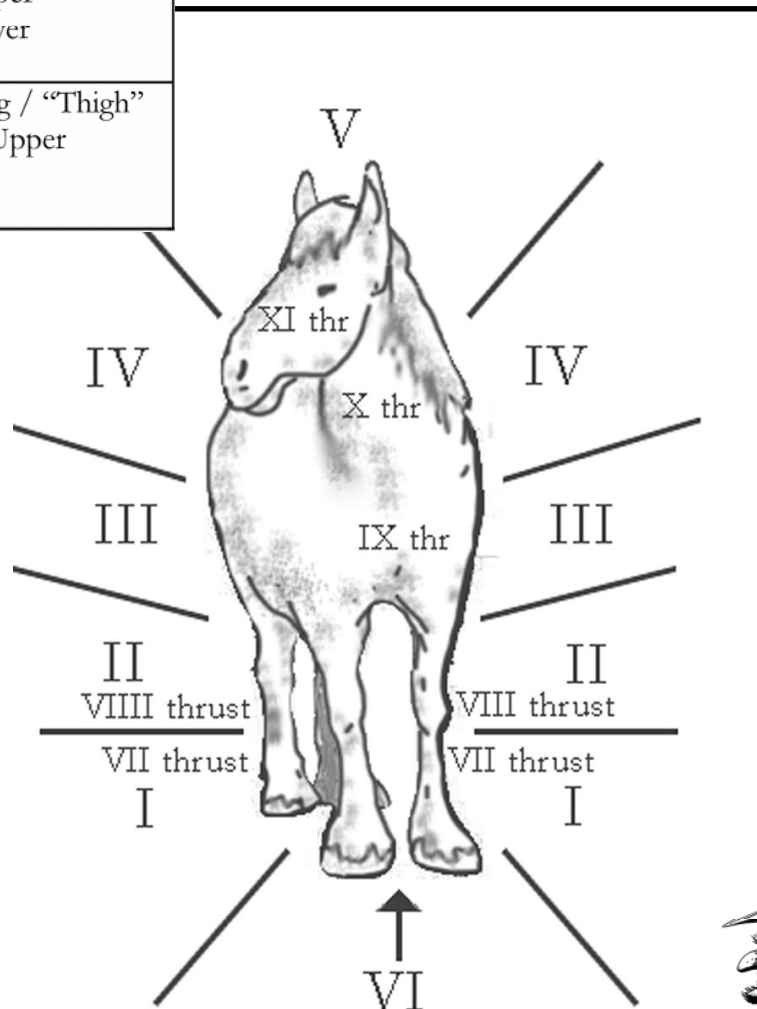
LARGE QUADRUPED: FRONTAL ATTACKS

SWUNG ATTACKS

Zone	D6 Location detail
I	1-2 – Foot/Hoof 3-5 – Lower Leg / “Shin” 6 – Knee
II	1 – Knee 2-4 – Upper Leg / “Thigh” 5-6 – “Shoulder Joint”
III	1 – “Shoulder Joint” 2-4 – Breast / Upper Ribcage 5-6 – Lower Abdominal / Side
IV	1-2 – Breast / Upper Ribcage 3 – Lower Abdominals / Side 4-5 – Head, lower 6 – Head, upper
V	1-3 – Head, upper 4-5 – Head, lower 6 – Neck
VI	1-3 – Upper Leg / “Thigh” 4-5 – Breast / Upper Ribcage 6 – Belly

THRUSTING ATTACKS

Zone	D6 Location detail
VII	1-2 – Foot/Hoof 3-4 – Lower Leg / “Shin” 5 – Knee 6 – Missed altogether
VIII	1 – Knee 2-3 – Upper Leg / “Thigh” 4-6 – “Shoulder Joint”
IX	1-2 – “Shoulder Joint” 3-6 – Breast / Upper Ribcage
X	1-2 – Breast / Upper Ribcage 3-4 – Collar / Throat 5-6 – Face / Head
XI	1 – Collar / Throat 2-6 – Face / Head



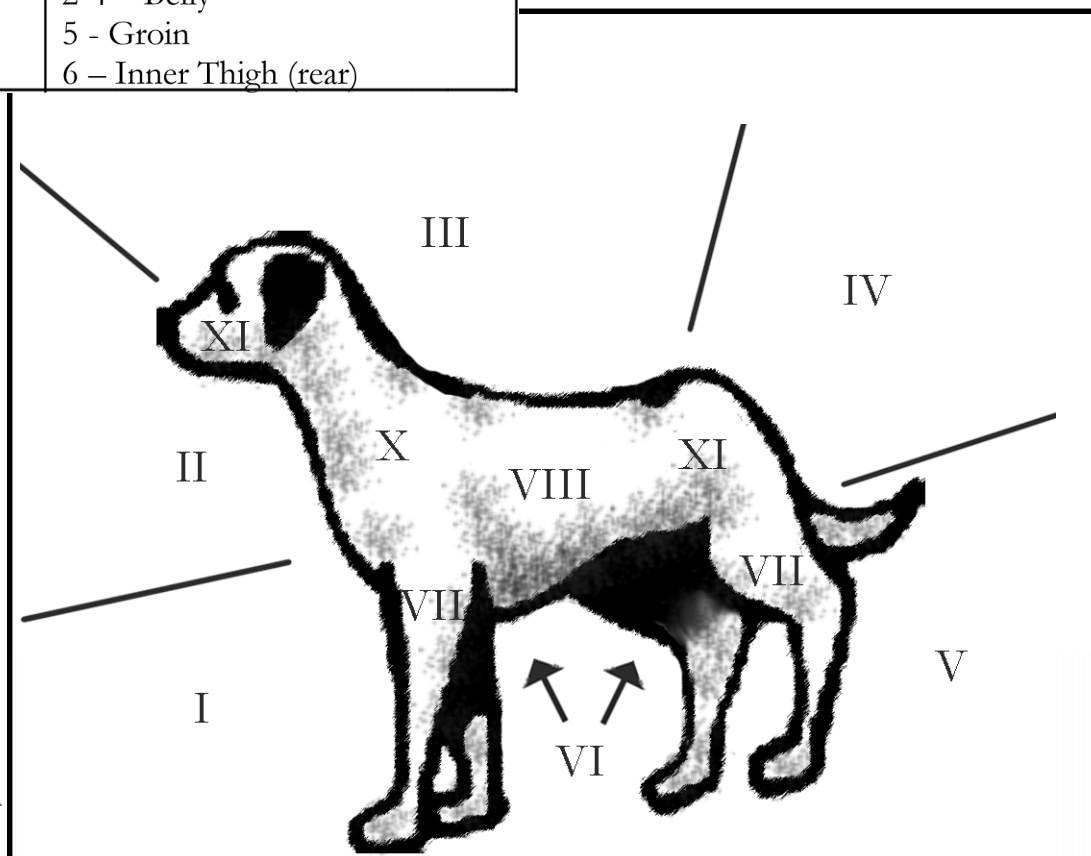
SMALL QUADRUPED: SIDE ATTACKS

SWUNG ATTACKS

Zone	D6 Location detail
I	1 – Foot/Paw 2-3 – Lower Leg / “Shin” 4 – Knee 5-6 – Upper Leg / “Thigh”
II	1 – “Shoulder Joint” 3-4 – Breast / Upper Ribcage 5 – Neck 6 – Head, lower
III	1 – Head, upper 2-4 – Neck 5-6 – Back / Spine
IV	1-3 – Back / Spine 4-5 – Pelvis 6 – Groin
V	1 – Groin 2-5 – Pelvis 6 – Upper Legs / “Thigh”
VI	1 – Inner Thigh (front) 2-4 – Belly 5 – Groin 6 – Inner Thigh (rear)

THRUSTING ATTACKS

Zone	D6 Location detail
VII	1 – Foot/Paw 2-3 – Lower Leg / “Shin” 4 – Knee 5 – Upper Leg / “Thigh” 6 – Missed altogether
VIII	1 – Back / Spine 2-5 – Abdominal / Side 6 – Belly
IX	1 – Back 2-3 – Abdominal / Side 4-6 – Pelvis
X	1-3 – Face / Head 4-5 – Collar / Throat 6 – Breast / Upper Ribcage
XI	1-4 – Face / Head 5-6 – Collar / Throat



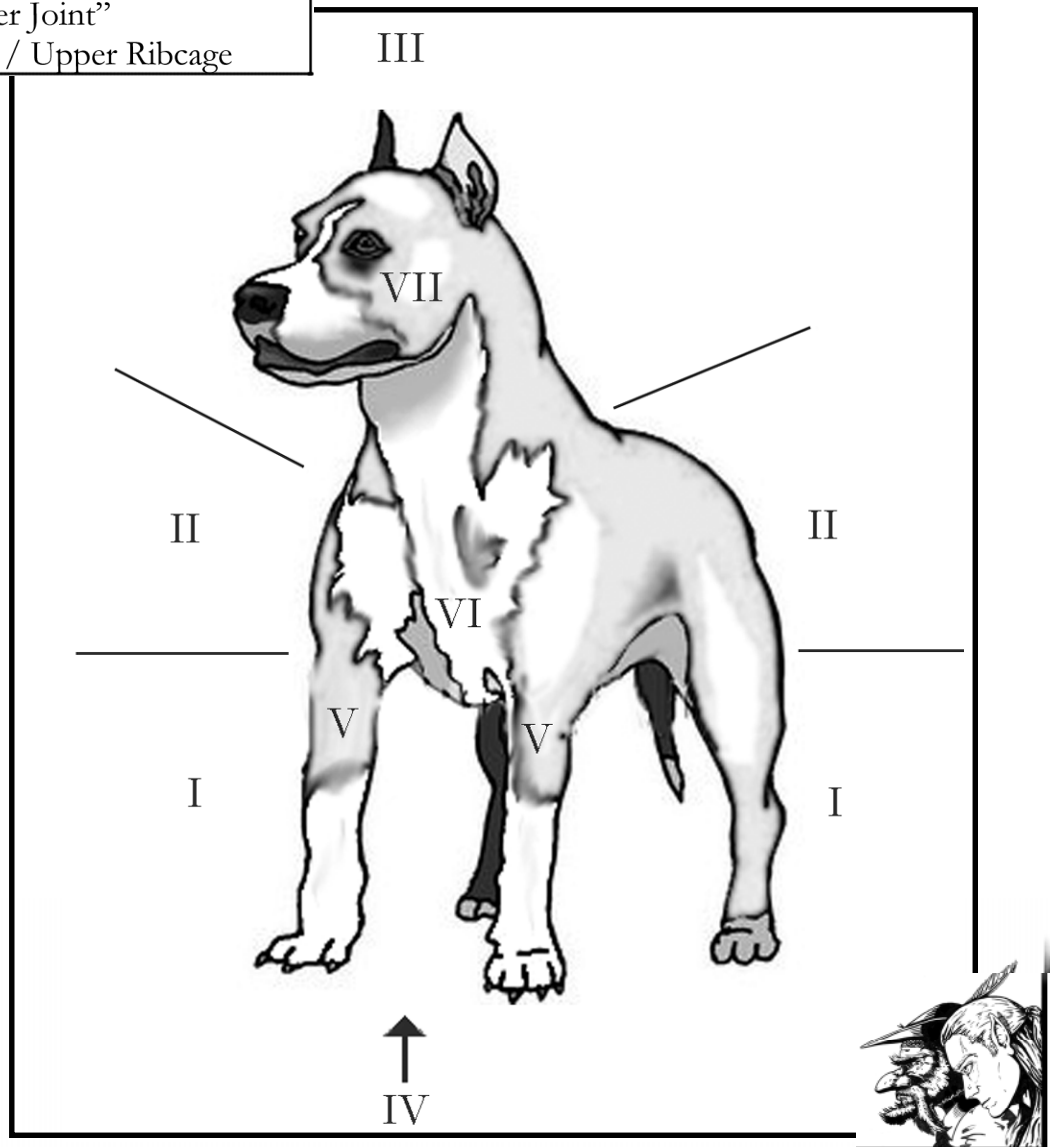
SMALL QUADRUPED: FRONTAL ATTACKS

SWUNG ATTACKS

Zone	D6 Location detail
I	1 – Foot/Paw 2-3 – Lower Leg / “Shin” 4 – Knee 5-6 – Upper Leg / “Thigh”
II	1 – “Shoulder Joint” 3-4 – Breast / Upper Ribcage 5 – Neck 6 – Head, lower
III	1-3 – Head, upper 4-5 – Neck 6 – Back / Spine
IV	1-2 – Upper Leg / “Thigh” 3 – “Shoulder Joint” 4-6 – Breast / Upper Ribcage

THRUSTING ATTACKS

Zone	D6 Location detail
V	1 – Foot/Paw 2-3 – Lower Leg / “Shin” 4 – Knee 5 – Upper Leg / “Thigh” 6 – Missed altogether
VI	1 – “Shoulder Joint” 2-4 – Breast / Upper Ribcage 5-6 – Collar / Throat
VII	1-4 – Face / Head 5-6 – Collar / Throat



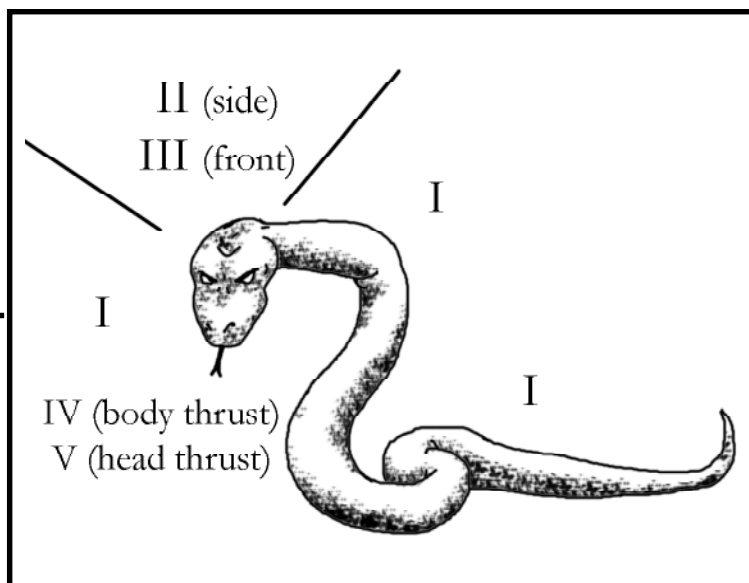
LIMBLESS CRITTERS (SNAKES, ETC): FRONTAL AND SIDE ATTACKS

SWUNG ATTACKS

Zone	D6 Location detail
I	1-5 – Abdominal/Side 6 – Head, upper
II	1-2 – Abdominal/Side 3-6 – Head, upper
III	1-2 – Abdominal/Side 3-4 – Head, upper 5-6 – Missed completely

THRUSTING ATTACKS

Zone	D6 Location detail
IV	1-2 – Abdominal/Side 3-4 – Face / Head 5-6 – Missed completely
V	1 – Abdominal/Side 2-3 – Face / Head 4-6 – Missed completely



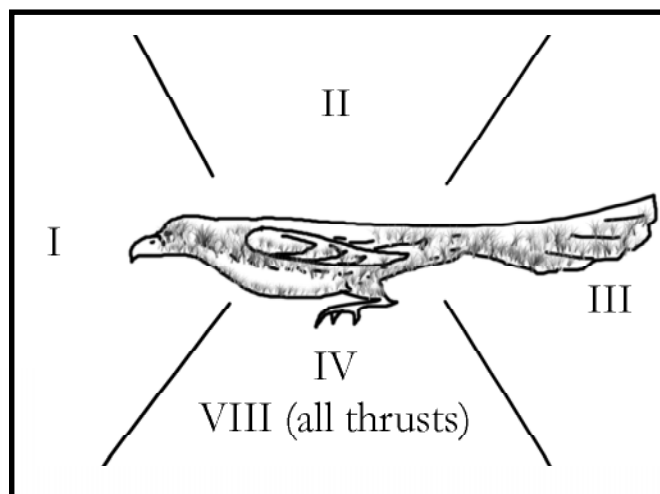
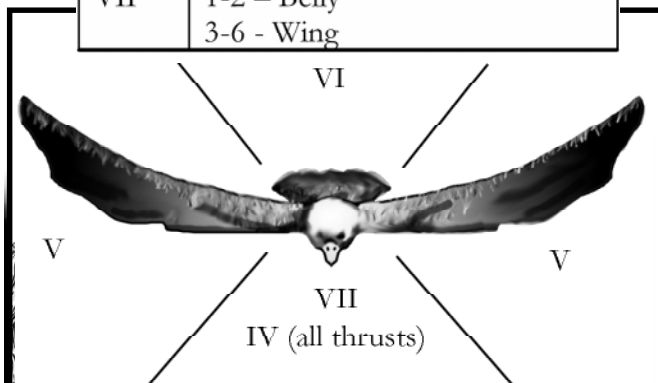
SMALL AVIANS (HAWKS, EAGLES): FRONTAL AND SIDE ATTACKS

SWUNG ATTACKS

Zone	D6 Location detail
I	1-3 – Head, upper 4-6 – Breast / Upper Ribcage
II	1-2 – Back 3-4 – Head, upper 5-6 – Wing
III	1-2 – Pelvis 3-4 – Back 5-6 – Wing
IV	1-4 – Belly 5-6 – Wing
V	1-4 – Wing 5-6 – Lower Abdominal / Side
VI	1-2 – Head, upper 3-6 – Wing
VII	1-2 – Belly 3-6 – Wing

THRUSTING ATTACKS

Zone	D6 Location detail
IV	1-3 – Wing 4 – Breast / Upper Ribcage 5 – Pelvis 6 – Face / Head
V	1-2 – Face / Head 3-6 – Wing



PART TWO: DAMAGE EFFECT TABLES

CUTTING DAMAGE TABLES

Cutting Damage Table: Paw/Hoof

Location	Level One	Level Two	Level Three	Level Four	Level Five
Paw/Hoof	BL: 0 Shock: 3-WP Pain: 2-WP <i>Surface wound</i>	BL: 1 Shock: 3 Pain: 3-WP <i>Some flesh and bruised bone.</i>	BL: 2 Shock: 4 Pain: 5-WP <i>Deep cut, hit bone (knockdown +3).</i>	BL: 5 Shock: 6 Pain: 6-WP <i>Broken paw/hoof (roll knockdown +1).</i>	BL: 10 Shock: 9 Pain: 8-WP <i>Paw/Hoof totally destroyed. Roll knockdown at -5 or instant knockdown if fewer than 4 legs</i>

Cutting Damage Table: Lower leg/“Shin”

Location	Level One	Level Two	Level Three	Level Four	Level Five
Shin and lower leg	BL: 0 S: 3 P: 2-WP <i>Painful, but not overly debilitating.</i>	BL: 2 S: 5 P: 6-WP <i>Bone chipped (knockdown at +2).</i>	BL: 4 S: 5 P: 6-WP <i>As Level two, but knockdown roll is at -2.</i>	BL: 8 S: 7 P: 8-WP <i>Broken (knockdown at -2).</i>	BL: 13 S: 9 P: 10-WP <i>Limb is destroyed. Roll knockdown at -5, or instant knockdown if fewer than 4 legs.</i>

Cutting Damage Table: Knee Joint

Location	Level One	Level Two	Level Three	Level Four	Level Five
Knee and nearby areas	BL: 0 Shock: 5-WP Pain: 3-WP <i>Glancing blow.</i>	BL: 2 Shock: 5 Pain: 5-WP <i>Solid blow; funny-bone effect.</i>	BL: 4 Shock: 8 Pain: 8-WP <i>Torn ligament or similar wound; roll knockdown.</i>	BL: 8 Shock: 10 Pain: 13-WP <i>Shattered knee. Roll for knockdown at -5.</i>	BL: 13 Shock: 12 Pain: 12-WP <i>Destroyed or torn off at knee. Roll knockdown at -5 or instant knockdown if fewer than 4 legs.</i>

Cutting Damage Table: Upper leg/“Thigh”

Location	Level One	Level Two	Level Three	Level Four	Level Five
Thigh	BL: 1 S: 4-WP P: 3-WP <i>“Light laceration.”</i>	BL: 2 S: 2 P: 4-WP <i>“Deeper laceration, including torn muscle (knockdown +2).”</i>	BL: 4 S: 5 P: 6-WP <i>“Serious flesh wound, including torn tendons; roll knockdown.”</i>	BL: 8 S: 10 P: 10-WP <i>“More serious damage and bleeding, including a broken femur (Knockdown 4).”</i>	BL: 12 S: 12 P: 12-WP <i>“Compound fracture. Roll knockdown at -5 or instant knockdown if fewer than 4 legs.”</i>

Cutting Damage Table: “Shoulder” Joint

Location	Level One	Level Two	Level Three	Level Four	Level Five
Shoulder ball joint (top of front legs)	BL: 0 Shock: 4-WP Pain: 3-WP <i>“Small cut, some blood.”</i>	BL: 2 Shock: 3 Pain: 5-WP <i>“Deeper cut.”</i>	BL: 4 Shock: 5 Pain: 7-WP <i>“Near dislocation and chipping.” Roll knockdown</i>	BL: 8 Shock: 8 Pain: 10-WP <i>“Cracked joint bone and dislocation. (-2 to knockdown)”</i>	BL: 12 Shock: 10 Pain: 12-WP <i>“Weapon stuck, serious damage to joint, lots of blood (knocked down).”</i>



Cutting Damage Table: Wing

Location	Level One	Level Two	Level Three	Level Four	Level Five
Wing	BL: 0 S: 2 P: 2-WP <i>A few feathers knocked loose, but no real damage.</i>	BL: 0 S: 3 P: 5-WP <i>Jarring, vestigial claw damaged perhaps. Roll knockdown or lose flight.</i>	BL: 1 S: 5 P: 6-WP <i>Wing damaged. Roll knockdown at -2 every round to stay flying.</i>	BL: 2 S: 7 P: 8-WP <i>Wing damaged. Knockdown at -5, must land even if roll succeeded, cannot fly until wound healed.</i>	BL: 4 S: 9 P: 10-WP <i>Wing severely damaged (or chopped off). Automatic knockdown and cannot fly again.</i>

Cutting Damage Table: Pelvis

Location	Level One	Level Two	Level Three	Level Four	Level Five
Pelvis	BL: 0 Shock: 4-WP Pain: 3-WP <i>"Small cut, some blood."</i>	BL: 2 Shock: 3 Pain: 5-WP <i>"Deeper cut."</i>	BL: 4 Shock: 5 Pain: 7-WP <i>"Near dislocation and chipping." Roll knockdown at -2</i>	BL: 8 Shock: 8 Pain: 10-WP <i>"Cracked pelvis and dislocation. (-4 to knockdown, affecting both back legs)"</i>	BL: 12 Shock: 10 Pain: 12-WP <i>"Weapon stuck, pelvis broken, lots of blood. Rear legs stop functioning. Instant knockdown."</i>

Cutting Damage Table: Abdominal/Lower Ribcage/Side

Location	Level One	Level Two	Level Three	Level Four	Level Five
Lower Breast (Abs) / Side	BL: 1 S: 2 P: 5-WP <i>"Light laceration."</i>	BL: 3 S: 4 P: 6-WP <i>"Deeper laceration, including torn muscle."</i>	BL: 7 S: 8 P: 10-WP <i>"Internal damage equivalent to a hernia."</i>	BL: 10 S: 10 P: 12-WP <i>"More serious internal damage and bleeding."</i>	BL: 20 S: All P: All <i>"Total disembowelment. May lose consciousness (-3 to roll)."</i>

Cutting Damage Table: Breast/Upper Ribcage

Location	Level One	Level Two	Level Three	Level Four	Level Five
Upper Breast / Ribcage	BL: 0 Shock: 2 Pain: 4-WP <i>"Light slash"</i>	BL: 2 Shock: 4 Pain: 5-WP <i>"Long slash"</i>	BL: 3 Shock: 8 Pain: 7-WP <i>"Winded, maybe with a broken rib." Roll knockdown</i>	BL: 9 Shock: 10 Pain: 12-WP <i>"Cracked ribs and internal bleeding. Roll knockout."</i>	BL: 20 <i>CP loss from shock and pain is total, as weapon is lodged in chest. Death is imminent.</i>

Cutting Damage Table: Neck

Location	Level One	Level Two	Level Three	Level Four	Level Five
Neck	BL: 1 Shock: 4 Pain: 5-WP <i>"Flesh wound."</i>	BL: 4 Shock: 7 Pain: 10-WP <i>"Chipped or cracked vertebrae."</i>	BL: 9 Shock: 10 Pain: 11-WP <i>"Crushed or slashed larynx."</i>	BL: 20 Shock: 13 Pain: 14-WP <i>"Cut jugular, maybe throat, too."</i>	<i>Total or near-total decapitation. Instant Death.</i>



Cutting Damage Table: Head, lower (including face)

Location	Level One	Level Two	Level Three	Level Four	Level Five
Head (lower), including the face.	BL: 0 S: 5-WP P: 0 <i>"Blow strikes snout, causes shock but little actual damage"</i>	BL: 2 S: 8 P: 5-WP <i>"Nasty teeth, cheek, or snout slash that will leave long term effects."</i>	BL: 5 S: 8 P: 7-WP <i>"Roll 1d6 for feature loss: 1-2 eye; 3 nose; 5 whole ear; 6 partial ear."</i>	BL: 7 S: 10 P: 10-WP <i>"Jaw has been shattered, with a concussion. May lose consciousness."</i>	<i>Death. Destruction of cerebellum. Really messy.</i>

Cutting Damage Table: Head, upper

Location	Level One	Level Two	Level Three	Level Four	Level Five
Head (upper)	BL: 3 S: 3 P: 4-WP <i>"Scalp cut. After 1d6 exchanges blood seeps into eyes: animals will usually rout at this point"</i>	BL: 3 S: 7 P: 8-WP <i>"Dizziness and bleeding. May lose consciousness (+1 to roll)."</i>	BL: 4 S: 10 P: 12-WP <i>"Cracked skull. May lose consciousness (-3 to roll)."</i>	BL: 10 S: All P: All <i>"Skull is shattered. Animal is unconscious and may not recover."</i>	<i>Real, real messy. Instant Death.</i>

Cutting Damage Table: Groin

Location	Level One	Level Two	Level Three	Level Four	Level Five
Groin	BL: 2 Shock: 5-WP Pain: 4-WP <i>"Small cut, some blood."</i>	BL: 6 Shock: 3 Pain: 5-WP <i>"Deeper cut."</i>	BL: 9 Shock: 5 Pain: 9-WP <i>"Near dislocation of pelvis from beneath and chipping."</i>	BL: 15 Shock: 8 Pain: 11-WP <i>"Cracked pelvis and dislocation. (-2 to knockdown)"</i>	<i>"Weapon destroys pelvis and lodges just below the stomach. Death is imminent."</i>

Cutting Damage Table: Belly

Location	Level One	Level Two	Level Three	Level Four	Level Five
Belly	BL: 1 S: 2 P: 5-WP <i>"Light laceration."</i>	BL: 3 S: 4 P: 6-WP <i>"Deeper laceration, including torn muscle."</i>	BL: 7 S: 8 P: 10-WP <i>"Nearly gutted. Animal will usually rout at this point"</i>	BL: 10 S: 10 P: 12-WP <i>"Serious internal damage and bleeding. Roll knockout."</i>	BL: 20 S: All P: All <i>"Total disembowelment. May lose consciousness (-3 to roll)."</i>

Cutting Damage Table: Back/Spine

Location	Level One	Level Two	Level Three	Level Four	Level Five
Back / Spine	BL: 1 S: 2 P: 5-WP <i>"Light laceration."</i>	BL: 3 S: 4 P: 6-WP <i>"Deeper laceration, including torn muscle."</i>	BL: 7 S: 10 P: 12-WP <i>"Some chipping to spine, extreme pain."</i>	BL: 10 S: 10 P: 12-WP <i>"Serious spinal damage. Roll knockdown at -8"</i>	BL: 20 S: All P: All <i>"Spine shattered; animal drops like a stone and dies slowly and painfully."</i>



PUNCTURE DAMAGE TABLES

Puncture Damage Table: Paw/Hoof

Location	Level One	Level Two	Level Three	Level Four	Level Five
Paw/Hoof	BL: 0 Shock: 4-WP Pain: 4-WP <i>"Surface wound"</i>	BL: 0 Shock: 3 Pain: 5-WP <i>"Some flesh and bruised bone."</i>	BL: 2 Shock: 4 Pain: 6-WP <i>"Sunk deep (knockdown +3)."</i>	BL: 3 Shock: 7 Pain: 7-WP <i>"Hit ankle bones (roll knockdown -1)."</i>	BL: 3 Shock: 7 Pain: 7-WP <i>"As previous, but roll knockdown at -5 or instant knockdown if fewer than 4 legs."</i>

Puncture Damage Table: Lower leg/"Shin"

Location	Level One	Level Two	Level Three	Level Four	Level Five
Shin and lower leg	BL: 0 S: 4 P: 4-WP <i>Painful, but not overly debilitating.</i>	BL: 1 S: 5 P: 6-WP <i>"Bone chipped (knockdown at +2)"</i>	BL: 2 S: 5 P: 6-WP <i>As Level two, but knockdown roll is at -2.</i>	BL: 3 S: 5 P: 6-WP <i>"Totally passes through, hindering movement (knockdown at -4)."</i>	BL: 4 S: 7 P: 8-WP <i>"Bone damaged in addition to Lvl. 4. Knockdown at -5 or instant knockdown if fewer than 4 legs."</i>

Puncture Damage Table: Knee

Location	Level One	Level Two	Level Three	Level Four	Level Five
Knee and nearby areas	BL: 0 Shock: 5-WP Pain: 4-WP <i>"Glancing blow"</i>	BL: 0 Shock: 4 Pain: 5-WP <i>"Solid blow; funny-bone effect"</i>	BL: 3 Shock: 6 Pain: 6-WP <i>"Torn ligament or similar wound; roll knockdown."</i>	BL: 4 Shock: 7 Pain: 8-WP <i>"Dislocated or otherwise jacked up knee. Roll knockdown at -2."</i>	BL: 6 Shock: 9 Pain: 11-WP <i>"Shattered knee. Roll for knockdown at -5."</i>

Puncture Damage Table: Upper leg/"Thigh"

Location	Level One	Level Two	Level Three	Level Four	Level Five
Upper leg / Thigh	BL: 0 S: 4-WP P: 4-WP <i>"Light laceration."</i>	BL: 1 S: 3 P: 4-WP <i>"Deeper puncture, including torn muscle (knockdown +2)."</i>	BL: 2 S: 5 P: 5-WP <i>"Serious flesh wound, including torn tendons; roll knockdown."</i>	BL: 4 S: 5 P: 6-WP <i>"More serious damage and bleeding, including some bone damage (Knockdown -2)."</i>	BL: 8 S: 5 P: 7-WP <i>"As four, but with more serious bleeding (a blood vessel was hit)."</i>

Puncture Damage Table: "Shoulder" Joint

Location	Level One	Level Two	Level Three	Level Four	Level Five
Shoulder ball joint (top of front legs)	BL: 0 Shock: 4-WP Pain: 4-WP <i>"Small cut, some blood."</i>	BL: 1 Shock: 3 Pain: 5-WP <i>"Deeper puncture."</i>	BL: 3 Shock: 5 Pain: 9-WP <i>"Near dislocation and chipping. Roll knockdown"</i>	BL: 6 Shock: 8 Pain: 10-WP <i>"Cracked joint bone and dislocation. (-2 to knockdown)"</i>	BL: 10 Shock: 10 Pain: 12-WP <i>"Weapon stuck, serious damage to joint, lots of blood (knocked down)."</i>



Puncture Damage Table: Wing

Location	Level One	Level Two	Level Three	Level Four	Level Five
Wing	BL: 0 S: 2 P: 2-WP <i>A few feathers knocked loose, but no real damage.</i>	BL: 0 S: 2 P: 6-WP <i>Stabbed through wing, but no serious damage done.</i>	BL: 0 S: 4 P: 7-WP <i>Wing punctured leaving hole. Roll knockdown at -2 every round to stay flying.</i>	BL: 1 S: 7 P: 8-WP <i>Wing damaged. Knockdown at -5, must land even if roll succeeded, cannot fly until wound healed.</i>	BL: 3 S: 9 P: 10-WP <i>Wing severely damaged. Knockdown at -5, must land even if roll succeeded, cannot fly until wound healed.</i>

Puncture Damage Table: Pelvis

Location	Level One	Level Two	Level Three	Level Four	Level Five
Pelvis	BL: 0 Shock: 4-WP Pain: 4-WP <i>"Small cut, some blood."</i>	BL: 1 Shock: 3 Pain: 5-WP <i>"Deeper puncture."</i>	BL: 3 Shock: 5 Pain: 9-WP <i>"Some chipping of pelvis. Roll knockdown at -2"</i>	BL: 6 Shock: 8 Pain: 10-WP <i>"Cracked pelvis and dislocation. (-4 to knockdown, affecting both back legs)"</i>	BL: 10 Shock: 10 Pain: 12-WP <i>"Weapon stuck, pelvis broken, lots of blood. Rear legs stop functioning. Instant knockdown."</i>

Puncture Damage Table: Abdominal/Lower Ribcage/Side

Location	Level One	Level Two	Level Three	Level Four	Level Five
Lower Breast (Abs) / Side	BL: 0 S: 3 P: 4-WP <i>"Light laceration, no puncture."</i>	BL: 6 S: 4 P: 6-WP <i>"Deeper laceration, including torn muscle."</i>	BL: 8 S: 7 P: 9-WP <i>"Internal damage equivalent to a hernia."</i>	BL: 12 S: 10 P: 12-WP <i>"More serious internal damage and bleeding. Some internal organs are in trouble."</i>	BL: 18 S: All P: All <i>"Serious damage to internal organs and heavy bleeding. May lose consciousness (-3 to roll)."</i>

Puncture Damage Table: Breast/Upper Ribcage

Location	Level One	Level Two	Level Three	Level Four	Level Five
Upper Breast / Ribcage	BL: 0 Shock: 3 Pain: 4-WP <i>"Light laceration, no puncture."</i>	BL: 8 Shock: 5 Pain: 6-WP <i>"Deep puncture"</i>	BL: 10 Shock: 8 Pain: 10-WP <i>"Serious internal damage and heavy bleeding."</i>	BL: 13 Shock: 13 Pain: 15-WP <i>"Extreme internal damage"</i>	BL: 20 <i>Heart is pierced, animal dies instantly.</i>

Puncture Damage Table: Non fatal puncture

Location	Level One	Level Two	Level Three	Level Four	Level Five
Non fatal puncture	BL: 3 S: 5 P: 6-WP <i>Pierced body without hitting any major organs, mostly just flesh and muscle. It hurts and bleeds, but probably isn't fatal.</i>				



Puncture Damage Table: Collar and Throat

Location	Level One	Level Two	Level Three	Level Four	Level Five
Collar and throat	BL: 2 S: 4 P: 5-WP <i>"Right below the collarbone; hurts, but not fatal."</i>	BL: 6 S: 7 P: 6-WP <i>"Right above the collarbone."</i>	BL: 7 S: 13 P: 15-WP <i>"Pierced the throat, missing the jugular; still very nasty."</i>	BL: 15 S: All P: 20-WP <i>"Pierced the throat, destroying the larynx and jugular."</i>	<i>Weapon pierces throat and punctures the cerebellum or lower brain. Death is instantaneous.</i>

Puncture Damage Table: Face/Head

Location	Level One	Level Two	Level Three	Level Four	Level Five
Face and Head	BL: 1 S: 7-WP P: 4-WP <i>"Grazed cheek or temple. May lose consciousness (roll at + 2)."</i>	BL: 2 S: 6 P: 6-WP <i>"As a graze, only deeper. The skull is still unbroken; may lose consciousness."</i>	BL: 8 S: 10 P: 9-WP <i>"Pierces part of face, missing the brain, but still causing significant damage (KO -3)."</i>	BL: 19 S: 13 P: 13-WP <i>"Part of brain destroyed. Unconscious."</i>	<i>Pierced brain. Death is nearly instantaneous, coming from massive brain damage and hemorrhaging.</i>



BLUNT DAMAGE TABLES

Blunt Swing Damage Table: Paw/Hoof

Location	Level One	Level Two	Level Three	Level Four	Level Five
Paw/Hoof	BL: 0 Shock: 4-WP Pain: 4-WP <i>Surface wound</i>	BL: 0 Shock: 3 Pain: 5-WP <i>Some bruised flesh and bone.</i>	BL: 0 Shock: 4 Pain: 6-WP <i>Hit bone, may be broken (knockdown +3).</i>	BL: 1 Shock: 5 Pain: 6-WP <i>Broken paw/hoof (roll knockdown +1).</i>	BL: 2 Shock: 8 Pain: 9-WP <i>Paw/Hoof totally mashed. Roll knockdown at -5 or instant knockdown if fewer than 4 legs</i>

Blunt Swing Damage Table: Lower leg/"Shin"

Location	Level One	Level Two	Level Three	Level Four	Level Five
Shin and lower leg	BL: 0 S: 4 P: 5-WP <i>Painful, but not overly debilitating.</i>	BL: 0 S: 5 P: 6-WP <i>Bone chipped (knockdown at +2).</i>	BL: 0 S: 6 P: 7-WP <i>As Level two, but knockdown roll is at -2.</i>	BL: 2 S: 8 P: 9-WP <i>Broken (knockdown at -2).</i>	BL: 5 S: 10 P: 12-WP <i>Compound fracture. Roll knockdown at -5, or instant knockdown if fewer than 4 legs.</i>

Blunt Swing Damage Table: Knee Joint

Location	Level One	Level Two	Level Three	Level Four	Level Five
Knee and nearby areas	BL: 0 Shock: 5-WP Pain: 4-WP <i>Glancing blow.</i>	BL: 0 Shock: 4 Pain: 5-WP <i>Solid blow; funny-bone effect.</i>	BL: 2 Shock: 8 Pain: 8-WP <i>Torn ligament or similar wound; roll knockdown.</i>	BL: 6 Shock: 10 Pain: 10-WP <i>Shattered knee. Roll for knockdown at -5.</i>	BL: 8 Shock: 15 Pain: 12-WP <i>Compound fracture at knee. Roll knockdown at -5 or instant knockdown if fewer than 4 legs.</i>

Blunt Swing Damage Table: Upper leg/"Thigh"

Location	Level One	Level Two	Level Three	Level Four	Level Five
Thigh	BL: 0 S: 4-WP P: 4-WP <i>"Glancing blow."</i>	BL: 0 S: 5 P: 4-WP <i>"Serious 'charlie horse' (knockdown +2)."</i>	BL: 0 S: 7 P: 7-WP <i>"Bone is bruised, maybe broken; roll knockdown."</i>	BL: 3 S: 8 P: 9-WP <i>"Femur is broken and muscle is pulverized. (Knockdown -4)."</i>	BL: 7 S: 10 P: 12-WP <i>"Compound fracture. Roll knockdown at -5 or instant knockdown if fewer than 4 legs."</i>

Blunt Swing Damage Table: "Shoulder" Joint

Location	Level One	Level Two	Level Three	Level Four	Level Five
Shoulder ball joint (top of front legs)	BL: 0 Shock: 3 Pain: 3-WP <i>"Thump."</i>	BL: 0 Shock: 5 Pain: 6-WP <i>"Nearly dislocates leg, bone is bruised."</i>	BL: 2 Shock: 8 Pain: 10-WP <i>"Leg dislocated, joint damaged." Roll knockdown at -5 or instant if fewer than 4 legs."</i>	BL: 10 Shock: 10 Pain: 12-WP <i>"Joint mangled badly, broken bone fragments cause bleeding."</i>	BL: 20 Shock: All Pain: 13-WP <i>"Joint destroyed, leg useless, massive bleeding. Roll knockdown at -5 or instant knockdown if fewer than 4 legs."</i>



Blunt Swing Damage Table: Wing

Location	Level One	Level Two	Level Three	Level Four	Level Five
Wing	BL: 0 S: 2 P: 2-WP <i>A few feathers knocked loose, but no real damage.</i>	BL: 0 S: 4 P: 4-WP <i>Jarring, vestigial claw damaged perhaps. Roll knockeddown or lose flight.</i>	BL: 1 S: 6 P: 6-WP <i>Wing damaged. Roll knockeddown at -2 every round to stay flying.</i>	BL: 2 S: 8 P: 8-WP <i>Wing broken. Knockdown at -5, must land even if roll succeeded, cannot fly until wound healed.</i>	BL: 4 S: 10 P: 10-WP <i>Wing shattered. Automatic knockdown and cannot fly again.</i>

Blunt Swing Damage Table: Pelvis

Location	Level One	Level Two	Level Three	Level Four	Level Five
Pelvis	BL: 0 Shock: 3 Pain: 3-WP <i>"Thump."</i>	BL: 0 Shock: 5 Pain: 6-WP <i>"Heavy thump to tailbone"</i>	BL: 2 Shock: 8 Pain: 10-WP <i>"Near dislocation and chipping." Roll knockeddown at -2</i>	BL: 4 Shock: 10 Pain: 12-WP <i>"Cracked pelvis and dislocation. (-4 to knockdown, affecting both back legs)"</i>	BL: 20 Shock: All Pain: 13-WP <i>"Pelvis shattered, lots of blood. Rear legs stop functioning. Instant knockdown."</i>

Blunt Swing Damage Table: Abdominal/Lower Ribcage/Side

Location	Level One	Level Two	Level Three	Level Four	Level Five
Lower Breast (Abs) / Side	BL: 0 S: 3 P: 5-WP <i>"Glancing blow."</i>	BL: 0 S: 7 P: 6-WP <i>"Slightly winded."</i>	BL: 3 S: 10 P: 8-WP <i>"Badly winded. May lose consciousness (roll at +3)"</i>	BL: 8 S: 10 P: 12-WP <i>"Serious internal damage and bleeding. May lose consciousness."</i>	BL: 15 S: All P: 15-WP <i>"Internal damage is real bad. May lose consciousness (-3 to roll)."</i>

Blunt Swing Damage Table: Breast/Upper Ribcage

Location	Level One	Level Two	Level Three	Level Four	Level Five
Upper Breast / Ribcage	BL: 0 Shock: 5-WP Pain: 4-WP <i>"Glancing blow"</i>	BL: 0 Shock: 4 Pain: 5-WP <i>"Solid blow, ribs and muscle will be bruised."</i>	BL: 1 Shock: 8 Pain: 6-WP <i>"Winded, maybe with a broken rib. May fall unconscious (+2)"</i>	BL: 3 Shock: 10 Pain: 9-WP <i>"Cracked ribs and internal bleeding. May lose consciousness."</i>	BL: 9 Shock: All Pain: 15-WP <i>"Broken ribs (perhaps several) and internal damage and bleeding. Roll knockout at -3."</i>

Blunt Swing Damage Table: Neck

Location	Level One	Level Two	Level Three	Level Four	Level Five
Neck	BL: 0 Shock: 4 Pain: 5-WP <i>"Glancing blow. Crick in neck remains."</i>	BL: 1 Shock: 7 Pain: 9-WP <i>"Damage to throat and air tracts."</i>	BL: 3 Shock: 10 Pain: 12-WP <i>"Crushed larynx. May lose consciousness or suffocate"</i>	BL: 3 Shock: All Pain: 15-WP <i>"Cracked vertebrae and other throat problems."</i>	<i>Neck broken. Instant death.</i>



Blunt Swing Damage Table: Head, lower (including face)

Location	Level One	Level Two	Level Three	Level Four	Level Five
Head (lower), including the face.	BL: 0 S: 5 WP P: 0 <i>"Blow strikes snout, causes shock but little actual damage"</i>	BL: 1 S: 8 P: 6-WP <i>"Nasty teeth, cheek, or snout bash that will leave long-term effects."</i>	BL: 4 S: 10 P: See below <i>"Bones near eye smashed. One eye lost, half CP. Roll knockout at -1."</i>	BL: 6 S: 12 P: 9-WP <i>"Jaw has been shattered, with a concussion. May lose consciousness (-3)."</i>	<i>Death. Destruction of cerebellum. Really messy.</i>

Blunt Swing Damage Table: Head, upper

Location	Level One	Level Two	Level Three	Level Four	Level Five
Head (upper)	BL: 0 S: 8-WP P: 5-WP <i>"Glancing blow, some dizziness. May lose consciousness (+2 to roll)."</i>	BL: 3 S: 8 P: 8-WP <i>"Concussion. May lose consciousness."</i>	BL: 4 S: 10 P: 12 WP <i>"Cracked skull. May lose consciousness (-3 to roll)."</i>	BL: 6 S: All P: All <i>"Skull is shattered. Animal is unconscious and may not recover."</i>	<i>Real, real messy. Instant Death.</i>

Blunt Swing Damage Table: Groin

Location	Level One	Level Two	Level Three	Level Four	Level Five
Groin	BL: 0 Shock: 3 Pain: 4-WP <i>"Thump."</i>	BL: 0 Shock: 5 Pain: 6-WP <i>"Nearly dislocates leg, bone is bruised."</i>	BL: 3 Shock: 8 Pain: 10-WP <i>"Near dislocation of pelvis from beneath and chipping."</i>	BL: 10 Shock: 10 Pain: 12-WP <i>"Cracked pelvis and dislocation. (-2 to knockdown)"</i>	BL: 20 Shock: All Pain: 13-WP <i>"Pelvis destroyed, with massive bleeding."</i>

Blunt Swing Damage Table: Belly

Location	Level One	Level Two	Level Three	Level Four	Level Five
Belly	BL: 0 S: 3 P: 5-WP <i>"Glancing blow"</i>	BL: 0 S: 7 P: 6-WP <i>"Slightly winded, may lose consciousness (Roll at +3)."</i>	BL: 3 S: 10 P: 8-WP <i>"Badly winded, may vomit and/or lose consciousness."</i>	BL: 8 S: 10 P: 12-WP <i>"More serious internal damage and bleeding."</i>	BL: 15 S: All P: 15-WP <i>"Internal damage is real nasty. May lose consciousness (-3 to roll)."</i>

Blunt Swing Damage Table: Back/Spine

Location	Level One	Level Two	Level Three	Level Four	Level Five
Back / Spine	BL: 0 S: 3 P: 5-WP <i>"Thump."</i>	BL: 0 S: 7 P: 6-WP <i>"Solid blow to spine, roll knockdown"</i>	BL: 3 S: 10 P: 8-WP <i>"Some chipping to spine, extreme pain."</i>	BL: 8 S: 10 P: 12-WP <i>"Serious spinal damage. Roll knockdown at -8"</i>	BL: 20 S: All P: All <i>"Spine shattered; animal drops like a stone and dies slowly and painfully."</i>

Blunt Thrust Damage Table: Paw/Hoof

Location	Level One	Level Two	Level Three	Level Four	Level Five
Paw/Hoof	BL: 0 Shock: 4WP Pain: 4-WP <i>"Surface wound"</i>	BL: 0 Shock: 3 Pain: 5-WP <i>"Some bruised flesh and bone."</i>	BL: 0 Shock: 4 Pain: 6-WP <i>"Hit bone, may be broken. Roll knockdown +3."</i>	BL: 0 Shock: 6 Pain: 8-WP <i>"Hit ankle bones (roll knockdown +1)."</i>	BL: 1 Shock: 9 Pain: 10-WP <i>"As previous, but roll knockdown at -5 or instant knockdown if fewer than 4 legs."</i>



Blunt Thrust Damage Table: Lower leg/“Shin”

Location	Level One	Level Two	Level Three	Level Four	Level Five
Shin and lower leg	BL: 0 S: 4 P: 4-WP <i>Painful, but not overly debilitating.</i>	BL: 0 S: 5 P: 6-WP <i>“Bone chipped (knockdown at +2)”</i>	BL: 0 S: 7 P: 7-WP <i>As Level two, but knockdown roll is at -2.</i>	BL: 2 S: 8 P: 10-WP <i>“Shin broken (knockdown at -4).”</i>	BL: 5 S: 10 P: 12-WP <i>“Compound fracture. Knockdown at -5 or instant knockdown if fewer than 4 legs.”</i>

Blunt Thrust Damage Table: Knee

Location	Level One	Level Two	Level Three	Level Four	Level Five
Knee and nearby areas	BL: 0 Shock: 5-WP Pain: 4-WP <i>“Glancing blow”</i>	BL: 0 Shock: 4 Pain: 5-WP <i>“Solid blow; funny-bone effect”</i>	BL: 2 Shock: 8 Pain: 8-WP <i>“Torn ligament or similar wound; roll knockdown.”</i>	BL: 6 Shock: 10 Pain: 10-WP <i>“Shattered knee. Roll for knockdown at -5.”</i>	BL: 6 Shock: 9 Pain: 11-WP <i>“Compound fracture at knee. Roll for knockdown at -5 or instant if fewer than 4 legs.”</i>

Blunt Thrust Damage Table: Upper leg/“Thigh”

Location	Level One	Level Two	Level Three	Level Four	Level Five
Upper leg / Thigh	BL: 0 S: 4-WP P: 4-WP <i>Glancing Blow.”</i>	BL: 0 S: 5 P: 4-WP <i>“Serious ‘Charlie horse’ (knockdown +2).”</i>	BL: 0 S: 7 P: 7-WP <i>“Bone is bruised, maybe broken; roll knockdown.”</i>	BL: 3 S: 8 P: 9-WP <i>“Femur is broken and muscle is pulverized. (Knockdown -4).”</i>	BL: 7 S: 10 P: 12-WP <i>“Compound fracture. Roll knockdown at -5 or instant if fewer than 4 legs.”</i>

Blunt Thrust Damage Table: “Shoulder” Joint

Location	Level One	Level Two	Level Three	Level Four	Level Five
Shoulder ball joint (top of front legs)	BL: 0 Shock: 3 Pain: 3-WP <i>“Thump.”</i>	BL: 0 Shock: 5 Pain: 6-WP <i>“Nearly dislocates leg, bone is bruised.”</i>	BL: 2 Shock: 8 Pain: 10-WP <i>“Leg dislocated, joint damaged.” Roll knockdown at -5 or instant if fewer than 4 legs.”</i>	BL: 10 Shock: 10 Pain: 12-WP <i>“Joint mangled badly, broken bone fragments cause bleeding.”</i>	BL: 20 Shock: All Pain: 13-WP <i>“Joint destroyed, leg useless, massive bleeding. Roll knockdown at -5 or instant knockdown if fewer than 4 legs.”</i>

Blunt Thrust Damage Table: Wing

Location	Level One	Level Two	Level Three	Level Four	Level Five
Wing	BL: 0 S: 2 P: 2-WP <i>A few feathers knocked loose, but no real damage.</i>	BL: 0 S: 2 P: 4-WP <i>Struck wing, but no serious damage done.</i>	BL: 0 S: 4 P: 5-WP <i>Wing damaged. Roll knockdown at -2 every round to stay flying.</i>	BL: 1 S: 6 P: 7-WP <i>Wing badly damaged. Knockdown at -5, must land even if roll succeeded, cannot fly until wound healed.</i>	BL: 3 S: 8 P: 9-WP <i>Wing severely damaged. Knockdown at -5, must land even if roll succeeded, cannot fly until wound healed.</i>



Blunt Thrust Damage Table: Pelvis

Location	Level One	Level Two	Level Three	Level Four	Level Five
Pelvis	BL: 0 Shock: 3 Pain: 3-WP <i>"Thump."</i>	BL: 0 Shock: 5 Pain: 6-WP <i>"Heavy thump to tailbone"</i>	BL: 2 Shock: 8 Pain: 10-WP <i>"Near dislocation and chipping." Roll knockdown at -2</i>	BL: 4 Shock: 10 Pain: 12-WP <i>"Cracked pelvis and dislocation. (-4 to knockdown, affecting both back legs)"</i>	BL: 20 Shock: All Pain: 13-WP <i>"Pelvis shattered, lots of blood. Rear legs stop functioning. Instant knockdown."</i>

Blunt Thrust Damage Table: Abdominal/Lower Ribcage/Side

Location	Level One	Level Two	Level Three	Level Four	Level Five
Lower Breast (Abs) / Side	BL: 0 S: 3 P: 5-WP <i>"Glancing blow."</i>	BL: 0 S: 7 P: 6-WP <i>"Slightly winded."</i>	BL: 3 S: 10 P: 8-WP <i>"Badly winded. May lose consciousness (roll at +3)"</i>	BL: 8 S: 10 P: 12-WP <i>"Serious internal damage and bleeding. May lose consciousness."</i>	BL: 15 S: All P: 15-WP <i>"Internal damage is real bad. May lose consciousness (-3 to roll)."</i>

Blunt Thrust Damage Table: Breast/Upper Ribcage

Location	Level One	Level Two	Level Three	Level Four	Level Five
Upper Breast / Ribcage	BL: 0 Shock: 5-WP Pain: 4-WP <i>"Glancing blow"</i>	BL: 0 Shock: 4 Pain: 5-WP <i>"Solid blow, ribs and muscle will be bruised."</i>	BL: 1 Shock: 8 Pain: 6-WP <i>"Winded, maybe with a broken rib. May fall unconscious (+2)"</i>	BL: 3 Shock: 10 Pain: 9-WP <i>"Cracked ribs and internal bleeding. May lose consciousness."</i>	BL: 9 Shock: All Pain: 15-WP <i>"Broken ribs (perhaps several) and internal damage and bleeding. Roll knockout at -3."</i>

Blunt Thrust Damage Table: Collar and Throat

Location	Level One	Level Two	Level Three	Level Four	Level Five
Collar and throat	BL: 0 S: 4 P: 5-WP <i>"Glancing blow. Crick in neck remains."</i>	BL: 1 S: 7 P: 9-WP <i>"Damage to throat and air tracts."</i>	BL: 3 S: 10 P: 12-WP <i>"Crushed larynx. May lose consciousness or suffocate."</i>	BL: 4 S: All P: 15-WP <i>"Cracked vertebrae and other throat problems."</i>	Neck instantly broken.

Blunt Thrust Damage Table: Face/Head

Location	Level One	Level Two	Level Three	Level Four	Level Five
Face and Head	BL: 0 S: 5-WP P: 0 <i>"Grazed cheek or temple. May lose consciousness (roll at +3)."</i>	BL: 1 S: 8 P: 6-WP <i>"Lost teeth or smashed snout (or both). May lose consciousness, roll at +1."</i>	BL: 3 S: 10 P: 7-WP <i>"Bones near eye are smashed; eye is considered lost. Lose 1/2 of current pool (Unc at -1)."</i>	BL: 6 S: 12 P: 9-WP <i>"Jaw shattered with concussion. May lose consciousness (-3)."</i>	Death. Destruction of cerebellum. Really messy.



GENERIC DAMAGE TABLE

This table is used for many magical attacks, cold, heat, and other non-body-part-specific damage. It can be applied to a single body part (such as with fire) as well, given slight modification (use your imagination).

Location	Level One	Level Two	Level Three	Level Four	Level Five
	BL: 0 Shock: 2 Pain: 5-WP	BL: 0 Shock: 5 Pain: 8-WP	BL: 0 Shock: 8 Pain: 12-WP	BL: 0 Shock: 11 Pain: 16-WP	BL: 0 Shock: All Pain: 20-WP



AN AFTERWORD, OR SOMETHING...

First off I both need and want to thank a few people: My wife, Earta, Ron Edwards (all the fiction in here is for you, man), Rick McCann (who got me going down this crazy road), Greg Metcalf (who still stays in touch), Gifford Young (my earliest design partner), Brian Leybourne (who said, "Sure, I'll finish it, Jake"), Ben Moore (who illustrated most of this book for an X-Box), my parents (I'll pay you back, I promise!), and all those guys at the TROS forum who keep me from working when I should. I love you all.

Secondly, I guess I'll say some publisher stuff. This is Driftwood Publishing's second book, and it's only a year late. Not bad for the industry, I suppose. In truth I'm glad that it's out and I hope it was worth the wait. Driftwood has attained a lot of success in this struggling industry, and in the process I've learned a lot about what is and isn't possible for an essen-

tially one-man company. Okay, enough. Here's an attempt to answer some questions that our playtesters brought up and I figured would be helpful to you, the reader.

There's a lot of magical beasts in here...isn't that counter to the base TROS feel?

Indeed, there is a great deal of magical creatures in *Of Beasts and Men*. Magic and its ilk is rare on Weyrth, yet the greatest stories are those that break the rules. Would the film *Dragonslayer* have been more impressive if the hero had defeated the one dragon when thousands more like it roamed the world? Certainly not. Use what you find in this book sparingly, and to great impact. Just because it's in the book doesn't mean that it exists.

Another option exists, of course. You could use these creatures all over the place in *your* Weyrth, turning TROS' default "low fantasy" into "high"



quickly and easily. It really depends on the style of play you and your group are interested in. Do it your way.

Why are there so many shapeshifters?

Two reasons, really. First, we liked them all, so we kept them all. Some, like the Loup Garou, will be more appropriate for TROS as we intended it. Others, like the Were-beasts in the back, will be more useful for “high” fantasy campaigns. The second reason is that we did our best to pull as much of *Of Beasts and Men* from real-world mythology, and we found that every culture has shapechangers, and in great abundance. Why shouldn’t Weyrth, too?

How powerful are these creatures?

Well...most of them are pretty ugly, to tell you the truth. Review a creature and your group care-

fully before pairing the two together. Also, these creatures are not dungeon fodder, nor are they for random encounters, but each one could (and should) be the basis of an actual story. Think Spiritual Attributes and you’ll be fine.

When are your next books coming out?

That’s a fine question. With our shift to smaller print runs and more PDFs, you can be assure that we’ll be moving much faster. This one sat on my computer for about 6 months or so because we were waiting for the payments from TROS core sales to finally come in and pay the printing costs. Expect some mini-supplements in the near future and the much awaited *Flower of Battle* as soon as we can produce it. Really.

Jacob P. Norwood
Creator, *The Riddle of Steel*
July 2003

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UNIVERSALIS

by Ralph Mazza and Mike Holmes © 2002
86-page, digest-sized, perfect bound, soft cover

Universalis is a game where players cooperate to author exciting stories

The story can be as outrageous or deeply moving as you desire; it truly is unlimited

Use Universalis to:

- Design entire worlds
- Build detailed settings
- Fashion exciting locations
- Create compelling characters
- Develop History and background
- Narrate the action scene by scene
- Drive the story forward to your desired conclusion
- Add your own surprises and plot twists

The game's play structure and robust mechanics ensures that every player will have the opportunity to influence the story and contribute to a dramatic ending. You have the power to dramatically shape the nature and direction of the story, of the very world; but so do each of the other players. The carefully crafted rules encourage suspense and meaningful conflict while providing the tools to keep the story focused and moving forward.

Universalis is supported by a lively on-line discussion forum and a frequently updated web site which contains examples of stories created from actual play and a number of player suggested rules variants.



<http://universalis.actionroll.com>

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