

White Hunter

THE INVISIBLE WORLD





Cover

Pat Loboyko

Interior Illustrations

Paul Carrick, Paul (Prof) Herbert, Veronica Jones, Pat Loboyko

Cartographer

Keith Curtis

Authors

Scott Charlton, Rucht Lilavivat, Henry Lopez, M. Sean Molley, Brian Schoner, Robert J. Schwalb, Robert Vaughn

Editors

Anna Maria Leon and Eric Wiener

Layout

Ruben Smith-Zempel

Art Direction

Jim Beck

Additional Material

Pedro Barrenechea, Sean Smith and Eric Wiener

Playtesters

Timothy Chandler, Phil Collins, Robert Farnsworth, Greg Ferguson, Joanne Fisher, Andrew Garbade, Bryan Leclair, Dee Leclair, J. Wayne Parrish, Cori Petrea, Michael Petrea, Erica Reeder, Gail Reese, Brian Schoner, James Todd, P. Dennis Waltman

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Team Paradigm

Jim Beck, Pedro Barrenechea, Matt Blank, Henry Lopez, M. Sean Molley, Nelson Rodriguez, Eric Wiener, and James Zwiers

Character Sheet

Pedro Barrenechea



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INTRODUCTION

To you who read this, by choice or chance, greetings. I know not who you are or how you may have come by this text; indeed, as I write it, I have no assurance that I will live to complete it, nor that my words will out-live me long enough to be read by any but their author. In truth, such a statement is true of any work done by the hands of man, for which of us can begin any day with absolute certainty that we will be alive when that day reaches its end? The Almighty has entrances and exits scripted for us all, and rare indeed is the man who knows the hour or nature of his end before it is visited upon him.

Even so, the risk is, I think, greater for this author and this work; but despite the danger, the words must be put to paper and sent out into the world, that those who may glean some value from them have a chance to learn by an easier tutor than the hard experience which has taught me enough to write them. Therefore, let me write, and assume that both I and the work will survive to reach you, the reader, lest I give in to despair and cease writing before I have properly begun.

What is it, then, that I write, which gives me cause for such morbid and fearful musings? That, unknown reader, depends very much on you. It may be that you have come across this book by chance, idly picked up from a book-seller's stall or in an acquaintance's reading-room, or discovered in a forgotten corner of some library, five or fifty years hence – may God grant that the work survive so long, and may He forbid that the need for it will still be present so far in the future! But if you found this book by such chance, I regret to say that it will probably bring you little enough of either wisdom or diversion. It will seem, more likely, to be a child's fairy-story, full of goblins and witches and other non-sense that enlightened men will consider beneath them, and that ignorant men will fail to understand. Moreover, if it is a fairy-tale, it will likely seem to such readers as one that is told in a particularly disjointed and ineffective manner, by an author so ashamed of his work that he will not even sign it with his full name. If such is the case, I offer my regrets, but not my apologies; for you are not the one for whom this work was meant.

Those for whom this book is meant will likely have been given a copy specifically by one who knows already that the story herein, far from being a childish phant'sy, is true; and who knows that this truth must be made known to the recipient as well. If you are such a one, I ask your patience and forbearance; soon enough this tedious introduction will be done, and the true revelations which are the reason you were given the text will begin.

But there is a possibility – a small one, and for the sake of your sanity, gentle reader, one which I pray to God is not the case – that you who find this manuscript by chance may, by the hands of Providence, be one of the unfortunate few for whom it was written. If you have seen things by Luna's pale and ghostly light that you could not make yourself forget the next day, beneath the warm and comforting light of Sol; if you have seen a nightmare come to life, and been unable to convince yourself that it was only a dream after all; if there is a moment in your past which you shudder to remember, but cannot forget, in which you learned that the world was not as you had been raised to believe, and that evil was a real and tangible thing; if you have unwittingly looked beneath the veil of Nature and glimpsed the face of Lucifer, and stood your ground rather than fled in terror, then you are one of us, whether you know it or not.

If these words strike a chord within you, then may God Almighty bless you with strength of body and of will, for you will need both. Read on, and gather up the kernels of wisdom in these pages, though they are bought with fear and pain. You must know the things that are herein set forth, and you must not turn away, hateful and vile though the revelations herein may be. Once you have glimpsed the face of Lucifer, know that he has seen your face as well; and though you may look away and try to forget, the Adversary will know you, and he will seek you out soon enough, to ensure that you do not share what you have learned. If you are not prepared, you are doomed to damnation, death, or (most likely) both; and while the humble wisdom in this book may not be enough to keep you from such a fate, it is in truth one of the only shields you are ever likely to have. Be assured that the Adversary knows you, and your only hope is to know him as well.

If the passages above mean nothing to you, then this book is not for you; be grateful to God that it is so. Read on, if you will, and believe that all contained herein is phant'sy; by the grace of the Almighty, this may be the closest you ever come to such evil. Those of us who know better will shield you from the truth if we can.

D.G.

Cambridge, Massachusetts Bay Colony
August, 1684

* * *

Welcome to the world of *Witch Hunter*!

Witch Hunter is a role-playing game of swashbuckling horror, in which once-ordinary men and women face and fight against the monstrous forces of evil in a seventeenth-century Earth almost, but not quite, identical to our own. From the crowded streets of Paris and London to the unexplored depths of the North American wilderness, those who have come face-to-face with supernatural evil must face it down with nothing but their flintlocks and their faith.

The world of *Witch Hunter* is a rich and complex one – this is a pretty big book, as you can see, and there are a lot more secrets we’re not ready to reveal just yet! However, let’s start out with a few essentials about the game and the world it’s set in. The five points on which *Witch Hunter* is based are Horror, Action, History, Folklore and Faith.

***Witch Hunter* is a game of horror.**

“Horror” is a commonly-used word for a genre that includes ghosts and witches, werewolves and vampires; it’s an easily-identifiable term that gives people an idea of what they’re getting themselves into. But monsters alone don’t make a game horrific. Trolls and goblins live in many role-playing worlds, but they’re common enough that players become jaded about their existence; they’re dangerous, but not scary. To truly make the monsters (and the game they live in) horrific, you need something more. Later in the rulebook, we’ll discuss the specifics of running and playing a horror game in detail. For now, just bear in mind that the diverse elements of horror – the dread of an unknown enemy, the fear of a dangerous foe lurking somewhere just out of sight, and the visceral terror of a blood-spattered beast suddenly appearing *right next to you* – lie at the core of a game of *Witch Hunter*.

***Witch Hunter* is a game of Swashbuckling Action.**

Horror can be built with a slowly-growing sense of dread, as the true wickedness and power of the enemy becomes gradually, terrifyingly clear. But when the enemy is finally revealed, or when innocents are endangered, the heroes of *Witch Hunter* respond with swashbuckling, bare-knuckled action. Muskets, swords, and courage may not be enough to put the forces of evil down, but that’s often all that our heroes have to rely on. Intellect, learning, and deductive reasoning will play central roles in finding and understanding the nature of the enemy, to be sure. But when lives and souls are on the line – when there is only one chance for victory and the alternative is unthinkable – the men and women of action reign supreme.

***Witch Hunter* is a game of history.**

While *Witch Hunter*’s Earth in the year 1689 is not quite identical to the one found in history books, it is close enough to allow the game to absorb the rich flavor of this extraordinary period of history. In Europe, Isaac Newton and other Natural Philosophers are driving the Age of Reason forward, revolutionizing science and man’s knowledge of the natural world. In North and South America, colonists from across Europe are struggling to carve civilization out of the edges of a vast and unknown continent, while some of the native inhabitants, most notably the powerful Aztec Empire, try to expunge their taint from their homeland. Others extend their hand in friendship, which at times is gratefully accepted, while at others is slapped away with prideful arrogance and contempt. Africa is still a dark and unknown land; the edges are a known source for strong but unwilling slaves, but the continent’s vast interior is a mystery to “civilized” Europe. Asia is a realm of exotic spices and strange cultures, little-known to the people of the West.

***Witch Hunter* is a game of folklore.**

Like our own Earth, the world of *Witch Hunter* is full of myths, legends, and superstitions. The difference is that in *Witch Hunter*’s world, almost all of them are true. Fairies do dance in mushroom circles in the woods, the unhallowed dead do wander the earth as ghosts or the walking dead, and demons and devils do seek to tempt and corrupt humans into mortal sin. Average men and women do not see these beings often (if ever), but they know they’re out there. A farmer’s wife will always leave milk out to appease the fairies, and a lone traveler returning home late at night will often recite the Lord’s Prayer to keep evil spirits from his path. For witch hunters, however, such simple charms rarely work; monsters and spirits are deliberately hunting them, and can only be faced with courage, faith and cold steel.

***Witch Hunter* is a game of faith.**

The existence of God is not a theory or a belief in the world of *Witch Hunter* – it is an accepted fact. Not everyone believes in the same God, of course – Christians of various sects, Jews, Muslims, Native Americans, and many other peoples all have their own faiths. But whatever specific religion they choose, the heroes and heroines of *Witch Hunter* rely on their faith to give them the courage needed to fight the forces of evil, and to resist temptation and corruption. This should not imply that *Witch Hunter* is a religious game, nor that all Witch Hunters are pious and holy individuals. But it is important to realize that, for the characters, belief in a benevolent divine power is an essential element. Even those who began their careers without faith soon learn to believe, whether they want to or not.

CHAPTER ONE: THE ORDERS OF SOLOMON

Part secret societies, part religious brotherhoods, and part divine sanctions, the Orders of Solomon are organizations under which Witch Hunters gather. This term is assumed to be a reference to the biblical character King Solomon, a wise man that bound demons to his service, possessed all manner of magical artifacts, and possibly made use of prophetic foresight. Aside from the overarching name, however, the Orders have little in common. They all have different origins, different methods, different hierarchies, and different geographical, political, professional, and spiritual areas of control. In fact, the only thing most have in common is their mission: to protect mankind from the dangers of the Invisible World. As you will see, however, even that similarity can be interpreted in many ways, and with varying levels of intensity. *Witch Hunter* takes place in a time when the light of reason serves only to cast darker shadows, and it is set in lands where allegiance to an earthly lord often contradicts an allegiance to one's Heavenly master. Even within the bonds of brotherhood and common cause, a wise Hunter trusts only himself and his closest comrades.

NOTABLE EVENTS IN THE HISTORY OF THE ORDERS

1000 BCE	The birth of King Solomon
952 BCE	The Creation of the Seal of Solomon
64–303	The Ten Persecutions
337	Constantine is baptized, becoming the first Christian Roman Emperor
664	The Twelve Penitents appear in Northumbria
909	Monastic movement created by William the Pious
1118	Knights Templars are founded
1294	Infestation of 1294 and sacrifice of Pope Sergius V
1347	The Black Plague sweeps across Europe, killing a disproportionate number of men
1378	The Great Schism Court Magi adopted by European Royalty. Pope orders rite of Purity be performed upon all Magi to verify their souls are free of Damnation
1492	Columbus sails to the West Indies
1518	Hernán Cortéz is killed by natives in Mexico
1531	Pizarro's expedition to the Incan Empire meets with disaster
1554	The Jesuits proclaim total obedience to the Pope, and make the hunting down of Witch Hunters one of their primary, though secret, goals
1666	The Great Fire of London, and the Accord

THE AGE OF SOLOMON

Solomon looked out beyond the kingdom of Israel and despaired.

As described by the ancient texts of the Greeks, Persians, and Egyptians, the Mythic Age was filled with fell creatures, macabre and hoary gods, and acts that would rend a man's soul.

Creatures of shadow and air, beasts from beyond the boundaries of civilization hunted man as the wolf stalked common prey, and within his own lands, news of monstrous beings, who he knew as Nephilim, had reached his ears.

Nephilim akin to the one his father slew; Nephilim like Goliath.

Yet what would befall mankind once one such as David was not able to slay a fiend of Goliath's ilk? Must man then bend knee and don the yoke of servitude to these brutal foes of humanity? Man's future upon the Earth was a precarious one indeed. The wise king was certain that the Almighty would not grant man reign over all the earth knowing that humanity would falter and wither away.

Determined to solve this conundrum, Solomon spent his youth traveling far throughout his father's kingdom and beyond, meeting the wise and the foolish, seeking knowledge forgotten or hidden away. In his travels to distant realms, lands as far away as Assyria and Chaldea, he befriended sorcerers of great power who granted him into the solution to his problem.

In 970 BCE Solomon returned to Judea in haste upon hearing of his father's death. His coronation as King presented Solomon with the power and influence required to secure the final details of esoteric knowledge necessary for mankind to fulfill his destiny upon the Earth.

After years of intense research, Solomon put his plan into motion. He summoned to his side the six greatest sorcerers and magi he had met during his travels. Answering his call were Shulmanu the Assyrian, Mitten of Tyre, Joran of Moab, Didanu the Aramaean, Imandaru of Damascus and Alahaz the Edomite. Each concurred with Solomon. For mankind to have a chance at survival, steps must be taken to cast away that which disputed humanity's claim upon the earth.

The fashioning of the Great Seal was the work of a lifetime. As the years passed, the seven wise men toiled, taking care that every line, mark, or rune was perfectly in place and at the proper angle. The tide of years wore on, and each of the seven drew to themselves, young and bright persons to assist them in their task, training them to carry on their work after they were dust.

As the completion of their great labor drew near, darkness stirred in a distant land determined to undermine their efforts.



THE HEART OF DARKNESS

There is a place in the center of Africa that is so corrupt, that it is as if one were looking down the maw of Hell itself. Alas, this description is not mere imagery; it is near to the very truth.

After Lucifer's failed rebellion against the Almighty, the faithful hosts of angels cast the Morningstar down from his place condemning him and his rebels to the darkest pits of Hell. Falling to earth, his lingering presence putrefied the very ground he lay upon, his wounds seeped and festered onto the land, and his spittle caused blight and infestation. After an eternity, the Adversary's body sloughed through earth corrupted by his baleful presence; sinking into the raw, fetid morass until eventually he fell into the flaming pits of damnation.

Yet even within his eternal prison Lucifer did plot to do harm to the children of God. He learned of the great work of Solomon and smiled. His whispers emerged from the Heart of Darkness and called upon those whom he previously favored with gifts and power. Known by some as the Coven of the Dark Cincture or as the Coven of the Horned Moon, these witches were the Adversary's most powerful and cunning minions by far.

Setting these vile creatures upon Solomon's kingdom, he gave them but a single mandate: to corrupt the Great Seal and turn its power to his benefit. And so did the coven travel across the continent upon the backs

of black beasts until they arrived in Judeah. Their leader, Malikeda, realized that Solomon was beyond reproach, but that they needed only look for their enemy's weakest link to accomplish their foul lord's task.

ENACTING THE GREAT SEAL

Malikeda sent the youngest and fairest of their coven to seduce the Damascan, Imandaru. Blessed with unearthly beauty, unblemished skin, a lithe, supple body and a voracious appetite, Ilianda needed less than an hour to seduce wizened old man. Each night while her lover slept, the seductress would make the smallest of changes to his portion of the Seal; an additional line here, a shortened line there, an additional crossing line and her master's work was complete.

When the appointed time came to empower the Great Seal, Solomon and the six wise men went down to the deepest level below the First Temple. There they spent the next full cycle of the moon binding powerful spirits, jinn and demons to empower their work. Another month was spent drawing out the complex formulae in exacting detail, each section according to their plan. Finally Solomon intoned the proper words, words of power that sent the full force of will from all seven men into the Seal.

Immediately, he sensed the flaws in the Seal.

Solomon foresaw a fatal flaw within the design. Though the Great Seal would indeed separate the mortal world from all that was supernatural, an act that would in fact forge the Invisible World, this flaw would fail to bar the many minions of Hell, including Fallen Angels, from the Earth; in essence, it would grant them free reign to plague mankind with no opposition save any derived from humanity itself. Acting quickly, Solomon altered his incantation so as to permit some magical essence to escape into the world of man, just enough to enable magicians to continue to practice the art, hopefully safeguarding humanity against the demonic forces of the Adversary. Unfortunately, this meant that creatures from the Invisible World could slip through these cracks and enter the Earth. He took solace in the knowledge that only a small number could do so and his keen mind already worked out a plan thwart their endeavors.

Nearly spent after such a demanding feat, Solomon sprang upon Imandaru in a rage, knowing full well that it was his section of the formulae from which the imperfection of the Great Seal arose. Imandaru begged the King's mercy, confessing his affair with the young mistress during the final months. With haste she was brought before Solomon.

Made to kneel and confess before the king, Ilianda taunted the ancient Imandaru as a fool for thinking that one as lovely as she would ever consent to bedding him without some other motive. Spitting into the face of the assembled, she declared that their great labor was for naught; her master had his own designs upon humanity and would not rest until mankind either knelt before him

or was utterly destroyed. Warned that unless she gave up her sisters she would be put to death, Ilianda mocked them, for the Coven of the Dark Canticle was beyond their reach, she said, and that death would only hasten the journey to her master's side.

Solomon meditated on her words. The Great Seal had indeed accomplished much of what he had intended; it had given mankind time to grow powerful as masters of the Earth as the Almighty had intended. Yet due to his hasty alteration of the ritual, it was also weakened. The Great Seal would eventually fail, and the Invisible World, with all its denizens, would flood into this one. In two, perhaps three millennia at the most, the entities bound by his work would break free and undo all he set forth to accomplish.

The king hoped three thousand years was adequate for humanity to learn how to fight back.

THE FIRST WITCH HUNTERS

Humiliated, Imandaru left in silence. His apprentices followed him and, by his example, remained silent as well. All that is, but one – Antiochus the younger, his most gifted student. Antiochus turned to the other wise men's apprentices and called upon them to go forth with him to hunt down the witches who worked this evil against their masters.

Though most remained at Solomon's side to organize the first Order of Magi, as was the king's wish, a handful agreed with Antiochus. An aggressive approach was needed. This Coven of the Dark Canticle had sought them out and did them a great wrong. Left unpunished, they would continue to work their dark arts and be as a plague upon the Earth.

These men petitioned Solomon for his blessing, and the wise king gave it. He anointed them as the avenging arm of the Almighty. Galvanized by his blessing, these brave men and women abandoned what few comforts they knew and set out to the far corners of the world to bring the battle to evil's own den, a quest still carried on by the modern inheritors of their task, those know as Witch Hunters.

HISTORY OF THE ORDERS

Residents of the visible world, meaning those who do not regularly interact with or delve into matters of the supernatural, could fill a thimble with their knowledge of the Witch Hunters and their history. Members of each individual Order have a clearer idea of the history of their own organizations, but even those are shrouded in mysteries and half-truths. After all, when a secretive group inducts a new member, it releases its secrets only slowly, lest that newcomer's loyalty proves empty or he falls into the hands of the enemy. Thus, the essential traditions and knowledge bases of an Order are passed verbally from the anointed to the novitiate as needed, or handed down via cryptic texts, both methods that lend themselves to exaggeration, mistranslation, and deviation over time.

THE SEAL OF SOLOMON

While barely a score of learned people know of the Great Seal of Solomon, many of those schooled in the esoteric and occult arts are aware of a more common version of this symbol. Drawn as a six pointed star, known also as the Star of David, this symbol, when properly blessed, still resonates with the power of the original. It has been sometimes known to keep malignant and otherworldly entities at bay or, when used in a binding ritual, appears to magnify the power or duration of the ritual.

This was the case, at least, before the Great Fire and the resulting Accord. Since that time, communication between the Orders has improved, and records have become more robust and reliable. The Orders themselves refer to this noticeable difference in the quality and reliability of information by dividing their historical records into two categories: those "Burnt" and those "Illuminated," both metaphors in regard to the effects of the Great Fire. In the case of the first term, records before the fire are dark, vague, and difficult to decipher, as if burnt. Those after the fire are clearer, more detailed, and more reliable, as if illuminated by the same fire that burnt the records of times before it.

THE BURNT TIMES: BEFORE THE FIRE

Although the Great Fire of London in 1666 didn't actually burn the records kept by the Orders, soldiers carrying forth God's will are prone, like the book in which they seek guidance, to embracing metaphor and mysticism. As such, when a modern Witch Hunter attempts to make sense of the writings and tales of his predecessors, those from before the Great Fire seem dark, shadowy, and barely comprehensible compared to those recorded since. A very literal glimpse of the situation has led the poetic among the Orders to think of those times as having been charred by the window of history through which they are perceived.

What can be seen through those flames is this: rampant sin and demonic presence, corrupt religious and political leadership, and amidst it all, proud icons of divine courage and wisdom. Those icons, the saints and leaders of Christendom, are the ones who laid the seeds for the Orders, either literally organizing them with their words or inspiring their creation with their actions. A few of the seed events that would grow into specific Orders, as well as events that would shape the Orders as a whole, are described below.

WITCH HUNTERS IN SCRIPTURE

The name of Antiochus and his fellow Witch Hunters was lost to the sands of time. After the destruction of Solomon's kingdom of Judea years later, all trace of the Witch Hunters and the First Order of Magi was lost. Some of the magus resurfaced in the Egypt and continued to refine their art, while others scattered to the four corners of the world. By the time the first Christians began proselytizing their new faith, all written record of them

were lost; only whispered tales of holy men and women who fought the Devil's followers in the shadows remained.

St. Peter and St. Paul were described as using "righteous" sorcery in the scripture, but only against fellow mortals. Where then are the great heroes, the binders and destroyers of witches and demons? If God wished for brave avengers to face the Invisible World in his name, would He not have given that message to his prophets? The Ascetics of the Ten Persecutions would say that the Old and New Testaments cannot be trusted, that they have been subtly altered with each new translation by insidious forces of evil, until no mentions of Christendom's only true hope have been left. They say that this, beyond all contemporary schemes, has been the Adversary's greatest victory: by leaving only references to pagan and ungodly "sorcerers" and "magicians," he has denied the common Christian a true understanding of those who should be seen as heroes. Worse, he has painted those heroes as his supposed allies, ensuring that they would be persecuted by those they seek to protect. The Stalkers of the Unseen Hunt, on the other extreme, would say that any written word is bound to be fallible, and that only those who pass the true tales from one generation to the next have remembered the old ways; in the old places, the toothless elders teach the young all they need to know about demons and those who hunt them.

Regarding the scripture, most of the Orders have a belief somewhere between these two extremes. All accept, however, that the Bible as we know it is not the final word regarding God's powers and His chosen servants on earth. It cannot be, for the Witch Hunters have seen things that would sunder men's souls, things that are described nowhere in their holy books. And yet they have emerged unscathed, thanks only to God's grace and to abilities that, likewise, are not described anywhere in the Bible.

THE TEN PERSECUTIONS

While Christianity still stumbled across the earth in its swaddling clothes, the emperors of Rome were nearly

MAJOR AND MINOR ORDERS

The Orders of Solomon, despite each individual Order's proclamations as to their divine sanction, proud history, unique mission, and so on, are at their hearts simply groups of men and women bound together by common goals, origins, or methodologies. No Order is uniquely protected by God, and no Order is guaranteed to survive through the end of the current century, or even decade. They are only as strong as the Witch Hunters who comprise them, and each Witch Hunter that falls to the Adversary weakens the brotherhood that depends on him.

Despite the transience of most groups of Witch Hunters, nine Orders have existed for long enough, spread far enough, and become powerful enough to be considered Major Orders. All, with the exception of the Ghost People, had representatives at the Accord, and all have agreed to the laws and vows set out at that meeting. The nine Major Orders are described below in detail in the main body of this chapter, including their history, preferred tactics, and the benefits that membership in the Order provides. Most starting Witch Hunter characters are members of one of these nine groups.

All other groups of Witch Hunters, be they sub-sects that have branched off of one of the Major Orders or a group of independents united by some common factor, are considered Minor Orders. Players must have their GM's permission to begin play as members of these smaller Orders, and must be willing to work with the GM to flesh out the Order's details and benefits.

Minor Orders suffer from several drawbacks, both as character organizations in the game and as support networks from the characters' point of view. First, they are less well known than the other Orders. Because the Minor Orders are younger or less hierarchical than the Major Orders, they are also less likely to have vowed to uphold the Accord, something that does not engender trust among other Witch Hunters. This suspicion is exacerbated by the Minor Orders' tendency toward independence and small numbers; whereas Witch Hunters know that the Major Orders can and do police their own, both for the sake of their organization's reputation and its survival, the Minor Orders have fewer checks and balances. It is much easier for a strong-willed tyrant to control a small group of faithful who are constantly under his supervision than a widespread group who are exposed to other influences and must make their own decisions.

Additionally, the Minor Orders tend to have very narrowly focused goals, methods, and even moral stances. Unless an entire campaign revolves around the hunting down of the being known as Korsky, a character playing one of the Devoted might not be as effective as the other characters, not to mention having a harder time rationalizing why his Witch Hunter would be involved in non-Korsky missions in the first place. The Brotherhood of the Broken Spear, who think of all Catholics as enemies to be destroyed, are an example of another problem posed by Minor Orders: closed-mindedness. Whereas the Major Orders must by necessity be open to a variety of prospective members and cultural beliefs, Minor Orders are sometimes defined by their inability to get along with others (which, obviously, does not make for ideal play group integration).

Of course, the final word on which Orders are available for play and which Orders even exist in the campaign world is up to the GM. The nine Major Orders provided here are those known in Europe and the New World, but others likely exist in the Orient. Likewise, Minor Orders might increase in power and stature, while Major Orders might shrink or disappear completely. All Major Orders began as Minor Orders, after all, and some Major Orders of the past have been killed off, whether through war, persecution, or simple obsolescence; nothing is permanent in this dark time, least of all an ethereal organization that exists only in secret.

obsessed with its persecution and destruction. Some of this persecution was mundane, of course; the Roman Empire was held together in part by its insistence on a “god of Empire,” personified by the emperor himself. Christianity threatened the power and unifying ability of this religion.

But hidden histories reveal that more than mundane fears powered the persecutions. From 64 CE, beginning with Emperor Nero, to 303 CE, ending with Emperor Diocletian, ten separate persecutions were recorded as being so intense and vicious that their effects would leave a lasting impact on Christianity’s tone and teachings. Each of these persecutions was instigated by what the Romans called powerful rituals or spells deemed to be a threat to the empire. Oddly, none of the supernatural events were harmful; miraculous healing, the exorcism of spirits, and prophetic visions, for instance, inspired three of the persecutions. These are the first historically verified accounts of supernatural powers being used by Christian men and women; in essence, the users of these powers were Witch Hunters.

Why, then, did Nero and those who follow him so viciously assault the Christian miracle workers? Wise and capable leaders, which these men otherwise were, should at least have tried to harness the powers demonstrated by the strange cult. Instead, they commanded complete destruction of the cult and even witnesses to the cult’s workings. To the conspiracy-minded Crusaders Inviolable and the strangely obsessed Ascetics, the truth is obvious: the Adversary was working through the Roman emperors to attempt to quash Christianity in its infancy. Regardless of the motivation behind the persecutions, they set the stage for the future relations between the Orders and the rest of society: Witch Hunters always have, and probably always will, arouse both suspicion and envy from those in power.

CHURCH AND EMPIRE

When Constantine was baptized as the first Christian emperor of Rome in the early fourth century, the leaders of Christendom rejoiced. However, the gain came at a cost. Constantine was an obsessively paranoid man. He was consumed with protecting his empire and, powerless to fight back against the inevitable decay of its overstretched boundaries, he turned his attention inward, and found schemes and betrayers everywhere he looked. He even had his eldest son and his wife put to death for having an affair with one another, an affair that was later proven to be false. He continued to worship pagan deities until just before his death, and he claimed that minor gods and spirits sent him prophetic visions. Some say that this ruler of the civilized world, and the man who irrevocably linked Christendom to western society, was mad.

Constantine issued many edicts providing ever greater tolerance and rights to Christianity, probably because he saw that this “cult” had grown to such power that to attempt to fight it would be pointless. However, he drew the line at welcoming those members of the cult

who claimed to have miraculous powers, who received visions like his own. He distrusted these individuals, partly because he did not understand their abilities, and partly because he feared that they might use their talents to oppose his rule. Or perhaps they would swoop in after his death, using their powers and prophecies to tear his progeny from the throne.

Constantine could not actively kill or banish these troublesome individuals without alienating all of Christianity. Thus, he decided to eradicate, if not the people themselves, any mention or sanctioning of them in official records. Whereas most leaders of Christianity were encouraged to build churches and to preach to the public, those who spoke of or displayed any superhuman abilities were not. They were harassed, ignored, discouraged, and rejected. They could not own land, own slaves, or achieve governmental positions. What outright assault could not accomplish, bureaucracy did. Within a few decades, written records referring to Witch Hunters had been obscured, altered, or removed. They continued to exist, of course, and passed on their teachings; but their political, social, and economic positions had been weakened. Constantine’s subtle manipulation of policy and history ensured that, while Christianity was embedding its roots as the shaping religion of the west, Witch Hunters would not be recognized as a part of that belief system.

SAFE HAVEN

Prophets and zealots throughout Christendom predicted the coming of the apocalypse, or at least major upheavals for good or ill, upon the end of the first millennium after the birth of Christ. The date was chosen, not due to any scholarly proof or mystic insight, but merely because it was an obvious number with which to capture the imagination of the common folk. And capture their imagination it did, leading to numerous short-lived cults, mass conversions, rebellions, and riots. This time period is also notable, however, as the beginning of widespread monasteries throughout the western world. The archivists among the Orders assure their fellows that this was no coincidence.

In 910 CE, with less than 100 years before the supposed end of the world, a French Duke (or perhaps Count; records vary) called William the Pious founded an abbey in a town called Cluny. The Duke endowed the abbey with the entirety of its wealth, then disappeared from public life, leaving his advisor St. Berno, the Abbot of Gigny, to take over management of the abbey. St. Berno applied himself to his position with vigor, and was a prolific writer and religious theorist, endearing him to the leaders of Christendom.

Over the next century, clunaic monasteries spread throughout France, Italy, England, Scotland, and Poland. This rapid spread was possible because the monasteries were essentially funded by the aristocracy. It is assumed that fear over the upcoming apocalypse had driven the wealthy to “give back” to the church some of their good favor and bounty, in the form of giving up their children along with sizeable donations to support them

THE TWELVE PENITENTS

By the seventh century, as the fledgling Orders stagnated under the repression of Christian doctrine, the ruling powers became obsessed with the minutiae of different sects of Christianity. Some conflict was inevitable, as the religion grew and came to absorb new peoples, each of which required slight variations in doctrine in order to be appeased. But heated arguments, escalating to violence and wholesale condemnation, also erupted. Worst of all, they existed around such minor details as what hairstyle monks should have, which colors should be used in stained glass windows, and upon which precise day Easter must be celebrated.

As the latter argument was being debated, in Northumbria (what would become Britain) in 664, something far more sinister was happening in the wilds of that kingdom. At first, only those who walked alone at night were in danger. Then whatever it was began preying on groups of twos and threes, but did not trouble those who remained in their homes, their doors shut and fires lit. Eventually, these too began to disappear. No trace was ever left of the victims, but the footprints of those who were taken remained filled in with ice for weeks after their disappearance, even in summer. The common folk called the predator Old Shuck, and imagined it as sometimes a large, black hound with icy blue eyes that glowed in the night; others claimed that it was pure mist, or that it rose from the earth itself to swallow people whole.

Some Orders say that the royal family and their religious advisors knew of the disappearances, that the conflicts over religious minutiae were their leaders' way of avoiding major problems by focusing on minor ones. Perhaps the insidious influence of the Adversary himself contributed to the arguments. Regardless, those in power did nothing. The Orders barely existed at this time in the center of Christendom, much less in its outskirts; Northumbria boasted only a few lone Witch Hunters, though at the time they called themselves merely "guardians" or "chosen" or some variant thereof. All of them were newcomers to the Isles, and knew nothing of the local lore or myth. They were helpless to protect themselves from the mysterious predators, much less those around them, and had no support from organizations. They didn't even know of each others' existences.

Then, tales began to be told of young men coming from the north, men bearing heavy Celtic crosses upon their backs, yet smiling as if their burden were weightless. None of them were ever seen together, and by their height, bearing, hair color, even the times and places they were seen, they were certainly different men. Mention of a dozen different such men is made in the poetry and song of 7th century Brittonia. But those who saw and spoke to more than one of them had something to add to the tale. These swore, by all they held holy, that each of the cross-bearing men had the same eyes, all of

them. Not just eyes of the same color, but the same eyes themselves, the same knowledge, as if the same person were looking out at you from a different face.

If the men had some connection with one another, they never mentioned it. In fact, they never mentioned anything, except to warn people as to which roads were safe, and which were not. They had a tendency of appearing just as someone was about to turn down a road, presumably one down which Old Shuck was waiting, and suggesting another path. If the traveler ignored them and went that way anyway, they were invariably lost, their footprints found the next day, filled with ice and disappearing in the middle of the road. The cross-bearers never came inside buildings, though they happily accepted food and drink, and they always traveled alone . . . with one exception. At some point in their journeys, each of the 12 is said to have approached a stranger upon the road, a man or woman or even a child, who had never seen him before. They offered to journey with the individual for a time, and to teach the way of their brotherhood, and though the travelers should have no reason to trust these odd strangers, they nevertheless did.

The cross-bearers, who called themselves the Twelve Penitents, always chose those with the potential for some miraculous ability or power, perhaps not yet evidenced, to instruct. The final test for each apprentice was to use a combination of his miraculous ability and the Penitent's teachings to hunt down and destroy one of the mysterious predators that had been plaguing Northumbria. Each chose a single stretch of road, and in the darkness before dawn on Imbolc, the first day of spring, did battle with their foe. When the sun rose, it found the new Hunters bloodied but victorious. With the apprentices' learning complete, the crosses were passed on, and the original brothers simply walked away down the road, never to be heard from again. The last directive of each of the original Penitents was that their apprentices should go out into the world of Christendom, sharing their mystical knowledge with others who had "strength and powers beyond the ken of man."

Throughout the following centuries, inheritors of the Penitents' teachings presented themselves to the fledgling Orders in the heart of the Roman Empire, bringing with them the knowledge and practices of a wider, mystical world. This combination of Christian ideals with exotic knowledge and practices was the first example of a tendency of the Orders that has continued to this day: that of being willing to embrace the unexplained and the mystical for the sake of furthering their mission.

and the monasteries in which they were enrolled. As the end of the millennium drew closer, entire aristocratic families sometimes secluded themselves into lives of monasticism.

All of this was as William the Pious had planned.

William had himself traveled with one of the Twelve Penitents for a time, and though he had eventually rejected the Brother's offer to take his place a bearer of the stone cross, he realized that what he had learned could be put to good use in another way. After leaving his apprenticeship with the Brother, he delved into the occult, traveling throughout Christendom and beyond in search of knowledge of the supernatural. His travels took him through northern Africa, the dark and craggy reaches of northern and eastern Europe, and even western Asia. He saw and learned much. Then, after a decade of traveling, he returned to his home in a hurry. Something he had discovered had made a dramatic impact upon him, and those who knew him were surprised: for the first time, they beheld William the Pious acting as if *afraid*.

The duke devoted the rest of his life to establishing and outfitting monasteries like the one at Cluny, and while most monks lived their lives peacefully and ignorantly within the walls of their new homes, a few gained insights into things beyond the mundane realm. William and his inner circle of associates, recruited actively from among the many monasteries spawned by Cluny Abbey, drawing into their confidence those who seemed the most courageous, intelligent, and gifted. The best among them were granted sanction to gather others like them, to organize and equip them, to go forth as best they knew how to fight the threats of the Invisible World. From these ranks were drawn most of the founders of Orders of Solomon that survive to this day. The monasteries were their gathering places, their sanctuaries, and their training grounds . . . all secretly, of course, as the monasteries were founded with the understanding that the pope had complete control of them. This masterful move appeased the powers of Christendom and simultaneously deflected their suspicions that the monasteries might be used as the places of "strange goings on."

At first the recruitment occurred at a rabid pace, as if William was desperately preparing for something. Some say that he needed an army of faithful followers to stop some dire event, perhaps a dark ritual to be performed upon the apocalypse that so many saw coming. Others say that he saw his own death, and was determined to prepare the world for what was to come after his passing. Regardless, William the Pious and several dozen of his recruits embarked on a journey in early 918, and none were ever heard from again. To appease the pope and other curious eyes, a story regarding an out-of-control fire in a hunting cabin was concocted, and a body of the proper age, appearance, and build (though thoroughly scorched) was interred in monastery of Saint-Julien in Brioude. To this day, the Crusaders Inviolat make pilgrimages to the crypt to pray for the unknown man who was sacrificed so that William's secret could be kept.

THE SECRET OF THE TEMPLARS

The majority of the Knights Templar was not part of a mystical secret society, and had no exotic knowledge of rites or rituals. They were merely devout, landed warriors who protected the routes through Christendom to the holy land. Some came to the Templars because membership excused their warlike natures, allowing them to slaughter foes on the battlefield without ever worrying about the conditions of their souls. Others were concerned for the mostly poor, unarmed pilgrims who were easy pickings for bandits, and wished only to protect them. Regardless of the military and moral motivations of individual members of the order, the Templars as a whole became renowned and powerful through completely peaceful, mundane means: as bankers.

The wealthy undertook pilgrimages as well as the poor, and monetary wealth was not easily transported, whether it be in pounds sterling, gold bullion, or jewels. Thus, a practice began wherein the Knights Templar, who had chapter houses all along the route to Jerusalem, took in a pilgrim's wealth, put it under lock and key, and, for a reasonable interest rate, wrote the pilgrim a voucher for his money that could be redeemed at any chapter house.

Then there was a third faction; those who were neither patrolling knights nor accountants, crusading soldiers nor moneylenders. These were a secret brotherhood among the elite order, members who performed their duties as a cover. It is said that while in the Holy Land, they found ancient secret writings from the time of Solomon. These writings spoke of the wise king's fears and his ultimate solution. They also spoke of the First Order of Magi and their sister organization, the Witch Hunters and their sacred purpose as guardians of mankind. Thus did the Templars pick up the mantle lost so long ago and devote itself to one overriding duty: to protect Christendom from the dangers of the Adversary and the Invisible World. No sacrifice was too great; no act too ruthless as long as the greater good was upheld and evil vanquished.

Thus it fell to these Templars the responsibility of setting in motion the Second Sacrifice. Their inheritance is today claimed by the Crusaders Inviolat.

The Clunaic monasteries remained places of recruitment and sanctuary for the fledgling Orders of Solomon throughout Christendom for several hundred years, until the purging of the Knights Templar in 1312.

THE SECOND SACRIFICE

In 1294, Pope Sergius V was convinced by Cardinal Paschal, members of the Stalkers of the Unseen Hunt and a secret faction of the Knights Templar that the infestation of undead centered in the Black Forest of Germania was like an ever-widening maw that needed to be stopped before it reached the more "civilized" lands of

Christendom and swallowed it whole. The pope was told that the matter was so grave that only a ritual performed by his holiness could destroy the undead swarm and wipe the Blighted area clean.

According to written history, Pope Sergius V was escorted by Cardinal Paschal and over 100 members of the Knights Templar. In a grueling ordeal that drew on for three days, the unholy tide of the dead was stopped, but at the cost of over two score of the knights and the sacrifice of the pope himself.

The truth is a bit more disturbing. The infestation of the region was such that whole villages were being swallowed whole. With each victim, the ranks of the dead swelled, and innocent victims took their places beside their attackers. The Knights Templar realized that drastic action would need to be taken before all of Christendom was turned into a charnel house. They contacted a high-ranking cardinal and convinced him that a horrific ritual uncovered from the writings of Solomon himself was the only hope they had to turn the tide against the Adversary's latest ploy. This ritual could only succeed via the spilling of the holiest of blood.

When the pope arrived at the village of Frieberg, at the edge of the Black Forest, he saw for himself the unholy horde that was being barely held back by members of the Knights Templar as well as every able-bodied man, woman, and child that could wield a weapon. He set himself to fervent prayer, following the instructions of his Templar escorts; the chants they instructed him to utter were merely a front, however. Late in the night, the Holy Father was seized by Knights and brought to a consecrated area. The pope was crucified and, throughout a terrible three days and nights, was made to endure the agonies of the Crucifixion. At the very end of the ceremony, with Sergius barely alive, Cardinal Paschal himself concluded the ritual and set the cross alight.

As the body caught fire, no sounds of pain or anguish came forth. Instead, a brilliant flash of blinding light erupted outward from the burning crucifix, searing the skin of all within the vicinity, bleaching their clothes and permanently blinding many. More importantly, however, the land had been cleansed of the unholy infestation. No sign of the Holy Father's body was found, and the charred cross was left where it stood, to smolder in the gray dawn.

In the aftermath of the destruction of the Infestation, the people's faith in the power of the Church increased greatly, and the clergy enjoyed even more power and influence over the people and kingdoms of Europe. Cardinal Pascal was rewarded for his bravery, and the now white-haired man was elected Pope Leo Innocent I, an especially young man for such a prominent post. The scars left upon him by that evil dawn were more than just superficial, however, and the new Pope spent a decade in paranoid, covert war with the Knights Templar. Pope Innocent was terrified that the members of the order would use their knowledge of his complicity in the death of Pope Sergius V against him, should he weigh against

them in some future endeavor. The Knights Templar resisted his attempts to control and limit them, of course, and soon enough the former allies began to tilt at one another with veiled threats and hidden assaults.

Pope Leo Innocent won out, eventually; working behind the scenes, he fed the avarice of King Philip IV of France, pointing to the wealth that the Knights Templar had accumulated during the crusades (and through their lesser known role as bankers and creditors for pilgrims to the Holy Lands). Philip accused the Templars of consorting with the Devil, and on October 13th, 1312, ordered their holdings seized and the Templars themselves arrested. A secret faction of the Knights Templar did, in fact, make use of mystic rituals in their battles against supernatural foes, so the King's court found plenty of evidence to prove the accusation. Secret storehouses filled with ancient scrolls, moldering tomes and arcane artifacts were ransacked and confiscated. The great majority were sent to Rome, to be catalogued and stored for safe keeping within the underground vaults of the Vatican itself. The exception being a large iron-studded bronze box which was delivered directly into the hands of Pope Leo Innocent himself.

The Pope had seen firsthand the dangers of allowing a well-armed religious order to operate outside of the Papacy's control, especially an order that knew more than the Holy Father himself about the Invisible World. He decreed such orders to be a violation of God's will, and the Papal See's position on the matter has not changed in the centuries since.

The Papacy was not the only faction to have been firmly influenced by these events. The few survivors of the secret faction in the Knights Templar, as well as the other fledgling Orders of Solomon, saw in these events and edicts the death of one way of life and the birth of another. In this world of an ever more centralized Church and ever more powerful nation-states, there was no place for those with a mission beyond the interests of either. The Orders realized that they would have to begin operating underground, regardless of the borders of kingdoms or the dictates of religious sectarians. This transition became known as the Suppression.

THE BLACK PLAGUE

Born upon a fetid wind from the Far East and carried to Christian lands by Genoese merchants, the Black Death spread across all of Europe with frightening speed. By time the plague had run its course in the early 1350s, it had claimed the souls of at least twenty million Europeans, fully a third to two-thirds of the entire population. Yet curiously, this plague struck down more than its fair share of men rather than women and it is this fact that Witch Hunters point to when they assert that the Black Death was begun by either the Accursed or the by the Adversary himself.

The plague arrived upon a doomed Genoan merchant ship from the trading city of Caffa. All aboard the vessel had already perished or were dying, victims of this virulent pestilence. Within days of arriving in the

port city of Messina on the Italian peninsula, the people began dying. By the time the new moon had risen, the city was abandoned; it's only residents the vermin and the dead. Yet as the people ran with whatever meager belongings they could carry with them to whatever city or village would take them, the Black Death stalked them like a ravenous wolf; never satiated and relentless in its grim task. So many had died, that one bishop claimed that he could hear the wailing of damned souls by pressing his ear to the ground, so full had Hell become.

The Black Plague had devastating effect upon Europe's population, killing three men for every one woman. This loss caused an irrevocable shift in European social structure. There just weren't enough men about to work the fields, build or repair structures, or defend the lands from bandits and other two-legged predators. Women had to step into those roles and take up the duty traditionally held by men.

It took two or three generations to once again increase the male population back to its original levels, and by that time, it was too late to turn back the sands of time. It was no longer an oddity to see women soldiers and officers leading the charge to meet a foreign army. Women blacksmith's were as common as male ones, and so on through the different professions.

Only the nobility tried to return things to the way it was. Gentle women did not learn how to handle a rapier nor toil with their hands; that was the providence of the lesser classes. Women of noble birth did not sully their hands with such things. And most young ladies curtsied and obeyed their father's wishes, at least to their faces. It was not rare for a noble woman to learn how to ride or fence like a champion duelist behind their father's backs, but this was done discreetly. A number of fencing schools would close their front doors for the day, and then, after extinguishing all their candles in the main studio,

THE DEVOTED

There are those among the Orders who do not actively recruit; who see themselves as cursed with a mission that only hatred and loss can inspire. A group who call themselves only "the devoted" are such men and women. They are devoted, not to the protection of innocents or the fight against the Adversary as a whole, but to the destruction of a single man, named Ivan Korsky. In 1641, Korsky killed, raped, and ate 43 women and boys in the Russian port town of Narva. He was hunted down, tortured, and killed by the victims' families, one of whom was a member of the Sunwise Circle named Josiah Rowe. But Rowe discovered something horrible, as Korsky's head continued to mock him for nearly three hours after its decapitation before finally expiring.

Of course, Korsky was not merely a man. He was the latest known incarnation of one of the most hateful, perverse, decadent, and devious creatures ever to walk the earth. He is more than just a spirit, but less than a true demon. All that is truly known about him is that he has an insatiable lust for torture and death, and that he cannot die. He may be able to jump from body to body at will, or may need to wait for a body to die before he can claim a new one. He can certainly endure physical punishment beyond the human norm, possesses preternatural strength, and very probably can enact some measure of mental control over his victims, lulling them into a sense of acceptance with something like hypnosis. He is also very, very intelligent.

The Devoted say that this creature first appeared in the body of the Roman emperor Caligula, something the Ascetics of the Ten Persecutions reaffirm. After personally attending to the torture and execution of hundreds of innocents, Caligula died . . . but something within him, presumably a spirit that had possessed him, lived on. It hid among the populace and reappeared throughout the timeline of Europe's history. It inhabited the body of Gilles de Rais, the lunatic whose life inspired the grisly fairy tale of Bluebeard and his many unfortunate wives. Some Witch Hunters believe that it wore the mask of Elizabeth Bathory, the "Blood Countess" (though the Fellowship of the Ashen Cross believe that she was a vampire, the Devoted know better).

Korsky's previous known identities are likely only the tip of the iceberg; if, as the Devoted claim, he inhabits a new body as soon as the old one is destroyed, then he must have lived as and destroyed a great many more lives than have been recorded. The Devoted cannot be sure if Korsky can claim an adult body or if he is reborn as an infant each time, and if so, whether he is born with full intelligence and knowledge as to what he is. If he spends at least a decade of each incarnation as a helpless child, so much the better for the world; but some of the Devoted pray that this is not so, for the image of such a perverse beast housed in the guise of an innocent is more than they can bear.

Rowe and several of his kin from Russia became the first Devoted, and over the intervening few years since the massacre at Narva they have found a few additional Witch Hunters whose ancestors, friends, or communities suffered at the creature's hands. They track him both backward through history, combing archives and records to learn more about him and his methods, and forward through the world, seeking out stories of what today would be called serial killers. They have at their disposal some magical means of tracking him, but its quality is vague and spotty at best; upon trailing the creature to a brothel in Constantinople, Rowe's team was set upon by the whorehouse's residents, who had been infected with some kind of demonic seed. Before that ambush, the Devoted numbered approximately twenty. Now there are fewer than a dozen, and Rowe is the last resident of Narva to continue the hunt. It would seem that Korsky is not so outnumbered as the Devoted once believed, nor is he unaware of their attentions.

Within the space of a decade, Korsky had tracked and hunted down no less than a score of Witch Hunters. Their tortured remains left as a clear and grotesque message to those still pursuing him: the hunters have now become the hunted.

would open the back door and teach women in dimly lit interior halls. One by one, women of higher birth would enter, their faces obscured by silk scarves and begin their training. The term “*escuela escondida*” or hidden school arose during this time.

The role of women in modern society was immortalized by the master 15th century Dutch painter, Hans Memling, whose masterpiece “*Rising to the Challenge*” embodied the resilience and adaptability of women to do what needed to be done so that society could move forward. Though commonly called “Rosie the Blacksmith” by the uncultured, Memling’s homage hangs in the private collection of France’s, King Louis XIV.

COURT MAGI AND THE ORDEAL

Ordeal Magus Sanctus or “the Ordeal” was officially instituted by the Catholic Church around 1394, however it is believed to have been enforced secretly since the Black Plague of 1347. With the demand by European Royalty for more immediate magical protections from the Adversary, the Pope ordered that while the ruling Courts could appoint a magus for their protection, these practitioners would first have to pass a series of tests developed by the Church. While the Catholic Church would accept with reservations this institution of Court Magi practicing at European Courts, rites of purity would have to be performed first upon all Magi to verify that their souls were clean and clear of any taint of Damnation. This test became known as the Ordeal of Holy Magic, or “the Ordeal.” This tested a magi’s physical, mental, and spiritual worthiness to practice their art and resist the dark attractions of the Adversary and its minions. In essence, the Church would create more weapons to use against the Great Enemy, molding these young hermetic magicians into wielders of righteous sorcery, similar to the magical powers manifested by St. Peter and St. Paul used against followers of the Adversary who rose up attempting to destroy the Church.

The Ordeal is a year-long test of a magician, taking place in sanctified and secret locations of the Church. The magicians are kept secluded, and must dedicate their daily lives to worship as well as education. Secrets to combating the various forms of the Adversary are taught, as is dedication to service of the Church. It is whispered that some of the physical ordeals border on the tortures of the Inquisition, but the actual elements of the Ordeal are known only to the Church and magicians that survive the process. Those that fail at the year-long Ordeal are never heard from again. Whether they leave the country in shame never again to practice their art, or are left to a more ominous fate is unknown.

Not all of the new magi put to the Ordeal survive, however, as the brutal test can break spirit, sanity, or soul for the weak or unprepared. Even those who endure it and are appointed to a court can carry the scars deeply within. Though all would agree it is important that magi placed in such positions of power within the European Courts must be free of any taint of evil, many whisper

that the Ordeal may cause unwarranted damage to these practitioner’s psyches. Youthful and well-educated men and women who enter the year-long rites of the Ordeal emerge sometimes peculiar, with strange, odd ticks of personality or obsessions. Loss of some senses, dark humor, and schizophrenic or manic behavior are common side effects as is a distrust of the very Church that has tested them. In some cases this distrust turns to hatred, and some magi turn against the Church and European Courts after the Ordeal is completed.

There has been opposition of late to the practice of the Ordeal from the Royal Courts, particularly those of Portugal. Lisbon has been home to a college of sorts, where nascent magi are brought to be taught by their elders. This is thought to be a better method than the old practice of a magus picking a child and training her for a good decade without supervision. Feeling that more enlightened methods are needed as the number of potential magi, already quite small, is reluctant to step forward knowing that a year-long torture session awaits them at the end of their training, the Portuguese nobles are pressing the Church for other, less heavy-handed practices.

Yet the threat of being an unsanctioned magus is even more terrible. Those found practicing the Hermetic arts without a seal of purity are immediately considered a Black Sorcerer and will be hunted down by both sanctioned magi and Church officials alike and burned at the stake.

Some magi however, do not affix themselves to a nobleman like a remora on a shark. Whether due to an epiphany while undergoing the Ordeal or due to some other motivation, a small number of magicians turn their backs on the comforts of the royal courts to join one of the orders of Witch Hunters. While no one order seems to entice more magi than any other, there are persistent rumors of an order within an order; one which is thought to descend directly from the original order decreed by Wise Solomon. When asked of this, magi laugh, scoff or plead ignorance on the matter.

SPANISH DISASTER

While the English, French, and Dutch swarmed over the lands of northern America, the Spanish sailed for warmer climes. Following Columbus’ journey, they began to extensively colonize the islands of the Caribbean and the peninsula of La Florida. As they came in contact with more and more of the indigenous people of the area, tales of a mighty Empire to the west whose roads were paved in gold and precious jewels became common. While a few expeditions were launched, none had come back with any proof to these claims.

Finally a brash and bold Conquistador by the name of Hernan Cortez set sail for the large land mass to the west of the Caribbean in March of 1519. After a deceptively calm passage across the gulf, Cortez and his six hundred Conquistadors arrived and conquered the small village of Tabasco. There, further tales were told of the Great Empire of the Aztecs and their many riches.

Emboldened by these rumors, Cortez set off to bring to heel these Aztecs. Along the way, he formed alliances with some indigenous tribes, for the Aztec customs were bloody and brutal. Their hope was that these Spaniards could indeed overthrow the Aztecs and free their people from their generation's long nightmare and oppression.

Cortez and his small army eventually entered the territory of the Aztecs, but instead of battle, they found themselves treated as honored guests and escorted to the capital city of Tenochtitlan and to a great palace. A great feast was held in their honor as the Aztec Emperor Moctezuma came and saw these strange men for himself. Resplendent in gold and precious gems, the Emperor struck fear into the hearts of the Conquistadors due to his savage markings and tattoos as well as the filed teeth that lined his maw like a great shark.

When Cortez demanded tribute to himself and the crown of Spain, the entire feast hall erupted in laughter. Speaking through a pale, abnormally-elongated man who was never too far from the side of Moctezuma, Cortez was told that it was he and his that would pay tribute to their God. Instantly, a raging battle broke out, but the Conquistadors were heavily outnumbered. A small handful was able to escape and remain hidden to see the doom that awaited their fellows.

At the rising of the noon day sun, almost six hundred men and women from Spain were taken to the heathen altar of Mictlantecutli the god of death and with great fanfare, had their still-beating hearts ripped out of their chests. Horrified, the surviving members of the expedition looked on as one by one hearts were first offered up to their Dark God and then tossed to a mass of cloaked charnel priests who fought to possess the grim gifts, squeezing them to drain every last drop of

HERMETIC MAGI IN THE GAME

Players wishing to have their characters able to practice hermetic magic by taking the talent Sorcerous Tradition – Hermetic are considered to have undergone the Ordeal before play begins. Upon the palm of their left hand is branded the sigil of purity, normally invisible to the naked eye though obvious to anyone who can see into the Invisible World. Should the player ever have a Damnation Score greater than 6, the sigil will become visible and begin to bleed as if it had just been cut into the skin, acting as a beacon to those nearby that are sensitive to such emanations, such as a Dominican Seeker and his “Hound.”

During character creation, players should choose a minor phobia, manic behavior, or psychosomatic symptom from the list on page 117. This minor mental disorder never goes away and will be with your character for his entire “life,” so choose one carefully.

Those wishing to play an unsanctioned magus may do so only with your Grand Master's approval.

blood into their obscene gullets.

For Cortez however, the most terrible fate awaited. When the last of the hearts were ripped from their fleshy cages, Cortez was then given his tribute. Made to kneel in the muck and gore of the altar, Cortez's head was forced back and molten gold was poured down his throat.

Eventually, three of the survivors managed to reach the small village of Tabasco. From there, their ravings and mad tales made it back to the Spanish. Part of their stories were dismissed as insane ramblings, but the portion of the account relating the vast wealth of the Aztecs fueled three more expeditions.

Of these, none were ever heard of again.

The one constant in the world is Man's insatiable greed, especially when that vast wealth is held by those who are unworthy of it. Yet, even after one hundred and fifty years of near-constant battle, the Aztec Empire remains tantalizingly out of the Spaniard's reach.

SPAIN'S GRASP IS DENIED AGAIN

Enticed once again by rumors of an extravagant wealth held by a heathen civilization, a conquistador by the name of Francisco Pizarro, set out from the small Spanish colony of Panama in search of a “great land to the south, along the western shore, rich with gold and gems.” Known to the natives of the area as “Piru,” the Empire called Tawantin Suyu or the Four Regions was ruled by “great lords of the sky” who ruled with “lightning and the cold wind of death.” These lords, known as the Inka or Inca, were said to be mysterious and reclusive as a people, so much so that their subjects left their tribute of food and slaves at designated spots and returned to their villages. The offering was always gone by the next morning as if whisked away into thin air.



AFTER ROCKWELL

What became of Pizarro and his expedition is a great mystery to the Spanish authorities. So remote and inaccessible is the region where these Inca supposedly live, that only a half-hearted effort was made to rescue Pizarro. Half-truths, conflicting stories, and outright exaggerations have made this Incan Empire more of a myth along the lines of El Dorado. With the war of conquest against the Aztecs becoming increasingly bloody, Spain's attention must be focused on the true enemy, not further flights of fancy.

Members of the Apostle of the New Dawn in the area have been discovering more and more new evidence that these mythical people may, in fact, be real, a fact that has not been overlooked by the Jesuits. A Jesuit priest by the name of Father Salamanca has been unrelenting in his search for the Inka and has been expending a great amount of resources to discover the truth. Father Salamanca's methods of sifting the truth from fiction has left entire villages emptied and more than a few natives horribly disfigured, but he is getting results and closer and closer to the truth. Why the Jesuits are so desperate to find the Incas is unknown to the Apostles at this time or perhaps this is merely one man's obsession that is causing so much pain and destruction.

THE SUPPRESSION

With the ominous rumblings of nation and church looming over them, the Orders armored themselves in secrecy. Records of the Orders during the Suppression are so rare as to be nearly nonexistent. It was during this time that the Orders splintered, and any communication and cooperation among them that had been building for the past thousand years faltered and died. Trust was simply too valuable a commodity to lend, and only by operating as independent, highly secret cells could the Orders survive and accomplish their goals without discovery. Despite the suffering and silence endured by these dark years of silence, they strengthened the Orders, in a sense. Each had to adapt to the conditions in its region and to the threats posed by their chosen foes. Over the centuries, they developed specialized tactics, uncovered knowledge thought long-lost, and made allies and foes. The nations in which they resided dealt with the Orders differently, depending on the nation and culture in question. In general, though, they were covert enough that their existence was considered purely theoretical to the governments of time.

As for the church, it occasionally uncovered evidence of their existence, whether in the persecution of members of the Order or while fighting the same forces of evil. Yet the approach begun with Constantine continued, and none of these events or encounters were recorded in official documents for posterity's eyes. To be sure, each of the various churches employed their own covert operatives to investigate anything deemed unusual or dangerous. But, like the Orders themselves, these operatives didn't officially exist.

The most official stance taken against the Orders occurred in the midst of the Protestant Reformation,

when the Roman Catholic Church engaged in its own "Counter-Reformation," which led to the clarification of many doctrinal issues. Among the doctrines established in 1555, during the Council of Trent, was the formal denial of the existence of Witch Hunters, referred to formally as "alleged living saints." Under close pressure from Pope Paul IV, it was declared that Witch Hunters' abilities were not miracles performed by God, Jesus, or the saints, but by deals made with darker powers. All Roman Catholic Witch Hunters were required to either renounce their claims or be excommunicated. Most chose to renounce their abilities, and while some Catholic Witch Hunters have continued to use their powers in service to the church, they do so only while acting alone. Those few who both continue to serve the Roman Catholic Church and work with their fellow Witch Hunters are likely to gather under the aegis of the Fellowship of the Ashen Cross.

THE GREAT FIRE

The key turning point about which recent Witch Hunter history has revolved was the Great Fire of London in September of 1666. At least four different cells of the Accursed were involved in setting the fire, delaying appropriate responses by London authorities, and planting false evidence and rumors regarding the source of the blaze. Due in large part to this evidence, the Great Fire is widely considered to have been the result of some obscure Catholic plot, and has been a significant factor in worsening Catholic-Protestant relations in England. While both this schism and the physical damage caused by the fire were highly damaging, they do not seem like sufficient motivation to involve so many servants of the Adversary. The true reason for the plot remains unknown. However, its results are clear: it galvanized the Orders, bringing them back into communication with one another for the first time in 300 years.

The complex machinations that brought about the Great Fire had not gone unnoticed by the disparate Orders. Members of the Sunwise Circle had tracked some of the Accursed arsonists all the way from Moscow, and the Crusaders Inviolable had noticed increased traffic at a known meeting place for Satanists. Either or both of these groups could have ambushed the particular Accursed they were observing, and had they managed to join forces, would almost certainly have disrupted the entire plot. Instead, they inadvertently aided their foes. The Sunwise Circle were planning to attack their targets on the night of August 28th, but their plans were disrupted by the appearance of three additional Witch Hunters walking towards the boarding house where the Accursed were staying. Two of these are known to have been Yevgeny Solovetsky (an officer in the Russian Army) and Amélie de Chevreuse (a French Cistercian nun), neither of whom were members of any known Order. The third Witch Hunter, described only as a tall, bearded man with a strange accent, has never been identified.

The three newcomers were readying weapons, apparently in preparation for their own attack on the Accursed base; this was later confirmed by de Chevreuse's

deathbed testimony. However, several members of the Sunwise Circle recognized Solovetsky as a prominent member of the Russian Orthodox Church who had led his troops in several recent military actions against Old Believer communities (the Circle's main supporters). One or more of the Circle members immediately opened fire on Solovetsky, wounding him; the other two newcomers dragged him to safety and began returning fire.

Meanwhile, the Crusaders Inviolable were shadowing a Accursed agent to try to determine the nature of the enemy's current plot. As the agent approached a boarding house, gunfire erupted from the street ahead. The Crusaders Inviolable raced ahead and saw the Sunwise Circle trading shots with the three strangers. Upon recognizing de Chevreuse's prayers as Catholic and her accent as French, they apparently decided that her group must have been engaged in some malicious act, and moved in to assist the Sunwise Circle. In the confusion of battle, however, one of the Circle members wounded one of the Crusaders Inviolable, and the conflict briefly became a three-way fight.

When the smoke cleared, Solovetsky was dead and de Chevreuse was mortally wounded; the third, unidentified Witch Hunter had apparently fled the scene. It soon became apparent that the Corrupted had also fled, and the Crusaders Inviolable immediately blamed the Sunwise Circle for disrupting "their" investigation, in "their" home city. This argument might also have come to blows, but both sides had wounded to tend to, and were also anxious to track down the runaway Corrupted, so the conflict was limited to harsh words. Both groups retired to their local bases and sent out scouts to track down the Accursed, but it soon became apparent that those who had escaped the boarding house had managed to warn their allies, and every known agent of the Adversary in London had gone to ground.

Over the next several days, while the Witch Hunters were searching London for leads, several small groups of Crusaders Inviolable and Circle members ran afoul of one another; several fights, and at least one murder, are known to have resulted from these encounters. As news of these conflicts spread, Circle members and Crusaders Inviolable alike began traveling in armed groups, spending more time searching for each other than for the Accursed, who were able to carry out the remainder of their plan undisturbed. Amélie de Chevreuse, taken to a plague hospital for treatment, pleaded desperately with her nurse to "stop the fire;" the nurse, knowing nothing of what de Chevreuse was talking about, assumed that the nun was referring to her fever. Early on the morning of September 2nd, a baker's home in Pudding Lane was set afire; London burned for nearly four days.

THE ILLUMINATED TIMES

The period of history after the Great Fire is relatively young; it is the period in which the Orders find themselves today, and it is a time of both hope and despair. Having rediscovered one another, the Orders now enjoy a level

of support and shared information unlike any in their history. The establishment of colonies in the New World and the relative peace in the Holy Land has unlocked new vistas of exploration and learning. Advancements in medicine and hygiene mean that death by disease or infected wounds are less likely, making travel more survivable.

On the other hand, the curtain pulled back in search of new lands has revealed a world stage darkened with mystery. Many feel that ignorance may have been bliss compared to the shadowy realities awaiting true Christians in the heathen world abroad. And while the battleground between east and west has settled into a permeable barrier, the battle lines have been drawn among the kingdoms of Europe, greedy for new land and desperate to protect their ocean trade routes.

The first notable event that occurred in Illuminated times, and in fact the event that made these times possible, was the Accord. Other events from the Illuminated times are described under the individual Order entries and throughout this book.

THE ACCORD

Whatever the Great Fire's goal, whatever it accomplished, it was like a beacon of malevolent power that sent ripples throughout the Invisible World. Each of the Orders throughout western civilization boasted seers of one sort or another, and all found it prudent to send investigators to see what darkness had occurred in London.

All of the Orders knew that there must be others like their organizations, and most Witch Hunters had run into investigators with similarly amazing abilities, whether in friendship or in battle. Yet these had always been encounters filled with secrecy and paranoia, and rarely had concrete information been shared, much less identities been revealed. The gathering of so many Witch Hunters in London could therefore have been a disaster. It likely would have been, if not for the intervention of one of the Twelve Penitents and an Anglican priest named Stewart Burgess.

Father Burgess had contacts among both the Crusaders Inviolable and the Sunwise Circle, and heard of the pre-Fire conflicts from both sides. When he heard rumors of other "strange" outsiders entering his city and investigating the circumstances of the Great Fire, the simple and mundane priest began to recognize that there was a fantastic and deadly world around him, and that these men and women were soldiers in the war against it.

Father Burgess managed to get the surviving members of the Crusaders Inviolable and the local cell of the Sunwise Circle to cease their bickering for long enough to sort out how and when the Great Fire had erupted, and asked for their help in gathering any newcomers to a peaceful council, the better to catalogue and establish ties between the various Orders that seemed to all be coming forth out of the woodwork. Given the Witch Hunters' long practice, by necessity, of masking their abilities, doing so would have been nearly impossible if not for the aid of

a beggar who simply claimed to be called “Blind John.” Presumably one of the Twelve Penitents, this unflappable figure appeared throughout London in the aftermath of the Great Fire, generally sitting with his back against a large stone Celtic cross that locals would claim was not usually present at that particular intersection. Sometimes the silent blindfolded fellow pointed Father Steward toward the hideouts of a newly arrived group of Witch Hunters, while any newly arrived Witch Hunters who came across him were directed to Father Burgess’s church, The Church of St. Bartholomew. Even without Blind John’s guidance, perceptive newcomers were drawn to the church because it was the only structures in its district to have survived the flames.

Once the representatives of the various Orders had gathered, Father Burgess called for a council meeting to be held in Cambridge and “to be conducted under an inviolable Flag of Truce, for it will be crucial to the Future of your collective Mission.” Five months later, representatives of nearly two dozen distinct Orders arrived for the scheduled “High Assemblage of the Seekers of the Invisible Adversary.”

Predictably, the meeting began with accusations of heresy, arguments over political, cultural, and religious differences, and very nearly several fistfights. It seemed that Burgess’s attempt to bring the various Orders together would be doomed before it started. However, in an eloquent speech, he stated that “...whatever your differences, you have one inviolable common interest: that the Adversary be foiled in his efforts to corrupt the souls of mankind. If you fight each other, as we have seen, you do naught but strengthen your enemy. Can you not each show the wisdom, the courage, and the humility to avoid the strife that strengthens the Adversary? If you will not aid each other, can you at least be wise enough to do each other no harm?”

Eventually, Steward was able to get the various Witch Hunters talking, and over the course of several weeks, the Accord was laboriously hammered out and eventually signed by all the attendees. In so doing, an “honorary” Order was founded, Burgess at its head, of neutral messengers, arbiters, and supporters of the other Orders. These would be called the Stewards, and their efforts ensured that the various Orders would, if not be given carte blanche by England’s ruler and its Church, at least not be harassed and hunted as they were by the Roman Catholic Church.

The Accord’s most significant provisions include the following:

No Witch Hunter shall, by action or inaction, interfere with the Efforts of another Witch Hunter to discover, defeat, or impede any Servants of the Adversary.

No Witch Hunter shall attack another Witch Hunter by deed or word, nor shall he encourage Laymen [*meaning, in this context, non-Witch Hunters*] to do so, nor shall he reveal the Identity or Whereabouts of any other Witch Hunter to any one.

BROTHERHOOD OF THE BROKEN SPEAR

The rift between Catholic and Anglican, while a motivation for extreme hate among the common man, is for the most part easily bridged by Witch Hunters. After all, when you face evidence of The Adversary’s existence and his evil works upon the earth on a daily basis, and when that evidence is often actively attempting to kill you, it becomes much easier to let bygones be bygones among fellow Christians, however misguided they may be. Especially when you are forced by circumstance to trust those fellow Christians with your life. The same is true among Witch Hunters of different nationalities; the only care the Adversary has for lines on a map are the motivation they might provide for death and war.

Yet there are those for whom religious sect and nationality are not secondary to the fight against the Adversary, but are essential to it. For them, to accommodate the blasphemous ways of a so-called Christian, or to sacrifice one’s pride in one’s king by working with a jumped-up foreigner from the Continent, are the first steps down a slippery slope into shame or even damnation. They are the Brotherhood of the Broken Spear, and they consider themselves to be England’s true defenders against the Adversary, Catholics, and foreigners alike.

Members of the Brotherhood have a strong presence in London and in the country’s major ports, and do their utmost to dissuade Catholics and foreigners from entering, particularly focusing on Witch Hunters of those ilks. They do not adhere to the Accord; in fact, the rulings of the Accord gave rise to the Brotherhood, which developed as a splinter group of English Crusaders Inviolable who disagreed with its premise.

Any Witch Hunter may ask any other Witch Hunter for such reasonable Aid and Succor as will enable him to most successfully prosecute his war against Servants of the Adversary, and such Requests shall be granted if it is in the asked party’s power to do so, and if granting the Request shall not put the asked party or any Laymen at risk.

Any specific information learned regarding the Nature, Aims, Powers, Weaknesses, or Identities of Servants of the Adversary shall be communicated, by the most rapid means practicable, to representatives of this Council, and thence disseminated to all Signatories of this Accord.

If the representatives of an Order see fit to sign this Accord, all members in good standing of that Order will likewise be bound by the Terms of this Accord, and will be informed of those Terms by the most rapid means practicable. Any Members of such Orders who do not agree to the Terms of this Accord will be removed from their Orders, and their names and descriptions furnished to representatives of this Council, and thence disseminated to all Signatories of this Accord.

Orders or individual Witch Hunters who have not signed this Accord, or whom are not known to have signed this Accord, shall be treated with the Respect and Cooperation due to Signatories of this Accord until such time as they violate the Terms of this Accord, and will be permitted and encouraged to become Signatories by agreeing to the Terms of this Accord. Failing to sign this Accord is not to be considered a violation of the Terms of this Accord.

Individuals who willfully violate the Terms of this Accord will be judged by the members of their Order and punished in a Manner appropriate to the seriousness of their Crime. Those who belong to no Order shall be brought before this Council and judged similarly.

THE ORDERS

While many of the world's Witch Hunters are loners, or gather only into small, self-directed groups, a number of formal Orders attempt to gather, organize, and direct their efforts. Naturally, each Order has its own agenda to promote, and while the Accord proscribes open conflict between the Orders and their members, there is a substantial amount of rivalry and discord between some of them. The nine major Orders are described below; others may be revealed in future supplements, and GMs should certainly feel free to make up their own. Unless the GM deems otherwise, all starting Witch Hunters must choose one of the major Orders at character creation.

Regardless of their Order, Witch Hunters instinctively recognize one another as kindred souls. It is not possible to determine another Witch Hunter's Order, religion, or intent, but all Witch Hunters can sense someone else who has joined the fight against the Adversary. Some report seeing a halo-like nimbus of light around the heads of fellow Witch Hunters, or feeling a sense of comforting warmth radiating from them. Others apparently hear something in another Witch Hunter's voice, or "just know." Even those who have just become Witch Hunters and do not fully understand their current situation will recognize other Witch Hunters as somehow like themselves, and will instinctively perceive them as potential allies. This phenomenon does not appear in the earliest records of the various Orders, and only seems to have begun in the last century or so. The significance of this is unknown.

APOSTLES OF THE NEW DAWN

Wherever expeditions travel, whenever new lands are discovered, the Apostles of the New Dawn are there. They are always on the edge of the known frontier, seeking out new places, new cultures, and of course facing new dangers. The Apostles face the evils of new lands so that those who follow them will not have to.

Other Names: Horizon Seekers, Merchant-Men, Missionaries Seekers, Voyagers

Area of Origin: Portugal, Spain, the Netherlands

HISTORY AND HOMELANDS

The Apostles are one of the youngest Orders. They sprang up, not out of some ancient tradition or proud inheritance, but to fill a void: that on the exploratory ships sent to the New World. The loss of the entire settlement at Roanoke, presumably to supernatural forces, was all the impetus that the Witch Hunters needed. In the span of just a few years, countless independent, itinerant Witch Hunters have gathered together and used their collective skills and connections to ensure that no exploratory expedition leaves its port in Europe without a Witch Hunter, probably one of the Apostles themselves, aboard ship.

A vocal minority of the Order is comprised of those who explore, not for exploration's sake, but to bring the word of God. These missionaries, who refer to themselves as "The Humble Brethren," are Witch Hunters who remain devout Catholics despite the Pope's rejection of them and all that they stand for. Unlike the Fellowship of the Ashen Cross, they do not seek to appease the Papacy or hope to reintegrate Witch Hunters with the Catholic tradition. They simply wish to practice their faith as best they know how, and can no longer do so within their home countries. The pressure to root out and excommunicate, imprison, or kill Witch Hunters is intense there, and very little can be done to fight the Adversary's servants there without making oneself a target.

Instead, the Humble Brethren operate missions in the New World and in the more accepting regions on the edge of Christendom, like northern Europe, northern Africa, and the areas east of the Ottoman Empire. Many members of the Brethren were once independent Catholic Witch Hunters who chose exile rather than excommunication, hiding their abilities and their secret war against the Adversary by relocating to places beyond the Inquisition's reach. As the Apostles of the New Dawn have spread their net of ports and contacts, the Brethren have encouraged them to include as many of their missionary fellows as they can find.

TRAITS AND TACTICS

The Apostles have little in common other than a shared desire to seek new lands, learn from those they meet, and instruct them when they are willing. Some are salty sea dogs with a lust for adventure; others are book-bound scholars who record everything they see. They are by necessity open-minded, and don't last long if they aren't likewise adaptable, rugged, and intelligent. Most also pick up languages quickly. The missionaries among them are protectors, keepers of knowledge, and teachers first, and only consider themselves to be explorers and warriors by necessity.

Although Apostles use mission houses as places to rest and gather supplies and information, a mission's entire priesthood is unlikely to be comprised of Witch Hunters. Rather, each mission likely has a few "special operatives" whose abilities and goals may or may not be known to their peers. While performing his normal duties, this Witch Hunter keeps an eye open for the possession

of natives by dangerous spirits, keeps his ears open for tales of supernatural attacks, and the like. Meanwhile, on the rare but welcome visit by an expedition that includes another Apostle, the missionary exchanges information with his fellow Witch Hunter and might offer his services on a mission.

The most notable visible trait of the Apostles is their tendency to embrace the dress and mannerisms of the cultures in which they've spent time. The wide range of charms, weaponry, and lore they acquire make them very useful in a wide variety of situations.

RECRUITMENT

There is nothing like an expedition in a dangerous foreign land, facing unknown dangers while weeks away from any aid or support, to discover the mettle in a man. If an Apostle and one other companion are the only survivors to return from an expedition, the Apostle will probably offer to train his fellow survivor. Long sea voyages are also good times to slowly, subtly probe a traveler's openness to supernatural encounters.

The missions set up by the Apostles are also fertile locations for recruitment, and they are a long way from exhausting all of the independent Witch Hunters throughout the Catholic missions of the world. They therefore continue to spread word of their recently created support network, all the while training those with potential who come to the mission, be they orphans or adults.

RELIGION

Some Apostles are motivated by a missionary drive, though they are not usually devoted enough to the cause to stay in one place for long and establish a lasting church among native peoples. They are more likely to pave the way for mundane missionaries, whether by dealing with supernatural threats before the mundane priests arrive, or by taking on the less dangerous, if more difficult, task of wearing down the locals' resistances to foreign ideas.

Catholic Apostles are tortured souls; they are devoted to their religion, but cannot embrace it wholeheartedly, for it will not embrace them. They practice strict Catholicism as best they can from outside Christendom. In many cases their existence is little different than that of most other missionaries, who are unlikely to ever return to Rome once they set out for the mission. The difference is all theoretical. Whereas most missionaries know that their homeland would welcome them back if they were to return, the Apostles must exist without that reassurance.

THE CURRENT DAY

The Apostles maintain chapter houses in the major port cities of Spain, Portugal, and the Netherlands, as well as a token presence in London. They were quickly eclipsed in New Spain by the Jesuits and the Los Mártires de Santiago; the Apostles are poorly suited to military

endeavors and to the harsh, near-prison method of conversion necessary to keep a mission running among the violent natives there. A few fervent explorers have driven forth into the frontiers of New Spain, past the battle lines, but these aren't likely to be heard from again.

While exploration to the east has waned in the face of the excitement of the New World, the Apostles have not completely forgotten the overland routes through Asia or the shipping lanes past the Cape of Good Hope. Thus they count among their number the majority of the Asian and African Witch Hunters in Europe and the New World.

FRIENDS AND FOES

The Apostles have a troublesome relationship with the East India Trading Company and the other groups whose primary motivation for funding sea voyages is to make profit, rather than for discovery or enlightenment. On the one hand, Apostles tend to be knowledgeable and capable explorers, meaning that an expedition that includes one is more likely to succeed. On the other hand, they tend to let ideas like human rights, respect for local cultures, and the value of knowledge get in the way of making money. The Apostles do not advertise their membership in the group, of course, any more than the other Orders do; nonetheless, the exploration community is close-knit, and individual Apostles become known to the merchant masters as "problem individuals."



Likewise, the Catholics among the Apostles have brought unwanted attention to the Order. As the Pope's preferred missionaries, the Jesuits look upon other missionary sects as upstarts and interlopers, even if they've existed for far longer than they. Should they learn of the existence of an Apostle of the New Dawn, they would likely become much more aggressive toward the sects within which they operate.

The other Orders appreciate what the Apostles accomplish, and are not hesitant to call on them for guides, supplies, and information when they journey to new areas. However, they tend to see them, at least, as misguided and naïve: why cling to a religious system that denies their existence? Why pine for a homeland that has rejected their very existence?

BENEFITS

Apostles are either very quick at picking up languages or have been exposed to many of them. Beginning Apostles gain double their Education in skill points to spend on languages.

Additionally, Apostles pick up a wide variety of charms, ointments, chants, and icons in their travels. At any time, an Apostle may attempt to recreate a prayer or Hermetic rite effect without possessing the requisite talents and rite knowledge, though he must still meet any requirements listed. The Apostle must have access to his collection of charms and materials to recreate the effect and the difficulty of the rite is increased by +2.

An Apostle may not recreate the same spell effect twice in the same adventure.

ASCETICS OF THE TEN PERSECUTIONS

Other Names: Heralds of the Past, the Reformed, Sufferers

Area of Origin: Throughout Christendom

The Ascetics of the Ten Persecutions are extremely pious Witch Hunters who practice unflagging ascetic deprivation in order to pay homage to what they describe as "the crucible in which Christianity was formed." They are considered extreme even by other Witch Hunters. Yet, despite their strange ways, they have insight into the lives of the lower classes among which they live. They also seem to possess an unusual, even prophetic wisdom.

HISTORY AND HOMELANDS

The Ascetics first organized sometime after the Suppression, when many now-extinct Orders were banished or forced into poverty. Their founder, Francis Pinion IV, was a privileged son of society who had become a Witch Hunter more as a lark than out of any sense of duty; nonetheless, disowned by his family and with nowhere to turn, he too was forced to vacillate between sleeping in the gutters and the hedgerows. That is, until one night, when he broke into a small crypt in the countryside of Austria in search of shelter.

Within, he found historical records never seen outside the Order. They described in lavish detail the ten persecutions suffered by the early practitioners of

Christianity by the Roman emperors, including thorough descriptions of the until-then unreported supernatural events and abilities that instigated the persecutions. As an educated son of nobility, Pinion could read the Latin in which the records were written, and he considered the teachings of the scrolls he found to be as valid as any book of the Bible. He had found new purpose.

The starving and desperate vagabond did not trust the Church to care for the scrolls, thanks to its recent ministrations upon Witch Hunters and their allies. Yet, perhaps because he had himself broken so many laws since his fall from elite society, he did not wholly disagree with the fate that had been dealt to him and his peers. Perhaps they deserved to be suppressed, if one like himself could be lowered to steal; to break into a house of the dead. He interpreted the scrolls as a message to him from God: only by enduring what the first Christians endured, only by living as they chose to live, would he be cleansed of his sins.

And so, the enlightened but perhaps deranged youth took up a penitent's path, enduring self-imposed restrictions while journeying among the common folk and preaching the message he had been given. None would listen to the bedraggled, gaunt figure, though, than the truly desperate and lost: his fellow thieves and criminals. Pinion offered them salvation and paradise, if not in this life then in the hereafter. Soon enough, armed though they were with only their fists and clothed in only rags, an army had amassed.

TRAITS AND TACTICS

The Ascetics live their lives, and claim to derive their powers from ten vows of deprivation, each of which is tied to one of the ten persecutions under the Roman emperors. The vows are as follows:

1. I shall not bring armaments to bear against my fellow Man or Woman, even be he of another faith, or even has he struck me or mine with a mighty blow.
2. I shall not allow any other to endure pain from wounds or illness of the body if I can ease that pain or heal that wound or illness, be he friend or foe.
3. I shall not suffer the dead to touch my body or mind, or to inhabit it. If such a spirit should touch my flesh, I shall not sleep again until it is destroyed. If such a spirit should inhabit my mind or body, I shall not eat again until three days have passed for every one that it spent within me.
4. I shall not claim as mine any item that I do not carry, be it weapon, wealth, tome, or garment.
5. I shall not practice magical workings, be they of the tradition of Christ or of some other teaching, excepting those rituals and blessings taught unto me by my brethren Ascetics.
6. I shall not lay my down my head upon any thing but this, the blessed ground given to us by God.
7. I shall not travel upon any conveyance of the land, nor ride upon the back of any beast, but let only mine own legs carry me from place to place.
8. I shall not allow coin to touch my skin, for its touch is anathema to the purity that I seek.

9. I shall not make a request, nor a demand, of my fellow Man or Woman, neither for any physical Thing nor for any Service.

10. I shall not speak of to those outside my Order, nor write down for the eyes of any outside my Order, the texts of the Ten Persecutions shown unto me, on which I base these vows.

Of course, each of these vows is subject to interpretation. Most Ascetics take them quite literally, so for instance, an Ascetic might don a glove in order to handle money, thereby avoiding breaking his seventh vow. The most notable literal interpretation is that of the first vow: the vow of pacifism towards other humans. The Ascetics do not consider that this vow applies to those who were once human (the undead), those who are cursed (lycanthropes and other human shape-changers), or most importantly, those who have rejected their humanity (the Accursed). Some Ascetics enter battle against these foes with a disturbing bloodlust.

Interestingly, the Ascetics lack vows that proscribe imbibing alcohol or experiencing sensual intimacy, something that endears them to the lower classes of society but that makes them repugnant to many other religious orders, including many Witch Hunters.

It is unclear whether the Ascetics' peculiar lifestyle and beliefs attract a certain type of madman, or if it fosters madness among its adherents. Regardless, the Ascetics are universally strange folk. Their vow preventing the possession of anything they cannot carry means that their clothing is likely to be ragged and worn; their vow preventing the asking of aid means that everything from ordering food to getting directions must be performed with a roundabout, hinting, querulous series of non-sequiturs. If you asked the Ascetics why they act so strangely, why they persist in following such obviously outdated and bizarre practices, they would simply smile and tell you that *someone* must.

RECRUITMENT

Jails, poorhouses, brothels, and bars are all prime recruiting spots for the Ascetics. They are perhaps the most well-known of the Orders to society at large; they do not hide their organization, their actions, or their beliefs. Yet they are allowed to continue subsisting, simply because they are assumed to be just another ridiculous sect of poor beggar-priests. In a sense, they hide in plain sight.

The Ascetics would not last long amidst their chosen flock by preaching, nor by cultivating a holier-than-thou air. Instead, they truly befriend the dregs of society. They act as lookouts for burglars and pickpockets, they act as physicians to prostitutes, they keep prisoners entertained with bawdy tales, and in the midst of it all, they occasionally partake of the benefits such a lifestyle has to offer. They are, after all, only human.

RELIGION

The Ascetics are the 1600s' equivalent of Evangelicals. Most experienced lives of depravity, hopelessness, and faithlessness before they "found their calling," and they embrace their odd brand of Christianity with the fervor that only the converted, the truly "saved," can muster.

The ten vows that the Ascetics take are only the tip of the iceberg of their religion. Each of the persecutions is the inspiration for a book, not unlike the books of the Bible that includes allegory, rituals, family histories, and the like. The Ascetics consider these ten books to be the true word of God, and quote from them liberally. The other Biblical writings, both of the Old and New Testaments, are said by the Ascetics to be corrupted by the Adversary himself. While those who follow the Christian Bible are not in themselves corrupt or evil, according to the Ascetics, they are prevented from knowing the full truth. They must instead read the word of God as unobscured and unaltered by the devious hand of the Adversary.

THE CURRENT DAY

The Ascetics are everywhere; not unlike, as their detractors like to say, rats and cockroaches. The New World in particular seems to have a high percentage of Ascetics. Most of these came across the ocean as something else, but were driven to the lowest points in their lives by the harsh realities of the voyage or of the New World itself. That is, until a benevolent Ascetic of the Ten Persecutions lifted them up again.



FRIENDS AND FOES

The Ascetics are too bizarre and well-meaning to have enemies. Even the authorities of the cities whose streets they plague appreciate the calming influence they have on the criminal element. Among the Orders, the Sunwise Circle has a protective, almost “older sibling” stance toward the Ascetics, while the Fellowship of the Ashen Cross seem to be embarrassed by them. The Witch Hunters of the other Orders remain neutral toward the Ascetics, but appreciate the versatility of the supernatural powers they can achieve thanks to their vows (see “Benefits”).

Although the tension is one-sided, the Ascetics seem either envious of or disdainful towards the Crusaders Inviolable. The Ascetics claim that these “inheritors of the ancient ways” may have plenty of relics and records, but that they don’t have the *right* ones. Just like all of the other Christian writings in the world other than the Ascetics’, the writings of the Crusaders Inviolable are, they say, corrupted and inaccurate.

BENEFITS

Each day, as he performs his morning prayers, an Ascetic of the Ten Persecutions may choose to devote his day to the consideration of one of his vows. Each vow relates to a related rite, which the Ascetic may use that day without training in the relevant magical tradition (indeed, the practice of a magical tradition is forbidden to the Ascetics), and their bizarre religion allows them to cast hexes without calling on the Adversary to do so or suffering any ill effects. They use their faith to enact these rites, meaning that they use their True Faith score in place of the Sorcerous Tradition skill, should they not have it. Note also that they must meet all requirements, such as True Faith score, etc. before being able to enact the effect.

The sorcerous effects are as follows, with the relevant vow listed after the spell in parenthesis: Soothing Song (vow #1), Exchange of Hurts (vow #2), Exorcism (vow #3), Shining Chest (see the Lost Book of Isis) (vow #4), Blessing (vow #5), Mastery of the Elements - Earth (vow #6), Opening the Way (vow #7), Banish Passion (See Von Grimmel’s Diary) (vow #8), Embodying the Totem (vow #9), Trapped in Darkness (vow #10).

If an Ascetic character ever breaks one of his ten vows, he loses access to the relevant rite until he is atoned for doing so. How the atonement is achieved is left up to the GM, but should at the least require an entire session of play to accomplish, with no other goal for the character or the party but to perform the atonement.

THE CRUSADERS INVIOLE

Other Names: Cryptics, Cipher Bearers, Guardians of the Tradition, Sophia’s Chosen

Area of Origin: France, Italy, England, Northern Africa

Other Witch Hunters aren’t sure how to categorize the Crusaders Inviolable. This is partially because the Crusaders Inviolable are so cryptic and veiled in everything

they do, but it is also because they defy simple definition. They claim to be the only true Order, and carry on the traditions of the most famous of the Orders’ forebears, the Knights Templar. Amidst all of their secret signs and initiations, however, even the Crusaders themselves run the risk of forgetting who and what they are.

HISTORY AND HOMELANDS

When the Templars were purged by King Phillip IV, most of their monetary wealth and knowledge died with them. The Witch Hunters among the Templars, however, were well practiced in avoiding detection. Some of them, and their rites and rituals, survived. These became the Crusaders Inviolable.

These few Crusaders Inviolable were an elite group, hesitant to trust anyone outside their own closely bound brotherhood. They guarded what few powerful relics they had with their lives and souls, and for decades did nothing to fight the Adversary, instead striving only to protect what they had salvaged. They took their name from the core belief of the Templars: that those who killed in the name of Christ did so with the blessing of God, and their souls were in no danger for the commission of that sin.

After the first generation, the Crusaders Inviolable began to operate once more, albeit subtly. Their primary goals were to establish a network throughout Christendom and beyond; wherever western civilization went, they followed. They relied on a system of secret signs and code words to identify one another, allowing them to journey from one nation to another and know that they would always have a safe haven. While other Witch Hunters were fighting desperately against the machinations of the Adversary, and striving to survive under the Pope’s continual persecution, the Crusaders bade their time and spread. Through canny investments and extreme caution, they have once more become a powerful force throughout Europe.

TRAITS AND TACTICS

The Crusaders Inviolable are secretive, calculating, and reserved. They name among their members inscrutable guards, skilled spies, merciless assassins, and determined warriors. They are as resistant to bribery as they are to rashness. If they have any *modus operandi* when attacking the Adversary, it is to study their foe as much as possible, strike, and leave no answers for the mundane world to follow up on. They have at their disposal many powerful relics of ages gone by, and their members have their fingers in diverse local organizations, both private and public. As a whole, the group exercises caution and cooperation, preferring to bring their impressive resources to bear against their foes. Nonetheless, when individual heroism and daring action are called for, the Crusaders Inviolable rise to the occasion.

The term “Crusaders Inviolable” is more than just a name, however. The members of this Order believe that any means, no matter how dire, justify the ends . . .

. so long as the Crusaders Inviolable are the ones doing the deed, that is. Whereas other Witch Hunters would put their souls in peril by committing sins, and should be punished for doing so, the Crusaders Inviolable believe that they alone have the divine sanction to do what must be done in the name of the fight against the Adversary.

RECRUITMENT

The Crusaders Inviolable do not recruit. Only those who interpret their secret signs or decode their ciphered messages, who discover the truth about the Crusaders Inviolable, are offered the chance to join their ranks. Those who refuse are murdered in cold blood; that act is but one of many sins that the Crusaders Inviolable commit with clean consciences. Those who accept are subjected to a regiment of mental, physical, and spiritual tests and initiations that amount to torture. By their end, the applicant is either an empty shell or is a wholly loyal and devoted member of the Crusaders Inviolable.

RELIGION

The Crusaders Inviolable are universally devout; however, their particular understanding of the divine word of God is unique to their brotherhood. It approximates Catholicism, but includes aspects of animism, Egyptian and pagan religions, and other even more exotic rites. The Crusaders Inviolable would simply refer to themselves as soldiers of God.

THE CURRENT DAY

The Crusaders Inviolable have chapter houses in every capital city in Europe, and though they might not boast squads of warriors ready to do battle, as their forebears once did, their power should not be underestimated. In the modern day, a drop of poison in the right cup or the destruction of the right record can accomplish more than a hundred armed and armored men.

By contrast, the Crusaders Inviolable have only minor presence within New Amsterdam and Quebec, and have been forced to deal with the dregs of society in order to find an inroad there. They definitely have associations with smugglers, thieves, and slavers; some say that they even deal with Satanists. Regardless of the truth of that particular rumor, Crusaders Inviolable in the New World is either out of his element or is willing to work with nearly anyone to accomplish his goals.

FRIENDS AND FOES

The Crusaders Inviolable trust the other Orders no more than they trust any outsiders, which is to say, not at all. They do not actively work against them, and have no qualms against using other Witch Hunters as muscle or "hired help" when necessary, but in the eyes of the Crusaders Inviolable, Witch Hunters from other Orders are little more than specialized freelance agents who can sometimes be duped into working without payment.

Regarding the rest of the society, the Crusaders Inviolable retain a particular distrust and hatred for the Pope and any who serve him, as well as for the monarchy of France. Other organizations, public or private, are of little concern to the Crusaders Inviolable, so long as they do not interfere with the Order's goals.

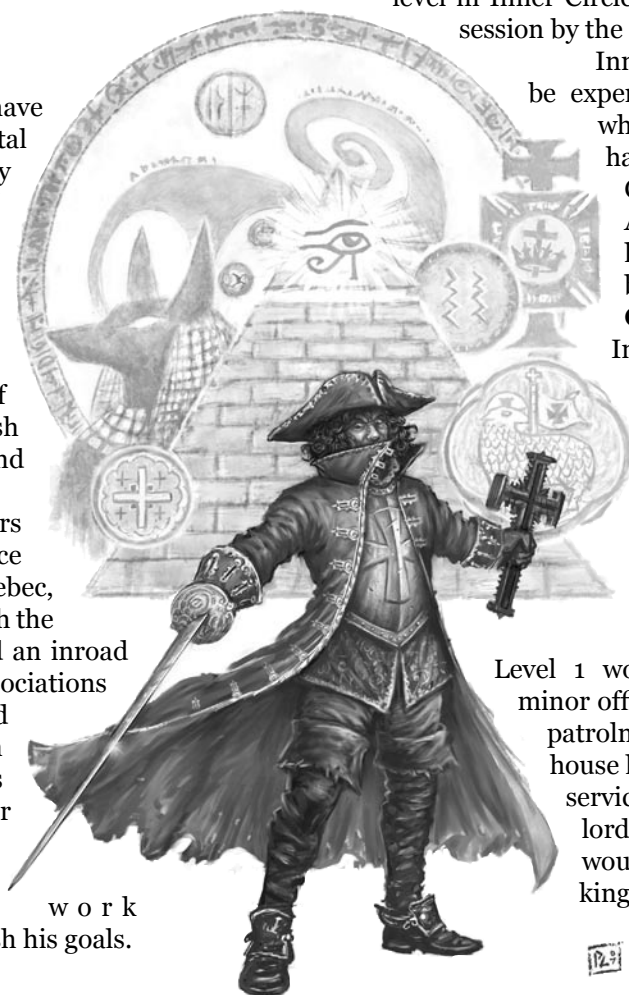
BENEFITS

Crusaders Inviolable characters gain a special elective skill at character creation, called Inner Circle. They begin play with Inner Circle 1, and may increase it as normal for an elective skill. Rather than being tied to a specific ability, however, Inner Circle is tied to all of the character's ability scores. The drawback to this is that a character's level in Inner Circle may only be as high as his lowest ability score. The benefit is that Inner Circle can be used for many activities, as described below. Levels of Inner Circle are spent during each session, like resources; for each use of the Inner Circle skill, the character's effective level in Inner Circle is lowered for the rest of the session by the number of levels used.

Inner Circle levels may only be expended in major urban centers where the Crusaders Inviolable have chapter houses. Inner Circle levels expended in New Amsterdam count as one level lower for the purposes of benefits gained.

Connections: Each level of Inner Circle expended grants a favor or boon from a public official or a powerful member of the community. The nature of the boon could be nearly anything the GM and player can agree on, but should not put the official's life in jeopardy or go against his political or religious beliefs.

Level 1 would grant a service from a minor official or personage, like a street patrolman, a craftsman, or boarding house landlord. Level 3 would grant a service from a city's mayor, a crime lord, or a ship's captain. Level 5 would grant a service from the king's closest advisor, the leader of a nation's military, or the head of a religious sect.



Esoteric Knowledge: By consulting the Order's libraries and experts, the Crusaders Inviolable may expend levels of Inner Circle to grant a number of bonus dice equal to the level expended to any Research, Myth and Lore, Occult or Trained Knowledge check performed by himself, a companion, or a hired expert or researcher. Doing so requires one day of preparation and research per level expended.

Relics: The Crusaders Inviolable may make use of one of his Order's relics. Each level of Inner Circle expended grants the loan of a relic of appropriate magnitude (see Chapter Eight: Grimoires and Relics).

Resources: The character may use levels of Inner Circle to provide funding for the sake of requisitioning items, paying for travel, and the like. One level grants funds for a single mission equal to the yearly income of a Commoner or Entertainer (see Table 3-3). For each level beyond the first expended, the funds available for that mission increase to the next level of social standing. Any items purchased using these funds must be donated to the Order upon completion of the mission.

FELLOWSHIP OF THE ASHEN CROSS

Other Names: Avengers, Lap-dogs of Rome, Dark-hearts, Burnt Brothers

Area of Origin: Italy, Spain

Not all Witch Hunters despise the Pope. The Fellowship of the Ashen Cross sees his persecution of Witch Hunters as just, given what was perpetrated by the Knights Templar upon Pope Sergius IV. The goal of the Fellowship is to atone for the sins of their brothers, past and present; to regain the faith of the Papacy; and to fight the Adversary without straying from the edicts of his Holiness the Pope. Their faith and determination make them fearful warriors, and their relics are imbued with the holy power of vengeance.

HISTORY AND HOMELANDS

The Fellowship was founded by a young Catholic novitiate named Corick Contadin. He accompanied Pope Sergius to the Black Forest on that fateful trip, expecting to aid him in whatever rituals he would be asked to perform. Instead, he watched helplessly as his beloved mentor was tortured, then burned alive. Shocked by what he witnessed there, yet afraid to stand up to the Knights Templar, Corick fled when the cross was lit, cowering throughout the night in an abandoned hovel. When the sun rose, he stumbled out to the ritual site, hoping to at least return his mentor's bones

to sacred ground so that they could be put at peace. All he found was the charred cross.

Corick had the cross removed and hidden, but feigned shock and memory loss regarding the entire event. Thus, while Pope Leo Innocent I made sure that the other witnesses to the Second Sacrifice, namely the Knight Templar, were silenced, he left the unassuming priest alone. Corick had no illusions as to the threat that Leo Innocent posed; however, he also realized that there must be other ways of fighting the Adversary than those used during the Second Sacrifice. Corick himself had seen, after all, brave men and women standing against the legions of the dead, wielding nothing more than sticks and pitchforks. He himself had beheld the glorious effect of the sacrifice, albeit unwilling, of Pope Sergius IV. He therefore began to recruit those among the Catholic ranks who would otherwise have been excommunicated for their strange ideas, or those who would have left in the face of mounting pressure from the hierarchy.

TRAITS AND TACTICS

The Fellowship of the Ashen Cross does things, as much as possible, by the book. They are not foolish enough to declare themselves openly to the Pope or to the nations in which they operate. However, they are incredibly careful to work through the system when it exists. Whether this means refraining from taking life in self-defense, following the local laws, or fasting during Lent, the Fellowship follows the rules.

This might seem to be quite handicapping, especially for a group that must fight foes who have absolutely no regard for laws, be they mundane or spiritual. However, the Fellowship has at its disposal the most recent relic to grace this earth: the charred cross on which Pope Sergius IV was sacrificed. Each member of the Order carries a piece of this cross with him, and by using it to mark themselves with ash, can accomplish miraculous things and endure terrible wounds.

Additionally, although it is unclear where the practice began, each of the Fellowship bears a weapon composed of wood from an ash tree. This wood is anointed and blessed, granting it special properties when used by a member of the Fellowship.



RECRUITMENT

The Fellowship recruits beneath the Pope's very nose; always doing their best to swoop in and snatch potential members from the claws of the Inquisition. If possible, they find and take into their care those who begin to display supernatural abilities. If such abilities are displayed before the Fellowship has a chance to conceal the individual, the Fellowship does its utmost to pass off the event as a rumor, as an exaggerated but mundane event.

In the New World, the Fellowship exists on the periphery of the Catholic missions that have come here. The directives of His Holiness the Pope are delayed and buffered by an ocean, and the Fellowship therefore takes the opportunity to further their cause as best they can. It is even rumored that some courageous souls of the Fellowship have become spies among the Jesuits, rescuing those who would otherwise be doomed at the Jesuits' merciless hands. If this is true, even the dour Stalkers and the haughty Crusaders Inviolates would have to admit the Fellowships' courage and audacity.

RELIGION

The Fellowship is one of the only Orders to be comprised completely of devout, practicing Catholics. They recruit exclusively from among their own religion, and their highest hope is to be once more accepted by God's representative on earth, the Pope.

THE CURRENT DAY

The Fellowship sees the New World as a gift from God, as their chance to return once more into the Holy Roman Church's good graces. They strive to perform heroic acts and good deeds there, to pave the way for the Catholic Church's presence, and to subtly and quietly plant an understanding of Witch Hunters' roles into the newer, hopefully more open-minded flocks of the New World.

Meanwhile, back in the Old World, the Fellowship fights a quiet holding action, enduring secretly within an institution that despises them. They do their best to dissuade the Catholic Church from taking actions that would mistakenly be to the Adversary's benefit, and when they cannot do so, they leak what information they can to whichever other Orders can best act on the situation. A large number of them lose their faith through this trying existence, while several each year are uncovered as heretics and imprisoned, tortured to death, or burned at the stake. The leaders of the Fellowship fear that it is only a matter of time before the organization as a whole is rooted out and destroyed.

FRIENDS AND FOES

The Fellowship practices humility, and they refrain from judging those of other religions, cultures, or Orders. There is one exception to this rule: The Crusaders Inviolates. The Ashen Cross remains as a constant reminder to the Fellowship what the Crusaders Inviolates, or at least their forebears, the Knights Templar, did to the holiest

personage on earth. The Crusaders Inviolates' continued activities, flaunting both mundane and spiritual law with their claim that the ends justify the means, cannot be endured by the Fellowship. While not going so far as to take arms against their misguided brethren, they do their best to dissuade, complicate, or if necessary sabotage the Crusaders Inviolates' actions, particularly if those actions would result in harm to innocents.

Members of the Fellowship also, in remembrance of the sacrifice made by Pope Sergius IV, pledge to destroy the undead wherever they find them. Regardless of the cost to the Witch Hunter or his comrades, such abominations must be vanquished. Members of the Fellowship have even been known to kill, albeit reluctantly, those who are possessed by the spirits of the dead. They enjoy such last resorts no more than any other Witch Hunter, but their determination to put all dead things to rest is such that very little will stay their hands.

BENEFITS

When a member of the Fellowship of the Ashen Cross wields any weapon made primarily from the wood of an ash tree, whether it be a spear, a crossbow with ash bolts, or a simply club, that weapon is considered blessed. A weapon that is blessed can harm certain creatures like ghosts and demons despite their defensive powers.

Additionally, once per day, a member of the Fellowship may inscribe ancient angelic symbols in ash upon his brow with the charred piece of the cross that he carries with him. Doing so requires 1 minute of uninterrupted prayer, and can create one of the following effects.

Mark of the Avenger: Any weapon the character wields throughout the next scene is considered to be under the effect of a Holy Weapon rite (see page 134).

Mark of the Unassailable: Throughout the next scene, the character is considered to be under the effect of a Heavenly Shield spell (see page 133).

Mark of Discernment: Throughout the next scene, the character can see clearly in any lighting as if the area were brightly lit, and doubles any successes on Search and Notice rolls.

GHOST PEOPLE

The native tribes of North America have fought the Adversary, in their own way, since their cultures first came to these lands. One should not fall prey to the misconception that these are "noble savages" with some kind of idyllic culture. Life among the wilds can be brutal and short, and the Indians are merely human. This can perhaps best be shown by the fact that, like the Europeans, they too ostracize the Witch Hunters who exist only to protect them.

Other Names: Children of Mee-Komwee-so, Guides, Spirit Speakers

Area of Origin: North America

HISTORY AND HOMELANDS

The Ghost People represent a tradition of Witch Hunters

that crosses tribal and regional boundaries. While they are not an Order in the European sense, the elders of the group agreed to the Accord in 1679, and the Ghost People have since been regarded as an Order by other Witch Hunters. The Ghost People include a great many hunters and warriors, and a relatively small number of shamans. There are also a significant number of female Children, which is unusual among Indian warrior societies. The women in this group dress, act, speak, and fight as men, and are generally treated as men by other Indians.

The Ghost People are named for the attitude that other Indians have toward them: namely, they pretend that they don't exist. The Indians believe as a whole that the Adversary and creating spirit are part of the same being, that everything is connected, and that those who fight the evil Manitou must inevitably become spirits themselves. Therefore, those who fight the Adversary are considered to be dead and are treated as spirits, able to only communicate with Shamans or ignored by the majority of the populace.

In order to survive, then, the Ghost People roam the wilds, staying in shelters that the local tribes prepare for them. These shelters are always stocked with food, water, tools, and weapons ... whatever a Witch Hunter would need. But they are always located a mile or more from the main village. Some Ghost People band together for companionship and safety; others live their lives in solitude. But all are forever barred from returning to their old lives in their community or any other.

TRAITS AND TACTICS

The Ghost Peoples' tactics are as varied as the nations and tribes from which they come. Some think of themselves as hunters, while others act as guards, orbiting villages with an eye toward protecting them. A few are loremasters and negotiators with spirits, binding them to their service or entreating them for aid. Some even act as educators, meeting with non-Ghost People under specified ritual conditions that prevent "contamination."

RECRUITMENT

The Ghost People do not usually choose their fellows; they accept them into their ranks by necessity. A Ghost Person is "made" when he becomes embroiled in the fight against evil, whether he likes it or not. A hunter who is attacked by a supernatural beast, a shaman who is forced to exorcise a spirit, or a brave who foolishly ventures into a Hellpoint to prove his courage are all destined to become Ghost People ... assuming they survive. On occasion, a Ghost Person who sees potential in a particular

warrior will make contact with that individual in broad daylight, in sight of the rest of the tribe. This virtually guarantees that the unfortunate individual will be cast out, with no other choice but to become a Ghost Person (albeit an embittered one). Some tales are even told of Ghost People acquiring unwilling wives and husbands in this way.

RELIGION

Each Indian nation has its own gods and spirits, and each tribe breaks these beliefs down even further by varying the details, names, and timelines of their mythological stories. All recognize the existence of the Adversary, however, and all know that, though he can never be destroyed, he must be opposed.

THE CURRENT DAY

The Ghost People are stretched thin in the face of European encroachment; often, when their people flee in the face of the settlers' greater numbers and more powerful weapons, the Ghost People stay behind to guard the sacred sites or, more often, to keep cursed sites and Hellpoints from growing stronger. Other Ghost People move on when their original tribe does, following them and doing their best to protect them in their new homes. However, a tribe in new territory must face unknown terrain and weather, not to mention deal with the area's more established residents. Often, such relocated tribes can barely support themselves, much less the Ghost People who depend on them for food and supplies.

More and more often, the Ghost People have begun to realize that the newcomers will not be leaving. Some work with the European Witch Hunters out of necessity, because they cannot defeat an enemy alone. Other Ghost People have lost their entire tribes to a Hellpoint, or to more mundane plague and warfare, and

now

continue their battle against the dangers of the Invisible World because they simply know no other life. Finally, a few Ghost People have become embittered with their lives and the treatment they received at the hands of their people. They see the open (by comparison, at least) society of the settlers, and the normal lives lived by the Witch Hunters among them, and decide that they have been duped all this time. Unfortunately, the stresses and strangeness of European life tend to catch up with these naïve men and women; alcoholism, poverty, and violent tendencies are all frequently suffered by "civilized" Ghost People.



FRIENDS AND FOES

Witch Hunters are little better than other Europeans when it comes to accepting natives as real people with their own valid cultures. Of the major Orders, only the Apostles of the New Dawn and the Stalkers of the Unseen Hunt treat the Ghost People as equals, and the latter have no love for the natives other than for their wilderness prowess. The Lightbringers speak of the Ghost People favorably, but naively think of them as “noble savages” rather than understanding the true complexity

Meanwhile, facing extinction or starvation, some Ghost People have begun to fight encroaching settlers as often as they fight evil monsters, spirits, and Corrupted shamans. This has often put the Ghost People at odds with Indian tribes allied with the Europeans, like the Algonquin. It also strains the Ghost Peoples’ relations with European Witch Hunters, who are torn between taking their Indian counterparts’ side and protecting their fellow newcomers.

BENEFITS

Ghost People have mastered the art of blending into their surroundings, the better to observe and guard the people they must protect without being noticed. The Ghost Person may use the Stealth skill in natural surroundings without any cover to hide behind. If the Ghost Person has cover to hide behind and is in natural surroundings, he may double the successes on any Stealth roll, so long as he remains still. If the Ghost Person moves, this benefit is lost.

In addition, Ghost People receive a +1 bonus die to all rolls made while in their native territory or terrain.

LIGHTBRINGERS

Although the Renaissance was a muted event in the world of *Witch Hunter*, and the Age of Enlightenment was a stillborn era that never came to pass, there are still those who embrace science and logic as the only way to guarantee the future of mankind. Those who hold up flickering candles in hopes of pushing back the darkness of the Invisible World are called the Lightbringers.

Other Names: Architects, Clockmakers, the Enlightened

Area of Origin: France, Italy

HISTORY AND HOMELANDS

The Adversary seemed to be drawn to the great works of the Renaissance, whether they be paintings depicting a deity or architectural works devoted to that higher power. Unexplained construction accidents claimed the lives of cathedral works; some who glimpsed paintings claimed to see the obscene or the impossible upon the canvas, things that no one else saw; witnesses claimed to see inanimate statues come to life and perform foul deeds. It was almost as if, by cursing and possessing art created in the name of his great foe, or in the name of human greatness, the Adversary gained a sense of mocking satisfaction. Eventually the artists and architects themselves sought out the knowledge and skill they would need to fight back against these subtle assaults.

TRAITS AND TACTICS

The Lightbringers are men and women of science and art (though the two were often intermixed during the time period). They seek rational, mundane reasons for any event they encounter, and when no such reasons exist, they simply expand their understanding of what is rational and mundane. In this manner, their definitions of science are constantly expanding to not only include the supernatural, but to claim and control it.

The Lightbringers are usually creators rather than destroyers, scientists rather than soldiers. Yet they are no less stalwart than a veteran warrior in the fight against the Adversary, for He threatens civilization and all of man’s great works. They do prefer to play to their strengths, however: they research their foes extensively before doing battle, and might construct elaborate traps or concoct strange chemical compounds to undo their enemies.

RECRUITMENT

Like most artists, scientists, and scholars, the Lightbringers are self-motivated. They recruit peers who stumble upon the same supernatural discoveries they do, and rather than creating a “mentor and apprentice” relationship, they tend to simply share their knowledge with those they think they can trust. The Order is therefore more like a collective of like-minded individuals, constantly amazing one another with their discoveries and tales, than a goal-oriented, hierarchical group like the other Witch Hunter Orders.



RELIGION

The Lightbringers are distinctly humanist. Religion can be a substantial part of that belief system, but only if it embraces human potential and free will. Most Lightbringers, for instance, embrace Christianity for its philosophy of the elevation of man. Lightbringers disdain any theology or sect, however, like the Puritans' that proposes predestination or original sin.

THE CURRENT DAY

The New World has attracted more of the scientific, scholarly Lightbringers than it has the artistic members. Both groups can be naïve, venturing into dangerous territory without the appropriate precautions. Yet the other Orders have come to rely on the Lightbringers for their excellent research skill, their logical minds, and their keen abilities of deduction. Thus, thanks to the Accord, any time a Lightbringer blunders into trouble, he is likely to have a bodyguard or assistant from another Order there to pull him out again.

In trade, the Lightbringers have taken on the roles of researchers, record-keepers and historians among the Orders. While the Crusaders Inviolates do not trust others to keep their secrets, and the records of the Ascetics are nearly unintelligible to those who do not embrace that Order's unique world view, the other Orders are only too happy to let the Lightbringers organize and keep safe their collected knowledge.

FRIENDS AND FOES

The Lightbringers may be brilliant artists and scientists, but their gifts are of little use when their findings go against the canon of the church. Those who proclaim theories like the roundness of the world or the heliocentric nature of the solar system had best travel light or be willing to recant, lest they find themselves the next target of the Inquisition.

Beyond their mundane enemies, the Lightbringers relish hunting down and destroying the Accursed. They see these men and women as fools who have forsaken that which guaranteed them a place in the heavens, or at least the history, of mankind: their humanity. Even the most mild-mannered artisan or sedentary scholar among the Lightbringers takes on a righteous, almost bloodthirsty attitude when facing the Accursed.

BENEFITS

Lightbringers truly believe that man can accomplish anything. At character creation, a Lightbringer chooses one of the mental abilities (Reason, Education, or Will). Once per session, the Lightbringer may choose to automatically receive a success for each die gained from that ability that he would normally roll on the test. The Lightbringer must choose to use this ability before rolling.

A Lightbringer may instead use this benefit substituting this ability when making an attack roll or casting roll, regardless of the ability used, but only if the target is an Accursed human.

STALKERS OF THE UNSEEN HUNT

Other Names: Blight Hunters, Coursers, Dusk Walkers, Hawks

Area of Origin: Austria, Poland, Lithuania, and small, isolated states in central and Eastern Europe

To most Witch Hunters, the Unseen Hunt is a term used to describe a rare and desperate act, the journeying of a Hunter into the dark wilds of the unknown, into the Hellpoints of the Adversary or the lairs of strange beasts. To the Stalkers, it is simply a way of life. The Stalkers of the Unseen Hunt see themselves as lone, doomed predators that are destined to one day become the prey. Their only care is in killing as many unnatural beasts and dangers as they can before their inevitable demise.

HISTORY AND HOMELANDS

The Stalkers of the Unseen Hunt may be the oldest extant Order, though their records are spotty, so this means little. The Order developed in Germania, probably in response to the expansion of the Roman Empire. Its roots lay in the druidic paths practiced by those peoples' elders and warriors, but as religions have come and gone, the Stalkers have adapted. All that matters to its members, regardless of the faiths they pray to, is the hunt.

The blood spilled in countless wars throughout the area, the pacts made with powers that were better destroyed than bargained with, have weighed heavily upon the Stalkers' lands. Hellpoints are so common there as to sometimes be the norm, rather than the exception, and entire generations have been born and died, of old age only if they're extremely lucky, within the boundaries of one of the evil locales. Over time, the evils of Eastern Europe became so entrenched and widespread that mundane and cursed environs became indistinguishable from one another. Tendrils of darkness ran through every forest, and in every soul. It became, not a matter of cleansing the area, but merely of surviving. Throughout the centuries of Roman expansion, and, later, apostolic spread of Christianity, the dark forests and hidden vales of Eastern Europe fended for themselves against horrible monsters and vengeful spirits.

The Stalkers therefore came into existence out of desperation. Hermits and lone woods folk developed rituals to keep their homes safe from the attentions of nocturnal visitors. Traveling merchants learned which roads were safely journeyed at night, and what goods were most likely to attract danger. Villagers kept their children close at hand and were quick to chase out neighbors who expressed suspicious behavior. But most endangered of all were the men who ventured forth, often alone, to hunt for game in the crags and forests. They were as likely to be hunted themselves, and so learned to ward themselves with charms and ointments. But the beasts that preyed upon them were cunning and adaptable, and the hunters began to band together for safety. Eventually they realized that the only way to make their hunting grounds safe was to actively seek out the beasts and fiends who hunted them, to cleanse whole regions of supernatural

threats. The loose affiliations of these hunters, their cooperation for the sake of regular cleansings, and the shared knowledge that they were none of them very long for this world, forged the Order.

TRAITS AND TACTICS

The Stalkers' activities traditionally include a high mortality rate, so they tend not to become particularly close with one another . . . or with anyone around them, for that matter. The traditional image of a stalker is that of a brooding loner, rough around the edges and close-mouthed with friends and foes alike. They are sometimes disdained as "simple country folk" by European Witch Hunters, but New Worlders tend to respect them as canny trackers and woodsmen.

As a rule, Stalkers prefer to take the fight to their enemies. Whether this means seeking out a cultist in his manor house or venturing into a demon's lair, the goal is to catch the enemy unawares and at leisure. A few Stalkers, generally those who are insane or wish for their own deaths, engage their prey in hand-to-hand combat. Most, however, prefer to use cunning and stealth to deal with their enemies. This can include the setting of snares, the use of poison, sniping shots with muskets or bows, or even sending in hunting animals to do the bloody work.

RECRUITMENT

Those who would join the Stalkers are neither pampered nor encouraged. Rather, they are tested, and if they prove their mettle, they are given leave to accompany a veteran Stalker on his hunts. He is told to watch, listen, and learn. And that is pretty much all the training a Stalker will get. If his instructor dies on the hunt, the recruit is likely to die as well; if nothing else, this ensures that poor and clumsy hunting methods are not passed on.

The Stalkers are not particular about who they take on as members, so long as he has a keen nose for the hunt.

T h e i r

ambivalence regarding religion means that faith is a small concern when choosing recruits. For that matter, beasts will eat a white man's flesh as soon as they'll eat a Turk's, an African's, or an Indians, and predators no nothing of the boundaries of human nations.

RELIGION

Many parts of Central and Eastern Europe never received the message of the apostles. This is in part due to geography; the dark forests and craggy mountains that separated the communities there from the "civilized" world of Christendom. The area resisted the apostolic movement as well, however, because the salvation of their souls took a second place to the salvation of their lives.

Though they have no qualms about using religious relics, charms, or even rituals to ward off or weaken their foes, Stalkers tend not to put complete trust in such religious trappings. Perhaps this is because the priests of their homelands, worshippers of pagan gods and nature spirits, failed to protect them so long ago. Or perhaps it is because the Stalkers do not want to become too much like their prey: creatures of the supernatural.

Despite their woods lore, Stalkers do not usually worship or appreciate nature for its beauty. To them, the wilds are battlegrounds, places to which they venture out of necessity. Nature itself, if it has any sort of divinity, is no more caring than the Christian god who has failed the Stalkers time and again.

THE CURRENT DAY

The Stalkers continue to be the most common Witch Hunters in the remote reaches of Central and Eastern Europe. They have little in the way of an organized hierarchy, instead communicating to nearby comrades via trail signs and to more distant allies by sending word with roaming gypsy bands, willing merchant caravans, or other travelers. Accords and other meetings of the various Orders are therefore as likely to be attended by a dozen Stalkers as they are to be attended by none; it all depends on who was out on a hunt when the summons was received, and who was home preparing for the next hunt, and who was dead by the time the message got to him.

Older Stalkers have little use for travel beyond their home region, having become settled in their ways and attached to their homes. Younger Stalkers, those who hunt for the sake of proving their bravado or for the thrill of it, may travel to the four corners of the globe in search of new and dangerous beasts to hunt. The New World is particularly appealing to these young adventurers, filled as it is with all manner of new and exotic beasts and spirits.

Despite their dangerous habits, Stalkers who come to the New World from overseas are not fools. They recognize that they are out of their elements, and seek out more experienced trackers, guides, and Hunters to show them the lay of the land. "Know your prey by knowing its territory"



is one common Stalker creed, and those who brave the imposing landscape of the New World take it to heart. Of all the Orders, the Stalkers feel the most at home working with Indian hunters and braves. Still, few Indians have become Stalkers; in general, the Stalkers learn from them more than the other way around.

FRIENDS AND FOES

The Stalkers are too peripheral and too disparate to have made a foe of the Roman Catholic Church, and the Russian Orthodox Church recognizes their value in facing foes in the wilds they cannot reach. The Stalkers' relationships to nearby communities vary, however. Some see them as heroes, particularly in situations where missing children, thought lost and dead, are returned to their thankful parents. Others blame them for the attacks that villages suffer, particularly in cases where the villagers and their attackers have worked out a system of tithes and sacrifices (often living members of the village, left in chains to be collected by the monster in question). Stalkers may be pragmatic, but they do not suffer innocents to be sent to slaughter without hope of rescue. Of course, they are not above using the guilty as bait . . . the village leaders who allow such sacrifices, for instance. As far as the Stalker who kidnaps them and sends them out as bait is concerned, such evil men and women at least have a chance of survival, which is more than they gave the innocent sacrifices they've sent to their dooms over the years.

When journeying in foreign lands, Stalkers tend to be mistrusted among civilized folk, though woods folk accept their skill and pragmatism with approval. They are not likely to find camaraderie or joy with any social group, however, be they hunters or city folk, foreigners or natives. They do what is necessary to learn from local hunters, such as learning Indian rituals of respect to the land around them . . . but performing such rituals and believing in them are two different things. For the Stalkers, it's all a means to an end.

Although the Stalkers despise all monsters of the wild, they tend to particularly focus on the brutal and mindless predators of the Invisible World (those with essentially "animal" intelligence). The other threats, they rationalize, can be dealt with by other Witch Hunters; they might be tricked, trapped, or banished. But the ravenous beasts that the Stalkers hunt only understand one language: death.

BENEFITS

Stalkers begin play with a bonus Basic and Greater talent. The bonus talents may be selected regardless of whether or not the character fulfills the prerequisites. The bonus talents must be chosen from the following lists.

Basic: Adaptable, Attack Focus, Iron Constitution, or Mountaineer

Greater: Agile Runner, Deadeye Shot, Marksman, or Night Vision

STALWARTS OF ST. CHRISTOPHER

Even in the civilized regions of Europe, servants of the Adversary lie in wait upon country roads, seeking to destroy or corrupt the unwary. The dangers of travel are only compounded in the New World, where civilization fights a holding action against the darkness of the wild. The Stalwarts of St. Christopher, named for the patron saint of travelers, exist to tip the balance in civilization's favor.

Other Names: Highwaymen, Long Watchers, Pilgrim Keepers, Way Guards

Area of Origin: England

HISTORY AND HOMELANDS

Though the Stalwarts have no direct connection to the Knights Templar, they were certainly inspired by their exploits. Too often throughout the medieval era in England, its founders were left to wonder helplessly why fellow merchants, farmers, or pilgrims did not arrive at their expected destinations. Several of these instances could be attributed to bandits, but not all; and where wild beasts left behind carcasses and tracks, the threats of the Invisible World left only a vague feeling of unease to those who investigated the disappearances.

Only landed knights were permitted to travel with arms and armor, so the Stalwarts learned to travel lightly, to conceal their weapons, or to perfect their cover stories as merchants or pilgrims. They spread beyond the British Isles to other realms of Europe, ever mindful of whatever local laws they must follow to remain hidden, and ever willing to come to the aid of fellow travelers.

TRAITS AND TACTICS

The Stalwarts vary their methods by the locales in which they find themselves. Where able, they carry what armaments are allowed to them by the local law. They tend to prefer to travel under the guise of pilgrimage or mercantile activity, however, and hide their weapons and capabilities; the better, after all, to pose as bait. Whereas the Stalkers of the Unseen Hunt seek out their enemies in the hill and dale away from the road, the Stalwarts seek to draw those enemies to them, to encounter them upon the paths and walkways that they know so well.

Stalwarts see it as their sacred duty, when they can, to accompany the helpless or the unarmed and to see to it that they reach their destinations without running afoul of supernatural threats. Mundane threats are another matter . . . a Stalwart might attempt to protect travelers from bandits, if he can, but probably would not interfere if corrupt tithe-takers demanded payment from a group of poor travelers, or a passing army sought to press gang the travelers into military service.

Protection always supersedes destruction; when given the choice between finishing off a repulsed foe and pushing on with a group of travelers, the Stalwart nearly always chooses to ensure the safety of the travelers. If a foe was fought off once, he can be fought off again, but a traveler slain can never be returned to life.

RECRUITMENT

Like so many of the Orders, the Stalwarts find many

of their recruits among the desperate and the vengeful. Lone survivors of slaughtered caravans, youths found lost and alone in the wild, and those who miraculously best supernatural threats while traveling on their own are all likely candidates for the Stalwarts.

RELIGION

The Stalwarts by and large adhere to the Church of England. Many in the New World were raised in the Puritan tradition, and those who spend time in other European nations tend to conceal their Anglican leanings in favor of the more commonly practiced Catholicism.

THE CURRENT DAY

Several of the Stalwarts were accepted among the Puritan groups that traveled first to the Netherlands, then to the New World. As such, the image of the dour traveler, armed with musket and sword and bearing black-brimmed hat, saying little but accomplishing much, likely resulted from the fairly common Stalwarts in New England. Those in the New World tend to be more heavily armed and more outspoken than their Old World brethren, given the more lax laws regarding weapon ownership.

The Stalwarts of England and Europe, by contrast, continue to practice the tradition of disguise and soft-spoken tradition, posing as simple merchants and pilgrims until their prey gets within range of blade (worn beneath a bulky tunic), polearm (disguised as a farming implement), or musket (hidden under the cart's tarp).

FRIENDS AND FOES

A Stalwart who chooses to patrol one section of road or one particular route tend to be beloved by the mundane travelers who must also regularly brave the dangers of that road, as well as by the innkeepers along the way, who are grateful for the Stalwart's efforts at keeping their customers alive and well. A newly arrived Stalwart might be mistaken for a bandit or other ne'er-do-well, given that he lurks along roadsides and always seems to be following travelers. Even well established Stalwarts can sometimes run afoul of local law enforcement for, essentially, moving in on the local lawman's turf.

In terms of their chosen foes, the Stalwarts bend most of their efforts toward creatures of the wild that evidence cunning and human intelligence, or even sometimes human form. Other Orders can deal with cultists, the Accursed, and other foes of the urban landscape; the Stalkers of the Unseen Hunt are suited for tracking and destroying mindless beasts. But none are as prepared as the Stalwarts



to beat the deceptive, clever predators at their own game. And none show less hesitance when striking down the enemy, regardless of his appearance. Many are the threats that wander the world in human form, though they are anything but, and the Stalwarts despise them all.

BENEFITS

Stalwarts are devoted protectors. Once per round, he may use any or all of his Defense Pool to block attacks directed at characters within arm's reach of him. He must be able to see the attack coming, and may not block attacks originating on the other side of the character he is trying to protect (so for instance, a Stalwart could not protect a fellow Witch Hunter if the fellow were standing

between the Stalwart and the attacker). The Stalwart must choose to expend Defense Points on another's behalf after the attacker rolls, but before the defender rolls.

If the Stalwart does not have enough Defense Points to completely eliminate the attacker's successes, the Stalwart (rather than the original target) takes any remaining damage.

In other words, a Stalwart may turn a sword meant for his friend's throat into a sword that glances off his own arm, but the Stalwart is unlikely to get off entirely unscathed.

SUNWISE CIRCLE

Proud, strong, domineering, and charismatic, the members of the Sunwise Circle are forces to be reckoned with. They believe in brute force, whether it is physical, religious, or magical. They tend to be great orators, not only because of their powerful presence and eloquence, but also simply because they so obviously, so firmly, and so overwhelmingly believe in the *rightness* of what they say. For the Sunwise Circle, is there no other way to speak, but to speak truly.

Other Names: Easterners, Old Believers, Right Thinkers, the Steel Fists of the East

Area of Origin: Poland, the Empire of Russia

HISTORY AND HOMELANDS

Beginning in 1652, the Russian Orthodox Church began a series of reforms intended to bring greater consistency to religious practices within the various branches of the Church by making those practices closer to early Greek Christian practices. Most of the changes brought about by these reforms seem minor – making the sign of the Cross with three fingers rather than two, and proceeding around

the church in a sunwise (counter-clockwise) direction rather than the opposite – but when combined with the harsh punishments meted out to those who did not follow the new directives, they caused a major schism within the Church. Followers of the original practices, referred to as the Old Believers, suffered persecution from both Church and secular authorities within Russia. For a few years, it looked as if the Old Believers would be rooted out and destroyed.

Then, amazingly, the tide turned. The leaders of the Russian Orthodox Church began to show mercy to the Old Believers, then began to retract their new edicts altogether. No reasonable explanation exists, but an unreasonable ones does: The efforts of the Sunwise Circle.

The Sunwise Circle had existed for centuries among the cities and towns of Russia, but only with the persecutions of the reforms in the 1600s did they feel the need to step forward and take an active role in the church. They did so using every mundane and magical means available to them, eventually resorting to mental control. Because the leaders of the church would not change their minds, the Sunwise Circle changed their minds for them.

TRAITS AND TACTICS

The members of this Order seek out injustices of all sorts, but have a particular bent toward undoing or resolving those crimes perpetrated in the name of Christianity. Second to these are injustices carried out in the name of some other religion, law, or organizing force. Both are equally evil, but the former is seen as more insulting the Sunwise Circle's faith.

Members of the Circle tend to be simple, almost monastic in their dress and behavior, in sharp contrast to the highly ornate dress favored by most Russian Orthodox priests. They are renowned for their strong minds and bodies,

both of which are kept in good shape with daily regimens of exercise. They distrust firearms and archery as imprecise; though members of the Sunwise Circle use ranged weapons when appropriate, they are certain to follow up with a good stab to the throat or bludgeon to the head to make sure their foe is dead.

RECRUITMENT

The Sunwise Circle rarely recruits from Western Europe or the New World, instead choosing to find and train their members in their home region. However, an observer might not guess at this practice, given the large number of Circle members in England and the New World.

RELIGION

The Sunwise Circle is based on a long-practiced Russian Orthodox tradition, but their actions against the persecutions of the Orthodox Church have opened their eyes to the fact that the rest of the world practices a wide variety of traditions. Their attitude toward those traditions can best be described as “live and let live.”

THE CURRENT DAY

Ever since their failure to stop the Great Fire, the members of the Sunwise Circle have claimed England and its colonies as their protectorate (much to the dismay of most Anglican Witch Hunters), and vow to never again let such a tragedy occur “on their watch.” As mentioned under “Recruitment,” above, the Circle constantly sends new recruits to England and its territories; these fresh-faced foreigners see themselves as crusading paladins, sent with pure souls and clear hearts to accomplish what the jaded Witch Hunters of the West cannot.

FRIENDS AND FOES

The Pope has no love for the forces that prevented mainstream Catholicism from gaining power over the Old Believers in Russia, though Rome does not know exactly who or what caused the turnabout of the process. Some Jesuits have recently been sent to Moscow from Rome to investigate tales of brainwashing, kidnapping, and even assassination of church leaders, but they are obviously outsiders, and have little hope of uncovering concrete evidence.

BENEFITS

The Sunwise Circle are strong, both physically and mentally, and they expect to win. Once per adventure, before rolling the dice for a skill check, the player of a Circle member may declare that he is calling on his inner strength. The number of dice rolled for the requisite ability is doubled.

The only limitation to this ability is that the Circle member must use this ability for skills of all five categories as equally as possible. So for instance, if he doubles the ability dice rolled on a fighting skill check one session, he may not use the ability on a fighting skill check the next session. Instead, he must use the ability to double the ability dice rolled from an interaction, movement, professional, or reaction skill. Only after using the ability once for each of the other skill categories can it be used again on a fighting skill check.



Witch Hunter

THE INVISIBLE WORLD

1	ACTOR NAME: _____	PLAYER NAME: _____
	RELIGION: _____	NATIONALITY: _____
	DESCRIPTION: _____	HEIGHT: _____ WEIGHT: _____ EYES: _____ HAIR: _____
	CATALYST: _____ 3	ORDER: _____ 4
	BACKGROUND: _____ 2	
	SIN (VICE): _____	VIRTUE: _____ 9
8	HERO POINTS: ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ TRUE FAITH: ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ :DAMNATION	

ABILITY SCORES

5 PHYSICAL ABILITIES STRENGTH AGILITY TOUGHNESS	MENTAL ABILITIES EDUCATION REASON WILL	SPIRITUAL ABILITIES COURAGE INTUITION PERSONALITY
--	--	---

SKILLS

6 SKILL (ABILITY)	TOTAL = RANK + ABILITY + BONUS			
COMBAT SKILLS				
☐ ARCHERY (Agi)	___	=	___	+ ___ + ___
☐ FIREARMS (Agi)	___	=	___	+ ___ + ___
☐ GRAPPLE (STR)	___	=	___	+ ___ + ___
☐ HAND-TO-HAND (STR)	___	=	___	+ ___ + ___
☐ THROW (STR)	___	=	___	+ ___ + ___
INTERACTION SKILLS				
☐ CHARM (PER)	___	=	___	+ ___ + ___
☐ COMMAND (COU)	___	=	___	+ ___ + ___
☐ DECEIVE (PER)	___	=	___	+ ___ + ___
☐ EMPATHY (INT)	___	=	___	+ ___ + ___
☐ INTIMIDATE (PER)	___	=	___	+ ___ + ___
☐ PANTOMIME (PER)	___	=	___	+ ___ + ___
MOVEMENT SKILLS				
☐ ACROBATICS (Agi)	___	=	___	+ ___ + ___
☐ CLIMB (STR)	___	=	___	+ ___ + ___
☐ CONTORTIONIST (Agi)	___	=	___	+ ___ + ___
☐ DRIVE (Agi)	___	=	___	+ ___ + ___
☐ JUMP (STR)	___	=	___	+ ___ + ___
☐ RIDE (Agi)	___	=	___	+ ___ + ___
☐ ROW (STR)	___	=	___	+ ___ + ___
☐ STEALTH (Agi)	___	=	___	+ ___ + ___
☐ SWIM (STR)	___	=	___	+ ___ + ___
REACTION SKILLS				
☐ BALANCE (Agi)	___	=	___	+ ___ + ___
☐ CONCENTRATE (WIL)	___	=	___	+ ___ + ___
☐ ENDURANCE (TOU)	___	=	___	+ ___ + ___
☐ NOTICE (INT)	___	=	___	+ ___ + ___
☐ PARRY (STR)	___	=	___	+ ___ + ___
☐ REFLEXES (Agi)	___	=	___	+ ___ + ___
☐ RESOLVE (COU)	___	=	___	+ ___ + ___
OTHER SKILLS				
☐ SPEAK LANGUAGE			RANK	LITERACY
NATIVE LANGUAGE: _____			___	___
OTHER LANGUAGE: _____			___	___
_____			___	___
_____			___	___
_____			___	___

THE TWELVE STEPS OF CHARACTER CREATION

- Step 1:** Character Concept – Come up with a basic idea for your Witch Hunter. See page 36
- Step 2:** Background – What were you before you became a Witch Hunter? See page 37.
- Step 3:** Catalyst – What made you become a Witch Hunter? See page 48.
- Step 4:** Choose your Order. See page 5.
- Step 5:** Generate Ability scores – What are your natural abilities? See page 49.
- Step 6:** Choose Skills – What can you do? See page 43.
- Step 7:** Choose Talents – What makes you special? See page 71.
- Step 8:** Record your Hero Points, True Faith and Damnation – See page 84.
- Step 9:** Choose your Sin and Virtue – You're only human. Where do you shine and what's your tragic flaw? See page 87.
- Step 10:** Equip your character – Select your tools of the trade. See page 93.
- Step 11:** How tough are you? Fill in your Health Track – See page 51.
- Step 12:** Can you handle yourself in a fight? Calculate Combat Dice Pool – See page 54.

WEAPONS

COMBAT DICE POOLS

10 **DN:** **C:** **DM:**

RANGE: **SIZE:** **WEIGHT:**

MELEE DICE: **RANGED DICE:**

RELOAD:

WEAPON: **C:** **DM:**

RANGE: **SIZE:** **WEIGHT:**

MELEE DICE: **RANGED DICE:**

RELOAD:

WEAPON: **C:** **DM:**

RANGE: **SIZE:** **WEIGHT:**

MELEE DICE: **RANGED DICE:**

RELOAD:

ARROWS/BOLTS:

POWDER & SHOT: **LBS**

BALLISTAE/SLINGER - 3 SHOTS PER LB.

SLINGER/SLING - 6 SHOTS PER LB.

SLING - 12 SHOTS PER LB.

MUSKETS - 6 SHOTS PER LB.

ARMOR

ARMOR: **AV:** **DM:**

AP: **MP:** **WEIGHT:**

ARMOR: **AV:** **DM:**

AP: **MP:** **WEIGHT:**

HEALTH TRACK

11	RY LEVEL	EFFECT	SCORE
HEALTHY	TOUGHNESS x2	NONE	
LIGHT	TOUGHNESS x 1.5	-1	
MODERATE	TOUGHNESS x 1	-2	
HEAVY	TOUGHNESS x 1	-3	
DYING	TOUGHNESS x 0.5	-4	

EQUIPMENT

10

BANKED MONEY:

MONEY:

12

INITIATIVE

REFLEX (AGILITY)

DEFENSE

AVERAGE YOUR
AGILITY + TOUGHNESS (ROUND UP)

COMBAT SKILL REFERENCE

SKILL	TOTAL DICE
ARCHERY (AGI)	
FIREARMS (AGI)	
GRAPPLE (STR)	
HAND-TO-HAND	
USING (STR)	
USING (AGI)	
THROW (AGI)	

TALENTS

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ORDER'S BENEFITS

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BACKGROUND ABILITY

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TY

PAGE

SURVIVAL POINTS

CHAPTER TWO: THE MAKING OF A WITCH HUNTER

Characters are the backbone of *Witch Hunter*. They are the protagonists of the story, the central cast of characters on which hangs the story's plot. Characters in this game are heroes opposed to the evil schemes and machinations of the Adversary, and though they are all "Witch Hunters" so to speak, they were not always born bold adventurers. A character could have been a meek missionary, braving the New World to spread the word of God. Another character might have been a corrupt bureaucrat, a violent criminal, a dashing swashbuckler, or any concept from countless paths. When you create your character, first consider the kind of hero you want to play. Will your character be a courageous adventurer who never quails before the horrors of the invisible world, or is he a dry antiquarian, more concerned with the lore contained in dusty tomes and ancient scrolls? Any type of character is possible in this game, and it falls to you to decide the story you tell.

of civilization. It is an age of exploration and trade, a time when those with grit and courage cross incredible distances to conquer and carve new empires from the ashes of old.

Witch Hunter collects people from countless nations and ethnicities, primarily those of Europe. Thousands of texts have been written about the histories of Europe's governments and cultures, and attempting to translate the diversity of a real-world people into game terms would be difficult at best, and in poor taste at worst. Therefore, we leave the level of detail of your character's cultural and ethnic ties to you and your GM. This can be a fun opportunity to delve into history books, watch travel or history documentaries, and pick up a few trademark cultural perceptions or historical nuances for your character to exhibit.

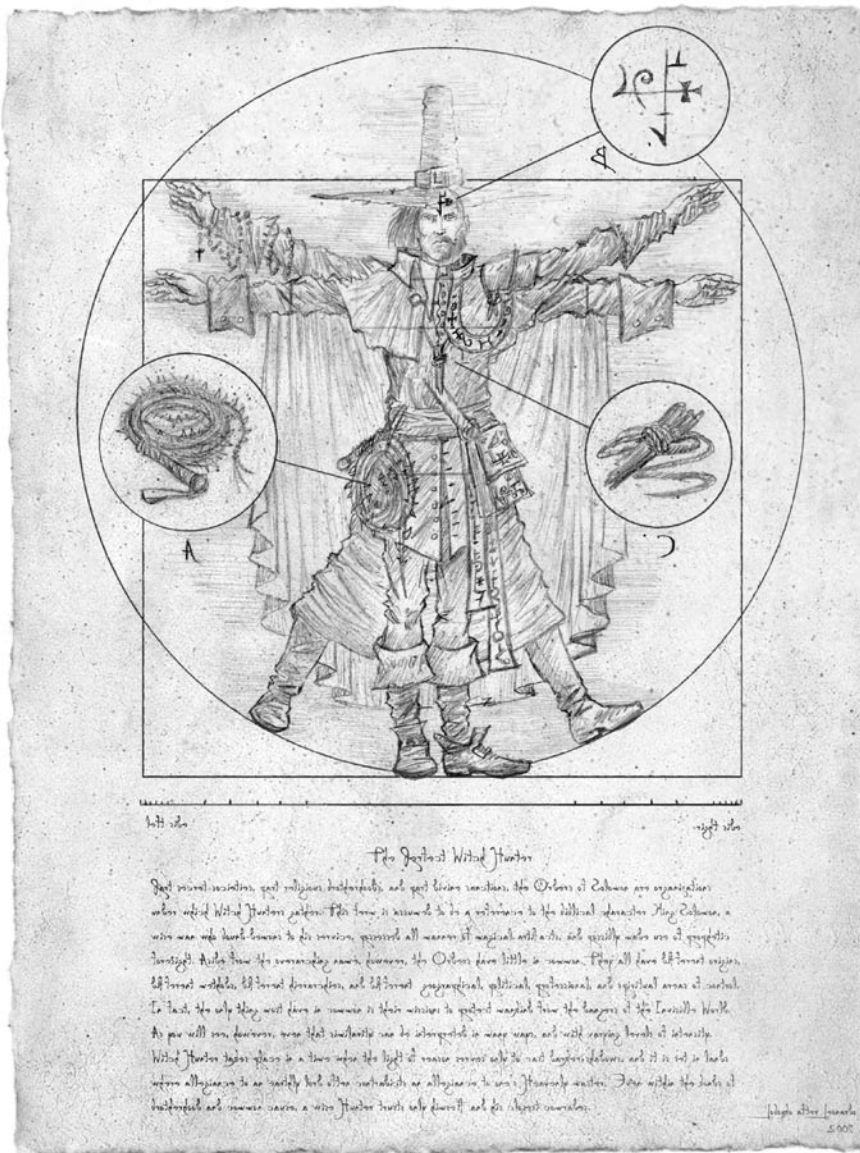
If having a character with strong ties to one of the

CHARACTER CONCEPT

A critical step in designing your character is to determine your character concept. Who do you want to be? Do you want to play a dashing swashbuckler, a grim priest bent on purging the tainted? A fearless adventurer who stands fast against any and all? Or, perhaps a dedicated scholar who risks his immortal soul by plumbing the depths of depravity in his search for weapons to use against the Adversary. Consider carefully since this decision should guide all future choices you make when creating your hero.

CULTURE AND ETHNICITY

The world of *Witch Hunter* is one of dark mystery, chilling horror, and undiscovered lands. A new world awaits those brave enough to explore the shadowy depths of untainted forests. Ancient civilizations command mighty lands, ruling empires through fear of the ancient sorcery they wield and the foul gods they serve. And though magic and monsters are all-to-real, it is also a world based loosely on the real history of our own world. Here you'll find England, France, Spain, Italy, India, China, and the other powers of the seventeenth century. Trading houses like the Dutch East India Company and the London Company fund expeditions to unexplored lands, beyond the reaches



European nations doesn't appeal to you, you can simply describe your character as a "New Worlder," a descendant of the brave or desperate colonists or missionaries who traveled past the places on the map where monsters were sure to dwell. Your character may have no affiliation with a motherland, but rather have a strong connection to family, to a pioneering or missionary spirit, or to this new land in which you were raised. Perhaps your bloodline isn't European at all, but rather from one of the many tribes of American Indians (Native American) such as the Mohawk, Oneida, Seneca, or Wendat to name a few. If you were raised among your people, you might choose a specific nation and tribe native to the Americas. If you were raised by missionaries or other Europeans, the specific tribe might not matter as much as the fact that you were taken from it, or saved from it, depending on your point of view.

Finally, history is full of accounts of strangers in strange lands: explorers from the far east might travel to the far west, warriors of Islam may serve the rulers of Christendom, and those taken from Africa or other places to serve against their will may choose to stay in their new homes once they have secured their freedom.

RELIGION

In the Grave New World of Witch Hunter, your character's religion adds another dimension to your group's dynamics and potential conflict. Does your character follow the tenants of the Roman Catholic Church or do you lean more towards the Protestant sects? Perhaps your character is an American Indian whose beliefs are more animistic? You may even choose to have her follow the 'Old Ways' while only paying lip service to the more dominant faiths to keep out of the hands of the ever-present Inquisition. Given the overall flavor of Witch Hunter, no matter what faith is chosen, it may lead to friction either within or most certainly outside of your group. This is fine. Conflict and drama makes a game session more interesting than if everyone were in perfect unity.

Below is a small list of possible faiths, which is by no means exhaustive, that you may choose from.

BACKGROUNDS

Before you committed your life to adventuring, you must have done something. Perhaps you were a skilled painter in Milan, or a soldier in the employ of Spain. Your background defines who your character was, but also charts the course of your future. Once you select your culture, pick a background from those described in this chapter. In addition to helping you define your character, backgrounds also offer some tangible benefits. They define your starting background skills, offer points to invest into your elective skills, and grant you a special background ability. You'll notice that many backgrounds have ability score requirements, so some options may not be available.

BACKGROUND ABILITIES

All backgrounds grant player characters a special ability. This ability works like a quality, but it is exclusive to characters of the chosen background.

BACKGROUNDS

ADVENTURER

Requirement: None.

You have always had trouble staying put. You itched to be free from the trappings of responsibility, and chafed under the responsibilities of civilized life. When you were old enough, you fled your homeland to seek your fortunes elsewhere. It's a dangerous and uncertain life, but it's the life for you.

Social Standing: Commoner

SKILLS

An adventurer's background skills include Climb 1, Endurance 1, Firearms 1, Hand-to-Hand 1, Reflexes 1, and Survival 1. Adventurers gain elective skills in the following categories:

Fighting: 2

Interaction: 2

Movement: 3

Professional: 1

Reactions: 2

DUMB LUCK

Lady luck favors you... usually. Once per scene, you may completely re-roll one action roll. You must take the second result, even if it's worse than the first one.

ARTISAN

Requirement: Reason 3.

You were a craftsman (or -woman). You made your living as your parents did, working long hours to produce finished goods, whether for sale to locals or to merchants bound for distant lands. From the moment you were accepted as an apprentice and began learning your trade, you hoped to pass on what you learned to another apprentice to keep your trade alive for future generations.

Social Standing: Artisan

SKILLS

An artisan's background skills include Charm 1, Construct (any one) 1, Disable 1, Evaluate 1, Gossip 1, and Trade (any one) 1. Artisans gain elective skills in the following categories:

Fighting: 1

Interaction: 2

Movement: 2

Professional: 3

Reactions: 2

MUSE

You are blessed with uncommon inspiration. Once per day per point of Reason, when making a Professional action roll, you may as a free action benefit from a sudden surge of inspiration. You gain a +2 dice bonus to that action roll.

A SHORT LIST OF RELIGIONS

CHRISTIANITY

Christianity, in its many forms, is the dominant religion of Europe and North America. While different interpretations of the Bible have splintered Christianity into many churches, all fundamentally believe in the life, death, and resurrection of Jesus Christ as the Son of God.

CATHOLICS

The largest single Christian denomination is the Roman Catholic Church. Centered on Rome, where the Pope leads the Church as the direct spiritual successor to the apostle Peter, Roman Catholicism dominates France and Spain and their colonies, though this common religion should not imply political unity. The Church has a great deal of political and temporal power and is extremely wealthy. It is highly ritualized and draws a very sharp distinction between the clergy and ordinary worshippers; the teaching and rituals of the priesthood are considered to be required for lay worshippers to achieve salvation. This strict hierarchy was largely responsible for the divisions that have rocked the Church over the last century and a half.

ANGLICANS

The Church of England, or Anglican Church, broke away from the Roman Catholic Church for political, rather than religious, reasons in 1534. Like Protestants, Anglicans do not acknowledge the rule of the Pope, but their beliefs and sacraments are generally closer to Catholic practices than Protestant ones. As might be expected, the Church of England is the dominant religion of England. The northern New World colonies have attracted large numbers of religious dissidents, and Anglicans are neither common nor popular in New England; however, the southern colonies or Maryland, Virginia, and Carolina are strongly Anglican. The Church of England does not have a strong presence outside English territory, though there are a fair number of Anglicans in New Amsterdam.

PROTESTANTS

In the early sixteenth century, led by the example of Martin Luther, large numbers of Christians turned away from the Catholic Church and formed various other denominations, collectively referred to as Protestants. Their primary objections were that the Catholic hierarchy, the sale of religious forgiveness, and the emphasis on tradition over Scripture were interfering with the true worship of God. This led to the bloody conflict known as the Thirty Years War which raged across most of Europe but particularly ravaged the Germanic states. While they are united in their distrust of (and often hatred for) the Catholic Church – some even go so far as to consider the Pope the Antichrist – the various Protestant denominations are hardly unified themselves, having become further subdivided over various small details of dogma and belief. Only a few of these denominations are

described below.

BAPTISTS

Baptists are a Protestant denomination marked by the belief that adults must consciously choose to believe in Jesus Christ and that this self-chosen faith is enough to achieve salvation; in other words, they believe that a human's fate is not predestined. There are significant number of Baptists in northern Carolina, the Massachusetts Bay Colony, and Providence Plantations.

CALVINISTS

Calvinism is the largest Protestant denomination in the English New World. The Puritan churches of New England consider themselves Calvinist ("Puritan" is a derogatory term used by their opponents), and generally feel that the Church of England has not gone far enough to distance itself from the Roman Catholic Church. They are unwanted in England proper, due to their opposition to the Church of England, and large numbers of them have thus migrated to New England. The Dutch Reformed Church that dominates New Netherlands is also Calvinist, as are the predominantly Scottish Presbyterian churches scattered throughout Pennsylvania, New England and New Netherlands. Calvinists tend to interpret the Bible very strictly, and anything which the Bible does not expressly permit is considered to be forbidden. They are a very solemn people who believe that wearing of bright and garish clothing, boisterous laughter, dancing and even singing (other than hymns) are the tools of the Adversary to lead mankind astray.

CHILDREN OF LIGHT (QUAKERS)

The Children of Light is a somewhat curious religious organization and not a church in the traditional sense. While members refer to themselves variously as Children of Light, Friends of the Truth, or Saints, they are colloquially known to outsiders as Quakers because they are said to "tremble at the word of God."

Quakers believe that the spirit of God is present in all men and women equally, and that there is no need for a priest or minister to lead anyone to God. To this end, Quaker religious services involve believers simply meeting together, and speaking or acting as the spirit of God moves them. They also believe that all humans are equal in God's eyes; Quakers do not address anyone as "Sir" (or, for that matter, "Your Majesty"), and do not remove their hats for any human being. Their dress and manners are plain and humble, their speech direct and truthful, and they do not swear oaths in court or anywhere else. Most Quakers in 1689 follow their spiritual "leadings" even when they seem to contradict the Bible, which has led to a great deal of persecution in England and elsewhere. This led directly to the formation of the colony of Pennsylvania as a haven for Quakers, and Pennsylvania is the primary place where members of this faith can be found.

LUTHERANS

The oldest of the Protestant denominations, Lutheranism has a fairly small presence in the New World, with a few small churches in New Netherlands representing its only significant stronghold. The core of Lutheran belief is that salvation is given by God's grace alone, through faith alone, as revealed by scripture alone – that is, God has already chosen who is worthy to enter Heaven and no amount of good deeds will change His mind. Lutheran churches tend to be more liberal in their interpretations of Scripture. Most Lutherans are from a German or Scandinavian background.

JUDAISM

Unlike Christians, Muslims, Buddhists or Hindus, Jews represent an ethnic group – or, more accurately, several related ethnic groups – as much as they do a religion. While it is possible for a non-Jew to convert to Judaism if they sincerely desire to do so, few seventeenth-century individuals do, and virtually all living Jews are descendents of the Israelite tribes of Benjamin, Judah, and the Levi.

The beliefs of Judaism are closely linked to those of Christianity, and slightly less closely to those of Islam. All three of these faiths believe in a single, omnipotent God and in the resurrection of the dead at the end of the world. However, because Jews do not believe that Jesus was the promised Messiah, they are regarded as infidels in Christian nations, and are frequently persecuted, expelled, or otherwise mistreated in such lands. In those nations where they are allowed to live, most Jews must live in *ghettos*, parts of towns specifically designated for Jewish residents.

For this and other reasons, many Jews have fled to the New World in the hopes of making a new life for their families. Due to its very tolerant attitudes, New Amsterdam is where most of settled. While they are still looked down upon by their Christians neighbors, they are not forced to live in squalor as in many cities in Europe.

NATIVE RELIGIONS

The myriad indigenous peoples of the New World, as might be expected, have a diverse array of religions and spiritual beliefs. Most are animist in nature, believing that all living things (and many non-living things, such as stones and bodies of water) have spirits, and that there are also ghosts and independent spirits roaming the world – some good, and some evil. Many of the Indian faiths also posit the existence of a single, formless “All-Father” deity, which gives Christian missionaries a starting point for their conversion efforts. Some tribes (particularly in the Five Nations) have a strong sense of good and evil, portraying life as a battle between these two forces; others are more concerned with practical matters of survival and less with ethical questions.

BRAVE

Requirement: None.

You are a warrior of your tribe; some may call you savages, but yours are a noble and proud people. You develop talents and skills to defeat the enemies of your people. Most of the time these foes are mortal, but when the Shaman calls you must steel your courage, as what awaits is likely not to be of this world.

Social Standing: Commoner

SKILLS

A brave's background skills include Animal Care 1, Archery 1, Hand-to-Hand 1, Pantomime 1, Stealth 1, and Survival 1. Braves gain elective skills in the following categories:

Fighting: 2

Interaction: 2

Movement: 2

Professional: 2

Reactions: 2

NATURAL STEALTH

You are adept at blending into natural surroundings. Whenever you make a Stealth roll outdoors, you gain +2 dice.

BUREAUCRAT

Requirement: Personality 3.

You were a bureaucrat and it was your job to grease the wheels of government. You were a minor functionary appointed to your post by your king, queen, lord, or some other bureaucrat. You prided yourself in overseeing the necessary functions that ensured a stable society. Whether you clerked for a barrister or were a tax collector for the king, it fell to you to keep everything working. And despite the hatred from the people you served, you knew in your heart that you contributed in some small way.

Social Standing: Professional

SKILLS

A bureaucrat's background skills include Deceive 1, Evaluate 1, Gossip 1, Read (any one) 1, Speak (any one), and Trained Knowledge (any one) 1. Bureaucrats gain elective skills in the following categories:

Fighting: 1

Interaction: 3

Movement: 1

Professional: 4

Reactions: 1

COMMITTED

You live by the rules and in an orderly fashion. Characters using Interaction skills against you take a -2 dice penalty.

CHARLATAN

Requirement: Personality 3.

Sure, the rubbish you peddled wasn't worth the bottle it was in, but you brought people hope, didn't you? It was the promise of a cure, and the kind smiles you got in return where what let you sleep at night. They may have called you a con-artist, a fakir, or worse, but it never mattered. By the time anyone found out you sold them a bottle of dyed water, you were on your way to the next town.

Social Standing: Commoner

SKILLS

A charlatan's background skills include Charm 1, Deceive 1, Drive 1, Evaluate 1, Pantomime 1, and Subterfuge 1. Charlatans gain elective skills in the following categories:

Fighting: 2

Interaction: 3

Movement: 1

Professional: 3

Reactions: 1

SILVER TONGUE

You know the right thing to say at the right time to convince others to do what you want them to. Once per day per point of Personality, you may gain a +1 die bonus to any Interaction action roll. In addition, characters take a -1 die penalty to Empathy (Intuition) rolls made to assess your disposition.

COURTIER

Requirement: Education 4, Personality 3.

Ah, how you loved the life at court – the comforts of civilization, the exquisite meals, the intoxicating elixirs, all of it, really. You were a dandy, a fop, a lady-in-waiting, or some other hanger-on. You lived for the thrill of the intrigue, the secret trysts in the lord's gardens. You listened for rumors, exchanging whispers with your informants to improve your standing by extorting the others who lounged about alongside you.

Social Standing: Merchant

SKILLS

A courtier's background skills include Charm 1, Deceive 1, Gossip 1, Hand-to-Hand 1, Parry 1, Read (any one) 1. Courtiers gain elective skills in the following categories:

Fighting: 2

Interaction: 2

Movement: 1

Professional: 3

Reactions: 2

CONNECTED

You have powerful friends. Once per month per point of your Personality, you may call in a favor. This favor might be in the form of a piece of equipment (worth no more than £5 × your Personality), coins (no more than £2 × your Personality), or a piece of information (treat as a successful Gossip or Trained Knowledge roll).

DIPLOMAT

Requirement: Education 3, Personality 3.

You had the power to broker peace, arrange treaties and contracts, and represent your homeland in important matters. The problem was that you were inevitably far from your

homeland, usually in some wretched backwater, where the local leaders showed no intention of listening to you. Still, you knew that what you were doing was important, no matter how frustrating it may have been.

Social Standing: Professional

SKILLS

A diplomat's background skills include Charm 1, Empathy 1, Pantomime 1, Read (any one), Speak (any one), and Trained Knowledge (any one) 1. A diplomat gain elective skills in the following categories:

Fighting: 1

Interaction: 3

Movement: 1

Professional: 4

Reactions: 1

ENVOY

You are trained in negotiation and diplomacy. Gain a +1 die bonus to all Pantomime rolls. In addition, if you get at least one success on a Charm roll, you gain one bonus success.

ENTERTAINER

Requirement: Personality 4.

Entertaining is in your blood. You live to manipulate peoples' emotions, making them laugh or cry at your whim. And for this, they pay you! Not well, of course, but they do pay. You started many years ago, singing on a street corner, or juggling with a troupe. Your family thought you were little better than a beggar, but you'll show them. One day, you'll play in the Queen's Court and then you'll be famous...if you ever go back to performing, that is.

Social Standing: Commoner

SKILLS

An entertainer's background skills include Acrobatics 1, Balance 1, Gossip 1, Jump 1, Perform (any one) 1, Reflexes 1. Entertainers gain elective skills in the following categories:

Fighting: 1

Interaction: 1

Movement: 3

Professional: 3

Reactions: 2

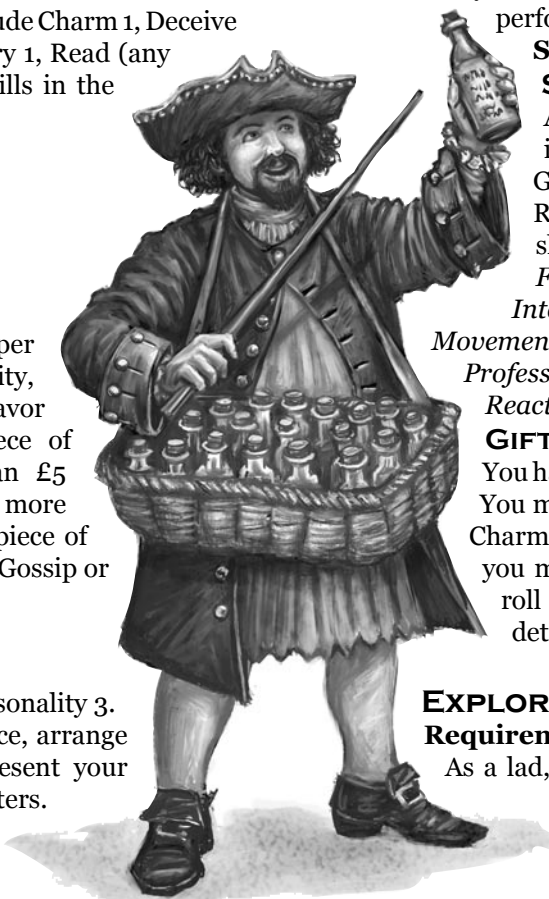
GIFTED PERFORMER

You have a natural knack for performance. You may substitute a Perform roll for any Charm or Deceive roll. In addition, when you make a Perform roll to earn money, roll twice and take the better result to determine the money earned.

EXPLORER

Requirements: Toughness 3, Courage 3.

As a lad, you were entranced by the stories you heard about explorers who crossed the sea to discover new lands and new peoples. The



stories filled your mind with fantasies of headless men, unicorns, rivers of stone, towering mountains and so much more. When you became an adult, you embraced the wanderlust that burned in your soul and set out to see the world.

Social Standing: Commoner

SKILLS

An explorer's background skills include Animal Care 1, Climb 1, Notice 1, Pantomime 1, Survival 1, and Trained Knowledge (geography) 1. Explorers gain elective skills in the following categories:

Fighting: 1

Interaction: 2

Movement: 2

Professional: 4

Reactions: 1

TRAIL-BLAZER

You are at home in the wild. You may make Survival rolls in half the normal time. Whenever you invest a level in the Speak skill, you gain two languages instead of one.

FOLK HEALER

Requirements: Reason 2, Intuition 3.

Name any one of the thousand natural shocks that flesh is heir to, and you probably have a poultice, tea, salve, ointment, or tincture for it. Some might have thought you a witch, but when their bowels were in an uproar, you were the one they came to. You've never been to any college; all you learned has been passed down from generation to generation, and hopefully one day you'll find a kindred soul to pass your knowledge on to.

Social Standing: Commoner

SKILLS

A folk healer's background skills include Empathy 1, Gossip 1, Heal 1, Herbalism 1, Myth and Lore 1, and Notice 1. Folk Healers gain elective skills in the following categories:

Fighting: 1

Interaction: 2

Movement: 1

Professional: 4

Reactions: 2

HEALER'S TOUCH

You are used to working with injuries that some would call untreatable, in conditions that others would find unacceptable. When making a Heal check, you may ignore up to 2 dice worth of penalties due to injury level or inauspicious circumstances.

GRAVE ROBBER

Requirements: Courage 2.

The dead don't need coin, right? All that money, just going to waste in those musty tombs. It's plain foolishness to pass up good gold that spends anywhere. So you robbed from the dead. So what? Hey, it's not like there's a lot of competition. Why, in half the vaults you've explored, the dead ain't quite still, and you've staved in the heads of many a corpse just to get them to lay back down.

Social Standing: Commoner

SKILLS

A grave robber's background skills include Climb 1, Disable 1, Evaluate 1, Endurance 1, Resolve 1, and Stealth 1. Grave Robbers gain elective skills in the following categories:

Fighting: 2

Interaction: 1

Movement: 2

Professional: 4

Reactions: 1

SEEN IT ALL

In your trade, you've seen plenty of nasty stuff. Whenever you face fear, you may roll your Resolve (Courage) roll twice and take the better result.

GUARD

Requirements: Intuition 3.

You might have been a watchman, patrolling the misty streets at night in search of wrongdoers. Or you could have been the fat jailor who oversaw prisoners waiting their turn to die kicking at the end of a rope. Then again, you might have been the village magistrate or a personal bodyguard for a wealthy aristocrat. Whatever you were, you earned your pay protecting people.

Social Standing: Artisan

SKILLS

Aguard's background skills include Empathy 1, Endurance 1, Gossip 1, Hand-to-Hand 1, Intimidate 1, and Notice 1. Guards gain elective skills in the following categories:

Fighting: 2

Interaction: 2

Movement: 1

Professional: 2

Reactions: 3

ALERT AND READY

Your job is to protect those in your charge. When actively protecting another character, you gain a +2 dice bonus to Notice rolls. In addition, when you Parry, you may use your Parry successes to protect an adjacent ally.

HUNTER

Requirement: Agility 3, Intuition 3.

As a hunter, you made your living trapping game or hunting larger animals. You could have been a nobleman's hunt-master leading drunken courtiers on a boar-hunt, or a frontier-dweller bringing food back to your family. Regardless, you learned valuable skills at getting along in the wild – skills that prove useful now, tracking down the agents of the Adversary and burning their wretched bodies at the stake.

Social Standing: Commoner

SKILLS

A hunter's background skills include Animal Care 1, Archery or Firearms 1, Notice 1, Stealth 1, Survival 1, and Track 1. Hunters gain elective skills in the following categories:

Fighting: 3
Interaction: 1
Movement: 1
Professional: 3
Reactions: 2

BLOODED

You are experienced in bringing down dangerous prey. You gain a +1 die bonus to Reflexes (Agility) rolls when rolling for initiative. You also gain a +1 die bonus to Track (Intuition) rolls made to follow and identify trails made by animals.

INQUISITOR

Requirements: Courage 3.

With the minions of the Adversary being very real and dangerous things, the Church devotes much of her resources to the various brotherhoods whose purpose it is to root out evil wherever it lies. You were an inquisitor. Reviled for your tactics and the heartless way you condemned any you suspected of heresy or witchcraft, you were a dutiful servant of God. But then you saw the face of the Adversary and learned what true evil really was.

Social Standing: Commoner

SKILLS

An inquisitor's background skills include Command 1, Empathy 1, Intimidate 1, Occult 1, Read (Latin), and Resolve 1. Inquisitors gain elective skills in the following categories:

Fighting: 1
Interaction: 3
Movement: 1
Professional: 4
Reactions: 1

SENSE CORRUPTION

You have a knack for detecting those in the service to the Adversary. A number of times per day equal to your Courage score, you may gain a +1 die bonus to Empathy (Intuition) rolls. In addition, you gain a +1 die bonus to Resolve (Courage) rolls.

LABORER

Requirements: Strength 3.

You were common-born and lived without the luxuries of the aristocracy. You worked hard, for long hours and for little pay, but you did it to support a family, or to make enough to one day start your own business. You may not have the refinement of the blue bloods, but you are honest and do what you believe is right.

Social Standing: Commoner

SKILLS

A laborer's background skills include Construct (any one) 1, Drive 1, Endurance 1, Gossip 1, Swim 1, and Trade (any one) 1. Laborers gain elective skills in the following categories:

Fighting: 1

Interaction: 1
Movement: 3
Professional: 4
Reactions: 1

STURDY

You are accustomed to hardship. Once per day per point of your Toughness score, you can shrug off a number of hits equal to your Toughness as a free action.

LAWYER

Requirements: Education 4.

As the world grows more complex, with a burgeoning merchant class rapidly outstripping the old nobility, the need for legal representation is greater than ever before. That's where you came in. You might have been a secular representative or a servant of the Church. Innocent or guilty, it rarely mattered as long as you were paid.

Social Standing: Professional

SKILLS

A lawyer's background skills include Charm 1, Deceive 1, Intimidate 1, Read (any one), Research 1, and Trained Knowledge (Law) 1. Lawyers gain elective skills in the following categories:

Fighting: 1
Interaction: 3
Movement: 1
Professional: 4
Reactions: 1

LOGICAL MIND

Your familiarity with law and argument helps you construct and win arguments. When making an Interaction roll to convince another character of something, you may substitute Reason for Personality. In addition, on any Reason-based action roll, you can re-roll a single die result of 1.

MERCENARY

Requirement: Toughness 3.

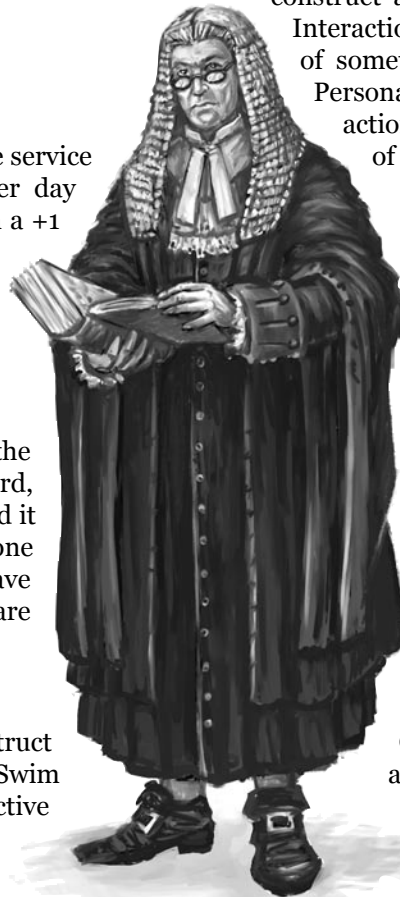
Your trade was war. You hired out your sword to whichever master that could pay your rates. You've fought for a dozen lords, in twice as many battles, sometimes for old masters and sometimes against them. In these uncertain times, it seems someone's always on the look out for some extra muscle, and so you rarely go hungry for long.

Social Standing: Professional

SKILLS

A mercenary's background skills include Endurance 1, Firearms 1, Gamble 1, Hand-to-Hand 1, Reflexes 1, and Resolve 1. Mercenaries gain elective skills in the following categories:

Fighting: 2
Interaction: 2



Movement: 2
Professional: 1
Reactions: 3

HARDENED

Life on the march has made you more comfortable in uncomfortable environments. You gain a +2 dice bonus to Endurance (Toughness) rolls made to resist the negative effects of hunger, thirst, and temperature.

MERCHANT

Requirement: Intuition 3, Personality 3.

The growth of colonies worldwide offers incredible opportunities for entrepreneurs and trading companies to expand their businesses. New markets like the Orient and the New World have allowed otherwise ordinary people to swiftly outstrip the nobility, creating a new social class that cast the fortunes of the aristocracy into uncertainty. You, along with many others, boldly stepped into this new world of commerce. You might have been an agent for the Dutch East India Company, a slaver harvesting flesh from Africa to meet the labor demands of the Americas, or an aspiring businessman, bound for the New World to find your fortune.

Social Standing: Merchant

SKILLS

A merchant's background skills include Charm 1, Empathy 1, Evaluate 1, Gossip 1, Notice 1, and Pantomime 1. Merchants gain elective skills in the following categories:

Fighting: 1

Interaction: 3

Movement: 1

Professional: 4

Reactions: 1

HAGGLER

You know how to get the best deals. Whenever you would buy or sell something, you gain a +2 dice bonus to Charm rolls made to Haggle. If you lose this opposed roll, you reduce your opponent's success by one.

MIDWIFE

Requirements: Reason 2, Intuition 2, Personality 2.

Bringing new life into the world – that was your job and you were good at it. So-called “learned men” always thought they knew more than you, but let them try to soothe a pregnant woman's retching stomach or rescue a babe coming into the world bottom-first, and see how far they get. You've seen as much blood as many a soldier, and saved as many lives as any doctor, with nothing but two strong hands and a quick mind. (Note that unlike most Backgrounds, which are gender-neutral, midwives are almost exclusively female.)

Social Standing: Commoner

SKILLS

A midwife's background skills include Charm 1, Command 1, Concentrate 1, Empathy 1, Heal 1, and Herbalism 1. Midwives gain elective skills in the following categories:

Fighting: 1

Interaction: 3

Movement: 1

Professional: 3

Reactions: 2

WOMAN'S WAYS

Having seen women at their best and at their worst, you have developed a keen understanding of the female psyche. Gain +1 die on all Charisma-based rolls against female NPCs.

MONASTIC CLERGY

Requirement: Will 3.

The monastic clergy are the monks and nuns who serve the Church. Removed from the hustle and bustle of ordinary life, you committed yourself to God and performed good deeds in His name. You spent your days in study, contemplation, and quiet prayer, and expected to spend the rest of your life that way. However, when evil thrust itself upon your placid existence, you knew that it was time to return to the world and fight for its survival.

Social Standing: Commoner

SKILLS

A monk or a nun's background skills include Concentrate 1, Read (any one), Research 1, Speak (any one), Trade (any one), and Trained Knowledge (any one). Monastic clergy gain elective skills in the following categories:

Fighting: 1

Interaction: 1

Movement: 1

Professional: 5

Reactions: 2

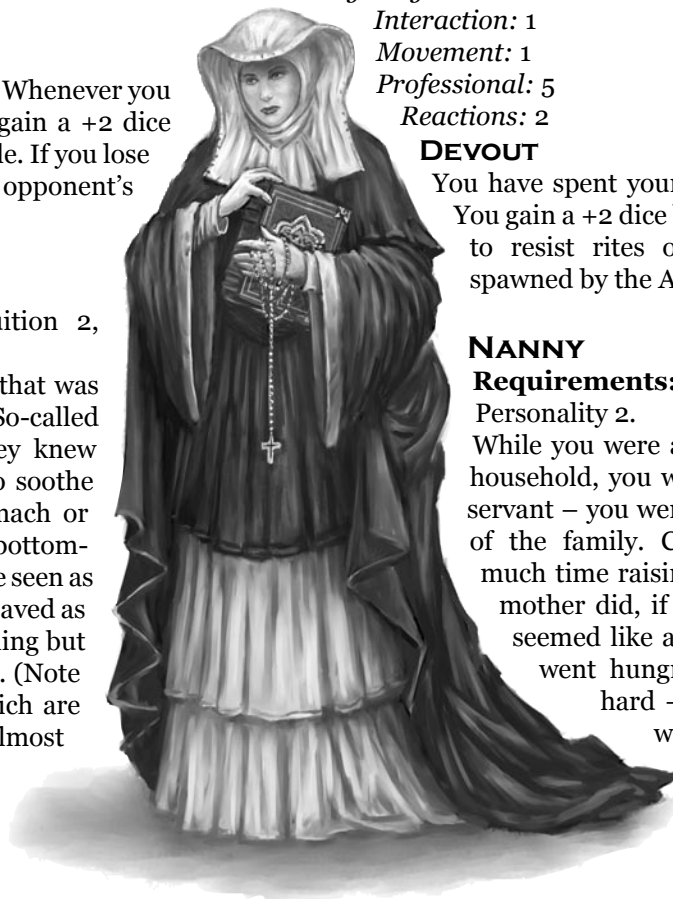
DEVOUT

You have spent your life in service to God. You gain a +2 dice bonus to any rolls made to resist rites or supernatural effects spawned by the Adversary.

NANNY

Requirements: Toughness 2, Personality 2.

While you were a commoner in a noble household, you were much more than a servant – you were practically a member of the family. Certainly you spent as much time raising the children as their mother did, if not more. It may have seemed like an easy life – you never went hungry or had to work too hard – but it was so difficult watching the children grow up before your eyes, knowing they would never be



yours, knowing how many things you would have done differently if you had the power to choose... (Note that unlike most Backgrounds, which are gender-neutral, nannies are almost exclusively female.)

Social Standing: Commoner

SKILLS

An nanny's background skills include Command 1, Empathy 1, Gossip 1, Grapple 1, Notice 1, and Perform 1. Nannies gain elective skills in the following categories:

Fighting: 1

Interaction: 3

Movement: 2

Professional: 2

Reactions: 2

A SPOONFUL OF SUGAR

You know how to handle children, whether they require sweet support or a firm swat across the backside. Gain +1 die on all non-combat rolls against children under the age of 10.

NAVIGATOR

Requirement: Reason 3, Intuition 3.

Give you a sextant and a bundle of nautical charts and you're confident you can chart a course to anywhere. You know the stars, the waters, and the weather patterns, making you an invaluable part of a crew. You had an important job, and the crew and passengers depended on you to see them through to their destination.

Social Standing: Artisan

SKILLS

A navigator's background skills include Hand-to-Hand 1, Notice 1, Read (any one) 1, Sail 1, Survival 1, and Swim 1. Navigators gain elective skills in the following categories:

Fighting: 2

Interaction: 1

Movement: 2

Professional: 3

Reactions: 2

DIRECTION SENSE

You have an uncanny sense for which way is north. You never need to roll Survival to determine true north. In addition, you are never at risk of getting lost so long as you have maps or a compass.

OCCULTIST

Requirement: Education 5, Will 3.

You were a wizard, a mystic, a demonologist, or just someone interested in forbidden lore and if anyone found out, you'd burn on the stake. You are drawn to the occult like a moth to the flame, compelled by an unquenchable thirst to uncover the buried secrets and the ancient lore

that can offer you knowledge, power and more. You might eventually dabble in actual magic, or you might decide that such activities tend to draw attention that is best focused elsewhere.

Social Standing: Artisan

SKILLS

An occultist's background skills include Concentrate 1, Occult 1, Read (any one), Research 1, Speak (any one), and Trained Knowledge (any one) 1. Occultists gain elective skills in the following categories:

Fighting: 1

Interaction: 1

Movement: 1

Professional: 5

Reactions: 2

QUICK READ

After a lifetime of reading old, musty tomes, they hold few secrets from you. When enacting a rite directly from a grimoire, scroll or other written object, you may ignore the +1 to Difficulty penalty.

PHYSICIAN

Requirement: Education 3.

Healer, scientist, philosopher – you're all these things. You've studied countless texts, pored through home remedies, and may have even stolen a few cadavers to study. You draw from this lore to heal the sick and to mend wounds, but above all, you want to unlock the secrets of life.

Social Standing: Professional

SKILLS

A physician's background skills include Empathy 1, Heal 1, Read, Research 1, Resolve 1, and Trained Knowledge (Science) 1. Physicians gain elective skills in the following categories:

Fighting: 1

Interaction: 1

Movement: 1

Professional: 5

Reactions: 2

MIRACLE WORKER

You have a gift for healing. You gain a +2 dice bonus to all Heal rolls. Performing First Aid takes only one action for you.

PRIEST

Requirement: Education 3, Intuition 3.

As a servant of the Church, you gave your life to God. You were in the business of saving souls in whatever way you could. If this meant heading up a congregation and intoning the rituals on holy days, you were happy to do it. And if it



meant involving yourself in politics, guiding the fate of the nation, you never hesitated. You might have even abandoned the trappings of the Old World to become a missionary in the New, braving strange lands and hostile natives to spread the word of peace and devotion to the heavenly Father.

Social Standing: Commoner

SKILLS

A priest's background skills include Charm 1, Command 1, Concentrate 1, Read (any one), Research 1, and Trained Knowledge (Philosophy & Theology) 1. Priests gain elective skills in the following categories:

Fighting: 1

Interaction: 3

Movement: 1

Professional: 4

Reactions: 1

HAND OF GOD

You are blessed with divine favor. Once per scene, you may call upon the power of God to shield you. You may roll a number of die equal to your True Faith score and add any successes to your Defense pool.

PROSTITUTE

Requirement: Courage 3, Personality 3.

It never fails. There's always some sailor, some randy husband saddled with a frigid wife, or a fat merchant who can't find love, and you're there to give them the release they need. You might have been a common street whore doing your business in a filthy alley, a high class courtesan who only knew the comfort of a lord's bed, or a muscular young man catering to those of socially unacceptable tastes, but when push came to shove, you survived by selling your body.

Social Standing: Commoner

SKILLS

A prostitute's background skills include Charm 1, Deceive 1, Endurance 1, Gossip 1, Notice 1, and Perform (Personality) 1. Prostitutes gain elective skills in the following categories:

Fighting: 1

Interaction: 3

Movement: 1

Professional: 2

Reactions: 3

SEDUCTIVE

You have great powers of persuasion. You gain a +2 dice bonus to Charm and Deceive rolls against targets ordinarily attracted to your gender.

REVOLUTIONARY

Requirements: Will 3, Courage 3.

The world is changing, now more than ever. The course is set; the old ways are vanishing and it's time to look ahead. Who needs kings and queens? Who needs the Church sticking its nose in temporal matters when they should be concerned with matters of spirit? You had had enough and you fought to create a better future. You read

the philosophers, you studied at University and spent your time in the salons listening to the agitators who through words alone stirred the passions for liberty. The time is coming and you aim to be at the forefront of the revolution.

Social Standing: Commoner

SKILLS

A revolutionary's background skills include Charm 1, Command 1, Hand-to-Hand 1, Notice 1, Read (any one) 1, and Trained Knowledge (Politics) 1. Revolutionaries gain elective skills in the following categories:

Fighting: 1

Interaction: 3

Movement: 1

Professional: 3

Reactions: 2

INCITE

Once per scene, you can incite another character to violence with inflammatory words. Roll Deceive. If the target is unwilling, he may negate your successes with a Will roll. If you have at least one remaining success, the target gains a +1 die bonus to all action rolls for a number of rounds equal to the number of successes you achieved. The target must attack the closest creature, regardless of friend or foe, each round.

SAILOR

Requirements: Agility 3, Toughness 3.

Life as a sailor is as wretched as it is exciting. For every day you went hungry, dreaming of buxom lasses who were free with their attentions, you faced a new challenge – fighting a storm, battling pirates, or braving new lands. Your future was uncertain, but that's for tomorrow, and you always live for the here now.

Social Standing: Commoner

SKILLS

A sailor's background skills include Balance 1, Climb 1, Hand-to-Hand 1, Row 1, Sail 1, and Swim 1. Sailors gain elective skills in the following categories:

Fighting: 2

Interaction: 1

Movement: 3

Professional: 2

Reactions: 2

SEA LEGS

You are accustomed to the rolling deck of a ship, giving you amazing poise and balance. Gain a +2 dice bonus to all Balance rolls. In addition, you gain a +1 die bonus to Endurance (Toughness) rolls made to resist poisons.

SCHOLAR

Requirement: Education 4.

You devoted your life to the pursuit of knowledge. You were a philosopher, scientist, theologian, professor, or even a tutor. Regardless, you plunged into the subject of your study with abandon, savoring the lore you uncovered with relish. Sometimes your research took you into

dangerous subjects, and there are many of your kind who have been undone by opening the wrong tome. So you temper your zeal with caution, never knowing for certain what the next volume will hold.

Social Standing: Artisan

SKILLS

A scholar's background skills include Concentrate 1, Read (any one), Research 1, Speak (any one), and Trained Knowledge (any two). Scholars gain elective skills in the following categories:

Fighting: 1

Interaction: 1

Movement: 1

Professional: 6

Reactions: 1

LORE

You have picked up all sorts of useful (and useless) information. You may roll Education to learn information normally revealed through a Trained Knowledge (Education) roll. In effect, you may substitute Education for any Trained Knowledge (Education) roll.

SCOUT

Requirement: Agility 3, Intuition 4.

You ranged ahead, examined the lay of the land, and reported your findings to your unit, your tribe, or your family. You were adept at moving unseen, using your environment to stay hidden, slip past your enemies, to learn what you could. And if you had to fight, you were always confident you could hold your own.

Social Standing: Commoner

SKILLS

A scout's background skills include Archery 1, Climb 1, Notice 1, Stealth 1, Survival 1, Swim 1. Scouts gain elective skills in the following categories:

Fighting: 1

Interaction: 1

Movement: 3

Professional: 3

Reactions: 2

UNCANNY SENSES

You have highly trained senses. You gain a +2 dice bonus to Notice rolls. In addition, you can see twice as far as a normal human does.

SERVANT

Requirements: None.

You long stood in the shadow of greatness. You cooked their food, cleaned their bed sheets, pressed their linens, and even raised their young. But you didn't mind. They were lucky enough to be born to a family of substance, of worth. You were not, but you could benefit from many of their privileges as long as you made it clear that you knew your place.

Social Standing: Commoner

SKILLS

A servant's background skills include Charm 1, Empathy 1, Endurance 1, Gossip 1, Notice 1, and Reflexes 1. Servants gain elective skills in the following categories:

Fighting: 1

Interaction: 2

Movement: 1

Professional: 4

Reactions: 2

BENEATH NOTICE

You can cringe and seem small and unimportant. In combat, you may, as your action, affect a servile demeanor. Your opponents attack other characters if possible. Otherwise, they must succeed on a D3 Will roll to attack you. The effects of this ability last 1 round.

SETTLER

Requirement: Courage 3.

The New World offers much. It's a perfect place for starting over, a land of opportunity, a place to make one's own fortune and build a future. To have this, you were willing to endure all manner of hardships for the faint chance to claim a piece of your own. You probably came over as an indentured servant, performing backbreaking labor to pay off the debt of your passage. But now you're free, and you can pursue your dreams to their fullest.

Social Standing: Commoner

SKILLS

A settler's background skills include Animal Care 1, Construct (any one) 1, Drive 1, Endurance 1, Hand-to-Hand 1, and Survival 1. Settlers gain elective skills in the following categories:

Fighting: 1

Interaction: 1

Movement: 2

Professional: 4

Reactions: 2

GRIT

Life on the frontier leaves no room for failure. Once per day, if you fail an action roll, you may immediately attempt the roll again but at a +2 dice bonus.

SHAMAN

Requirements: Intuition 4, Personality 3, Courage 3.

The power of the divine lies not with those who serve the Church alone. All cultures recognize the existence of divinity, whether it takes the form of a deity, a pantheon, or even an elemental force. You are one of those who have a simpler view of God, without the trappings of organized religion and without the political interests of the religious institutions of the day. You may have been a spiritual leader for your tribe or an anchorite who withdrew from society to contemplate existence as a hermit.

Social Standing: Commoner

SKILLS

A shaman's background skills include Concentrate 1, Heal 1, Intimidate 1, Notice 1, Perform (any one) 1, and Resolve 1. Shamans gain elective skills in the following categories:

Fighting: 1
Interaction: 3
Movement: 1
Professional: 3
Reactions: 2

YOU ARE KNOWN TO THE SPIRITS

Your training began at a young age and since that time, many of the spirits of the earth know and like you. Whenever you are enacting a rite that requires you to make a successful Interaction check, your Intuition acts as if it were 1 higher for the purposes of determining the Difficulty.

SLAVE

Requirements: Toughness 3, Courage 3.

As repellent as the practice is, slavery is a lucrative trade in the seventeenth century – not only legal, but a crucial component of the economy. That was of small consolation to you, even if you fully understood it; you and your descendants were doomed to short, hellish lives of back-breaking labor. Somehow, you endured long enough to escape or receive the gift of freedom from your master, but the threat of being cast back into a life of shackles and inhuman treatment haunts your nightmares.

Social Standing: Commoner

SKILLS

A slave's background skills include Construct (any one) 1, Endurance 1, Notice 1, Pantomime 1, Resolve 1, and Trade (any one) 1. Slaves gain elective skills in the following categories:

Fighting: 2
Interaction: 1
Movement: 2
Professional: 2
Reactions: 3

RESISTANCE

You are accustomed to a life of hardship. Gain +1 to each injury level on your Health track.

SMUGGLER

Requirements: Agility 3, Intuition 3.

You never saw yourself as a criminal, though in your heart you knew it was what you were. But it wasn't your fault; they forced you. You couldn't keep your business alive as restriction after restriction passed. New prohibitions in various ports, to say nothing of the outrageous tariffs, forced your hand. And so you began to smuggle goods. Maybe you're breaking the law, but it just means that you're keeping some coins for your own pocket rather than sending them off to some fat nobleman half a world away. Is that so wrong?

Social Standing: Commoner

SKILLS

A smuggler's background skills include Deceive 1, Evaluate 1, Row 1, Subterfuge 1, Stealth 1, and Survival 1. Smugglers gain elective skills in the following categories:

Fighting: 1
Interaction: 2

Movement: 3
Professional: 3
Reactions: 1

CONTRABAND

You are good at hiding things. You may roll Stealth to conceal a small object on your person. Targets searching for it must beat your successes with a Notice roll. In addition, you gain a +1 die bonus to Deceive rolls.

SOLDIER

Requirements: Courage 4.

As a professional soldier, you were a cut above the rest. Unlike the mercenary rabble, you knew the value of discipline: It's why you and your fellow soldiers won repeatedly. You got more respect than the mercenaries, and had a slightly better life expectancy, but you were in the same whirling maze of blood, mud, and death whenever battle was joined.

Social Standing: Professional

SKILLS

A soldier's background skills include Command 1, Endurance 1, Firearms 1, Hand-to-Hand 1, Parry 1, and Reflexes 1. Soldiers gain elective skills in the following categories:

Fighting: 3
Interaction: 1
Movement: 1
Professional: 1
Reactions: 4

VETERAN

You are unfazed by combat. When rolling Reflexes for initiative, you gain a +1 die bonus. In addition, once per scene, you can remove a number of hits from your damage track equal to your Toughness score.

SPY

Requirements: Agility 3, Reason 3, Personality 3.

As a spy, you filled many roles. You were an informant, passing along vital information to your employer. But you may have played him false, working from within to uncover the most heavily guarded secrets. Whatever you did, you were in the business of information. It's a dangerous job, but it's far more exciting than tending a shop after all.

Social Standing: Professional

SKILLS

A spy's background skills include Charm 1, Deceive 1, Empathy 1, Gossip 1, Notice 1, and Stealth 1. Spies gain elective skills in the following categories:

Fighting: 2
Interaction: 2
Movement: 1
Professional: 3
Reactions: 2

ADAPTABLE

You can change your appearance quickly. Whenever you roll Deceive to pretend to be someone other than you are, you gain a +2 dice bonus.

THIEF

Requirements: Agility 4, Intuition 4.

You prowled the streets in search of marks. From the merchant whose apple you nicked yesterday to the fat merchant whose purse you cut, the city is full of victims just begging for your attention. It may be wrong to steal, but even the good Lord pardoned a thief, right?

Social Standing: Commoner

SKILLS

A thief's background skills include Climb 1, Deceive 1, Evaluate 1, Notice 1, Reflexes 1, and Subterfuge 1. Thieves gain elective skills in the following categories:

Fighting: 2

Interaction: 1

Movement: 1

Professional: 4

Reactions: 2

CUTPURSE

You are skilled at filching purses. You may use Subterfuge to pick pockets as a free action.

THUG

Requirement: Strength 3, Personality 3.

Your biggest asset was always your strength and toughness. You threw your weight around, bullying people into giving you what you wanted. You have advantages over others, so you use them to your best effect. It's also easy finding work. Merchants, crime lords, and even politicians need enforcers, and scaring the wits out of weaker folk is what you do best.

Social Standing: Commoner

SKILLS

A thug's background skills include Gossip 1, Grapple 1, Hand-to-Hand 1, Intimidate 1, Reflexes 1, and Stealth 1.

Thugs gain elective skills in the following categories:

Fighting: 3

Interaction: 1

Movement: 1

Professional: 1

Reactions: 4

FIERCE

You live by instilling fear in your enemies. When using Intimidate to scare your opponents, you gain +2 dice. Finally, the DM for your unarmed attacks increases by +1.

WITCH HUNTER CATALYST

Now that you have an idea of what your nascent Witch Hunter once did, it's time to give some thought as to why you left your previous life and embarked on a journey of selfless sacrifice and soul searing encounters with that which lies beyond.

Your GM may have prepared a starting adventure to begin your saga, so check with her before choosing your own catalyst. Below is a short list of possible reasons why your character may have become a Witch Hunter. GMs (and players) are encouraged to come up with your own should these not be a perfect fit for your character.

THE SOLE SURVIVOR

Sometime in your past, whether as a child or as an adult, you were miraculous survivor of a group that was horribly savaged and killed. Perhaps, when you were a child, your family was attacked by a pack of werewolves during a particularly vicious snowstorm. Your mother hid you away and managed to close the cellar door just seconds before the beast leapt upon her. As an adult, you may have been part of a Spanish offensive against the blasphemous Aztecs. Their foul blood magic fell many of the contingent and you fell unconscious during the onslaught. When you awoke beneath some palm fronds, you found your fellow Conquistadores slaughtered, their hearts ripped out of their chests. Regardless, by some miracle you find yourself the only survivor out of a group of victims. It was not long thereafter before a Witch Hunter found you and gave you chance to use this second chance at life to make sure that no one else would suffer as you had.

THE LAZARUS EFFECT

You died. Or at least you believe you did. You may have found yourself in a shallow grave, frantically clawing your way out, or you may have found yourself pinned beneath a pile of corpses, just another of the dead awaiting burial. Whatever it was that you "died" from, it was certainly not from anything as simple as consumption or the plague. Whatever you died from was brutal, bloody and terrifying. You were soon found by a Witch Hunter; perhaps he pulled you from the corpse pile or helped you out of your grave. He explained to you the miracle that had just received and that it was God's Will that you walk the earth a bit longer, battling against the depredations of the Adversary's minions.

THE DAMNED

You've done some bad things in your life; some really bad things! Whatever your crime, whether it be against the laws of Man or some transgression against God, you realize that an eternity of burning in Hell awaits you unless you can somehow redeem yourself in the eyes of the Lord. You found or were found by a Witch Hunter who decided that you were not yet completely damned and in need of being put down. She saw that you honestly were repentant for your sins and were worthy of redemption. Since that day, you hunt down those who are too corrupted to be saved and show mercy to those who may yet find salvation.

You and your Grand Master may elect to have your character start with one point of Damnation, though this is completely optional.

CURSED

Somewhere along the line, you were cursed. It may be an ancient family curse that has descended upon you or you greatly offended a true Witch who laid her spell upon you. Whatever the cause, you were searching to have it removed by whatever means necessary. Every wise-man, priest and minister were either unable to help or were

opportunistic charlatans taking your last pence and giving only false hope. Finally, when all hope was lost, a strange and foreboding man appeared and offered salvation. All you had to do was give up your old life and follow him on his bizarre crusade against evil. Desperate for help, you agreed and your life became more dangerous and terrifying than a hundred curses could be.

You and your GM may decide to have your character begin play with a minor curse, though this is completely optional.

THE WITNESS

‘Blessed be those who see and act.’ You saw something, something that everyone else didn’t see or refused to believe. But instead of trying to blot the image from your mind through drink or drugs, you acted; you fought back. Now the things from the darkness know that you are not mere chattel like the rest of humanity, but a threat to their power. They know who you are and they are after you.

Whether it was for self-preservation or from a deep-seated need to do the right thing, you took up the mantle of the Witch Hunters to take the fight to these malignant denizens of Hell. Perhaps one day, you’ll be able to truly have a good night sleep without having to keep one eye open.

THE CHOSEN

You were born to be a Witch Hunter. Possibly, upon your birth, your parents were told that you had a great destiny before you. Perhaps one or both of your parents were Witch Hunters and trained you from a very early age in the ways of the Invisible World. Either way, you never had a normal life. Nightmares were your bed time stories and the soothing coo of a mother was replaced by the howls of creatures not meant for this world. You may have tried to fight destiny, learning a mundane trade and trying to lead a normal life, but God’s will is not easily ignored. Events conspired to cause you to take up arms and do what you were born to do.

ODD BOB

Weird things always seem to happen around you. Some think you’re cursed or are just bad luck to be around. Bizarre occurrences and happenings follow you wherever you go. As a child, while other children scrambled up a hill, you were the one that fell into a hole and discovered an ancient barrow. Any other child would be delighted to find a shiny coin by the side of the road, but the ones you found were always strange with sigils carved into them. As an adult, the strangeness became more pronounced and disturbing and eventually you faced certain death at the hands of servants of the Adversary. Fortunately, a group of extraordinary people appeared in time to rescue you. They adopted you as one of their own and gave meaning to your odd luck.

ABILITIES

Abilities are the building blocks of all characters. They define, in broad strokes, what your character can do, describing your character’s strengths and weaknesses. More than just raw numbers, your ability scores can help you shape decisions about your character’s personality and background. Perhaps a low Toughness score could have resulted from a childhood illness or a low Education might mean your character was raised by wolves. Look beyond the numbers to find the character that lives within the stats.

USING ABILITIES

Whenever you would do something in *Witch Hunter*, you make an action roll by rolling a number of dice equal to the ability that is most closely associated with the action you’re trying to perform. For example, if you’re swinging a club at a cultist, you’d use your Strength. Or, if you’re trying to dive behind a pile of crates to avoid a hail of gunfire, you’d use your Agility. Each result of 7 or higher counts as a success. The harder the action to pull off, the more successes you need. It’s the Grand Master’s job to tell you which ability to use and to assess the difficulty of the action attempted.

ABILITIES AND SKILLS

While abilities enable you to do all sorts of things in the game, your skills, described in the following chapter, allow you to pull off specialized actions, improving your chances to pull off some daring maneuver because your character has right kind of specialized training. Skill levels give you bonus dice for your action rolls. For example, let’s say you’re trying to flip off a table and land on your feet a few yards away. The GM decides this is a difficult maneuver so he assigns a Difficulty 4, meaning you need four successes to pull this off. Since you only have a 3 Agility, odds are, you’re going to fail—you could succeed, remember, if you rolled three successes and one of which is a 10, giving you a chance to gain an extra success. If, however, you had 3 levels in Acrobatics, you’d be rolling 6 dice (3+3), thereby greatly improving your chances of success.

GENERATING ABILITY SCORES

Generating your ability scores is easy in *Witch Hunter*. All characters start with scores of 2 in all nine abilities (Strength, Agility, Toughness, Education, Reason, Will, Courage, Intuition, and Personality). You get 100 points with which you may increase your ability scores. Consult **Table 2–1: Generating Ability Scores** for the point costs. You must purchase each increase separately. So to increase Strength from 2 to 3, it costs 10 points. To increase Strength from 2 to 4, it costs 10 points to increase the score from 2 to 3 and another 20 points to increase the score from 3 to 4, for a total of 30 points. Finally, you can make an ability score worse to gain more points. Dropping an ability to 1 gives you 10 extra points.

Some backgrounds have an ability score requirement. You must have the listed score or higher to select the background.

Table 2–1: Generating Ability Scores

Score	Cost	Total Cost
1	(10)	-
2	0	0
3	10	10
4	20	30
5	30	60

IMPROVING ABILITY SCORES

As you accumulate Survival Points, you may spend them to improve your ability scores by simply using the costs described on **Table 2–1**. As you can see, advancing ability scores can become expensive; hence, it’s usually a better choice to improve your skills first.

PHYSICAL ABILITIES

All characters have three physical abilities: Strength, Agility, and Toughness. Together, they give you a good picture of your character’s general health and physical capabilities.

STRENGTH

Associated Skills: Climb, Grapple, Hand-to-Hand, Jump, Row, Swim, Throw

This ability describes your physical power, your might, and brawn. It reflects your capacity to dish out damage, to exert your hidden reserves, to use the physical resources at your disposal. Strength is an important ability for characters that fight in hand-to-hand combat. While Agility might serve to help you slip past your opponent’s defenses, its Strength that lets you smash in his face.

Score	Description
1	You are weak. You may be small, malnourished, or simply neglect your body in favor of other pursuits.
2	You have average strength. While your strength is not impressive, you are no weakling either
3	You have above average strength, being physically fit, but not overly muscled.
4	You are strong. You could be well-muscled and bulky or slender and wiry.
5	You are incredibly strong. You are a model specimen, mighty and powerful, dwarfing other people with your brawn.

USING STRENGTH

Strength is the key ability for hand-to-hand attacks, grappling, throwing objects, climbing, swimming, and most other physical actions.

AGILITY

Associated Skills: Acrobatics, Archery, Balance, Contortionist, Drive, Firearms, Hand-to-Hand (small weapons), Parry, Reflexes, Ride, Sail, Stealth, and Subterfuge.

Agility represents your natural quickness and sense of balance. Agility also encompasses accuracy and precision, incorporating natural reflexes and manual dexterity. Agility is an important ability as you use it to avoid your enemies’ attacks, to get out of the way of explosions and other calamities. It is also used to determine your initiative in combat. Finally, you use this ability when shooting firearms and projectile weapons.

Score	Description
1	You are incredibly clumsy and accident prone. You trip over your own feet and your hands seem to have a life of their own.
2	While your agility is average, your body is stiff and unresponsive or is burdened with a slight tremor.
3	You have slightly above average reflexes and dexterity.
4	You are agile and quick. You have uncommon reflexes.
5	You have incredible reflexes, your body reacting before you consciously think. You are fast and incredibly agile, moving with liquid grace.



USING AGILITY

Agility is the key ability for making most ranged attacks, avoiding attacks, performing acrobatics, slipping from bonds, wriggling through tight spaces, and any kind of fine work that requires a steady hand.

TOUGHNESS

Associated Skills: Endurance.

Toughness measures your vitality, your ability to withstand pain, fatigue, and injury. Toughness describes your ability to shrug off sickness, to fight off toxins, and any other harmful effects that affect the body. Toughness is also used to shrug off injuries.

Score	Description
1	You are sickly and puny. You become sick easily, have little endurance whatsoever, and have a hard time catching your breath when you exert yourself.
2	Like most common folk of the age, you are unhealthy. You may be overweight or malnourished. You are not accustomed to physical exercise.
3	You are hale and healthy, definitely above average for this day and age.
4	You are very healthy, physically fit or blessed with uncommon vigor.
5	You have an incredible metabolism. You can shrug off sickness, you heal quickly, and you can adapt to uncomfortable environments.

USING TOUGHNESS

Toughness is important as it determines how much damage you can take, how long you can exert yourself physically, and how well you resist poisons, sickness, and other physical effects.

HEALTH TRACK

All characters have a health track to keep up with the damage they take. The track has five injury levels: healthy, light, moderate, heavy, and dying. A character has a variable number of points for each injury level as follows (round all fractions up).

Injury Level	Score	Die Pool Penalty	Unconscious Roll Needed
Healthy	Toughness × 2	0	No
Light	Toughness × 1.5	-1	No
Moderate	Toughness × 1	-2	Yes
Heavy	Toughness × 1	-3	Yes
Dying	Toughness × 1/2	-4	Yes

As you take damage in combat, record them in the space provided on your character sheet. Once the points exceed the score for the injury, you shift down to the next lower level and all remaining damage applies to that level.

Example: Emil Zargossa has a Toughness 3, meaning he has 6 points of Healthy and 5 Light. Emil gets hit by a sword for 10 damage. Six points come off of his Healthy, moving him down to Light. The remaining 4 points come off from Light, leaving him with 1 point. If he has no points left on any track, he's dead.

For more information on damage, see **Chapter Four: Playing the Game**.

MENTAL ABILITIES

All characters have three mental abilities: Education, Reason, and Will. Together, they depict your characters state of mental development, acuity, natural intelligence, education and intellectual training.

EDUCATION

Associated Skills: Construct, Evaluate, Herbalism, Myth and Lore, Occult, Sorcerous Tradition: Hermeticism and Trained Knowledge.

Simply put, Education is what your character has learned, what he knows, and how he can bring that knowledge to bear. Although Education typically reflects formal learning and training it need not be. Characters with high Education score may be worldly, having traveled across the seas, interacted with different cultures, seen incredible sights, and generally experienced more than others have.

Score	Description
1	You were either raised by wolves or you have led such a sheltered life, you have next to no practical understanding of how the world works.
2	You know little about the wider world, having had next to no formal education or training.
3	You have an atypical education or training for your culture, having been taught how to read and write or perhaps have experienced more than the average member of your society.
4	You have advanced training, perhaps some formal schooling or an apprenticeship with a master.
5	You have attended a university or academy, devouring everything you could. You know a great deal about many subjects.

USING EDUCATION

Education is your go-to ability whenever you need to recall some important fact about a people or place, to know about some historical fact, or perhaps how something works.

STARTING LANGUAGES

All characters begin play with 3 levels in Speak Language for their native tongue, and with additional levels of Speak Language equal to their Education score. These levels may be used to purchase literacy in the native tongue, divided up between different languages, all spent on a second language, or any combination thereof.

REASON

Associated Skills: Disable, Research, Sorcerous Tradition: Necromancy and Trade.

Reason is your ability to use your intellect, to solve problems, figure out puzzles and riddles, and solve logical problems. It is the application of intelligence, the ability to set your mind to a task and come to the correct conclusions.

Score	Description
1	You are slow and dim-witted. You completely miss subtleties and grow frustrated when faced with an intellectual challenge.
2	You are a little dull. It takes a bit for your experiences to sink in.
3	You have a good head on your shoulders. You're not too bright, but neither are you stupid.
4	You are smart and clever. You have a knack for coming up with a reasonable solution to most problems.
5	You are a genius. Brilliant, quick-witted, and a mental giant, you have considerable brain-power.

USING REASON

You use Reason when you're confronted with an intellectual challenge or when trying to figure out a particular thorny issue. You might apply your reason to find some strategic advantage in combat or to come up with a way to dismantle a device. Reason is also important to many professional skills.

WILL

Associated Skills: Concentrate, Sorcerous Tradition: Animism.

Will describes your discipline; your ability to commit to the situation at hand. The higher your will, the stronger your focus, the more fine-tuned your mind. Reason is nothing if you lack the will to use it. Will is also important when resisting temptation, certain supernatural effects, and anything that attacks the mind.

Score	Description
1	You are weak-willed and easily distracted. You have a hard time concentrating on anything.
2	You tend to shrink away from problems, moving on to easier subjects. You are undisciplined and may have a hedonistic streak.

Score	Description
3	When needed, you can focus your attention on the matter at hand.
4	You have a disciplined mind and can ignore many distractions.
5	Little fazes you. You have incredible focus and mental clarity.

USING WILL

Will comes into play whenever you would keep your attention directed at the task at hand, such as continuing to read a rite from an ancient grimoire despite the distraction caused by a barrage of whizzing bullets, a screaming horde of cultists, or any other threat. You will also make Will action rolls to resist supernatural effects that specifically target the mind.

SPIRITUAL ABILITIES

All characters have three spiritual abilities: Courage, Intuition, and Personality. Together, they give you a good picture of your character's force of character and determination.

COURAGE

Associated Skills: Command, Resolve and Sorcerous Tradition: Prayer.

Battling the servants of the Adversary takes resolve; a stiff spine in the face of unreasoning and horrific evil. Courage is the ability that helps you push past fear and soldier on to fight the good fight.

Score	Description
1	You are craven. When you face a dangerous situation, you'd rather flee.
2	You lack much of a backbone and quail before danger.
3	You're no coward, but you're not a fool either.
4	You are brave and can stand fast in the face of horror.
5	Some might call you reckless or foolish, but you do what's needed to get the job done.

USING COURAGE

The most common use for Courage is to resist fear. Each monster or scene has a Fear Difficulty. This is the number of successes you need on a Courage action roll to negate the Fear altogether. For example, Prudence opens the door to the isolated roadside inn and sees inside a grotesque scene of death. Bodies lie in tatters on the floor and blood paints the walls. The GM sets the Fear Difficulty at 1, so Prudence, with a 3 Courage, rolls three 10-sided dice. If she gets at least one success, she can force down her revulsion and horror and move in to investigate.

INTUITION

Associated Skills: Animal Care, Empathy, Gamble, Heal, Navigation, Notice, Sorcerous Tradition: Witchcraft, Survival, and Track.

Intuition is your ability to perceive your surroundings. It is your gut instinct, your danger sense, and your knack for anticipating danger before it appears. It also reflects your ability to get hunch about the people you meet, assessing their trustworthiness and character.

Score Description

1	You are utterly oblivious. You miss the obvious.
2	You have a hard time picking up on small details. You might be self-absorbed, have bad vision or hearing, or naive.
3	You have a good handle on your surroundings and you are a pretty decent judge of character.
4	You have refined senses, enabling you to pick up on small details.
5	You have incredible senses, allowing you to see farther than others can, hear things others can't. You may also be able to pierce through double-talk, seeing people as they truly are.

USING INTUITION

Intuition is the key ability for most action rolls involving perception. You use this ability when searching a room, when trying to see through a person's deception, or to notice hidden enemies.



PERSONALITY

Associated Skills: Charm, Deceive, Gossip, Intimidate, Pantomime, Perform and Sorcerous Tradition: Diabolism.

This ability quite simply is your natural charisma, the force of your character, and your skill when interacting with others. Personality encompasses all the ways you might communicate with others and change their attitudes, including deception, seduction, and intimidation.

Score Description

1	You are an introvert. You have a difficult time speaking to others and you'd rather let others do the talking.
2	People make you a little nervous and so you tend to stammer or mutter through conversations.
3	You have typical communication skills.
4	You are a skilled communicator. You can win people over to your line of thinking and get others to do what you want.
5	You have amazing animal magnetism and a forceful personality. A natural leader, people follow you with little or no hesitation.

USING PERSONALITY

Personality is a common ability since it is the means by which you interact with NPCs. You make Personality action rolls when you would befriend, intimidate, or deceive other characters. The Difficulty depends on the target's mood, with hostile and violent characters being harder to affect than pliable and friendly ones.

DEFENSE

This is not so much an ability as it is a representation of your ability to evade and shrug off minor amounts of damage. Defense is calculated by taking the average of your Agility and Toughness (rounded up).

USING DEFENSE

Each round you roll a number of dice equal to this number and any successes (known as Defense Points) may be used to negate your opponent's attack successes. For more details, see Chapter Four: Playing the Game.

SKILLS

The nine abilities let you attempt just about anything you want to do in the game. If you want to swing a sword at a foe, make a Strength roll. If you want to recall some esoteric general fact about the world, you'd make an Education roll. Or, if you would fast-talk a constable into letting you go after you were caught stealing, make a Personality roll. However, in all cases, these efforts are based on your natural talent and don't include or reflect any special training you might have. Hence, *Witch Hunter* uses skills.



Skills are specialized expressions of your abilities. By investing in a skill, you improve your chance of success in a particular area. For example, any character can try to leap across a pit, but a character that has training in the Jump skill stands a much better chance. Likewise, a character might flip off a table to land on his feet, but if he's a trained acrobat, he stands a better chance of pulling off this feat. The list below denotes the corresponding skills with an ability. These abilities are the most commonly associated attributes with that skill, but they are not the only ones which may be used. A Resolve (Courage) check and a Resolve (Will) check are both valid, but they express two completely different concepts: one an expression of bravery, the other of willpower.

USING SKILLS

Skills give you extra dice when making an action roll. The number of extra dice you can roll is determined by the number of levels you place in the skill, on a 1 for 1 basis. So if you have 1 level in Jump, you would get an extra die when rolling Strength to jump over or across an obstacle. Skills range from 0 to 5, with 0 being natural talent (no training) and 5 being mastery.

Table 2–2: Levels Defined

Score	Description	Score	Description
0	No Training	3	Expert
1	Trained	4	Adept
2	Proficient	5	Mastery

There are exceptions. Skills associated with Education represent special knowledge or training and characters that do not have at least 1 level in the skill cannot roll Education to use them.

SKILLS CATEGORIES

Although each skill is distinct, being an area of expertise tied to a particular ability, many skills share common elements and uses. Hand-to-Hand is used in fighting just as is Archery. A character uses Charm to influence other characters just as they might use Deceive or Intimidate. These skills may have different outcomes, but they are all used in the same ways. As a result, skills are gathered into five categories: Fighting, Interaction, Movement, Professional, and Reaction.

FIGHTING SKILLS

Fighting skills are any skills that indicate combat training, whether it be fighting with hand-to-hand weapons, grappling, or shooting firearms. These skills are associated with your physical abilities, such as Strength and Agility.

USING FIGHTING SKILLS

When using a fighting skill, you roll a number of dice equal to the skill's associated ability plus your levels in the skill minus a number of dice equal to the complexity of the weapon.

Each die that comes up as a 7 or higher counts as a hit. Your opponent may use successes gained from his Defense pool to negate some or all of your successes.

Add any remaining successes to the weapon’s damage modifier to determine damage. For more details, see **Chapter Four: Playing the Game**. Rolling a fighting skill is 1 action.

INTERACTION SKILLS

Interaction skills are the basic means by which characters interact with other characters. Under most circumstances, you don’t need to roll dice. Instead, you simply talk— role-play—through the conversation, not unlike an improvisational actor on stage. But there are times when you wish to modify a characters behavior, urging him or her to perform in a desired way. Interaction skills facilitate this. Interaction skills are associated with your spiritual abilities, including Courage, Intuition, and Personality.

USING INTERACTION SKILLS

Charm, Command, Deceive, and Intimidate represent the key ways in which your character interacts with others. Charm lets you befriend, Command compels, Deceive fools, and Intimidate frightens. These skills come into play whenever you would like to change the attitude of another character. Before rolling the dice, you should always role-play such scenes first. What you do or say may result in a bonus or penalty to the roll, as determined by the GM. Even if the situation is uncomfortable, such a seducing another character, an explanation of how you are going about the seduction can certainly help your chances. Once you establish what it is you want from the other character, you make an interaction roll based on what it is you’re trying to do.

When using an Interaction skill, the number of successes needed to modify the character’s disposition depends on the target’s initial disposition. It’s far easier to charm, for instance, a subject who loves and adores you than it is to charm someone who hates you. Each success beyond those required modifies the target’s attitude toward you as described in the skill description. Such modifications last until events in the game would naturally alter the character’s disposition.

Interaction skills cannot be used against other player characters, only against NPCs. If you want to convince another PC to do what you want, you will have to do so via-roleplaying.

MOVEMENT SKILLS

No character needs a skill to walk or run; anyone can do these things. Movement skills, then, cover all types of movement beyond the basic types of motion. Examples include jumping, climbing, and swimming, but also sneaking, acrobatics, and any other action that depends on some kind of physical movement. Naturally, these skills use your physical abilities, specifically Strength and Agility.

USING MOVEMENT SKILLS

When rolling a movement skill, the number of successes you get determine the distance you travel, or else the distance to be traveled determines the number of successes you need.

PROFESSIONAL SKILLS

Professional skills encompass the most specialized areas of expertise. Most of these skills require special training. As a rule of thumb, if you would do something that would allow you to earn an income, you’d use a professional skill. Sail, Gossip, Trained Knowledge, and Perform are all examples of Professional skills. These skills may use physical, mental, and spiritual abilities.

USING PROFESSIONAL SKILLS

Professional skills are easy to use. You state the desired action and the GM assigns a difficulty. If you net enough successes, you complete the task. Generally, professional skills can’t be used in combat. Exceptions, where they exist, are noted in the skill’s description.

REACTION SKILLS

Reaction skills are skills that respond to other actions or threats, such concentrating, dodging, or maintaining your balance. Reaction skills may use physical, mental, and spiritual abilities.

USING REACTION SKILLS

As described in **Chapter Four: Playing the Game**, in combat characters have 1 action and 1 reaction each round. You may sacrifice your action to gain a second reaction in the same round. Reactions are typically used in opposition to other rolls.

Table 2–3: Skill Summary

Skill	Ability
<i>Fighting Skills</i>	
Archery	Agility
Firearms	Agility
Grapple	Strength
Hand-to-Hand	Strength*
Throw	Strength
<i>Interaction Skills</i>	
Charm	Personality
Command	Courage
Deceive	Personality
Empathy	Intuition
Intimidate	Personality
Pantomime	Personality
<i>Movement Skills</i>	
Acrobatics	Agility
Climb	Strength

Table 2–3: Skill Summary

Skill	Ability
Contortionist	Agility
Drive	Agility
Jump	Strength
Ride	Agility
Row	Strength
Stealth	Agility
Swim	Strength
<i>Professional Skills</i>	
Animal Care	Intuition
Construct	Education
Disable	Reason
Evaluate	Education
Gamble	Intuition
Gossip	Personality
Heal	Intuition
Herbalism	Education
Myth and Lore	Education
Navigation	Intuition
Occult	Education
Perform	Personality
Research	Reason
Sail	Agility
Sorcerous Tradition	Varies
Speak Language	—
Subterfuge	Agility
Survival	Intuition
Track	Intuition
Trade	Reason
Trained Knowledge	Education
<i>Reaction Skills</i>	
Balance	Agility
Concentrate	Will
Endurance	Toughness
Notice	Intuition
Parry	Agility
Reflexes	Agility
Resolve	Courage

GENERATING SKILLS

All characters gain starting skill levels depending on their background. Each background grants 16 levels. Six levels are assigned to six skills called background skills. The remaining 10 are divided between the five skill categories. Any skill that is not a background skill is an elective skill.

ASSIGNING LEVELS

Your background skills are already assigned. These reflect the training you underwent to be a member of that occupation. You do, however, have options with your elective skills.

- You may place skill levels into any skill within the assigned category, whether it's a background skill or an elective skill.
- You may transfer skill levels from one skill category to another, but you sacrifice half of the levels by doing so (round down).

LIMITATIONS

You have a lot of flexibility when it comes to assigning skill levels, but there are limits. No skill can have more levels than its associated ability score. For instance, if you have a 3 Strength, you can't place more than 3 levels in Hand-to-Hand.

EXAMPLES

To help you through the process of assigning levels, check out this example. John's background grants him Charm (Personality) 1, Deceive (Personality) 1, Drive (Agility) 1, Evaluate (Education) 1, Pantomime (Personality) 1, and Subterfuge (Agility) as background skills. For elective skills, he gains 2 in Fighting, 3 in Interaction, 1 in Movement, 3 in Professional, and 1 in Reaction.

When assigning his Fighting electives, he places 1 level in Hand-to-Hand and 1 level in Firearms.

For Interaction electives, he places 1 level in Deceive. Deceive is a background skill for John, so when added to the one point he got for free, this gives him a rating of 2 in this skill.

John decides to transfer his 2 remaining Interaction levels back into Fighting, but by doing so, he halves the number of levels gained. He places his one remaining level in Hand-to-Hand, bringing the skill up to 2 levels.

IMPROVING SKILLS

Like abilities, you may spend Survival Points to purchase additional skill levels. It costs 5 Survival Points to increase a background skill by 1 level and 10 Survival Points to increase an elective skill by 1 level.

SKILL DESCRIPTIONS

The skills in this chapter are presented in alphabetical order.

ANIMAL CARE

(INTUITION, PROFESSIONAL)

Animal Care enables you to handle or tend animals, or even calm them when they are frightened or startled. To handle an animal, you must make an Animal Care roll. For domesticated animals, you gain +2 dice; for wild animals, you take a –2 dice penalty, and may need extra successes

at the GM's discretion. An Animal Care roll takes 1 hour. Failed Animal Care rolls indicate the animal was not properly tended, fed, brushed, or its injuries were not addressed. For the next day, the animal may take a -1 die penalty to all rolls if the GM deems the animal was used roughly on the previous day.

Example: After a long day of riding, Luther tends to his horse before he turns in for the night. He has a 3 Intuition and 1 level of Animal Care, so he rolls 4 dice. He gets a 9, 8, 6, and 4: two successes. Luther's character brushes down his steed, pulls stones from its hooves, and makes sure the animal is properly fed.

ACROBATICS (AGILITY, MOVEMENT)

Acrobatics is the skill used when you perform a physical feat of agility, such as flipping, rolling, or swinging from a rope or chandelier. You can leap into the air and over obstacles, hop to your feet from a prone position, or tumble past opponents with readied attacks. You can move 1 yard for every success on an Acrobatics roll.

Example: The Lady Katerina stands on a table surrounded by three cultists wielding swords. On her turn, she spends her action to do a back flip over the heads of the cultists and land on her feet. The GM decides this is a challenging task, so he assigns a 3 Difficulty. Katerina has 3 Agility and 3 levels in Acrobatics. She rolls the dice getting: 10, 10, 9, 8, 4, and 1. Since Katerina rolled two 10s, she can roll these dice again, but she gets a 5 and a 2, neither of which is an extra success. Still, she got 4

successes and managed the stunt without a problem. And because she got an extra success, she can move an extra yard from where she landed.

ARCHERY (AGILITY, FIGHTING)

Use the Archery skill to make attacks with bows or crossbows. Roll a number of dice equal to your Agility plus your skill levels minus the complexity of the weapon. In addition, the target's range can modify the number of dice you roll.

Example: To prove his skill with a bow, Esteban aims and fires an arrow at a target 10 yards away. He's using a bow, so the target's within close range. The target, however, is small, so the GM sets the difficulty at Challenging, meaning Esteban needs 3 successes to hit the target. Esteban has 4 Agility and 2 levels in Archery, giving him 6 dice. He rolls and gets a 7, 6, 4, 3, 3, and 1. He only got two successes, so the arrow hit the target, but not the center.

BALANCE (AGILITY, REACTION)

The Balance skill is used to maintain your bearings while on uncertain footing. Whenever subjected to a condition, attack, or even treacherous terrain that would threaten your equilibrium, roll Balance to keep your feet. Generally, each success negates those made to knock you down or the number of successes required by the circumstances.

Example: While Gideon is fighting on the steps of a storm-tossed ship, a huge wave strikes the vessel, crashing over the rail and tossing about all the people on board. The GM calls for Balance rolls, describing the event as difficult, requiring all characters to get at least 4 successes or they fall down to the deck. Gideon, unfortunately, has only a 3 Agility and no levels in Balance. The only way he can succeed on the roll is if he rolls well and gets one or more 10s. He throws the dice, getting an 8, 6, and 6. One success is not enough, so he slips and falls.

CHARM

(PERSONALITY, INTERACTION)

The Charm skill is best used to establish a rapport with another character, to befriend or seduce them, to engender good feelings about you in another. Characters affected by Charm are more likely to help you, to trust you, and may even put your interests before their own. The action roll's difficulty depends on the character's Disposition. See **Table 2-4: Interaction Difficulties** for details. Each success beyond those required indicates a shift in the target's attitude toward you, as follows. If you get no successes, and you rolled at least one 1, you botch the roll.



Table 2-4: Interaction Difficulties

Disposition	Difficulty	Description
Affection	Intuition -3	The target loves you.
Friendly	Intuition -2	The target likes you.
Responsive	Intuition -1	The target is interested in you.
Indifference	Intuition	The target has no opinion of you.
Dislike	Intuition +1	The target dislikes you.
Enmity	Intuition +2	The target hates you.
Malice	Intuition +3	The target wants to see you harmed.

Table 2-5: Charm Success

Successes	Effect
Botch	For whatever reason, the target finds you offensive. You don't click and future Charm rolls against this character are much harder. Take a dice penalty to future Charm rolls against this target equal to 6 minus your levels in Charm.
0	There is no connection. The target neither likes nor dislikes you any better or worse than she did before.
1	The target sees your clumsy efforts for what they are. While she may soften, and perhaps even help you, it's unlikely such feelings last long.
2	The target is friendly to you, and regards you as an acquaintance. She will help you if it's not inconvenient to her. Gain +1 die to future Charm rolls against this target.
3	The target takes a liking to you, and sees you as a friend or possible lover. She will suffer minor inconveniences to help you. Gain +1 die to future Charm rolls against this target.
4	The target sees you as a kindred spirit and will endure much on your behalf. Gain a +2 dice bonus to future Charm rolls against this target and a +1 die bonus to all other Interaction rolls against this target.
5+	The target regards you as his best friend or even lover, placing you at the same level as she might any other loved ones. She does anything she can to help you. Gain a +4 dice bonus to future Charm rolls against this target and a +2 dice bonus to all other Interaction rolls against this target.

The nature of the Charm roll may result in bonus or penalty dice. Say for example, you were going to charm two women, both of whom are friendly to you. One is happily married and loyal to her husband. The other is unmarried and is looking for a lover. In the first case, the GM would rule that the seduction would be quite difficult and impose a -3 dice penalty. In the case of the second, the woman is looking for a lover so the character would gain a +3 dice bonus.

Example: Alex has spent the last week at the dockside tavern and a pretty maid named Sarah has caught his eye. Rather than spend another cold night alone, he decides to try his luck at seducing her. The maid is responsive, so the difficulty is equal to Sarah's Intuition-1. She has a 3 Intuition, so Alex needs just 2 successes. However, Sarah is a veteran in the game of love and is suspicious of Alex's motives, so the GM imposes a -1 die penalty to Alex's roll.

Alex spends that evening talking with the maid and at the end of the night he makes a Charm (Personality) roll. Alex has 3 Personality and 3 levels of Charm, giving him 5 dice (6-1=5). He rolls and gets a 10, 8, 7, 6, 4, and 1. Since he rolled a 10, he gets to roll an extra die, getting a 6. Alex gets a total of 3 successes. He needed two to get past her disposition, leaving him with 1 success. Sarah sees Alex's attempts for what they are; she's amused, but is unlikely to go through with any romance this evening.

HAGGLING

Charm can also be used to negotiate for fair prices, terms of service, or to establish the particulars of a deal. Both you and your opponent roll Charm. The character with the most successes wins, reducing or increasing the asking price by 10%. Skilled merchants inflate their prices to prevent gouging by shrewd negotiators. Haggling can only take place if both sides agree. You cannot force another character to Haggle, nor can merchants force characters to Haggle.

CLIMB (STRENGTH, MOVEMENT)

Use the Climb skill to ascend vertical or sloped surfaces. The quality of the surface may grant a die bonus or penalty. Modifiers are cumulative. Every success allows you to climb 1 yard. If you are climbing and you get no successes, you fall. You can catch yourself by rolling a D3 Climb. Regardless of success, you fall 1d10 yards before you may make the roll, so it's possible you hit the ground before you can even make the attempt. On a success, take 1 Damage per yard you slipped - painful, but better than hitting the ground.

Table 2-6: Climbing Conditions

Surface Condition	Dice Modifiers
Ladder	+2 dice
Rope	+1 die
Handholds	+0



Table 2–6: Climbing Conditions

Surface Condition	Dice Modifiers
Crumbling surface	–1 dice
Flat surface	–2 dice
Sheer surface	–3 dice
Wet	–2 dice
Greased	–3 dice

Example: Chased by horrid undead wolves, Alex decides to climb a tree to escape his pursuers. Alex has a 3 Strength and 2 levels of Climb, so he rolls 5 dice. The tree has handholds and none of the other situational modifiers apply. He gets a 8, 5, 5, 5, and a 5, only 1 success! As he scrambles up the tree, he finds no purchase on the trunk, only getting a few feet off the ground. The wolves circle. It doesn't look good for our hero!

COMMAND (COURAGE, INTERACTION)

The most elementary use of Command is to issue orders and have those orders followed. But Command (Courage) rolls can also engender feelings of confidence, of loyalty, and even respect. Characters affected by your Command rolls are more likely to follow your future commands, especially if your command has led to success. The action roll's difficulty depends on the character's Disposition. See **Table 2–4: Interaction Difficulties** for details. Each success beyond those required indicates a shift in the target's attitude toward you, as follows. If you get no successes, and you rolled at least one 1, you botch the roll. You may also use Command to affect multiple targets. To do so, roll Command as normal, but you need one additional success for every two members in the group.

Table 2–7: Command Success

Successes	Effect
Botch	The target resents you and refuses to see you as an authority figure. In fact, he works to undermine your authority when possible. Take a penalty to future Interaction rolls against this target equal to 6 minus your levels in Command.
0	The target does not see you as an authority figure, but doesn't hold it against you.
1	The target recognizes a good idea when he sees one, and may do as you ask, but only because it doesn't make sense to do otherwise.
2	The target sees you as an authority figure and follows simple orders. Gain +1 die to future Command rolls against this target.
3	The target respects you and will follow your orders, though may hesitate if they are dangerous. Gain +1 die to future Command rolls against this target.
4	The target looks up to you and defends you to others. He gladly follows your orders in the hopes of gaining your respect. Gain a +2 dice bonus to future Command rolls against this target and a +1 die bonus to all other Interaction rolls against this target.
5+	The target borders on worship and to him, you can do no wrong. He will give his life for you. Gain a +4 dice bonus to future Charm rolls against this target and a +2 dice bonus to all other Interaction rolls against this target.

Example: Bertrand, a mercenary, has been stationed at an outpost and given the command of 10 men. Over the last week, he's worked to establish himself as a leader not only in name, but also in the hearts and minds of his men. The outpost falls under attack and Bertrand must order a couple of men to hold the gate. The nature of the order is dangerous, but Bertrand has made a lot of effort to prove himself a worthy commander, thus he takes no penalty to his roll. Finally, the men are friendly and have Intuition scores of 2. Thus, Bertrand needs 0 successes to modify the order. As well, he's issuing the order to two characters, so he doesn't need any additional success.

Bertrand has a 4 Personality and 3 levels in Command, for 7 dice in all. He rolls the dice, getting a 10, 8, 5, 3, 2, 1, and 1. He got a 10, so he rolls one die again, getting a 7. So Bertrand gets three successes. The soldiers respect him and carry out the orders to the best of their ability. If things get too hairy though, they'll break. Bertrand gets a +1 die bonus to future command rolls made against these men.

Command can also be used to mitigate the effects of failed Fear checks among one's allies by rallying their courage. As a free action, a character may make a Command (Courage) check to assist one friendly character who has failed a Fear check. If the character rolls more successes than the fearful character failed his check by, the effects of the failed Fear check are eliminated.

Example: *Later in the outpost attack, one of Bertrand's soldiers comes face-to-face with a blood-drenched daemon. The soldier needs to roll 3 successes to overcome the daemon's Fear rating, but only rolls 1, and begins to flee in terror. Bertrand commands the soldier to stand his ground for the sake of his comrades, and rolls 8 dice (4 from Personality, 3 from Command, and 1 die for his earlier Command successes), getting 3 successes. The soldier missed his check by 2 successes, so Bertrand's 3 successes are just enough to remove the Fear effect. On the soldier's next action, he stiffens his spine, raises his sword, and turns back to face his terrifying foe.*

CONCENTRATE (WILL, REACTION)

Use Concentrate to maintain your focus, to keep your mind trained on the task in the face of distractions. You make a Concentrate roll whenever something would snatch your attention, such as an explosion while watching a particular target, being attacked while casting a rite or intoning a prayer, and so on. The nature of the distraction determines the difficulty. When injured, the difficulty equals the number of successes your opponent achieved when he attacked.

Concentration also applies to rites which allow the caster to bank successes generated. Whenever you take at least 1 hit, you lose all banked successes that apply towards the casting of a spell, prayer, or hex. You can roll Concentrate to retain them as a free action, keeping one banked success for each success on the Concentrate roll.

Example: *Ethan casts a potent rite that will conjure up a demon from Hell. While casting the rite, he's shot. His opponent gained 2 successes on the attack, and Ethan survived. However, he's in danger of losing concentration on his rite. He must roll Concentrate (Will) and get 2 successes or his rite unravels. He has a 4 Will and 2 levels of Concentrate. However, the attack made him moderately injured, imposing a -2 dice penalty on his roll. So he rolls 4 dice (4+2-2). He gets an 8, 8, 5, and 1 for two successes. Since he achieved the number of successes required, he maintains his concentration on the vile incantation.*

CONSTRUCT

(EDUCATION, PROFESSIONAL)

Use the Construct skill to make things. Construct encompasses several skills. Whenever you would place levels in this skill, choose from any one of the following: Armor smith, Artist, Bowyer, Gunsmith, Jeweler, Land Vehicles, Mason, Shipwright, Tanner, Waggoner, or Weapon Smith. Others may be available as determined by the GM.

Since this is a game of horror, investigation, and thrilling adventure, spending your time manufacturing shoes runs counter to the spirit of this game. Rather than spend pages on the processes for building a house or describing how much work actually goes into crafting a sword, *Witch Hunter* simplifies these rules at the expense of realism.

Roll Construct. Each success generates 1 Construction Unit (CU). When you achieve the proper number of Construction Units, the item is finished. In addition, you must have raw materials on hand. The cost of these materials equals one-half the finished price. As normal, bank excess successes to apply towards the construction of another item.

You can make superior items. Every two successes generates 1 CU. When you complete the item, you may sell it for three times its listed price. Likewise, you can make shoddy items. Every success generates 2 CUs. It sells for only half its listed price.

Each item has a number of construction units (CU) based on the item's price. Multiply the item's price by the listed CU to determine the minimum number of successes (rounding up) required to create the item. Note, you must supply half the cost in materials.

Pound (£) = 50 CU

Crown (c) = 12.5 CU

Shilling (s) = 2.5 CU

Penny (d) = .2 CU

Farthing (f) = .05 CU

Each Construct roll takes 6 hours.

Example: *Glen works at a forge to construct a superior sword, which costs £1 10s, or 75 CU. Glen has a 4 Education and 3 levels in Construct (Weaponsmithing), so he rolls 7 dice. He rolls the dice and gets a 10, 5, 4, 3, 2, 1, and 1. He rolled a 10, so he gets one re-roll, which is a 3. For six hours of work, he gets just one success. Only 74.5 successes to go!*

CONTORTIONIST

(AGILITY, MOVEMENT)

The Contortionist skill is used to get in and out of tight places. Roll Contortionist when wriggling through a tight place. Every three successes allow you to move 1 yard. You cannot move through areas smaller than your head. You can also use contortionist to slip free of rope bindings or manacles. It takes 4 successes to escape rope bonds and 6 successes to escape manacles.

Finally, you can substitute Contortionist for Grapple when trying to escape a grapple, hold, or pin.

Example: *Stacee works to escape her cell in a dungeon. For the last three weeks, she's dug a hole in the wall that opens to an open space in the wall, which she believes leads outside. However, the tunnel is quite small. She has a 3 Agility and 1 Contortionist. She rolls 4 dice and gets 9, 6, 6, and 5. Since she got only 1 success, she made no progress, maybe only moving a foot into the tunnel. She can try again next round.*

DECEIVE (PERSONALITY, INTERACTION)

The Deceive skill works like most other interaction skills, except that behind the soothing words or intense command, there is an ulterior motive, a desire to misinform or trick the subject. The Deceive skill is used to lie, to evade the truth or just shade it enough to slip away.

The action roll's difficulty depends on the character's Disposition. See **Table 2-4: Interaction Difficulties** for details. Each success beyond those required indicates a shift in the target's attitude toward you, as follows. If you get no successes, and you rolled at least one 1, you botch the roll. You may also use Deceive to affect multiple targets. To do so, roll Deceive as normal, but you need one additional success for every two members in the group.

Table 2-8: Deceive Success

Successes	Effect
Botch	The target sees through your lies and not only does he not trust you, he doesn't like you. Take a penalty to future Interaction rolls against this target equal to 6 minus your levels in Deceive.
0	The target simply calls you on your deception, but doesn't hold it against you.
1	The target is suspicious, but accepts your deception, for now.
2	The target believes your deception. Gain +1 die to future Deceive rolls against this target.
3	The target completely believes your deception and forms a good opinion of you. Gain +1 die to future Deceive rolls against this target.
4	The target holds you in a good light and can't believe you would do anything to betray him. Gain a +2 dice bonus to future Deceive rolls against this target and a +1 die bonus to all other Interaction rolls against this target.
5+	You own this target and can say or do just about anything without eliciting suspicion. Gain a +4 dice bonus to future Deceive rolls against this target and a +2 dice bonus to all other Interaction rolls against this target.

Example: Esteban knows the identity of a cultist in New Amsterdam. Hoping to infiltrate the group, he tries to ingratiate himself with one of the members. If he succeeds, he's sure he will find the location of their foul temple. Esteban pretends to have the same beliefs as the

cultist and works to convince the man that he would be a good candidate to join.

Esteban has a 3 Personality and 3 levels in Deceive. The cultist dislikes Esteban but only has a 2 Intuition, so Esteban needs 3 successes. Esteban rolls six dice and gets 10, 10, 8, 7, 7, 6, and 3. For his two tens, he rolls again, getting a 4 and another 10. He rolls this 10 again, but gets a 4. In total, Esteban gets six successes. He only needed 2 to get past the cultist's disposition and so he manages to convince the cultist that he's in league. Furthermore, the cultist is so convinced that Esteban gains +2 dice for further Deceive rolls and a +1 die bonus to all other Interaction skill rolls against this character.

DISABLE (REASON, PROFESSIONAL)

Use Disable to deconstruct or dismantle a mechanical object. This could include picking a lock or dismantling a crossbow or firearm. Roll Disable with a difficulty determined by the complexity of the item. Simple objects require 1 success, complex 3 success, while very complex items require 5 or more successes. For instance, taking a wagon wheel from a wagon is simple, while dismantling a common lock is complex, and dismantling a dangerous trap may be very complex.

A Disable roll takes 1 minute.

Example: Joe and his companions need to break into a shop in New Amsterdam. The back door is locked, but Joe is a skilled lockpick. He has a 3 Reason and 3 levels in Disable giving him six dice. The GM declares the action is complex, so Joe needs 3 successes. He rolls and gets a 10, 8, 8, 7, 6, and 5. For his re-roll, he gets a 3. Still, he rolled four successes, which is enough to pick the lock.

DRIVE (AGILITY, MOVEMENT)

Use the Drive skill to pilot a vehicle. Ordinarily, driving a vehicle does not require a roll. Combat, difficult terrain, and harrowing chases are different matters entirely. While in combat, you must spend an action to roll Drive to maintain control. If you achieve no successes, the vehicle is out of control. Each success buys you one round before you have to make another Drive roll. See **Chapter Four: Playing the Game** for details on vehicles and combat. *Difficult Terrain (D varies):* Use Drive to maneuver a vehicle over or through difficult terrain. You only need one success to move at half speed or three successes to move at full speed.

Example: In a thrilling chase, Katerina drives a wagon, fleeing some bat-winged horror from the depths of the forest. The GM calls for a challenging Drive roll, indicating Katerina needs two successes. She has 3 Agility, but only 1 level in Drive. She rolls the dice getting 8, 5, 3, and 2. She got one success, which allows her to maintain control for the round. However, she must spend her next action on the following round to roll Drive or the vehicle will go out of control.

EMPATHY (INTUITION, INTERACTION)

Roll D3 Empathy to assess a target's general attitude or mood (happy, sad, angry). In some cases, the target may wish to conceal his mood and if so, roll Empathy, but your target reduces your successes for each success he gains on a Deceive (Personality) roll.

Alternatively, player characters may use Empathy to negate the successes of some Interaction skills used against them. When subjected to a Charm or Deceive roll, you may roll Empathy. Each success you gain negates one of your opponent's successes.

Example: After a failed attempt to pick Luther's pocket, a thief tries to bluff his way out of trouble. The thief has a 3 Personality and 2 levels in Deceive, so he rolls 5 dice getting a 10 (re-roll 2), 10 (re-roll 7), 8, 5, and 3, for a total of four successes. Luther rolls Empathy (Intuition) to see past the thief's lies. Luther has a 3 Intuition and 1 level of Empathy. He rolls and gets a 10 (re-roll 1), 10 (re-roll 4), 8, and 3, for a total of 3 successes. The thief beat him by 1, so Luther genuinely believes the thief meant no harm.

ENDURANCE (TOUGHNESS, REACTION)

The Endurance skill is used to resist poisons, diseases, and any other effect specifically targeting the body. Endurance is also used to remain conscious in combat. At the end of every round, all characters who are moderately injured or worse must make an Endurance roll. If you fail to achieve any successes, you immediately fall unconscious and you cannot act on the following round, though at the end of that round, you may attempt another Endurance roll to regain consciousness.

Example: Esteban is exposed to a dreadful poison. The poison will inflict 10 hits. Esteban rolls Endurance (Toughness). He has 2 levels in Endurance and 3 Toughness, so he rolls 5 dice, getting 9, 8, 8, 4, and 3, for a total of three successes. He resists three of the hits, but takes the remaining 7.

EVALUATE (EDUCATION, PROFESSIONAL)

Roll Evaluate to determine the approximate value of an object. If you get at least two successes, you find out its typical worth. If you get only one success, you determine the value within 20% of its real worth (either high or low, equal chance of either). Successes beyond two may reveal a greater value if the object is particularly valuable to a specific group. For particularly strange, otherworldly, or rare objects, the GM may impose penalty dice, ranging from -1 to -4 dice.

Note: The GM should roll Evaluate secretly so that the player does not know if he succeeded or failed.

Example: Bertrand finds a golden skull, which he believes is an Aztec artifact. He wants to assess its value, and the GM decides that this is challenging, requiring Bertrand to get 3 successes on his roll. Bertrand has a 4 Education and 1 Evaluation, giving him five dice. The GM secretly rolls, getting 7, 6, 4, 3, and 2: one success. The GM knows the item is worth £5, but since Bertrand didn't get enough successes, the GM tells Bertrand it's worth £2 instead.

FIREARMS (AGILITY, FIGHTING)

Use the Firearms skill to make attacks with blunderbusses, muskets, and pistols. Roll a number of dice equal to your Agility plus your skill levels minus the complexity of the weapon. In addition, the target's size and range modify the number of dice you roll.

Example: Luther, armed with a musket (complexity 2), fires at a crazed killer. Luther has a 3 Agility and 3 levels in Firearms so he rolls $(3+3-2) = 6$ dice. He rolls and gets 9, 8, 6, 6, 4, and 2, for a total of two successes. The killer has a 1 Defense Point and uses it against this attack, so the successes drop to one. He adds the 1 to the weapon's DM (+3), dealing 4 hits.

GAMBLE (INTUITION, PROFESSIONAL)

Whenever you play a game with stakes, you roll Gamble. You and all the participants in the game roll. The character with the most successes wins the game and gains the winnings if any. In the case of a tie, the characters may split the spoils or make new Gamble rolls until there is a clear victor.

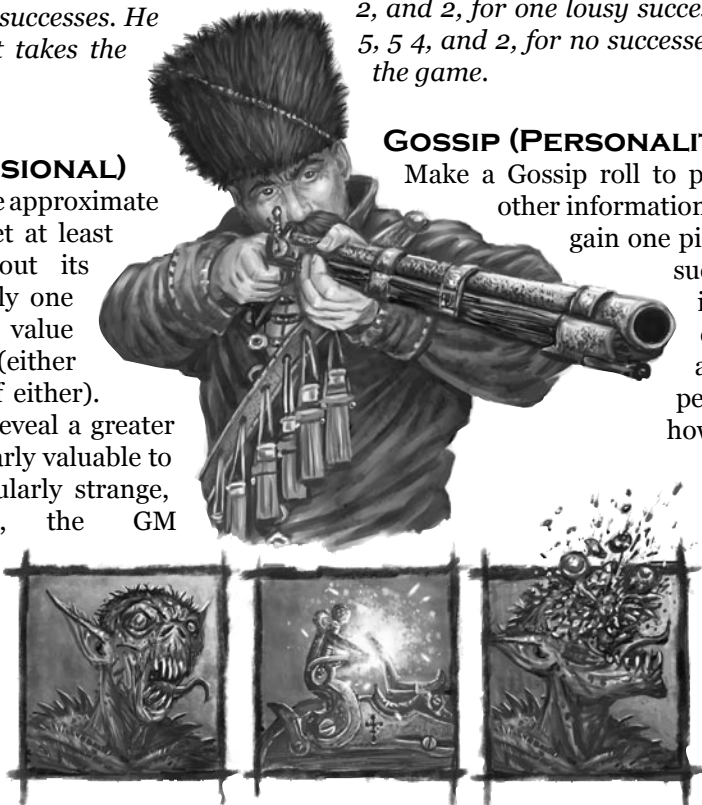
Example: Tom sits in a tense game of cards. The other players have dropped out and this last hand is between him and a skilled card shark. Tom has a 4 Intuition and 3 levels in Gamble, while his opponent has a 3 Intuition and 3 levels in Gamble. Both roll. Tom gets 8, 5, 5, 4, 2, 2, and 2, for one lousy success. His opponent rolls 6, 6, 5, 5, 4, and 2, for no successes! Tom wins the hand and the game.

GOSSIP (PERSONALITY, PROFESSIONAL)

Make a Gossip roll to pick up rumors, news, and other information from locals in an area. You gain one piece of information for each success. Each Gossip roll may involve the expense of a few coins to buy drinks, meals, and so on. You may take penalty dice depending on how guarded the information is that you seek.

Each Gossip roll takes 1d10 hours.

Example: Glen hits the city streets in search of rumors about a man he's spent the last few months chasing. Since the fugitive has been reckless and left



behind a fairly large footprint, the GM calls for just two successes. Glen has a 3 Personality and 1 level of Gossip. He rolls four dice and gets 9, 9, 3, and 1. Since he rolled two successes, he finds a clue about his quarry's whereabouts.

GRAPPLE (STRENGTH, FIGHTING)

Use the Grapple skill is use to hold, lock, or pin your opponent. To use this skill, you must be adjacent to your opponent. Roll a number of dice equal to your Strength plus your skill levels. Your opponent, as a free action, can negate your successes by rolling Grapple (Strength). He may spend Defense Points to negate additional successes. If you have any remaining successes, you deal 1 damage per success. If your opponent rolled Grapple and has any successes remaining after negating all of yours, he deals 1 damage per success to you!

Holds and Pins: You may exchange successes to hold or pin your opponent. If you have nothing in your hands and sacrifice one success, your foe cannot move on his next turn. If you sacrifice three successes, your opponent is pinned and cannot use any Defense Points to negate your successes and on his action, he can do nothing other than try to break free from the grapple.

Throw: You can throw a held opponent 1 yard for every two successes you sacrifice. The opponent takes 1 hit per yard traveled.

Weapons and Grapples: If you are armed with a small weapon you may substitute its DM for your normal unarmed attack. You can't use weapons larger than small as part of a Grapple roll.

Escaping a Grapple: If you're held or pinned, you can try to escape by making a Grapple roll as an action. This is resolved in the same way as making a normal Grapple roll, in which both you and your opponent make Grapple rolls. If you are just grappled, you need one success to escape. If you are held, one success frees you from the hold and two or more successes allow you to escape altogether. If you are pinned, one success drops the pin to a hold, two successes drop the pin to just grappling, and three or more successes allow you to escape. As with a normal Grapple roll, you can deal 1 damage with each success.

Note: You may substitute Contortionist for Grapple when you try to escape, however you cannot deal damage with the Contortionist skill.

Example: A rampaging gorilla killed Joe's guide and has managed to avoid or block most of the attacks against it. Joe wants to hold it down while his remaining companions put a sword through its head, so Joe rolls Grapple. He has a 4 Strength and 3 levels in Grapple giving him seven dice. He rolls 10 (re-roll 1), 9, 7, 7, 5, 3, and 2, for a total of four successes. The gorilla has a 5 Strength and 3 levels of Grapple. He rolls eight dice and gets 10 (re-roll 5), 9, 7, 6, 4, 3, 3, and 2, for a total of three successes. Joe deducts the gorilla's successes from his own leaving him with two. He sacrifices one success to hold the gorilla and deals 1 hit with his remaining success.

HAND-TO-HAND (STRENGTH*, FIGHTING)

Use the Hand-to-Hand skill to make attacks with handheld weapons or with your bare fists. You may use Agility in place of Strength when wielding small weapons. Roll a number of dice equal to your Agility plus your skill levels minus the complexity of the weapon. The opponent may reduce your successes by using Defense Points. Add remaining successes to the weapon's DM to determine the damage dealt by the attack.

Example: Matthew fights for his life against two savage pirates. On his action, he lashes out with his sword. He has a 4 Strength and 4 levels in Hand-to-Hand, giving him eight dice. He rolls an 8, 7, 5, 5, 5, 5, 4, and 2, for a total of two successes. The pirate he attacks has 4 Defense Points and applies 2 points towards the attack, so the pirate negates Matthew's attack completely.

HEAL (INTUITION, PROFESSIONAL)

Use Heal to repair the injuries. You can use the Heal skill in one of two ways: First Aid and Extended Care.

Use First Aid to patch up comrades on the field. You may roll Heal once per character per combat in which a character took damage. You must make the Heal roll within 5 hours of the injury. Otherwise, only Extended Care can be used.

When using either method, roll Heal, modifying the dice based on the injury level (see the following table). Every success removes 1 hit.

Table 2-8: Heal Modifiers

Injury Level	—Modifiers—	
	First Aid	Extended Care
Healthy	—	+2 dice
Light	—	+1 die
Moderate	−1 die	—
Heavy	−2 dice	−1 die
Dying	−4 dice	−2 dice

The circumstances of where you treat the injured character may apply additional penalties. For example, without bandages, unguents, and clean water, you could take as much as a −2 dice penalty to you roll. In an unsanitary environment, you might take an additional −2 dice penalty.

You can also use the Heal skill to treat poisons and disease. If you are assisting the character, you may substitute your Heal roll for the action roll made to resist the poison or disease.

A Heal roll to perform First Aid takes 1 minute. You may roll Heal to give extended care once every 8 hours.

Example: After a vicious fight with a pack of pygmies, Katerina tends to Bertrand's wounds. Bertrand is heavily injured, so Katerina takes a −2 dice penalty to her roll. She has a 4 Intuition and 2 levels of Heal, giving her a total of four dice. She rolls and gets a 10 (re-roll 4), 8, 4, and 3, for two successes. She removes 2 hits. Not good for poor Bertrand.

HERBALISM (EDUCATION, PROFESSIONAL)

Herbalism is used to identify, collect and use different types of herbs and naturally occurring substances. The Difficulty of finding and using these items to create poultices or unguents depends on the type of ingredient required and its use. Herbs and other materials found can be used to aid a Heal check by granting one bonus die for every 2 successes on the Herbalism check, or it may even cure the ailment completely. It should be noted that Herbalism cannot be used to create magical effects, but only as a means of providing a natural remedy for a particular problem.

Example: *Prudence's fellow Witch Hunter, Emil Zargossa, has been bitten by a deadly viper. Before she makes her Heal check, she takes a round to dig through her pouch for a poultice that may assist his recovery. Prudence has an Education of 3 and an Herbalism skill of 2. She rolls a 9, 8, 7, 4, 3 for a total of 3 successes. By using the poultice, Prudence has an extra die to roll when she makes her subsequent Heal check. For Emil's sake, let's hope that will be enough!*

INTIMIDATE (PERSONALITY, INTERACTION)

Where Charm and Command produce a desired action through reasonable words, Intimidate does so by instilling fear in the subject. Intimidate may simply be based on appearance or a certain mannerism, but it can also be a direct assault against a target, such as torture, physical abuse, or threats of either or death.

The action roll's difficulty depends on the character's Disposition. See **Table 2-4: Interaction Difficulties** for details. Each success beyond those required indicates a shift in the target's attitude toward you, as follows. If you get no successes, and you rolled at least one 1, you botch the roll. You may also use Intimidate to affect multiple targets. To do so, roll as normal, but you need one additional success for every two members in the group.

Table 2-9: Intimidate Success

Successes	Effect
Botch	The target not only despises you, but she thinks you are weak and foolish. Take a penalty to future Interactions rolls against this target equal to 6 minus your levels in Intimidate.
0	The target is not impressed and doesn't fear you at all.
1	Your intensity and attempt is unsettling. The target cooperates for now.
2	The target is afraid of you. Gain +1 die to future Intimidate rolls against this target.

Table 2-9: Intimidate Success

Successes	Effect
3	The target is genuinely frightened by you and will do what he can to put distance between you and him. Gain +1 die to future Intimidate rolls against this target.
4	The target quails before you and may even shriek with terror. He does whatever you ask. Gain a +2 dice bonus to future Intimidate rolls against this target and a +1 die bonus to all other Interaction rolls against this target.
5+	The target is intensely frightened by you and when you appear, he always screams with fear. He will do anything you ask. Gain a +4 dice bonus to future Intimidate rolls against this target and a +2 dice bonus to all other Interaction rolls against this target.

Example: *Frustrated by his companion's efforts to infiltrate the cult, Luther decides to kidnap the cultist and torture him until he reveals the location of the temple. After a harrowing combat, Luther captures the man and straps him to a chair. Eight excruciating hours later, Luther is ready to make his Intimidate (Personality) roll. The cultist's disposition is enmity and has a 2 Intuition, so Luther needs four successes. Luther has a 3 Personality and 3 levels in Intimidate. Since Luther has spent eight hours torturing the cultist, the GM grants Luther +2 dice for eight dice. Luther rolls and gets 10 (re-roll 7), 8, 8, 7, 6, 4, 2, and 1. He gets five successes and after reducing them by the cultist's Intuition and disposition, he has one success remaining, which is enough to get the cultist to reveal a little information, but not all that Luther requires. It's going to be a long night for them both.*

JUMP (STRENGTH, MOVEMENT)

Whenever you would leap over obstacles or jump to reach a high ledge, roll Jump. If you ran at least 3 yards before jumping, you jump one yard for every two successes. If you made a standing jump, you move one yard for every four successes. You can jump upwards 1 yard for every five successes.

Example: *Gideon is running away from a terrifying ghost. He comes to a pit and decides to leap across it. He has a 4 Strength and 3 levels in Jump, so he rolls seven dice, getting 9, 9, 7, 5, 2, 1, and 1. He gets two successes, so he leaps two yards (he was running). Luckily the pit was only five feet across, so Gideon safely makes it to the other side.*

MYTH AND LORE (EDUCATION, PROFESSIONAL)

Use Myth and Lore to recall some unusual piece of folklore or obscure information about ancient legends. While this skill cannot be used to know of a particular creature's weakness or vulnerability, it can be used to recall odd facts and gossip that may point a Witch Hunter in the right direction. This skill can also be used to call to mind the proper way to address a Noble of the Unseelie Court or to correctly identify the meaning of a stick figure hanging upside down from an ash tree.

Myth and Lore pertains to legends, folklore, old wives' tales, and the like. For more "scientific" knowledge about the supernatural, use the Occult skill.

Example: *Sebastian, a Witch Hunter, has been tracking a clutch of bat-like creatures through the rugged territory of the Appalachians. Vaguely remembering that he has heard of these creatures before, he thinks back to the tales told by his grandfather. Sebastian has an Education of 2 and a Myth and Lore of 2. He rolls a 9, 8, 7, and 7 for four successes. The GM determines that this is enough for him to recall hearing of a similar creature being stalked in the Black Forest of Germany and that they burst into balls of green flame when set alight. Upon finding their nest, Sebastian confidently lights two torches and attacks. Though the fire does seem to do some harm, the beasts are not spontaneously combusting. Poor Sebastian. Rather than doing some further research, he relied on fragmentary information. What the tales didn't tell was that these creatures do burst into flames easily enough, but only when underneath the night sky when the moon is full.*

NAVIGATION (INTUITION, PROFESSIONAL)

You can use Navigation to get a sense of where you are and to help you maneuver through unfamiliar territory. The GM secretly rolls for the character (or leader of a group) moving through the wilderness. If the sky is partly concealed, such as by a canopy of trees, this roll is at a -1 dice penalty by day and a -2 dice penalty by night. If the sky is overcast, the roll is at a -2 dice penalty by day and a -4 dice penalty by night. Should the leader achieve no successes, he becomes lost and travels in a random direction for one hour, at which point, the leader may make another Navigation roll to regain his bearings.

NOTICE (INTUITION, REACTION)

Notice allows you to discover things about your surroundings. Roll Notice when you would detect an enemy that's trying to sneak up on you, to locate a hidden trap, or hear a conversation on the other side of a door. When trying to detect a hidden character, you roll Notice and the hiding character rolls Stealth. If you beat your target's successes, you see him.

You can also use notice to search. This involves moving things around, opening doors, and otherwise thoroughly examining an area. Each use of Notice in this way covers an area three yards square. The GM sets the

difficulty depending on how well the object was hidden. If the object lies beyond the normal means to find (such as in a wall or under the floorboards), it can't be found without removing the obstacles first.

You can also use Notice to perceive the world around you. Normally, making a Notice roll in this way is not an action; the GM simply calls on you to make a Notice roll. But you may take an action to Listen at a door, look around without actively searching, sniff the air, and so on. The Difficulty is determined by how well the odor, thing, or sound is concealed. Distance, obstacles, darkness, and other factors add bonus or penalty dice.

Finally, Notice is used to detect another character who attempts a Subterfuge roll against you. See Subterfuge for details.

Example: *It's the dead of night and Bertrand is standing watch over his companions. A villain creeps out of the darkness, intent on murdering everyone in their sleep. The villain gets 3 successes on its Stealth roll, so Bertrand needs 3 successes on Notice to hear the enemy approach.*

OCCULT KNOWLEDGE (EDUCATION, PROFESSIONAL)

Use Occult Knowledge to identify or recall information dealing with the supernatural or the Invisible World. This skill will aid the character in identifying magical sigils, ancient runes, charms, grimoires and paraphernalia associated with the mysterious and arcane.

The Occult Knowledge skill represents knowledge of organized magic and mystical lore. For legends and folktales, use the Myth and Lore skill instead.

Example: *Emil Zargossa, an scholar of forbidden and lost lore, tries to recall information about an esoteric order of wizards. He rolls Occult Knowledge skill. He has a 5 Education and 3 levels in the skill, giving him eight dice. The GM decides that this is pretty obscure information, requiring 4 successes. Emil rolls and gets 10 (re-roll 2), 9, 9, 7, 6, 5, 4, and 1. He got four successes, so he manages to recall at least basic information about the subject.*

PANTOMIME (PERSONALITY, INTERACTION)

The Pantomime skill lets you get your ideas across with body language and gestures. The Difficulty depends on the complexity of the message you wish to transmit.

Table 2-10: Pantomime Complexity

Successes	Complexity	Example
3	Simple	Direction (left, right, up, down), basic emotion, basic need
5	Moderate	Simple sentences containing basic concepts

Table 2–10: Pantomime Complexity

Successes	Complexity	Example
10	Complex	Complex sentences, or short sentences with complex concepts
15+	Very Complex	Extensive communication

PARRY (AGILITY, REACTION)

The Parry skill enables you to deflect your opponent’s melee and thrown attacks. Parry may be used whether or not you have acted in the round, but may only be used once a round. After your attacker has determined his success, but before you apply any Defense Points, you may elect to parry the attack. Henceforth, you may spend these successes to negate Hand-to-Hand and Thrown hits made against you.

The successes accrued from the Parry reaction remain until the end of combat or until you spend them all. You may not store more successes than the sum of your Parry levels and your Agility score.

Example: Gideon took a nasty hit the previous round, so when a Corrupt opponent throws a knife at him, he opts to Parry. He has a 3 Agility and 2 Parry, but he’s moderately injured so he loses two dice, giving 3 dice in all. He gets a 10 (re-roll 6), 5 and 2, just one success. He can now use that single Parry success to negate the opponent’s upcoming knife attack.

PERFORM

(PERSONALITY, PROFESSIONAL)

Use Perform to entertain an audience. Perform encompasses several skills. Each time you would place levels in this skill, choose from one of the following: Dance, Oratory, Percussion Instruments, Sing, Stringed Instruments, or Wind Instruments. Others may be available as determined by the GM.

Each success on a roll earns you 1 pence per 10 people in the crowd. You may gain bonus or penalty dice based on the crowd’s mood.

A Perform roll takes 10 minutes.

Example: Matthew sings for a crowd of 20 peasants. He has a 4 Personality and 2 levels of Perform (Sing). He rolls six dice getting a 10 (re-roll 7), 9, 7, 4, 3, 2, and 1 for four successes. Since there are 20 peasants, he earns 2 pence per success, giving him a total of 8.

REFLEXES (AGILITY, REACTION)

At the start of combat, all participants roll Reflexes. The character with the most successes goes first, followed by the next lowest and so on. In case of a tie, compare levels in Reflexes, and then Agility scores. If there is still a tie, the contestants should roll off.

Reflexes are occasionally used to negate hits from area attacks.

Example: Katerina and Bertrand find themselves surrounded by four thugs. They all roll Reflexes. Katerina has a 3 Agility and 1 Reflexes, Bertrand has a 4 Agility and 2 Reflexes, and the thugs have 3 Agility and no levels in Reflexes. Katerina rolls four dice, getting 4, 4, 3, and 2; no successes. Bertrand rolls six dice, getting 10 (re-roll 3), 9, 7, 6, 4, and 3, for three successes. The thugs roll three dice getting an 8, 4, and a 3 for one success. Bertrand goes first, then the thugs, and then Katerina last.

RESOLVE (COURAGE, REACTION)

Use Resolve to resist effects that specifically target your spirit, such as fear and some magical effects. Each effect has a Difficulty, defining the number of successes you must get to overcome the effect.

Example: Tom encounters a terrifying demon. The demon’s fear rating is 3. Tom needs three successes on a Resolve roll to negate the fear. He has a 3 Courage and 1 level of Resolve so he rolls four dice, getting 9, 8, 7, and 4. His three successes allow him to swallow his terror and confront the foul spawn of hell.

RIDE (AGILITY, MOVEMENT)

The Ride skill is used to control a mount in combat, to guide it through difficult terrain, or to stay in the saddle.



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Under normal circumstances, you don't need to make Ride rolls. However, anytime you or your steed is threatened or you attempt to perform a dangerous maneuver, the GM may call for a Ride roll. The number of success you need depends on desired outcome. When maneuvering a steed through treacherous terrain, you only need one success to move at half speed or three successes to move at full speed.

You also make Ride rolls to keep your seat when struck in combat. Should you take any hits in combat, you may spend a reaction to make a Ride roll to stay in the saddle. You must get at least one success for every two Damage you took. If you do not get enough successes, you fall off your mount.

In combat, unless the mount is specifically bred for war (trained to attack, defend, or guard; see the **Animal Training** talent on page 74), loud noises, smoke, and blood can startle it. On your first turn, you must roll Ride. Each success buys you one round of control. If you fail to gain any successes, the steed flees from the battle 1d10 rounds.

Example: Glen urges his horse to leap over a fallen log. The GM decides this is a fairly easy task so requires Glen to get just one success. Glen has a 3 Agility and 1 level in Ride, giving him four dice. He rolls and gets 4, 4, 1, and 1. No successes. The GM rules that the horse balks and throws Glen from the saddle.

ROW (STRENGTH, MOVEMENT)

Use the Row skill to maneuver an oared boat. For each success on a Row roll, you propel the boat forward one yard when going up stream or two yards per success

downstream. You can trade 2 successes to change direction 45 degrees. The GM may increase or decrease the Difficulty based on the current and water conditions. You may also be called to make a Row roll when piloting the craft through treacherous waters or to perform a dangerous maneuver. Each success buys him one round (including the one he's in) before he has to make another roll. See Steeds and Vehicles in **Chapter Four: Playing the Game** for details.

Example: Luther rows his boat down a treacherous river. The GM calls for a Row roll. Luther has a 3 Strength and 1 level of Row. He gets 9, 8, 7, and 4. In three rounds, he'll have to make another Row roll if he's still in treacherous water.

RESEARCH (REASON, PROFESSIONAL)

Research is used to find information from written materials and allows you to make your way efficiently through any repository of information. A Research roll's difficulty depends on the obscurity of the subject, as shown on the following table.

Table 2-11: Research Difficulty

Obscurity	Successes
Very Common	1
Common	2
Average	3
Scarce	4
Obscure	5 or more

A Research roll takes 2 hours.

Example: Esteban stumbles onto an ancient library. He's looking for information about a demon-god. The GM rules that the information may be contained within the volumes, but the information is obscure, requiring Esteban to get 5 successes. Esteban has a 4 Reason and 3 levels in Research, giving him seven dice. He rolls and gets 10 (re-roll 8), 10 (re-roll 4), 9, 8, 7, 7, and 2, for seven successes. Esteban finds what he's looking for and probably a bit more too.

SAIL (AGILITY, PROFESSIONAL)

Use the Sail skill to maneuver a sailing vessel. Ordinarily, you need not make rolls to Sail. However, in storms you may be called to do so. The difficulty depends on the intensity of the storm.

Table 2-12: Sailing Difficulty

Weather	Difficulty
Light Wind	1
Moderate Wind	2
Strong Wind	3
Severe Wind	4
Hurricane	5

A Sail roll takes 30 minutes.

Example: Caught in a deadly storm, the GM calls for Bertrand to make a Sail roll. The storm has strong winds so Bertrand needs three successes. He has a 3 Agility and 1 level of Sail. He rolls and gets 7, 7, 4, and 1. He only got two successes, so the ship is now imperiled and is out of control!

**SORCEROUS TRADITION
(VARIES, PROFESSIONAL)**

When taking this skill, a tradition must be selected from those available for game play. Initially, these are Animism, Hermetic, and Prayer. Villains may also select Diabolism, Necromancy, and Witchcraft.

Each tradition is associated with a corresponding ability (See Chapter Five: The Circles of Sorcery). To succeed in casting a rite properly, a number of successes equal to or greater than the rites difficulty must be rolled. For details on enacting rites, see Chapter Five: The Circles of Sorcery.

**SPEAK LANGUAGE
(REASON, PROFESSIONAL)**

The Speak skill is used to determine a character's level of understanding and mastery of a language. Tests with this skill may be made any time a character attempts to pose as a member of another culture or when he attempts to decipher a strange dialect or ancient manuscript in a language with which he is familiar. A character's levels in a language denote certain capabilities, as shown on Table 2-9.

Table 2-13: Speak Language Effects

Level	Capability	Effects on Deceive Rolls
0	No speech or comprehension	-5 or automatic failure
1	Basic speech and comprehension	-2
2	Fluent, but obviously not a native speaker	-1
3	Native fluency	no effect
4	Trained in formal speech	+1
5	Language scholar; trained in many dialects	+2

Spending one additional skill level, regardless of the character's level in that language, grants literacy. This is denoted with an (L) after the language.

Speak Languages is a Slotted Skill: When selecting the Speak Language skill, you need not identify which languages you know until you want or need to. For instance, if a character speaks four languages, she may choose two of those languages now. Later, while playing a scenario, the group stumbles across a text written in Latin. No one else speaks or reads Latin, so she uses one of her slots to decide that her character was raised

near a convent and was taught rudimentary Latin. Once selected, a language cannot be changed at a later date.

Passing as a Native Speaker: When attempting to use the Deceive skill to pose as a member of a culture other than a character's own, the character suffers a penalty to Deceive rolls if he does not have Speak Language 3 in that culture's native language; the character suffers a -2 penalty to the Deceive roll if he has Speak Language 1, or a -1 penalty if he has Speak Language 2. If he has no skill in the culture's native language at all, he either suffers a -5 penalty to the roll or automatically fails, at the GM's discretion.

On the other hand, a master of a foreign language can use his knowledge of the language's subtleties to reinforce his attempts at deception, tossing in local catchphrases and using obscure dialects to help support his ruse. A character with Speak Language 4 in the native tongue gains a +1 bonus to Deceive rolls made to pose as a member of that culture, while a character with Speak Language 5 gains a +2 bonus to such Deceive rolls.

Deciphering Dialects: The Speak Language skill is used to translate a piece of writing or to comprehend speech that's in a variant of a language you know, or one that is related to a language you know. The Difficulty depends on the language. If the language is a dialect of one you know, the Difficulty is 2. If it's not a language you know but belongs to a language group with which you are familiar, the base Difficulty is 3, and you may use your highest skill level in any language from that language group. If it is a supernatural language, the base Difficulty is 5. If you get the required number of successes, you understand what is being said.

If the language being deciphered is written, it requires approximately 1 minute per page for tests of Difficulty 2, 10 minutes per page for tests of Difficulty 3, and 1 hour per page for tests of Difficulty 5. If you get the required number of successes, you are able to read the text, though the time it takes to read the entire manuscript is listed per page above. Of course, if you are illiterate, you cannot translate any written texts. Should you wish to merely skim the text to find a particular text or passage, the pages perused is 10 x the amount per the time listed.

Note: The GM should make this roll in secret, so that in case of a failure, you can derive false conclusions about the nature of the language being heard or read.

Example: Matthew finds an ancient scroll written in an odd dialect of Latin. Luckily, he reads Latin, so he only needs 2 successes to translate the document. He has a 4 Reason and 2 levels in Speak Latin (L). The GM secretly rolls 6 dice getting a 9, 9, 8, 7, 3, and 3, for a total of four successes. Matthew translates the document successfully.

Special: All characters begin play with 3 levels in Speak Language for their native tongue, and with additional levels of Speak Language equal to their Education score. These levels may be used to purchase literacy in the native tongue, divided up between different languages, all spent on a second language, or any combination thereof.

LANGUAGES OF THE INVISIBLE WORLD

There's simply not room enough to go into extensive detail about the various languages used in the world of *Witch Hunter*. So what follows are some of the most common (and not so common) languages used in the setting. Players are encouraged to select languages that are appropriate for where the campaign is centered.

EAST AFRICA

Amharic, Oromo, Somali

NORTH AFRICA

Berber, Hausa

SOUTH AFRICA

Bantu dialects, Shona

WEST AFRICA

Fulani, Igbo, Yoruba

BALTO-SLAVIC

Bulgarian, Czech (and Slovak), Polish, Russian, Serbian, Shtokavian

CELTIC

Gaelic, Scots Gaelic, Welsh

GERMANIC

English, Dutch, German, Flemish, Yiddish

NORTH GERMANIC

Danish, Finnish, Norwegian, Swedish

ROMANCE

Italian, Romanian, Catalan (Spain), French, Ladino, Portuguese, Spanish

NEW WORLD

Algonquian (Northeast, includes many languages such as Cheyenne, Cree, Massachusett, Powhatan, and so on), Hopi, Iroquoian (Cherokee, Mohawk), Kiowa (central America), Mayan, Muskogean (Chickasaw, Choctaw, Creek, Seminole, etc.), Nahuatl (Aztecs), Navaho, Numic (Comanche, Shoshone, Ute), Quechua (South America), Siouan (Crow, Winnebago, Sioux)

INDO-IRANIAN

Bengali, Hindustani (Hindu and Urdu), Persian, Punjabi, Romani, Tajik

SEMITIC

Arabic, Hebrew

SINO-TIBETAN

Burmese, Cantonese, Mandarin, Thai, Wu

OTHERS

Albanian, Armenian, Basque (isolate, spoken in Pyrenees), Greek, Japanese, Korean

DEAD LANGUAGES

Akkadian (Sumerian), Aramaic, Coptic, Edomite, Elamite, Hittite, Hurrian, Kushite, Latin, Libyan, Medean, Nubian (magical tongue), Phoenician (includes Ugaritic), Sumerian, Urartian

STEALTH (AGILITY, MOVEMENT)

Use the Stealth skill whenever you would move unseen or to hide from view. To use this skill, you must have something to hide behind or in, such as cover, shadows, dim lighting, foliage, and so on. The quality of cover may grant bonus or penalty dice.

To use this skill, roll Stealth. Every success allows you to move 1 yard without attracting attention. Alternatively, you can hide in one location. Roll Stealth and add up your successes as normal. Opponents must beat your successes with Notice to detect your presence.

Example: *Gideon tries to sneak past a pair of guards who are standing watch at the end of the street. Since it is dark and the guards are distracted by their conversation, Gideon gains +3 dice. He has a 4 Agility and 2 levels in Stealth, giving him nine dice. He rolls and gets 10 (re-roll 7), 9, 8, 8, 7, 7, 5, 5, and 1, for a total of seven successes. For the guards to spot him, they must get seven successes on a Notice roll.*

SUBTERFUGE (AGILITY, PROFESSIONAL)

The Subterfuge skill is used to perform tricks of the hand, such as palming objects, picking pockets, and snatching objects from another person. To use this skill to perform a trick, roll subterfuge as normal. The nature of the trick determines the difficulty. Easy prestidigitation needs only one success, while feats of agility and misdirection need more.

When you use Subterfuge to lift an object from a person, roll Subterfuge as normal. Your opponent may roll Notice (Intuition). If you have more successes than the target, you succeed in lifting a random object from their person, or you may sacrifice 3 successes to lift a specific small object from the person. In the case of a tie, you simply fail. If your target gets more successes than you, he notices the effort and may act appropriately.

The GM may assign bonus or penalty dice base on the location of the object and its size, as well as the number of witnesses.

Example: *Glen tries to pick a fat merchant's pocket. He has a 3 Agility and 1 level of Subterfuge. He rolls four dice and gets an 8, 5, 3, and 2, for only one success. The merchant is entitled to a Notice roll. If he gets one success, the attempt fails. If he gets more successes, the merchant notices the attempt.*

SURVIVAL (INTUITION, PROFESSIONAL)

Survival is used to get along in the wild, to find safe food and potable water, and to avoid getting lost. The difficulty depends on the terrain. Fertile terrain, such as rich forests or farmlands, provide enough food and water to sustain one adult for one day per success rolled. Typical wilderness yields enough food and water to sustain one adult for one day per two successes rolled. Barren terrain, such as mountains, deserts, and badlands yield food and water for one adult for one day for every three successes rolled. GMs are encouraged to use common sense in regard to how much time it takes to gather these resources as well

as how much a particular area can yield at a time. A Survival roll to forage takes 4 hours. A Survival roll to navigate takes 1 minute.

Note: The GM should make Survival rolls in secret to determine whether you found safe food and water or to see if you are lost or not.

Example: *Alone and lost in the woods, Katerina tries to scrounge up some food. She has a 3 Intuition and 1 level of Survival. She rolls four dice, getting a 10 (re-roll 8), 6, 6, and 2, for a total of two successes. She finds enough food and water to sustain herself for two days.*

SWIM (STRENGTH, MOVEMENT)

Swim is used to propel yourself through water. Every success allows you to swim one yard. You can trade 2 successes to change direction 45 degrees. If achieve no successes, you slip under the surface of the water. You may make a Swim roll on your next turn, and exchange 2 successes to surface. If you fail to achieve any successes again, it requires 4 successes to break the surface. This continues until you are pulled out of the water or you drown.

Example: *Glen fell overboard into the frothing seas. He struggles to stay above the waves, so he rolls Swim (Strength). He has 2 levels of Swim and a 3 Strength, giving him 5 dice. He rolls and gets 10 (re-roll 9), 8, 4, 4, and 3. He has three successes, but he fell beneath the surface. He spends two to get his head above the water, and one success to swim forward one yard.*

***insert art* throw 1/4 page**

THROW (STRENGTH, FIGHTING)

Use the Throw Attack skill to make attacks by hurling a handheld weapon. Roll a number of dice equal to your Strength plus your skill levels minus the complexity of the weapon. In addition, the target's size and range modify the number of dice you roll.

Against an opponent, resolve the action roll as normal, however, the opponent is entitled to a Parry roll if he has not spent his reaction for the round. Each success on the opponent's roll removes one success from your attack. The opponent may then apply Defense Points as normal. Add any remaining successes to the weapon's DM to determine the damage dealt by the attack.

Example: *Esteban throws a dagger at a fleeing cultist. The enemy is within close range, so Esteban rolls a number of dice equal to his Strength and his Throw. He has a 3 Strength and 1 level of Throw, giving him four dice. He rolls and gets 9, 9, 7, and 2. The cultist has only a 2 Defense Points and applies them all to the attack, so Esteban has one success. He adds it to the dagger's DM, inflicting 3 hits.*



TRACK (INTUITION, PROFESSIONAL)

Use Track to follow trails. The difficulty depends on a variety of conditions, from the condition of the ground to the time that's passed since the time when the tracks were left. Each success allows the character to follow the tracks for 1 hour. If the tracker wants to catch up with his prey, he may move more quickly, but takes a -2 dice penalty to the action roll.

Table 2-14: Tracking Difficulty

Condition	Difficulty (cumulative)
<i>Ground</i>	
Very soft	0
Soft	+1
Average	+2
Hard	+3
Very Hard	+4
<i>Numbers</i>	
0-3	+0
4-6	-1
7-12	-2
13-24	-3
+20	-1
<i>Creature Size</i>	
Smaller than man-size	+2
Larger than man-size	-2
<i>Time</i>	
Per day	+1
Per week	+10
<i>Weather</i>	
Per hour of rain or wind	+1
Snow	+5
<i>Visibility</i>	
Dawn or Dusk	+1
Dark	+3
Moonlight	+2
Fog, rain, snow	+2

A character can hide his tracks. Each success on a Track roll increases the success required by 1.

A Track roll takes 10 minutes.

Example: *Tom follows a slave train moving through across the countryside. The GM describes the conditions. The ground is soft (D1) and there are at least two dozen people (D-3). It's been two days since they passed through the area (D+2) and Tom has only moonlight to see by (D+2). Summing the modifiers, Tom needs two successes on a Track (Intuition) roll to follow the tracks.*

TRADE (REASON, PROFESSIONAL)

Use Trade to earn income from a chosen profession. Trade encompasses many skills. Each time you select this skill, choose a trade from any of the backgrounds listed in **Chapter Two: Backgrounds**. For every success on a Trade roll, you find 1 day's work. You must spend the better part of each day (at least 8 hours) working in your trade (stealing or robbing for Criminal, sailing for Sailors, prostituting for Prostitutes, and so on). You earn 1d10s for every two successes.

You make one Trade roll per week.

Example: *In between adventures, Bertrand looks for work as a longshoreman. He has a 4 Reason and 3 levels of Trade (longshoreman), giving him seven dice. He rolls and gets 10 (re-roll 5), 6, 5, 4, 3, 1, and 1. He found enough work to keep him busy for a day, which earns him 1d10 shillings.*

TRAINED KNOWLEDGE (EDUCATION, PROFESSIONAL)

Use Trained Knowledge to recall some esoteric piece of information. Trained Knowledge encompasses many skills. Each time you select this skill, you may place levels in an existing specialization or acquire a new Knowledge from any of the following: Current Events, Geography, History, Law, Philosophy & Theology, Politics, or Science. Others choices may be available as determined by the GM.

Example: *Gaspard sees a group of monks wearing a very strange cross. Having some skill in Theology, he tries to determine what sect they belong to. The GM decides that information about this sect would be obscure requiring 4 successes to identify. Gaspard has a 3 Education and a 2 Trained Knowledge (Theology). He rolls and gets 10 (re-roll 6), 9, 8, 7, and 1. He got four successes, so he manages to identify these monks as belonging to the Monastery of St. Anthony of the Kyiv Caves. But what are monks from Russia doing here in New Amsterdam?*

TALENTS

What separates the Witch Hunter from the common folk of the world is the ability to do the extraordinary, to transcend the normal limits of humanity and achieve greatness, glory, and reach the pinnacle of heroism. To reflect these abilities, Witch Hunter player characters usually have one or more talents, special abilities that offer improvements to their skills, abilities, or allow them to bend the rules in interesting or exciting ways. Talents cover a lot of ground. Some are simple, adding additional dice for specific skill uses, while others unlock other parts of the game, granting access to supernatural powers, expanded uses of Faith, Damnation, and Magic, stunts, maneuvers, and much more.

Each talent falls into one of three categories: Basic, Greater, and Heroic. Basic talents provide small modifications or access to minor abilities, while Greater

and Heroic talents push against the limits of human potential. Since Greater and Heroic talents are superior to Basic talents, they also cost more Survival Points. Furthermore, they are also harder to attain, requiring ability scores to be of a specific value or a certain amount of levels to be placed in a skill.

All starting characters begin the game with at least three talents. You may select any four basic talents or two basic talents and one greater talent. You must meet all requirements before you can select the talent.

USING TALENTS

Most of the time, talents don't require an action to use. Instead, they affect how you use other actions, such as granting additional dice, expanding the ways in which a skill can be used, and so on. Should the talent require an action to use, an explanation of its function is provided in its description. Benefits derived from talents are cumulative. Even with talents that increase the number of dice a character rolls for an action, the most dice you may roll at a time are 10.

ACQUIRING NEW TALENTS

You may spend Survival Points to acquire additional talents. Basic talents cost 5 SPs, greater talents cost 10 SPs, and heroic talents cost 20 SPs.

ADAPTABLE (BASIC)

Description: A keen understanding of hand-to-hand combat allows you to find openings and opportunities where others would swear none exist. Whenever you are grappling another opponent, you may employ medium weapons.

AGILE RUNNER (GREATER)

Requirement: Agility 3

Description: You retain your preternatural reflexes even when running. Whenever you use an action to run and are not wearing armor, you may still reduce your opponent's attack successes by your Agility bonus.

AMBUSH ATTACK (GREATER)

Requirement: Stealth 2

Description: You know how to slip your knife through your opponent's defenses, and do the job quickly, even if it's a bit messy. Whenever you are wielding a small weapon in hand-to-hand combat, halve your opponent's Agility for the purpose of resolving the attack.

ANIMAL EMPATHY (BASIC)

Requirement: Animal Care 1, Empathy 1

Description: You can see into the hearts and minds of beasts, perceiving their desires, moods, and fears. You may bring this unnatural insight to bear when handling animals. Gain a +1 die bonus to Animal Care (Intuition) rolls. As well, you may also roll Empathy (Intuition) to assess the attitude of an animal.

TABLE 2—15: BASIC TALENTS

Talent	Requirements	Benefit
Adaptable	—	Use medium weapons while grappling.
Animal Empathy	Animal Care 1, Empathy 1	+1 Animal Care, use Empathy on animals.
Attack Focus	Archery 1, Firearms 1, Hand-to-Hand 1, or Throw 1	Reduce weapon's complexity by 1.
Basic Animist	—	May learn basic Animism rites
Basic Fighting Style	—	Learn a basic fighting maneuver for your tradition
Basic Fighting Tradition	—	May learn basic talents from a single sword school
Basic Hermeticism	Speak Latin 3	May learn basic Hermetic rites
Basic Prayer	Faith 2	May learn basic Prayer rites
Basic Rite	Basic Tradition	Learn a basic rite for your tradition
Bookworm	Research 1	Halve required successes for Research roll.
Charismatic	Charm 1	Reduce Charm difficulty by 1.
Cheat	—	Impose –1 die penalty once per scene.
Commanding Presence	Courage 3, Command 1	+1 Command, reduce difficulty by 2.
Dilettante	—	Gain fortune.
Direction Sense	Navigation 1	+1 Navigation and Navigation rolls in 1 action.
Expertise	—	+1 any one skill.
Incredible Actor	Deceive 1, Perform (acting) 1	+2 Deceive, extend Deceive effects.
Inheritance	—	Gain £2d10.
Iron Constitution	—	+2 Endurance against disease or poison.
It's just a Scratch	—	Make an Endurance check to ignore injury penalties.
Lucky	—	Re-roll some or all dice on single action roll.
Meditative Trance	Concentration 1	Meditate to gain bonus dice to when enacting a rite.
Mountaineer	Climb 1	Climb swiftly.
Pious	Intuition 3	Begin game with True Faith of 2.
Pugilist	Hand-to-Hand 1	+1 Hand-to-Hand when unarmed.
Skilled	—	Change elective skill to background skill.
Strong Lungs	Toughness 2	+1 Endurance, hold breath equal to Toughness ×2.
Talented	—	Re-roll 1 on one skill.
Torturer	Intimidate 1	+1 Intimidate.
Unreadable	Deceive 1	+2 Deceive against Empathy.

TABLE 2—16: GREATER TALENTS

Talent	Requirements	Benefit
Agile Runner	Agility 3	You still reduce successes when running.
Ambush Attack	Stealth 3	Halve opponents Agility.
Animal Trainer	Animal Care 2	Teach animals to perform tasks.
Appealing	—	+1 Charm, Command, and Deceive.
Attack Specialist	Attack Focus	Increase DM by 2.
Born Thief	Subterfuge 2	–3 Subterfuge and use as free action.
Break Fall	Acrobatics 2	Roll Acrobatics to reduce falling damage.

TABLE 2—16: GREATER TALENTS

Canny Fighter	Agility 2, Parry 2	Use cautious attack and negate 2 successes.
Combat Driving	Drive 2	+2 Drive in combat, re-roll 1.
Convey Power	Greater Tradition	Bestow basic rite upon another
Danger Sense	—	+2 Reflexes, +1 Notice.
Deadeye Shot	Archery 2, Firearms 2, Throw 2	Double range.
Dealmaker	Personality 3, Haggle 2	+1 die bonus to Charm made to haggle.
Deft Disarm	Hand-to-Hand 2	Ignore Difficulty of opponent's weapon on Disarm.
Expert Rider	Ride 2	D7 Ride to increase mount's move.
Fast Draw	Reflexes 2	Retrieve stowed item as free action.
Fearless	—	+2 Resolve rolls to resist fear.
Grab and Run	Subterfuge 2	Three successes on Subterfuge roll grants immediate move.
Greater Animist	Basic Animist	May learn greater Animism rites
Greater Fighting Style	—	Learn a greater fighting maneuver for your tradition
Greater Fighting Tradition	Basic Fighting Tradition, 2 basic fighting talents	May learn greater talents from a single sword school
Greater Hermeticism	Basic Hermetic, Speak Latin 4	May learn greater Hermetic rites
Greater Prayer	Basic Prayer, Faith 4	May learn greater Prayer rites
Greater Rite	Greater Tradition	Learn a greater rite for your tradition
Humiliating Attack	—	–2 damage to impose –1 die penalty for 1 round.
Inspire	Courage 4	Grant bonus to ally.
Iron Fisted	Strength 4	+1 Strength to break, unarmed DM ×2.
Iron Grip	Grapple 2	+1 Strength to break, swap 2 successes to pin with Grapple.
Judgment of Solomon	True Faith 2	Destroy a Villain's soul utterly
Life Drain	Damnation 4	Spend 2 Damnation points to draw energy from single target.
Linguist	Education 4	D3 Education to read text in same language family.
Logical Mind	Reason 4	+1 Resolve, +2 Reason to solve puzzles.
Marksman	Archery 2, Firearms 2, or Throw 2	+2 dice for aim.
Night Vision	—	See twice as far in low-lighting.
Quick Stand	Acrobatics 2	Stand as a free action.
Riposte	Hand-to-Hand 2, one Basic Fighting Style	Negate attack and strike back at opponent
Second Wind	Endurance 2	D7S2 Endurance to shrug off injuries.
Sneaky	Stealth 2	Move 1 yard per Stealth success.
Speed Loader	Firearms 2	Reduce reload by 2 actions.
Sweep	Hand-to-Hand 2	Attack to knock-down foes.
Swift	—	Walk 12 yards, run 20 yards.
Tough	Toughness 3	Gain +1 to each level on your Health track.
Tumbling Escape	Acrobatics 2	Spend action to add avoid damage.

TABLE 2–17: HEROIC TALENTS

Talent	Requirements	Benefit
Armor Piercing Shot	Marksman	–2 dice to negate armor.
Brutal Charge	—	On charge, increase DM by 2.
Escape Artist	Contortionist 3	Retry Contortionist rolls, no limits.
Grace and Speed	—	+1 all Movement skills.
Heroic Animist	Greater Animist	May learn heroic Animism rites
Heroic Fighting Style	—	Learn a heroic fighting maneuver for your tradition
Heroic Fighting Tradition	Greater Fighting Tradition, 2 greater fighting talents	May learn heroic talents from a single sword school
Heroic Hermeticism	Greater Hermeticism, Speak Latin 5	May learn heroic Hermetic rites
Heroic Prayer	Greater Prayer, Faith 6	May learn heroic Prayer rites
Heroic Rite	Heroic Tradition	Learn a heroic rite for your tradition
Incredible Reflexes	Reflexes 3	+2 dice on Defense pool rolls.
Incredible Leaper	Jump 3	Jump further than normal.
Incredible Strength	Body 6	+2 on feats of strength.
Lightning Draw	Fast Draw	Draw and attack at no penalty.
Lightning Reload	Archery 3, Fast Draw	0 actions to reload bows.
Master Manipulator	—	+1 all Interaction skills.
Penetrating Shot	Archery 3	Arrows or bolts burrow through foes.
Permanent Rite	Greater Tradition	May make a rite permanent
Pinning Shot	Deadeye Shot, Marksman, Throw 3	Special attack to immobilize target.
Renouncement of Solomon	True Faith 2	Dispel an unholy ability or power
Ricochet Shot	Firearms 3	Negate cover.
Shattering Attack	Strength 5	+3 dice to rolls to destroy weapons.
Stab and Shoot	Archery 3	Two attacks in one action.
Two Arrow Shot	Archery 3	Two attacks in one action.
Veteran Warrior	—	+1 die to all Fighting skills, +1 Endurance to remain conscious.

ANIMAL TRAINER (GREATER)**Requirement:** Animal Care 2

Description: You have spent many years around animals and beasts, honing your ability to get them to do as you want. The techniques you have acquired make you an expert trainer and those creatures you instruct display amazing capabilities and tricks. You may roll Animal Care (Intuition) to teach animals to do tasks. After each week of training, roll Animal Care (Intuition). The difficulty depends on the nature of the task. Other tasks may be available with the GM's discretion.

Directing an animal in combat is an action, though once you've give the animal the order to attack, you don't have to spend any more actions.

Task	Successes
Simple Trick (roll over, beg)	2

Task	Successes
Attack (fights where directed)	4
Come (comes to you when called)	2
Defend (fights to protect you)	3
Guard (protects area you indicate)	3
Retrieve (brings an item to you)	3
Work (push or pull)	3

APPEALING (GREATER)

Description: People ordinarily attracted to your gender find you appealing and have a hard time saying no to your requests. Whether you have extremely good looks or maybe just a magnetic personality, people just can't help but like you. You gain a +1 die bonus on all Charm, Command, and Deceive rolls.



ARMOR PIERCING SHOT (HEROIC)

Requirement: Marksman

Description: With a steady hand and keen eye, you can pick out the chinks in your opponent's armor. When making an attack with a ranged weapon, you can take a -2 dice penalty on the roll to prevent your opponent from gaining protection against your attack from his armor worn, if any.

ATTACK FOCUS (BASIC)

Requirement: Archery 1, Firearms 1, Hand-to-Hand 1, or Throw 1

Description: Rigorous drilling, training, and constant dedication to perfecting the art of fighting gives you an advantage with a particular type of weapon. Choose one weapon in a Fighting skill that you know. When using this weapon, you reduce the weapon's complexity by 1. You may select this talent multiple times. Each time, the benefits apply to a new weapon.

ATTACK SPECIALIST (GREATER)

Requirement: Attack Focus

Description: When armed with your preferred weapon, you are a force to be reckoned, ripping through your enemies and leaving a heap of quivering flesh in your wake. When you select this talent, its benefits apply to a weapon for which you selected the Attack Focus talent. When making attacks with this weapon, the Damage Modifier increases by two. Thus, a weapon with a DM of +3 would become +5 in your hands. You may select this talent multiple times. Each time, the benefits apply

to a new weapon. This talent cannot be chosen for any Firearms.

BASIC ANIMIST (BASIC)

Requirement: None.

Description: You have learned the fundamental teachings of the Animist tradition and have been ushered into the secrets of their First Circle. Henceforth, you may perform basic Animist rites learned via the Basic Rite talent.

BASIC FIGHTING STYLE (BASIC)

Requirement: Basic Fighting Tradition

Description: The great nations of Europe boast some of the finest sword schools known to man. Whether it is in grand halls filled with dozens of students or from an individual master in his private studio, you have learned a novice style. This style must be associated with a school you selected when choosing the Basic Fighting Tradition talent.

BASIC FIGHTING TRADITION (BASIC)

Description: While others may flail about with a blade, yours sings with style and precision. Choosing this Talent allows you to have access to the Basic Fighting Styles of one school. This Talent may be purchased multiple times to grant access to other schools.

BASIC HERMETICISM (BASIC)

Requirement: Speak Latin 3.

Description: Upon finishing your training in the First Circle of the Hermetic tradition, you unlock the mysteries of this ancient art. You may perform basic Hermetic rites learned via the Basic Rite talent.

BASIC PRAYER (BASIC)

Requirement: 2 Faith points.

Description: You are blessed in the eyes of God. You have learned through extensive study of the Prayer tradition to perform basic Prayer rites learned via the Basic Rite talent.

BASIC RITE (RITE)

Requirement: Any basic Sorcerous tradition

Description: From ancient scrolls, dusty tomes, or archaic manuscripts associated with your particular tradition, you learn and may cast a single basic rite. This rite must be associated with a tradition for which you have the basic talent.

BOOKWORM (BASIC)

Requirement: Research 1

Description: People may sneer at your love of dusty old books, but you know within their stained and delicate pages that they hold the secrets of the world, if you know where to look. Long hours spent poring over countless manuscripts have made you an old hand when you spend

any time in a repository. When searching for a particular nugget or clue, you know just where to look. Research rolls for you require half (round down) the required number of successes needed to find what you're looking for.

BORN THIEF (GREATER)

Requirement: Subterfuge 2

Description: Small objects have a tendency to find themselves in your pockets. Quick fingers and keen eyes let you snatch unattended items before anyone has a chance to notice. You may make a Subterfuge roll as a free action by taking a -3 dice penalty to the roll.

BREAK FALL (GREATER)

Requirement: Acrobatics 2

Description: A wall's surface, tree branches, and anything else within reach can all serve to slow or break your fall and you can instinctively use these obstacles to minimize even the worst of falls. Break Fall allows you to use Acrobatics as a free action whenever you are falling and are within 1 yard of a solid surface (trees, wall, cliff face, and so on). For every success on the roll, reduce falling damage by 1.

BRUTAL CHARGE (HEROIC)

Description: There are times when killing is necessary and you waste no time getting down to business. Whenever you charge into combat, you can use your momentum to deliver deadly blows and hack throughout you enemies, sending blood, flesh, and bone flying. The Damage Modifier of the weapon you're wielding when charging increases by 4 instead of by 2. You still take the -2 dice penalty to the attack roll.

CANNY FIGHTER (GREATER)

Requirement: Agility 2, Parry 2

Description: Through practices maneuvers with a hand-to-hand weapon, you can erect a nearly impenetrable wall to deflect your opponents' attacks. To use this talent, you must be armed with a Hand-to-Hand weapon and use the Active Defense maneuver (see page 106). In addition to the normal benefits gained from that maneuver, you automatically negate 2 successes from any single opponent that attacks you until the start of your next turn. You may select the opponent after he or she chooses to attack you, but before the results of the attack are resolved.

CHARISMATIC (BASIC)

Requirement: Charm 1

Description: You know the right words to say and the body language needed to put yourself and your request in the best possible light. You reduce the difficulty of all Charm rolls by 1. Those who meet you find themselves liking you despite their better judgment.

CHEAT (BASIC)

Description: Advantages are there for those with the courage to take them, even if taking them is not particularly noble or fair. You can manipulate circumstances to give yourself a slight edge. Examples include kicking sand in a foe's face, a cunning lie to convince a target to see things your way, and so on. Once per scene, you may impose a -1 die penalty to your target's roll any time both you and your target make an opposed roll.

COMBAT DRIVING (GREATER)

Requirement: Drive 2

Description: Incredible instincts or just plain raw talent give you a decided advantage when operating a vehicle in the thick of combat. Gain a +2 dice bonus on Drive rolls. In addition, when you make a Drive roll, you may re-roll any one result of a 1 on a die. You must keep the result of the new roll, even if it's another 1.

COMMANDING PRESENCE (BASIC)

Requirement: Courage 3, Command 1

Description: People naturally respect and want to support you for you radiate a potent aura of competence. Whenever you enter a room, people take note and see in you a figure of authority. Gain a +1 die bonus to Command (Courage) rolls. In addition, you may reduce the difficulty of your Command roll by 2.

CONTACTS - MINOR (BASIC)

Description: No one lives in a vacuum and neither do the Witch Hunters. Not everyone they meet is a potential enemy or monster to be sent screaming back to Hell. These are people who, while not particularly loyal or beholden to the Witch Hunter may help if its in their best interest or worth their while. Either way, a friendly face or a helping hand should always be welcomed, especially if it whispers a bit of information here or gives them access to equipment there.

This talent gives the Witch Hunter a +2 bonus dice to all Interaction skills when dealing with their contact. This contact is a minor functionary, such as an inn or shop keep, a low level barrister, a common thief, a ship's hand, a servant or a common soldier.

When purchased, the player may wait until needed to call upon this talent. At that time, the talent is keyed to that one person. That contact now becomes a named NPC and should be noted by the player. If the player then wants to use this talent for another contact, it will have to be purchased again.

This talent may be purchased multiple times.

CONTACTS - INTERMEDIATE (GREATER)

Description: As the Basic talent, Contact - Minor, but the type of contact the Witch Hunter has is of a greater nature. Examples would include the mayor of a small town, a constable, a mid-ranking officer, a ship's first mate, a rich merchant, or an assistant to a Cardinal in the Vatican.

This talent may be purchased multiple times.

CONTACTS - HIGH (HEROIC)

Description: As the Greater talent, Contact – Intermediate, but the type of contact the Witch Hunter has is of the highest position possible. Examples would include the governor of a colony, a high ranking officer such as a colonel or general, a ship's captain, a merchant prince or a high ranking member of the East India Company, or a Cardinal or Bishop.

This talent may be purchased multiple times.

CONVEY POWER (GREATER)

Requirement: Greater Tradition.

Description: You have a greater understanding of sorcerous power, being able to imbue this energy into objects of your creation. Such objects might be alchemical concoctions, a special medicinal brew, a great pattern inscribed on a surface, and so on. You can apply the benefits of basic rites to someone other than yourself. This raises the rite's preparation and casting times by one factor (from 1 round to 1 minute, 1 minute to 10 minutes, 10 minutes to 1 hour, and 1 hour to 2 hours). The rite's difficulty and duration remain the same.

You may also grant the benefits of a rite to multiple recipients; the preparation and casting times calculated using the system above are per person included, and you must divide up successes rolled with your Sorcerous Tradition skill check among the recipients in order to successfully grant them the effects of the rite. You may include yourself among the potential recipients of a rite using Convey Power if desired.

DANGER SENSE (GREATER)

Description: Danger lays on all sides, lurking in every shadow, behind every tree. People harbor foul intentions behind serene and friendly masks. Demons wear the skins of the innocent and death casts a shadow over all things. Should you falter, should you become lax in your vigilance, you know you will become one more victim of the adversary. Gain a +2 dice bonus on Reflexes (Agility) rolls and a +1 dice bonus on Notice (Intuition) rolls.

DEADEYE SHOT (GREATER)

Requirement: Archery 2, Firearms 2, or Throw 2

Description: Through intense concentration and expertise with your chosen weapon, you can attack remote targets, extending the ranged and accuracy of your weapon by compensating for its flaws with your impressive skill. When you select this talent, choose one skill you have that qualifies for this talent. Whenever wielding a weapon that uses this skill, you double the weapon's range.

DEALMAKER (GREATER)

Requirement: Personality 3, Charm 2

Description: Everyone has a price and you know how to ferret out just what that price is. Through keen insight and quick wit, you can manipulate bargains to get the best deal. Gain a +1 die bonus to Charm rolls made to haggle.

DEFT DISARM (GREATER)

Requirement: Hand-to-Hand 2

Description: A swift hand and startling skill with weaponry gives you an advantage in hand-to-hand combat and with a practices maneuver, you can knock away your opponent's weapon and snatch it with a free hand. Whenever you attempt the disarm maneuver (see page 106), you ignore the complexity of your opponent's weapon. In addition, if you beat your opponent by four or more successes, you may snatch a weapon you have successfully knocked out of your opponent's hand if that weapon is one-handed and you have a hand free.

DILETTANTE (BASIC)

Description: You have the privilege of great wealth and you may draw upon your fortunes to aid you in your crusade against the forces of wickedness. When you select this talent, decide whether this money stems from an inheritance, a viable business, or a sudden windfall. Regardless of what you choose, your fortune equals £1d10 × 1d10. Once a month, you may draw any amount from your treasury, but if you don't, the amount increases by £1d10. While you can draw any amount from your treasure that you like, you must be in a place where you can access those funds, such as good-size city or from a wealthy individual who will extend you a line of credit (which is paid for out of your treasury). Such wealth may also grant additional benefits to you when interacting with those to whom riches are important.

DIRECTION SENSE (BASIC)

Requirement: Navigation 1

Description: You instinctively know which way is north, even when the sun or sky is hidden from you. Gain +1 die to Navigation rolls. In addition, you can make a Navigation roll in 1 action instead of 1 minute.

ESCAPE ARTIST (HEROIC)

Requirement: Contortionist 3

Description: You can slip in and out of tight spots by twisting your body or popping your limbs out socket to squeeze through incredibly narrow spaces. When rolling Contortionist and you get no successes, you may immediately roll a second time. You are not limited by the size of your head when trying to wriggle through a tight space.

EXPERT RIDER (GREATER)

Requirement: Ride 2

Description: When riding a steed into battle, your mount becomes an extension of you. You are hard to dislodge from your seat and you can coax your steed to move at amazing speeds. Whenever you take hits in combat, you never have to make Ride rolls to remain in the saddle. You may roll Ride to increase your mount's movement by 150% for a number of rounds equal to your successes. Finally, you may use Defense Points to negate an opponent's attack against your steed.

EXPERTISE (BASIC)

Description: You have an uncommon knack with a particular skill. When you select this talent, choose any skill. You gain a +1 die bonus to rolls made when using this skill.

You may select this talent multiple times. Each time, select a new skill.

FAST DRAW (GREATER)

Requirement: Reflexes 2

Description: Your fast hands let you ready your weapons in a blink of any eye. You may retrieve one stowed item as a free action.

FEARLESS (GREATER)

Description: Gibbering demons, noisome beasts, terrifying horrors from beyond: You've seen it all. Gain +2 dice on Resolve (Courage) rolls to resist fear.

GRAB AND RUN (GREATER)

Requirement: Subterfuge 2

Description: When you brush against a target, you can relieve him of his treasured belongings, letting you rob the target and make a quick get away. If you get at least three successes on a Subterfuge (Agility) roll, you may immediately move up to 6 yards.

GRACE AND SPEED (HEROIC)

Description: You move with liquid grace, have the gift of natural dexterity and an uncanny sense of balance. Gain a +1 die bonus to all Movement rolls.

GREATER ANIMIST (GREATER)

Requirement: Basic Animist.

Description: You are trained in the Second Circle of the Animist tradition, and may perform greater Animist rites learned via the Greater Rite talent.

GREATER DIABOLIST (GREATER)

Requirement: Basic Diabolist, 6 Damnation points.

Description: You are trained in the Second Circle of the Diabolic tradition, and may perform greater Diabolic rites learned via the Greater Rite talent.

GREATER FIGHTING STYLE (GREATER)

Requirement: Greater Fighting Tradition talent.

Description: Choosing this talent allows you to have access to the Greater Fighting Tradition from a school where two basic styles are known. This talent may be purchased multiple times to grant access to other schools.

GREATER FIGHTING TRADITION (GREATER)

Requirement: Two Basic Fighting Style talents from one school.

Description: You may learn one greater fighting style. This style must be associated with a school you



have already selected when choosing the Basic Fighting Tradition talent.

GREATER HERMETICISM (GREATER)

Requirement: Basic Hermeticism, Speak Latin 4.

Description: You are trained in the Second Circle of the Hermetic tradition, and may perform greater Hermetic rites learned via the Greater Rite talent.

GREATER NECROMANCY (GREATER)

Requirement: Basic Necromancy, 4 Damnation points.

Description: You are trained in the Second Circle of the Necromantic tradition, and may perform greater Necromantic rites learned via the Greater Rite talent.

GREATER PRAYER (GREATER)

Requirement: Basic Prayer, 4 Faith points.

Description: You are trained in the Second Circle of the Prayer tradition, and may perform greater Prayer rites learned via the Greater Rite talent.

GREATER RITE (RITE)

Requirement: Any greater ritual tradition

Description: You may learn a single greater rite in a tradition for which you have the greater talent.

GREATER WITCHCRAFT (GREATER)

Requirement: Basic Witchcraft, 2 Damnation point.

Description: You are trained in the Second Circle of the

Witchcraft tradition, and may perform greater Witchcraft rites learned via the Greater Rite talent.

HEROIC ANIMIST (HEROIC)

Requirement: Greater Animist.

Description: You are trained in the Second Circle of the Animist tradition, and may perform heroic Animist rites learned via the Heroic Rite talent.

HEROIC FIGHTING STYLE (HEROIC)

Requirement: Heroic Fighting Tradition talent.

Description: You may learn one Heroic Fighting Style. This style must be associated with a school you have already selected when choosing the Greater Swordsman talent.

HEROIC FIGHTING TRADITION (HEROIC)

Requirement: Two greater fighting style talents from one school.

Description: Choosing this talent allows you to have access to the Heroic Fighting Styles from a school where two Greater styles are known. This talent may be purchased multiple times to grant access to other schools.

HEROIC HERMETICISM (HEROIC)

Requirement: Greater Hermeticism, Speak Latin 4.

Description: You are trained in the Second Circle of the Hermetic tradition, and may perform heroic Hermetic rites learned via the Heroic Rite talent.

HEROIC PRAYER (HEROIC)

Requirement: Greater Prayer, 4 Faith points.

Description: You are trained in the Second Circle of the Prayer tradition, and may perform heroic Prayer rites learned via the Heroic Rite talent.

HEROIC RITE (HEROIC)

Requirement: Any heroic ritual tradition

Description: You may learn a single heroic rite in a tradition for which you have the heroic talent.

HUMILIATING ATTACK (GREATER)

Description: You know where to hit your opponent to damage not only his body but his pride. Whenever you successfully injure an opponent, you may reduce the damage you deal to an opponent by 2 to impose a -1 die penalty to all of his rolls for 1 round.

INCREDIBLE ACTOR (BASIC)

Requirement: Deceive 1, Perform (acting) 1

Description: Truly you have the gift of performance. Through your moving words and immersion into the character you portray, you leave behind the mundane “you” in favor of the dramatic role. You can apply these techniques to convince others of your assumed persona. When rolling Deceive to convince a target you are someone other than whom you really are, you gain a +2 dice bonus

and the target sustains this belief for a number of hours equal to the number of successes you rolled. The target is entitled to a new roll if you do anything obviously out of character.

INCREDIBLE REFLEXES (HEROIC)

Requirement: Reflexes 4

Description: An astounding awareness and peerless reflexes allow you to escape danger unscathed. When rolling your Defense Point Pool, you gain +2 dice bonus.

INCREDIBLE LEAPER (HEROIC)

Requirement: Jump 3

Description: You can spring farther and further than an ordinary person, capable of covering great distances with a single bound. If you run at least 3 yards before jumping, you jump one yard for every success. If you made a standing jump, you move one yard for every three successes. You can jump upwards 1 yard for every four successes.

INCREDIBLE STRENGTH (HEROIC)

Requirement: Body 6

Description: You are a perfect human specimen, with a chiseled body and unmatched strength. When you make a feat of strength (see **Chapter Four: Playing the Game**), you gain +2 dice.

INHERITANCE (BASIC)

Description: Twas a tragedy that your friend or family left this world, but their death has become your fortune. Gain £2d10. You may select this talent multiple times.

INSPIRE (GREATER)

Requirement: Courage 4

Description: You can fill people with the courage needed to get the job done. With words, song, or even just leading by example, others take heart in your bravery. You may roll Command (Courage) to aid another character to perform a specific action. For every two successes rolled, you grant the character +1 die bonus. Using this talent is an action. In addition, this talent allows characters to exceed 10 dice on their roll.

IRON CONSTITUTION (BASIC)

Description: Through rigorous conditioning and natural hardiness, you develop resilience to toxins and diseases. When making Endurance (Toughness) rolls against these hazards, you gain +2 bonus dice.

IRON FISTED (GREATER)

Requirement: Strength 4

Description: A quick assessment of an object reveals its weaknesses, giving you an edge when attempting to break it—be it a door, chest, or wall. When rolling Strength to break an object, you gain a +1 die bonus. In addition, the Damage Modifier for your unarmed attacks is by an additional +1.

IRON GRIP (GREATER)**Requirement:** Grapple 2**Description:** Woe to the person that finds himself in your grasp for once you latch onto your foe, there's little chance your opponent will get away. You gain a +1 die bonus to all Grapple rolls and you only need to trade 2 success to get a pin when Grappling.**IT'S JUST A SCRATCH (BASIC)****Requirement:** Toughness 4**Description:** Pain is a fact of life on the battlefield. But whereas most let pain rule them, you have learned to take it to your bosom like a lover. You may make a D3 Endurance (Toughness, Will, or Courage) check to ignore any penalties from Light injuries and a D4 Endurance (Toughness, Will, or Courage) to ignore penalties from Medium injuries.**JUDGMENT OF SOLOMON (GREATER)****Requirement:** True Faith 2**Description:** One of the few lesser Seals of Solomon commonly known throughout the Witch Hunter orders, this seal gives the user a power only God should have; the utter destruction of a soul. Used at the moment of a Villain's death, this seal is against the body of the target and the Witch Hunter makes a True Faith check. The difficulty of the check is one-half the Villain's Damnation score (rounded up). If successful, the target's soul does not go to Hell, but is instead ripped to shreds and unmade. If the check is unsuccessful, the Villain's soul is sent to Hell where it will eventually come back to spread more evil across the world.

A word of warning: Destroying a soul not Damned is a horrible sin. Anyone using the Judgment of Solomon against a pure soul is himself Damned (incur 7 Damnation points), whether that soul is destroyed or not.

LIFE DRAIN (GREATER)**Requirement:** Damnation 4**Description:** There is power in life and you know how to seize it when it flees the body. You can use the life essence of other beings to power your foul rites. You may spend two points of Damnation at once to leech energy from a living creature within 10 yards that you can see clearly. Make a Concentrate (Will) check. The target(s) may negate your successes by making a Resolve (Courage) roll. For every remaining success, the target takes one hit and you gain +1 bonus die when enacting a rite.**LIGHTNING DRAW (HEROIC)****Requirement:** Fast Draw**Description:** In one smooth motion, you may retrieve a weapon and deliver a devastating attack. In one action, you may draw a weapon and make an attack at no penalty.**LIGHTNING RELOAD (HEROIC)****Requirement:** Archery 3, Fast Draw**Description:** Your quick hands let you pull ammunition and load your weapon quickly to fire a barrage of shots before your opponent knows what hit him. Reduce the reload time in actions for all archery weapons by 1.**LINGUIST (GREATER)****Requirement:** Education 4**Description:** You recognize the common elements that unite many languages and can, with some effort, get the gist of nearly any written text. You may roll Education to read a language in the same family as one you already leave. To do so, you need three successes. (See **Languages of the Invisible World** on page 69.)**LOGICAL MIND (GREATER)****Requirement:** Reason 4**Description:** Your mind is rational and well-structured, resilient to the hazards of fear and madness. As well, when you bring your considerable intellect to bear on a problem, you know how to take it apart and find the easiest solution. Gain a +1 die bonus to all Resolve rolls. In addition, you gain a +2 dice bonus when using Reason to solve a puzzle or riddle.**LUCKY (BASIC)****Description:** Fortune favors you and always seems to intercede on your behalf in the direst of circumstances. Once per scene, you may re-roll some or all of the dice on a single action roll.**MARKSMAN (GREATER)****Requirement:** Archery 2, Firearms 2, or Throw 2**Description:** When you take the time, you can find the quiet place in your mind to focus on your target. With such preparation, your ranged attacks have deadly accuracy. Whenever you aim, you gain +2 dice for each round spent aiming instead of the normal +1 die.**MASTER MANIPULATOR (HEROIC)****Description:** You can ferret out the hidden desires and fears held by all people and use them to your advantage. People are putty in your hands. Gain a +1 die bonus to all Interaction skills.**MEDITATIVE TRANCE (BASIC)****Requirement:** Concentrate 1**Description:** You can enter a deep state of intense concentration to center your self and unlock hidden reservoirs of magical power. If you spend at least ten minutes in a deep meditative trance, you may roll Concentrate (Will). Every two successes grant +1 bonus die when enacting a rite. The use of this talent adds ten minutes to a rites preparation time.**MOUNTAINEER (BASIC)****Requirement:** Climb 1**Description:** Extensive experience in mountainous



terrain has honed your muscles and reflexes, allowing you to make ascents with incredible speed. When you roll Climb, ascend 2 yards for every three successes.

NIGHT VISION (GREATER)

Description: The darkness can no longer hide its secrets from you. You can see well in conditions of low-lighting. You see twice as far as other people see in areas of shadowy lighting. For example, if a light source casts 12 yards of shadowy light, it would cast 24 yards of shadowy light for you.

PENETRATING SHOT (HEROIC)

Requirement: Archery 3

Description: Such is your strength and expertise with archery weapons, you can unleash your bolts or arrows with astonishing force, making them capable of punching through your foes and striking those beyond. If you get at least one success on an Archery roll (after the target's reaction), the arrow or bolt passes through the opponent and may strike another target directly behind the first target. Roll Archery a second time, but at a -2 dice penalty. If you get at least 1 success (again after reactions), the ammunition passes through and may strike another target beyond. This continues until you fail to gain 1 success or until there are no more targets in a row.

PERMANENT RITE (HEROIC/VILLAINOUS)

Requirement: Any heroic/villainous ritual tradition

Description: You may weave the eldritch energies

in such a way as to make their effects long-lasting and resilient to the decay that affects magical power. Any time you perform a rite with a duration other than Instantaneous or requiring concentration, you may make that rite permanent. This comes with a cost, however. For basic rites, you must lower three of your abilities by 1. For greater rites, you must lower four abilities by 2. For heroic or villainous rites, you must lower five abilities by 3. These losses are permanent and these ability scores can only be raised again by expending Survival Points.

PINNING SHOT (HEROIC)

Requirement: Deadeye Shot, Marksman, Throw 3

Description: You know how to make a special trick shot that can pin your opponent to a surface. With a practiced throw, you can pin a target in place. To use this talent, your target must be adjacent to a wall, door, or some other vertical surface. Resolve the throw as a normal attack, except that instead of multiplying your successes by your DM, you pin a piece of the target's clothing (or hair) to the surface. The target must get a number of successes on a Strength roll equal to those successes that remain after your target's reaction. You cannot use this talent against targets not wearing clothing (or lacking the requisite hair).

PIOUS (BASIC)

Requirement: Intuition 3

Description: You have a deep and abiding connection to God. You begin play with 2 points of True Faith rather than 1. This talent may only be taken at character creation.

PUGILIST (BASIC)

Requirement: Hand-to-Hand 1

Description: You know your way around a ring and are an expert in fisticuffs. When rolling Hand-to-Hand and making an unarmed attack, you gain a +1 die bonus. Your opponent takes a -1 die penalty to reactions made to avoid your attack.

QUICK STAND (GREATER)

Requirement: Acrobatics 2

Description: You can hop to your feet with ease. You can stand from a fallen position as a free action.

RENOUNCEMENT OF SOLOMON (HEROIC)

Requirements: True Faith 2

Description: Another of the commonly known lesser seals of Solomon, the Renouncement of Solomon allows a Witch Hunter, fueled by his faith to dispel some of the powers used by the Adversary. If the power's description allows it, a Witch Hunter may attempt to disrupt one power possessed by a threat she is facing. To do this, a Witch Hunter must use her True Faith in an opposed roll with the creature's Damnation. The Witch Hunter may be assisted by other characters that also have the

Renouncement of Solomon talent. Should the Witch Hunter succeed in her opposed roll, the creature's power is disrupted.

Participating in renouncing takes an action, as does assisting in the roll. While the renouncing is taking place, the Witch Hunter and anyone assisting her must speak in strong voice and loses their Defense for that round.

RICOCHET SHOT (HEROIC)

Requirement: Firearms 3

Description: With a quick examination of the terrain around your opponent, you know just where to shoot to bounce the shot off a surface and strike a hidden enemy. You halve the protection cover grants to your opponents and you bypass light cover completely. Moderate cover and heavy cover negate 1 and 2 successes respectively. This talent gives you no bonus to striking targets protected by total cover. Reduce you attack's DM by 1.

RIPOSTE (GREATER)

Requirement: Hand-to-Hand 2, one Basic Fighting Style

Description: When dueling with a foe, you are quick to seize whatever opportunities he gives you. Anytime you are attacked and negate all of your opponent's successes with your Parry and have successes left over, your opponent takes damage equal to those leftover successes.

SECOND WIND (GREATER)

Requirement: Endurance 2

Description: You can tap buried reservoirs of energy to shrug off your injuries and keep fighting. Once per round, you may spend your action to make an Endurance (Toughness) roll. For every 2 successes, you remove one hit from your damage track.

SHATTERING ATTACK (HEROIC)

Requirement: Strength 5

Description: A practice strike sends pieces of your enemies' weapons flying in all directions. When rolling Strength to destroy an opponent's weapon, gain a+3 dice bonus.

SKILLED (BASIC)

Description: You are adaptable and open to new possibilities. This willingness to learn new things makes you a quick study when confronted with a new skill. Select one skill. Henceforth, it is considered a background skill for you.

You may select this talent up to six times. Each time, it applies to a different skill.

SNEAKY (GREATER)

Requirement: Stealth 2

Description: You are naturally a devious and quiet person, and so you can move more quickly while trying to avoid attention. When making a Stealth roll, you move 1 yard for every success.

SPEED LOADER (GREATER)

Requirement: Firearms 2

Description: Deft hands and plenty of experience with firearms makes reloading weapons a snap. Reduce the reload time for your firearms by 1 action (minimum 1 action).

STAB AND SHOOT (HEROIC)

Requirements: Archery 3

Description: You learned that the lessons of combat rarely apply when you're fighting for your life, and sometimes unorthodox techniques are the only way you'll survive to fight another day. In combat, you may make a special attack using an arrow to stab at a nearby foe and then fire that arrow with your bow, all in the same action. To do so, divide your Archery dice into two sets. Roll the first set of dice to attack an adjacent foe with the arrow (treating the arrow as a dagger). Then, roll the second set of dice to attack an opponent by firing the arrow normally.

STRONG LUNGS (BASIC)

Requirement: Toughness 2

Description: You can hold your breath for long durations. Gain +1 bonus die to Endurance (Toughness) rolls. In addition, you can hold your breath for a number of rounds equal to twice your Toughness.

SWEEP (GREATER)

Requirement: Hand-to-Hand 2

Description: Sometimes you have to create your own opportunities. You may make a special attack to pull the feet out from under your foe. Resolve this attack as normal. If you land any hits, you may trade two of them to knock your foe to the ground.

SWIFT (GREATER)

Description: You move like the wind. When walking, you move 12 yards when walking and 20 yards when running. Outside of combat, you walk 4 miles per hour and run 7 miles per hour.

TALENTED (BASIC)

Description: You have a natural ability with a particular skill. When you select this talent, choose one skill. You may re-roll any single result of a 1 when using this skill. You may choose this talent multiple times. Each time select a new skill.



TORTURER (BASIC)

Requirement: Intimidate 1

Description: Those under your tender ministrations have little chance of resisting your interrogation techniques. Each hit you inflict on a target grants you a +1 die bonus to Intimidate rolls. In addition, when using Intimidate to scare opponents, you need one less success than normal.

TOUGH (GREATER)

Requirement: Toughness 3

Description: You're tough as nails. Increase the points on each level of your Health Track by +1.

TUMBLING ESCAPE (GREATER)

Requirement: Acrobatics 2

Description: Your acrobatic skill is a useful tool when confronted with enemies. If you have not yet acted, when attacked, you may spend your action making an Acrobatics (Agility) check. Any successes can be used like Defense Points for this attack only. Any successes left after you negate your opponent's successes, may be used to immediately move 1 yard per success sacrificed.

TWO ARROW SHOT (GREATER)

Requirement: Archery 3

Description: It's less accurate, but darn it's cool. You may fire two arrows at once. Divide your dice on the roll into two separate pools. You may use each set of dice against the same target or separate targets so long as the targets are within 6 yards of each other.

UNREADABLE (BASIC)

Requirement: Deceive 1

Description: You are expressionless and hard to read. You gain a +2 dice bonus to Deceive checks made to oppose Empathy (Intuition) rolls.

Veteran Warrior (Heroic)

Description: You are a veteran of many battles and the smells and sounds of battle no longer bother you. Killing is a job and one you just happen to be damn good at. Gain +1 die to all Fighting skill rolls. In addition, you gain +1 die to Endurance (Toughness) rolls to remain consciousness in combat.

FINISHING TOUCHES: HERO POINTS, TRUE FAITH, DAMNATION, SINS AND VIRTUES

HERO POINTS

Witch Hunters are heroes, and as such they are capable of deeds beyond the grasp of the average resident of this Grave New World. But even with the arsenal of powers available at their disposal, sometimes even an indefatigable Witch Hunter needs the intervention of providence or fortune.

Hero Points are designed to set the Witch Hunter apart; to demonstrate the qualities that arise in true heroes when it really counts. Given that Hero Points are grudgingly awarded in small quantities means that the players should be cautious about when and where to expend one. Using a Hero Point at just the right time could permit glorious victory and being without fortune's favor at an importune time could cause a horrible death.

AWARDING HERO POINTS

Hero Points are awarded by the GM to players for a variety of reasons:

1. Should a player act in such a manner that drastically enhances the enjoyment of the Scene or performs an otherwise normal action with spectacular flair, she should be awarded a point.

Example: *Rather than running up a staircase to rescue an innocent from the vile clutches of a deranged cultist, Gaspard Duvau grabs hold of a rope anchoring a heavy chandelier and cuts it, immediately propelling him up to the action as the massive crystalline centerpiece shatters into a million fragments.*

2. Playing a Virtue to the character's detriment.

Example: *Luther's Virtue is Merciful. During play, Luther encounters Jack O'Connell, a scoundrel and pirate that unsuccessfully tried to ambush him. Rather than killing O'Connell in cold blood, Luther lets him go with a warning that he won't be so forgiving next time they meet. Though the player of Luther realizes that O'Connell will be back to cause even more trouble, his act of mercy adds drama to the story by setting him free. Pleased that the player added a bit of history between his character and what was but a minor minion (whose status now rises a bit higher in the saga), the GM awards Luther a Hero Point.*

3. Not resisting when the Grand Master triggers a character Sin to the character's detriment.

Example: *Olivia Santoro's Sin is Greed (of Knowledge, in particular rare books and ancient tomes). While sneaking through the New Amsterdam manse of Geert van Ghent, Olivia enters the man's private library, filled with hundreds of rare books and unique and fascinating artifacts. Her eye falls on a copy of Von Grimm's Diary within a glass case and her mouth waters. Knowing that she is but seconds away from being discovered, she begins to turn away, but the GM takes that moment to activate her Sin. If she doesn't actively resist (by using a Hero Point – See below) she will be awarded a hero*

point at the end of the scene, assuming she survives the encounter with the approaching guards.

4. Adding a welcome complication or twist to the plot. (with the Grand Master's approval of course).

Example: *Gideon Marks is in New Amsterdam and has run afoul of the Rattle Watch. Needing to keep a low profile, he finds an unlocked door and quickly enters the darkened room beyond. Our GM has determined that the house is occupied by a small family, but Gideon's player has another idea. The player asks for the GMs indulgence and quickly narrates a small scene, as Gideon turns around to face a woman holding a candle and staring at him through narrowed eyes. Gideon takes off his hat and says, "Hello Marguerite." She replies, "I told you I'd kill you if I ever saw you again, Gideon." Seeing the possibilities of an old flame/adversary for Gideon, the GM agrees with this twist and awards Gideon a Hero Point. Of course, if the GM had other plans for the family within the home, he could refuse the plot twist and game play continues. Gideon's player will have to save that idea for another time.*

USES OF HERO POINTS

Hero Points are one of the key factors that separate a Witch Hunter from the common masses, providing him the opportunity to accomplish feats of an extraordinary quality.

Characters can only use a single Hero Point per instance; in other words, you cannot expend two Hero Points on any one action, though you can spend more than one Hero Point per round. The GM may allow a player to expend more than one point at her discretion, usually at a pivotal or climatic moment. Also, allowing the use of more than one hero point may be advised when only a miraculous roll can save the cadre of Witch Hunters.

Example: *Emil Zargossa launches himself against a Werewolf in an attempt to save the innocent children who are the foul beast's intended victims. Emil is not an expert swordsman like his friend Gideon, but the other Witch Hunter is hard pressed in his own life and death struggle. Emil's attack pool is only 4, so he decides to expend one of his Hero Points to increase his pool by 1. He cannot expend 2 Hero Points at this time to increase his pool to 6. Emil's attack fails to damage the creature, but he succeeds in turning its attention from the children to him. When the inevitable slash of claws comes, Emil may expend another Hero Point to negate 1 point of damage or, should he fall unconscious, expend another one to remain active.*

Hero Points can be used for a variety of benefits. Below are some of the ways that Hero Points can be applied. The use of Hero Points to enhance play in other ways is encouraged, and is entirely at the Grand Master's discretion

Hero Points can be expended for the following effects:

1. Add one bonus die to your roll. The Hero Point must be expended before the dice for the action are rolled. This is the most common manner of expending a Hero Point. This bonus die is not an automatic success. It is rolled like any other die from the dice pool. Dice pools may be increased beyond 10 if applicable. Additional Hero Points will need to be spent to gain a bonus die on any other actions.

2. One Hero Point may be expended to negate one wound taken.

3. One Hero Point may be expended to resist the triggering of a character's Sin.

4. One Hero Point may be expended to gain the use of any one Talent the character qualifies for but does not currently have. This talent only applies for one action.

Example: *Gideon is faced with a group fearful townspeople running from a war band of savages. If he could command their attention and get them to form up against their attackers, their chance of survival would greatly increase. Gideon has a Courage of 3 and a Command of 2, which meets the requirements of the Commanding Presence (Basic) Talent. He expends one Hero Point to temporarily (one action) gain the use of that Talent. Now he has a chance of rallying the villagers to make one last stand.*

5. When a character is injured, she begins to suffer penalties to her action rolls. One Hero Point may be expended to ignore all injury penalties for one action.

6. If a character fails her roll to remain conscious (see page 109), then one Hero Point may be expended to remain conscious.

7. If a Witch Hunter is killed, one Hero Point may be expended to avoid death. The character is instead unconscious and at the threshold of death, i.e. one Health point remaining. Remember, barring an exception from the GM, only one Hero Point may be spend per instance, so another Hero Point could not then be spend to remain active.

TRUE FAITH

Religious traditions in the Witch Hunter world typically adhere to a concept of good versus evil, or benign and malignant spirits. True Faith is a measure of the character's unwavering conviction that the Supreme Being or greater power they follow will ultimately triumph over its wicked counterpart. Witch Hunter uses Damnation points, rather than True Faith, to show the Accursed's devotion to the Adversary.

ACQUIRING TRUE FAITH POINTS

Witch Hunter characters are permitted as many as ten (10) points of True Faith, and all characters begin play with one. Your True Faith score is limited by the number of Damnation points you have accumulated. Your True Faith score can never exceed ten (10) minus your Damnation score.

Example: *If the character's Damnation score is one (1), then that character's True Faith score can never be greater than nine (9).*

To increase your character's True Faith points further, players may exchange ten (10) Hero Points for one (1) point of True Faith.

USING TRUE FAITH POINTS

True Faith points have a number of uses.

1. Certain rites and relics may require the user to have a minimum True Faith score before they can be learned or used.

2. There may be times when a Witch Hunter has no other choice but to fight fire with fire. Using a profane spell or even reading passages from a particularly blasphemous tome may require a True Faith check to avoid staining your soul. This is done by rolling a number of dice equal to your True Faith score. The number of successes necessary to avoid gaining Damnation points is equal to the Damnation score of the tome, rite or relic. Failure means the character receives a number of Damnation points equal to the item's Damnation score. Calling upon the power of the Adversary may be helpful or even necessary but such dread deeds are always dangerous.

Example: *Emil Zargossa has found no way to defeat the Wicker Man and heroes are running out of time. In act of desperation, he pulls out an ancient Pagan scroll of Unmaking and enacts the foul rite. Emil's True Faith score is 3 and the Damnation score of the rite is 2. Emil will need a minimum of two (2) successes to avoid gaining two (2) Damnation points.*

3. True Faith may also offer protection against attacks from demons, devils and other unholy creatures and spells. If noted in the description of the blasphemous rite, power, or creature's ability, the character's True Faith score may provide a number of bonus dice to defend against such attacks. While it is not out of the realm of possibility that such an attack could be of a physical nature, most such assaults target the soul (Spirit) of the Witch Hunter.

4. Lastly, True Faith is used when a group of Witch Hunters attempt to utterly destroy the soul of a Villain in the hopes that they can prevent it from ever returning to the land of the living. For details on this see **Chapter Ten: Creatures and Adversaries**.

DAMNATION

Damnation represents doubt in the ultimate triumph of that character's faith over the forces of the Adversary, as well as the influence of the Adversary over that character's soul. There is a distinction between a character's Damnation score and her Damnation dice pool. A Damnation score is only reduced by the expenditure of Hero Points, whereas a Damnation dice pool may increase and decrease depending on its use. Further details are given below.

ACQUIRING DAMNATION

The world is full of temptations that can lead one down the road to Hell. For the Witch Hunter, protecting one's soul is every bit as important as safeguarding one's mind or body. Yet sometimes there is no other option other than calling upon dark powers and hoping the cost is not too steep.

All Witch Hunter characters begin play without a Damnation score, but it can easily be gained by the following:

1. The most common place manner in which Damnation points can be accrued is by committing wicked acts. Cold blooded murder, the torture of innocents, or bearing false witness so that an innocent suffers are examples of damning acts that pull one's soul toward the adversary.
2. Reading certain blasphemous texts or using certain unholy rites and relics can add to one's Damnation score. The exact amount of Damnation gained and how to prevent it is detailed above under the heading "Using True Faith points". Additional information can be found in the **Chapter Eight: Grimoires and Relics**.
3. As explained in the Sins and Virtues chapter, giving in to temptation, i.e. using the beneficial aspect of one's mortal sin will earn the sinner one (1) Damnation point.
4. The use of Damnation points will earn the user a one point increase each time he uses his Damnation pool.

Example: Etienne Busard found himself in a terrible bind and called upon the Adversary's power to save his life. He tapped into his Damnation dice pool and uses two bonus dice to save his life. Etienne's Damnation score is increased by one (1) and his available dice pool is reduced by two (2).

Unlike Hero Points, one's Damnation dice pool refills at the beginning of every adventure. That means that should you have depleted your entire Damnation dice pool at the end of an adventure, unlike Hero Points, you begin with a fresh dice pool equal to your current Damnation score at the beginning of the next adventure. The Adversary is quite eager to obtain new servants.

USING DAMNATION

The use of Damnation points is very similar to that of Hero Points. You acquire a die for each point of Damnation you have. The expenditure of the points is slightly different as detailed below:

1. Unlike Hero Points, you may expend as many Damnation dice as you wish on a single action.
2. Damnation points may be expended to negate wounds taken on a point for point basis.
3. As a character becomes injured, he begins to suffer dice penalties to his action rolls. A Damnation Point may be expended to ignore injury penalties for one action.
4. If a character fails his roll to remain conscious (see page 109), then one Damnation Point may be expended to remain conscious.
5. If your character is killed, one Damnation Point may be expended to avoid death. The character is instead

unconscious and at the threshold of death, i.e. one remaining Health point.

EFFECTS OF DAMNATION

Using Damnation is pretty tempting, it is supposed to be. On a point by point basis, Damnation points are more useful than Hero Points and they are far easier to obtain as well. As with all things that are too good to be true, having a Damnation score has a hidden penalty that may not be readily apparent to the player.

1. Each point of your Damnation score (not dice pool) acts as a die penalty against resisting black magic, foul rites, and the unholy abilities of both creatures and artifacts. A dice pool can never be reduced below one (1) regardless of the penalty.

Example: A spirit that is trying to possess Etienne Busard. His Spirit is 2 and his True Faith is 2. To resist he would normally roll 4 dice, but since his Damnation score is 4, his pool is reduced by 4. As this would bring his pool to 0, he gets to roll only 1 die. Etienne better hope for a 10, unless he wishes to use a few bonus Damnation die to augment his roll.

2. The stain of corruption is offensive to God and those who embrace wickedness gain the enmity of the just. A character's Damnation score acts as a die penalty to any Interaction Skill rolls he makes when dealing with any who are not themselves corrupted. Again, a dice pool can never be reduced below one (1).

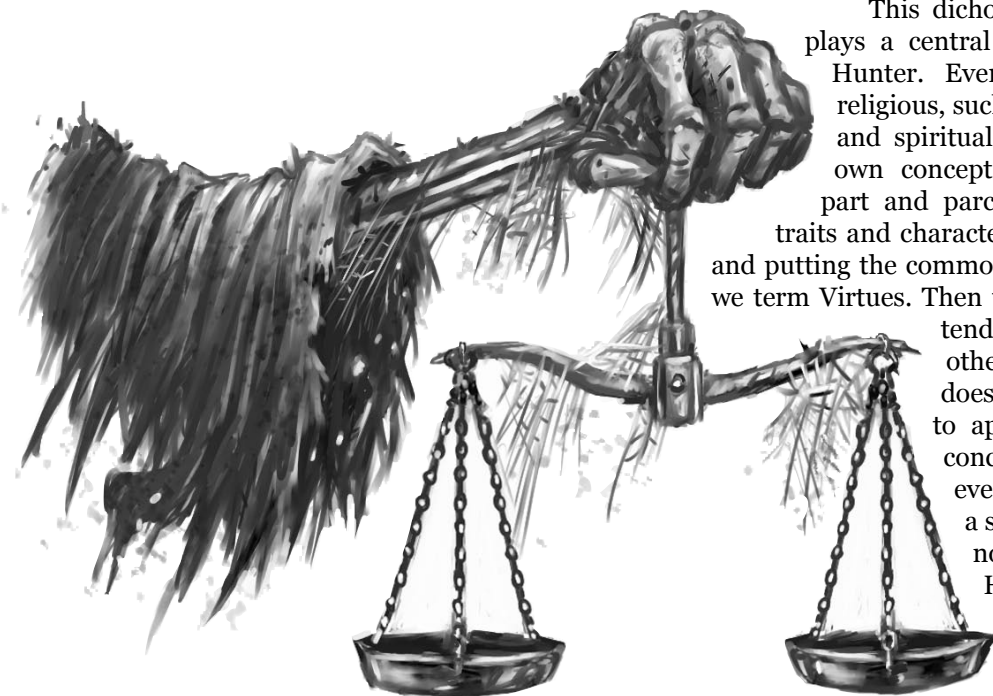
3. The truly damned begin to show physical signs of their corruption, manifesting in bizarre features and disgusting habits. Characters with Damnation scores above five (5) develop some twisted behavior of physical sign of their corruption. This may manifest as fiery eyes, an odd marking, a disturbing darkening of the skin, disturbing appetites and so on. The GM assigns a corruption appropriate to the character's actions and sins.

4. Lastly as noted in the True Faith section, a character's True Faith score is limited by his Damnation score. A character's True Faith cannot be higher than 10 – Damnation. Example: Etienne has a Damnation score of four (4). Thus, the highest his True Faith score can reach is six (6).

REDUCING THE DAMNATION SCORE

The only sure way to reduce your Damnation score is to atone for your sin. In the game, this is simulated by expending a Hero point earned for playing your Virtue correctly. This Hero point must be earned some time **after** a Damnation point was awarded. Therefore, even if you have hoarded five Hero points before you were damned, you cannot expend those to expunge the stain from your soul.

You may also expend a bonus Hero Point awarded at the end of a scenario to negate a Damnation point. This reflects the overall feeling of doing good by defeating a great evil and thus balancing the scales against any sins you may have committed.



This dichotomy between virtue and vice plays a central role in the themes of Witch Hunter. Every tradition (whether overtly religious, such as Christianity, or naturalistic and spiritual, such as animism) carries its own concepts of “vices” and “virtues” as part and parcel of its teachings. There are traits and characteristics that involve selflessness and putting the common good ahead of oneself, which we term Virtues. Then there are baser impulses and a tendency to put oneself ahead of others, which we term Vices. One does not have to be a Christian to appreciate and believe in these concepts on a universal level. Thus, even though the term “sin” carries a strong religious connotation, it’s not inappropriate for every Witch Hunter, even those who are non-denominational, to have these traits.

Example: Emil was forced to use the Rite of Unmaking to destroy the rampaging Wicker Man. He failed his True Faith roll and gained two points of Damnation. Even though Emil has three (3) Hero Points available to him, he cannot use them to drive the blackness that now haunts his soul. Later, Emil is in a situation where his Virtue puts him in a slight dilemma. After resolving the scene, the GM awards Emil one Hero Point. Emil can now bank this point with the other three that he has or he can immediately expend it to reduce his Damnation score by one.

SINS AND VIRTUES

The world of Witch Hunter is one with a strong undertone of morality. Religion obviously plays a central role, but faith does not hold a monopoly on morality. The individual player characters may be drawn from a variety of different faiths and traditions, but the one thing they all have in common is that they fight on the side of the righteous. They are the agents of God and they serve in the front lines of an endless war against the Adversary and evil in all its guises. The fact that the Hunters are clearly on the side of good does not mean that they are entirely pure in their own hearts and souls. Each of them is flawed in the way that all mortal beings are flawed, for perfection is something that only exists in the realm of the divine. Yet at the same time they each have the capacity for limitless goodness and it is that spark which (hopefully) shines even more brightly than the obsidian shard of sin that festers at the heart of all the children of Adam and Eve.

During character creation, you must select both a Sin (also referred to as a Vice) and a Virtue. These are intended to influence the character from both a game-mechanical and role-playing standpoint. These traits are not intended to serve as a major controlling factor or place limits on how many different kinds of characters and personalities exist in the game world. Rather, they are intended to provide additional “hooks” for defining the character, as well as to offer the Grand Master specific opportunities to shine the spotlight on each individual Hunter during an adventure. You should always see these traits as additional opportunities, not as limits or boundaries. In short, Vices and Virtues are an important part of your character, but they are no more or less important than all the other parts. If you as a player find yourself evaluating every decision your character makes in the context of his Vice and his Virtue, then you are probably carrying the metaphor a little bit too far; likewise, if the Grand Master treats these traits like a checklist of mandatory scenes that have to be added to each and every adventure for each and every character, then the Vices and Virtues will quickly become a detriment rather than an asset to the role-playing experience. Thus, you need to strike a balance, where these characteristics come into play when it is interesting and serves the story, but without “forcing” them to come up all the time.

Each character chooses only a single Vice and only a single Virtue. There’s nothing particularly unbalancing that would happen if you were to choose more than one, but because these elements do serve as a specific focus that will draw the spotlight to your character at key points in the story, “doubling up” would make it nearly impossible for the GM to give all the characters equal time in this regard.

SINS (VICES)

Your character's Vice is a fundamental weakness that she strives to overcome, a less-than-noble aspect of her soul that can come into play at inopportune times. Resisting the lure of temptation is always a challenge, even for those of the strongest moral fiber, and Witch Hunters (who are exposed to sin and depravity on a regular basis) are no different than anyone else in this regard. In order to make a Vice "appealing" it has a game mechanic associated with it. This gives your character a special benefit or ability that you can activate by tapping into that dark core of sin inside your soul and drawing forth some of its power. That's the good news. The bad news is that by giving in to the temptation you taint yourself in the eyes of God, gaining a point of Damnation. You may activate the ability associated with your Vice any time you choose – it does not need to be in a scene or situation that is thematically appropriate to the Vice in question. This is because the number of scenes that will actually match your Vice will be very low, but the temptation is omnipresent. Thus, the power is always there, you need only call upon it. The Vice itself is intended to help guide your role-playing and to give the GM the opportunity to draw your character into situations where the Vice itself (not the specific ability) might matter. If you give into temptation during such a scene (by following the Vice and thereby putting yourself or someone else at a disadvantage) you gain a Hero Point. Thus, there are always benefits to indulging your Vice, but there is always a cost as well. This is the Faustian bargain that has plagued mortals since the Fall.

To be clear, there are two entirely different scenarios that relate to your Vice. The first is a straight game-mechanical exchange – you activate your Vice power, gain its benefits (which usually involve manipulating a dice pool in some fashion) and also immediately gain a Damnation point. There is no other consequence and the game continues. The second is a pure role-playing scenario. If the Game Master presents you with a situation in which giving in to your character's Vice will put you, other people (especially innocents), or the mission at risk, and the choice is significant from a story standpoint, then you are rewarded with a Hero Point for giving in to the temptation and thereby complicating the story. Giving in to your Vice has to make things tangibly worse if it is to be worthy of a Hero Point. Of course, as with so many other things in the game, what exactly constitutes "worse" is a matter to be negotiated between you and the Grand Master, but an example will hopefully clarify what we mean.

A character whose Vice is that he is Lustful might find himself at a party in which he needs to infiltrate a wealthy landowner's manor house and steal a tome containing a particular spell or piece of information that is needed to complete the mission. All of the heroes work together to infiltrate the party and arrange matters so that the host is distracted and the Lustful character ends up sneaking into the sorcerer's chamber undetected. Sitting on a desk across the room is the tome. Unfortunately,

just as the hero is about to step into the room and claim the book, another partygoer, this one a beautiful woman, comes up the stairs behind him. She has been enticed by the Lustful character's charm and good looks and wishes to arrange an assignation for later, after the party. The player now has a decision to make. If he indulges his Vice and stops to talk with this woman, the moment of opportunity to steal the book will be lost and the heroes will have to find another way to get it later. This complicates the story and produces a "worse" outcome than if he resists the temptation and ignores the woman's advances to focus on stealing the book. Because either of these outcomes is interesting from a story standpoint, this is a situation where the GM calls for the player to make a choice, and if he chooses to give in to his Lustful nature, his reward is a Hero Point (and no doubt the good-natured dismay of his fellow players). The player does not gain a point of Damnation in this case because the negative repercussions of failing to steal the book have taken the story in an interesting direction and there is no need to add insult to injury.

Should the player decide that the character will resolutely ignore this brazen temptation, but the Grand Master feels that it is too strong to avoid, the GM may choose to make things interesting by forcing the character to succeed on a Personality test, with the difficulty determined based on how strong of a temptation that the GM thinks opportunity represents. In this case, if the character fails the test, he gives in to his Vice after all and goes off with the woman, but because the GM forced the issue, the character does not gain a point of Damnation. If the character passes the test, then he is able to fend off the woman's advances and proceed with the mission.

In order for a scene to be meaningful without being overly forced, it should have several characteristics. First, it should involve a choice that is not story-ending. If there is really only one decision to make (failing to steal the book means that the mission is an immediate failure) then there is really no choice involved because the player should not be put in a position of ruining the story simply by staying in character. Second, it should be significant. A Lustful character who starts drinking and wenching every time he passes a bar might be indulging his Vice, but that doesn't really have anything to do with the mission, so while it's not a bad thing and represents good role-playing, it's not worth a Hero Point. Now, if that character was supposed to be tailing an important suspect, and instead he goes into the bar and loses his mark, that represents a good use of the Vice and is worth a Hero Point for the indulgence of temptation.

Basically, such choices need to be meaningful in the sense that the mission will be harder or more complicated in some fashion because the character gave in (or didn't give in) to temptation, but they should not be matters that will bring the story to a screeching halt either way. Although sometimes these opportunities arise through pure serendipity as the story unfolds, more often setting these kinds of scenes up often requires a

fair amount of planning on the part of the GM, and of course it's a big help to know the characters' Vices ahead of time when designing the scenario so that appropriate opportunities can be provided. Again, this is a role-playing device and something that is supposed to add to the fun, so don't force it. There is no reason that every character should have to check her Vice in every single game session, but try to spread things around so that each character has a moment in the spotlight with a tough choice to make. Ideally, each player and the GM should work together to look for opportunities during the game where interesting choices relating to the character's Vice can be made.

Any time the game mechanics for a Vice ability grant you a bonus, the amount of the bonus is always based on the character's Personality score. For example, if you get to add dice to a pool, the number of dice you add is equal to your Personality. Those who have stronger personalities tend to be larger-than-life and that affects their bad behavior as well as their good behavior.

Any time a Vice ability grants you the ability to affect another character, that other character must be present when the ability is activated. (In other words, you can't target someone who isn't there.)

Remember, these abilities are not constant – they have to be activated deliberately. So while a Deceitful character might lie on multiple occasions during the game, he only gains bonus dice on his Deceive check if he activates his Vice. Activating any of these abilities earns the character an immediate point of Damnation. Such is the price of giving in to the darkness within. However, making checks of the appropriate type without activating the power does not give the character Damnation. (Otherwise, many characters would very quickly fall into irredeemable corruption.)

BLOODTHIRSTY

You love to spill blood and see the shredded corpses of your foes fall before you like wheat before a scythe.

Benefit: Any time you make a physical (melee or ranged, but not magical) attack that deals damage, you may roll bonus dice equal to your Personality. Any successes you roll are added to the damage dealt.

CARELESS

You are more concerned with finishing quickly than finishing well. Your handiwork is often sloppy.

Benefit: Any time you need to make a check, you may add bonus dice to your pool. The number of bonus dice is equal to your Personality. However, if you do not roll any successes on the check, you automatically suffer a Botch, even if you did not roll any natural 1's.

CRUEL

You derive a sick satisfaction when inflicting anguish and suffering on others.

Benefit: You automatically gain +1 success on any Intimidate check you make. This means that you can never suffer a Botch on an Intimidate check.

DECEITFUL / DISHONEST

You are a habitual liar.

Benefit: You automatically gain +1 success on any Deceive roll you make. This means that you can never Botch on a Deceive check.

DESPAIRING

You suffer from frequent crises of faith in which you question everything you believe and fall into hopelessness.

Benefit: You may ignore a Fear effect with a strength less than or equal to your Personality. This is not because you are courageous, it's because you simply don't care.

ENVOIOUS / COVETOUS

You always want what others have and are never satisfied with what you have been given in life. The grass is always greener on the other side of the fence.

Benefit: Whenever another character makes a roll, you may copy the number of successes and use that number of successes in place of a check of the same type that you would otherwise roll. (You can only get a number of successes equal to the entire size of your own dice pool, however.) This must be done within a number of rounds (in combat) or minutes (out of combat) equal to your Personality. For example, if another character makes an attack and scores 7 successes, you may choose to score up to 7 successes on your next turn instead of rolling your own attack pool, assuming you have at least 7 dice in your pool. You could not use those 7 successes for your defense pool because the roll you copied was for making an attack.

GLUTTONOUS

You are over-indulgent when it comes to your appetites, especially with food and drink. You will gladly take from others in order to ensure that there is enough for you. This is different from Lust because your gluttony is for something other than sexual gratification, and it is different from Greed because you do not hoard, you consume voraciously. A character with an addiction of some sort might be considered Gluttonous.

Benefit: Before you make a roll, you may choose a number of other Witch Hunters (your fellow characters) equal to your Personality Score. Each of those characters suffers -1 success on their next roll (whatever it is) and you roll that many bonus dice.

GREEDY

No matter how much you are given, you always want more, whether it is money, power, or fame. Too much is never enough for you.

Benefit: When you spend a Hero Point, you may choose to spend a second Hero Point at no extra cost (in other words, you only spend the original Hero Point, and the second is free). You gain the full benefits of both Hero Points.

HOT-HEADED / QUICK-TEMPERED

You are always itching for a fight and take offense easily. Benefit: On any Initiative check, you gain bonus dice equal to your Personality. If you are the one starting the fight, you also gain +1 success on the check.

LUSTFUL

You delight in the pleasures of the flesh. Chastity and abstinence are not words with which you are familiar. Benefit: On any Charm check, you gain bonus dice equal to your Personality.

PERFECTIONIST

There is never enough time to do something right, but there is always enough time to do it over. You are hypercritical of your own work and the work of others, and you are never satisfied. Benefit: Any time you fail a non-combat skill check, you may re-roll a number of non-successes (dice that result in a 6 or lower) equal to your Personality. You always start with the lowest dice first (1s, then 2s, then 3s, etc.) If the result of the check including the re-rolled dice is a success, then you succeed. Even if it is still a failure, you may not activate this ability to re-roll a second time.

PRIDEFUL

You are inordinately proud of yourself and your accomplishments. You are the best! Benefit: You may re-roll any check that you just rolled. You must take the results of the second check even if they are worse than the first, but the second check can never cause a Botch no matter how badly you roll (although it can still fail to succeed).

SLOTHFUL

You are lazy and slovenly, always trying to get others to do your work for you. Benefit: When you are about to make a check outside of combat, you may instead choose another Witch Hunter (one of your fellow characters) and force that player to roll the check instead. If the check is a success, you gain the benefits, but if the check is a failure, the other character suffers the consequences.

VAIN

You take an inordinate amount of pride in your personal appearance. Mirror, mirror, on the wall, you're the fairest one of all. Benefit: On any Charm check, you gain bonus dice equal to your Personality.

VENGEFUL

You never forget a slight (whether real or perceived) and always get your revenge on those who have wronged you in some fashion. Benefit: Whenever you deal damage to a creature or character that has previously done damage to you, you

may roll a number of bonus dice equal to your Personality. Any successes you roll are added to the damage dealt. This can also apply to damage that you deal with magic.

This list is not intended to be exhaustive. The number of possible Vices is limited only by your imagination. If you want your character to have a Vice that is not listed here, you should check with the Grand Master first to devise a suitable definition and come up with an effect. Good effects are those that are limited to a specific type of check or roll, and should never involve anything more powerful than manipulating the outcome of that type of check or roll. Adding bonus dice, having a bonus success, and being able to re-roll some or all of the dice are all examples of good mechanical effects. Remember that the conditions under which you activate your ability do not have to match the terms of your Vice. A Greedy character who spends two Hero Points for the price of one is not sitting at a banquet table gobbling down food and wine at that exact moment in time, but he is drawing on the evil feelings and the corruption in his soul that has accumulated from all those times in the past when he did indulge his Vice and it is that dark power which gives him both the benefits of his ability and the concomitant point of Damnation.

VIRTUES

Virtues are the moral opposite of Vices. However, they function in a similar fashion. Virtues do not give you special abilities the way Vices do, because virtue is supposed to be its own reward. If the Grand Master feels that you are taking actions that are diametrically opposed to your Virtue then she can punish you with a Damnation point. (This should typically be preceded with a warning so that the player ultimately makes the decision whether or not to take a particular action.) Virtues are not intended to be straitjackets – they are supposed to enhance role-playing and provide an additional character hook. So, the use of Damnation to punish transgressions against a Virtue should be reserved for situations where the deed is particularly heinous in the context of that Virtue or when a series of smaller sins finally adds up over time (persistent infringement).

Just like with Vices, the Grand Master can also try to “tempt” you away from the path of righteousness. This should involve a situation where your virtuous nature actually gets in the way of doing what is most expedient. In other words, you must choose to do what you believe is right even though upholding that virtue causes you some other sort of story complication or problem. If you uphold your Virtue then you gain a Hero Point. However, you may instead choose to forego gaining that Hero Point to eliminate one point of Damnation that you received by giving in to your Vice (activating its ability). If you fail to uphold your Virtue then you do not gain the Hero Point but you do not suffer the story repercussions that the GM had in mind.

As we explained in the section on Vices, the story complications that arise from the exercise of Virtue should never be game-ending. They should be significant, but the story must be able to proceed regardless of which path is chosen. Otherwise it is really an illusion of choice rather than a meaningful decision. Virtues are not supposed to be cynical. They are intended to represent good qualities about people, but sometimes upholding those qualities can put us in difficult situations. Those who choose to do the “good” thing rather than the “easy” thing are rewarded. Witch Hunters often find themselves in cases where situational ethics and relative morality would suggest that betraying one’s Virtue is the necessary thing to do – but does that make it right? Do the ends justify the means? We hope such moral dilemmas help to spark interesting role-playing and make the game more fun for everyone. Witch Hunters want to live in a world of black and white. They serve God and fight the Adversary. The descriptions of each Virtue are intended to represent this. Betraying one’s core beliefs results in Damnation, because a sin of convenience and a sin of necessity are still both sins even if one of them seems to be much more justifiable than the other.

As an example, let’s consider Mercy. A Merciful character should generally seek to spare the lives of enemy minions as long as there is a hope that they can be reformed or redeemed. God is the ultimate arbiter, and it would be wrong of the Hunter to substitute his own flawed judgment for that of the Almighty. This might suggest that the player would be an advocate of allowing foes to surrender rather than be killed, of patching up the dying rather than letting them bleed out, and so forth. The specific interpretation will vary from person to person, and that’s a good thing (otherwise every character who chooses the same Virtue will seem like a carbon copy, which is boring). Upholding the Virtue in this day-to-day fashion is part and parcel of the character’s beliefs and actions, so these acts of Mercy do not result in the character gaining Hero Points. However, should the Grand Master feel that the character has lost sight of his Virtue (such as by refusing to allow foes to surrender and killing them indiscriminately, even after they throw down their weapons) the she might issue a warning to the player and follow up with a point of Damnation should the character commit a particularly egregious offense against his virtue of Mercy.

Now, suppose the GM contrives a scene in which the character’s Mercy is really put to the test. A particular foe has committed terrible acts in the past which caused great harm to innocents and perhaps even to the character (killing someone that the Hunter cared for or was specifically trying to protect, for example). Now the Hunter has that foe dead to rights, and must choose whether to be Merciful and suffer the evildoer to live even though he richly deserves death for his crimes, or to give in to a baser urge for revenge and kill the helpless foe. The scene becomes even more interesting if by showing Mercy the Hunter knows that justice will be denied and although

this particular scheme might be thwarted, there’s every reason to believe that this foe will be back in the future with another nefarious scheme. Showing Mercy under those circumstances is worthy of a Hero Point because the character is sacrificing a meaningful gain in order to uphold his Virtue. If the character had previously accumulated one or more points of Damnation, the player might choose to forfeit this Hero Point and instead redeem a point of Damnation.

Some Virtues might be difficult to work into scenes such as the one described above. However, with a bit of thought, it’s usually possible to come up with a situation where upholding the Virtue can only be done if the character passes up some other gain. Remaining Chaste might mean losing the opportunity to infiltrate a cult (one of whose members is interested in the character). Being Charitable means giving away material wealth even when it would be very useful to the character. Instead of keeping a relic that would be very potent in future combat scenes, the character sends it to the “home office” where it can be studied and protected. Being Honorable is great until you encounter a situation where following your code of conduct might cause harm to an innocent. Being Humble in a social setting might mean that someone who could provide useful information loses interest in talking to you. Being Just means upholding the law even if that does not result in a “good” outcome. Being Truthful can lead to a situation where the character must choose between speaking honestly to a member of the nobility about an unpleasant situation in that noble’s family (and thereby losing that noble’s favor) or telling a pleasant lie to keep the benefits of the noble’s patronage but allowing him to continue to live in ignorance. As with Vices, it’s not necessary for every single character’s Virtue to be explicitly tested in every single gaming session.

CHASTE

You hold your virtue sacred and do not give in to the pleasures of the flesh, even when you are sorely tempted.

CHARITABLE

You are generous to a fault; your worldly possessions are only those things that you absolutely need to survive. Any material wealth you accumulate, you seek to give away to someone who needs it more than you do.

COURAGEOUS

Your bravery is beyond question. You lead the charge, hold the line, and make the difficult choice even if it means facing down your deepest fears and insecurities.

HONORABLE

You adhere to a strict code of conduct (such as chivalry) which prevents you from taking advantage of others, striking someone who is at a disadvantage, or settling for the expedient but distasteful compromise.

HUMBLE

You are self-effacing and deflect the credit for good deeds to others rather than claiming glory for yourself. You derive satisfaction from a job well done and feel that doing your best is its own reward rather than needing the recognition of others.

INDUSTRIOUS

You believe that hard work is its own reward and idle hands are the Devil's tools. You always seek to give maximum effort and encourage those around you to do the same. The only way to truly fail is not to try and succeed.

JUST

You are concerned with what is fair, believing that righteousness often equals fairness. Everyone should be regarded and treated as equals, and laws should be upheld because they represent a common framework that holds civilization together.

MERCIFUL

You seek to redeem those who do not have to be killed or destroyed. While certain servants of the Adversary are obviously beyond recovery, any time you see an opportunity to turn someone back to the light, you try to spare that person's life.

PRUDENT

You exercise good judgment at all times and do not allow yourself to lose your wits in the heat of the moment. You are cautious, but not fearful. You want to be certain of the best course of action before you make a rash decision or leap to conclusions.

TEMPERANCE

You do not partake of what others might call the finer things in life; perhaps you prefer plain homespun to fancy attire, or adhere to a strict and very basic diet rather than indulging in delicious food and drink.

TRUTHFUL

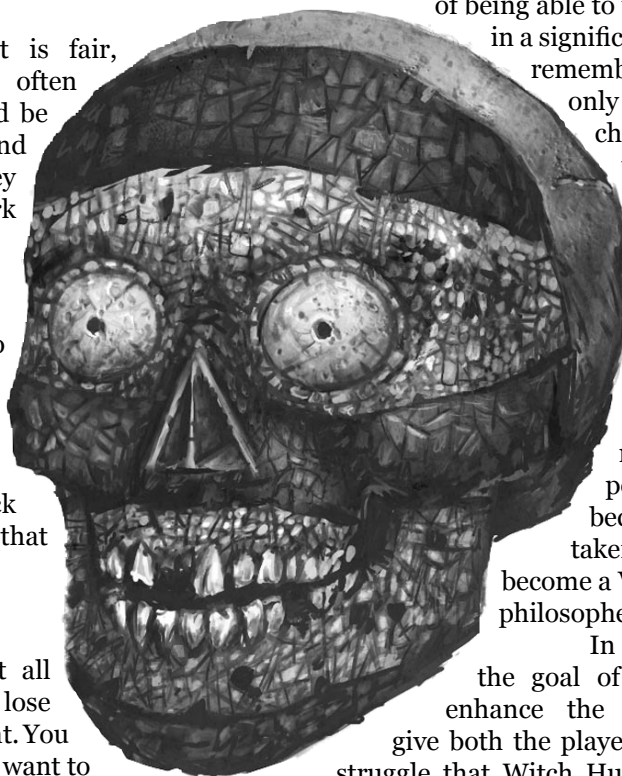
You believe that honesty is the best policy. Lying only serves the Adversary because if we are not honest with those around us then we cannot truly be honest with ourselves. Telling people the truth, even if it is not necessarily what they want to hear or even if it is a hard truth, is always better in the long run.

As with Vices, there are a great number of Virtues that a character might possess. The following list is by no means exhaustive. We encourage players and Grand Masters to work together to pick Virtues that are interesting from a role-playing standpoint but also concrete enough that the GM has a reasonable likelihood

of being able to work that Virtue into the story in a significant fashion. Most importantly,

remember that even though you only choose one Virtue for your character, it does not mean that this is your character's only (or even primary) personality trait. Your Virtue should help round out your character concept and give you a basic thermometer to help you decide how your character will react to situations and life in general, but it should not constrain you to the point where your portrayal becomes one-dimensional. If taken to extremes, can a Virtue become a Vice? That is a question for the philosophers, indeed.

In conclusion, remember that the goal of Vices and Virtues is really enhance the storytelling experience and give both the players and the GM a sense of the struggle that Witch Hunters must go through. They have opportunities to gain power and use that power for their own benefit, but doing so always carries a cost. They have core beliefs which sustain them through dark times but also sometimes get in the way of doing what needs to be done. The rules in this section are intended to facilitate those kinds of choices and make them a tangible part of the game, creating opportunities for the story to go in interesting directions. However, if you find yourself running down a checklist or "getting the Virtue and Vice stuff out of the way at the beginning of the adventure" then you probably need to rethink your approach. If these mechanics do not work well with the play style of your particular group, you can always choose not to use them and instead just treat the lists of Virtues and Vices as some character traits that help define a character concept but do not have the force of rules behind them.



CHAPTER THREE: WEALTH AND EQUIPMENT

The *Witch Hunter* world has a complex economy, with new companies forming, abundant resources, and the hopes of great fortune. But tempering this new age is the realities and cost of expansion into the new world. Society reels from the rise of mercantilism dictated by the developing complexities of the foreign markets, new commodities, and a slew of other factors. One difficulty in creating an economic system to underpin *Witch Hunter* stems from the uncertainty and the variability of the currency. It is an era where the barter system is in use, but also declining as a coherent economic system emerges to meet the needs of colonial industry. The days of exchanging pelts for sacks of grain are starting to wane as the monies of the day take hold. Even the Native Americans employ a form of currency that's recognized by the settlers and their governments. In short, the world is changing and how people buy and sell goods reflects this new era.

CURRENCY AND ECONOMY

While economic upheaval and evolution is of interest to historians and economists, it does not make for an exciting roleplaying game. For simplicity, *Witch Hunter* uses a simplified coin-based system. A system for using wampum, the common currency of the indigenous peoples, is included for those wishing to add another level of realism to their campaign.

In the New World, paper currency has yet to catch on; it is viewed with suspicion at best. Instead, most people rely on cold hard coin to deal in transactions. Each nation mints their own coin, as do many trading houses, colonies, and more. From florins to doubloons, guineas to ducats, there are plenty of coins in circulation. In the interests of keeping this game fun, all coins are worth the same regardless of national origin. (This is a historical stretch, but it makes for a simpler game.)

Witch Hunter uses five denominations. The most valuable coin is the pound sterling (£), worth about 4 ounces of gold, though prices fluctuate a great deal, ranging from 3.8 oz. to as much as 4.8 oz. Next comes the crown (c), followed by the shilling (s), the penny (d), and the farthing (f). For the rate of exchange, see **Table 3-1: Coins of Witch Hunter**. In some places in the New World, the full bore musket ball is equivalent to a farthing.

Table 3-1: Coins of Witch Hunter

Coin	—Exchange—				
	£	c	s	d	f
Pound (£)	1	4	20	240	960
Crown (c)	1/4	1	5	60	240
Shilling (s)	1/20	1/5	1	12	48
Penny (d)	1/240	1/60	1/12	1	4
Farthing (f)	1/960	1/240	1/48	1/4	1

WAMPUM

The indigenous peoples of the New World tend to barter more than they use coin. However, as businesses began to demand coin in exchange for goods, the Native Americans started trading in polished shells cut into beads called seawant. Several can be woven onto string. Called a peag, these strings come in many denominations, with white peags appearing in 1d, 3d, 12d, and 5s denominations, and black peags coming in 2d, 6d, 2 1/2s, and 10s denominations.

Nearly all settlers recognize wampum as viable coinage, though local governments tend to impose limits. Most towns accept wampum in trades worth up to 40s. There are two types of wampum, white and black. The black wampum are worth more, as shown on **Table 3-2: Wampum**.

Table 3-2: Wampum

Coin	—Exchange—		
	ww	bw	d
White seawant (ww)	1	1/2	1/8
Black seawant (bw)	2	1	1/4
Pence (d)	8	4	1

BUYING AND SELLING

Though the prices described in this chapter appear fixed, it's important to remember haggling is a big part of commerce. Rarely do merchants get their asking price for goods, and most can be convinced to reduce the price of their goods to come close to the buyer's asking price. As a result, most prices fluctuate up or down by as much as 20%.

STARTING WEALTH

All starting characters begin play with £1d10 with which they may purchase equipment. In addition, they have one set of clothes and a backpack. Though some backgrounds such as the monk/nun or slave probably have less, and courtiers and diplomats have more, but characters of a higher station undoubtedly spend more money on their comfortable lifestyles, while poorer ones scrimp and save to make ends meet, putting away what they can. As such, this extra coin is discretionary wealth left over from your former life. When creating Native American Indian characters, buy items using the standard coin-based system and then either convert the remainder as wampum or have the character begin with European coinage as a sign of her having interacted with the settlers.

SPEEDING PLAY

The easiest way to expedite buying and selling is simply to use the prices included in this chapter. Characters wishing to purchase equipment spend the listed amount for new and used goods. Likewise, characters selling goods receive half the listed price for used goods and the full listed price for new goods. Use this method for all newly generated characters purchasing starting equipment.

INCOME

As Witch Hunters, characters don’t have the time to set up and maintain a business. *Witch Hunter* is a game of horror, of action and adventure, not whiling away the time in a workshop mending shoes. But, in certain scenarios, player characters may have the time and inclination to seek employment to earn wages as described under the Trade skill. What follows approximate standard incomes based on social standing.

Table 3–3: Standard Income

Social Standing	Yearly Income*
Slave	0
Commoner or Entertainer	£15
Artisans and artists	£30
Professional or soldier	£50
Merchant	£75
Lesser noble	£125
Greater noble	£250

*Average

GOODS AND GEAR

Here is a list of the common types of goods one is bound to find in the world of *Witch Hunter*. While the prices described here are close to what items went for in the seventeenth century, these are approximations and in some cases, they may be completely inaccurate. Prices fluctuate based on crops, availability, political developments and more. These should serve as a guide for quick transactions. It is also important to note that these prices are for goods of average quality. Exceptional goods may go for as much as twice the price, while poor goods can go as low as half or even a third of the price. Where necessary, descriptions for how to use specific equipment are included on the following tables.

STARTING KITS

While many Witch Hunters will want to customize their purchases in detail, there are times when you simply want to grab “the essentials” and be on your way. If so, these kits are for you.

THE SOLDIER’S KIT

The Soldier’s Kit is built for the professional fighting man (or woman). While it does not include a musket or pistol – such things are expensive, and usually provided by one’s employer – it includes an armored breastplate, a sturdy sword, and all the other essentials needed for traveling in rough and potentially hostile terrain. It is also fairly heavy, though hopefully one will not be carrying the bulkier items into battle.

Metal breastplate	Tent
Sword	Tinderbox
Dagger	Waterskin
Backpack	Whetstone
Rations (6 days)	Common garb (2 sets)
Bedroll	Boots (2 pair)
Pouch/purse	Cloak

10 yards rope

Total Cost: 4£ 3c 4s 8d 3f

Total Weight: 88 lb.

THE SAILOR’S KIT

For those without the money or the inclination to carry around heavy armor and extensive traveling supplies, the Sailor’s Kit is a practical alternative. It provides basic self-defense equipment at a more affordable price, though it assumes that you will have some shelter from the elements wherever you’re going.

Pitch jacket	Pouch/purse
Cutlass	10 yards rope
Club	Whetstone
Dagger	Sailor’s garb (2 sets)
Wine, 1 bottle, poor	Cap

Total Cost: 1£ 3c 3s 2d 3f

Total Weight: 37 lb.

THE TRADESMAN’S KIT

Not everyone feels the need to carry weapons and armor wherever they go. The Tradesman’s Kit is intended for those more civilized individuals who need to maintain a respectable appearance while carrying the essentials they need to carry on their trade or profession.

Dagger	Tinderbox
Tradesman’s garb (2)	Chisel
Hat, common	File
Cloak	Hammer
Lamp	Handsaw
Pouch/purse	Nails (24)
Sack	

Total Cost: 3c 1s 6d

Total Weight: 31 lb.

THE SCHOLAR'S KIT

Whether priest or layman, it is inconceivable for you to travel without your books and papers. Weapons are for the uneducated...your weapons are between your ears, and they are mightier than the sword.

Dagger	Purse
Scholar's garb	Paper (10 sheets)
Tobacco	Prayer book
Book (3)	Quill (3)
Ink (3 oz., 3 different colors)	Tinderbox
Candle, wax (3)	
Total Cost: 3£ 2c 3s 6d 2f	
Total Weight: 15 lb.	

THE GENTLEMAN'S KIT

Finally, there are those to whom appearance and propriety are everything. With the Gentleman's Kit, you may not have the right tool at hand for every eventuality, but you will certainly look good when you get there.

Sword	Hat
Dagger	Wig
Gentleman's garb	Pouch/purse
Handkerchief (2)	
Total Cost: 9£ 1c 4s	
Total Weight: 12.5 lb.	

VEHICLES

Vehicles move about as fast as the force pulling or propelling it. Land vehicles all require some sort of dray animal to pull it, while rowboats require the strength of the rower to move it forward. Large water vessels use sea power or oars. For details on using vehicles in combat, see **Chapter Four: Playing the Game**.

CARRIAGE/COACH

Essentially a wagon equipped with a comfortable compartment for travelers, carriages are the preferred mode of transportation for the landed and wealthy. A typical carriage can hold about six passengers inside, plus two seats on the front for the drivers, a stand at the back for the footman. It's not unheard of for passengers to ride on top of the carriage, which can hold up six more passengers. A carriage can be pulled by a team of two, four, or six horses.

T 172 (frame) or 22 (wheel); **Typical Speed:** 5 mph for two horses/6 mph for four horses/7 mph for six horses; **Ram DM** +3; **Trample DM** +6

CART

This is a simple vehicle, consisting of a bed held aloft by two wheels. It is drawn by one dray animal. The bed can hold

up to three passengers and a driver.

T 125 (frame) or 17 (wheel); **Typical Speed:** 3 mph/45 yards per round; **Ram DM** +2; **Trample DM** +3

KEELBOAT

A keelboat is a large boat that can sail at sea or in rivers. Statistics for a keelboat also reflect those of a barge. These vessels can typically hold upwards of 50 tons of cargo.

T 220 (hull); **Typical Speed:** 3 mph/45 yards per round; **Ram DM** +6; **Trample DM** n/a

ROWBOAT/CANOE

This small oar-propelled craft can hold up to four passengers.

T 96 (hull); **Typical Speed:** Depends on current, 1–3 mph, see **Row** skill; **Ram DM** +2; **Trample DM** n/a

SAILING SHIP

A sailing ship encompasses a broad range of ships. These vessels can sail at sea or in deep lakes. Most have a two to three dozen crew members and the ships can hold as much as 200 tons of cargo.

T 240 (hull); **Typical Speed:** Depends on wind, 2–4 mph; **Ram DM** +10; **Trample DM** n/a

WAGON

A wagon is a large flatbed vehicle drawn by a team of two to four horses. It can hold a rider, and up to nine passengers.

T 172 (frame), 42 (wheel); **Max Speed:** 5 mph/75 yards per round; **Ram DM** +3; **Trample DM** +6

Table 3–4: Animals, Tack, and Vehicles

Item	Cost
Carriage or coach	£50+
Cart	8s
Dog, common hunting	1s
Dog, guard or war	£1
Donkey or mule	8s
Eagle or falcon	£8
Horse, Draft	£1
Horse, riding	£5
Horse, riding, quality	£10
Keelboat	£100+
Pony	£1
Rowboat/Canoe with 2 oars	£2 10s
Saddle	£2
Saddle bag	5s
Sailing Ship	£300+
Wagon	£1
Warhorse	£80

CLOTHING AND ACCESSORIES

The prices for clothing are generally for average apparel, with a few exceptions. Items of finer materials or of a more fashionable design may certainly cost more. Superior quality clothing grants a +1 die bonus to Charm rolls.

Table 3–5: Clothing and Accessories

Item	Cost	Weight
Belt	2s4d	—
Boots	9s	3 lb.
Breeches	2s	3 lb.
Cap	1s10d	—
Cloak	5s	9 lb.
Garb, common	1s2d	2 lb.
Garb, gentleman's	£6 1s	8 lb.
Garb, gentlewoman's	£10	10 lb.
Garb, poor	8d	1 lb.
Garb, sailor's	3s	4 lb.
Garb, scholar's	8s	8 lb.
Garb, tradesman's	1s	5 lb.
Gown	12s	6 lb.
Handkerchief	4d	—
Hat, common	1s2d	—
Hat	3s	—
Holster	6d	1 lb.
Long Coat	10s	15 lb.
Necklace, gold	16s	—
Pearls, string	£4 12s	—
Pocket watch	£3	—
Ring, common	£2	—
Ring, fine	£5	—
Ring, exceptional	£60	—
Shirt	2s6d	1 lb.
Shoes	2s3d	2 lb.
Shoulder belt	1s	1 lb.
Socks, pair	1s8d	—
Suit, fine	19s	7 lb.
Suit, good	15s	5 lb.
Suit, common	7s6d	5 lb.
Tobacco, fine	6d	1/2 lb.
Waist Coat	2s6d	2 lb.
Wig	£1 12s6d	—

EQUIPMENT

All of the items described here are available in most locales. Most need no further description, but a few items warrant additional comments.

Candles: A lit candle burns for 1 hour before guttering out. It sheds bright light in a 1-yard radius and shadowy light 1 yard further.

Chain: A chain may be snapped with a D5 Strength roll.

Crowbar: When using a crowbar to pry open a container or door, you gain a +2 dice bonus.

Grappling Hook: To use a grappling hook to secure a rope, you must make a Throw (Agility) roll. The hook has a range of 3 yards. Each additional 3 yards beyond the first imposes a cumulative –1 die penalty.

Lamp or Lantern: When filled with oil and lit, these devices burn for 2 hours. A lamp sheds bright light in a 10-yard radius and shadowy light 20 yards further, while a lantern sheds bright light in a 20-yard radius and shadowy light 40 yards further.

Rope: Rope can be snapped with a D4 Strength roll.

Spyglass: These devices magnify vision by ten times.

Tinderbox: Lighting a fire, lamp, lantern, or torch requires 5 actions when using a tinderbox.

Torch: A lit torch burns for 1 hour. It sheds bright light in a 6-yard radius and shadowy light 12 yards further.

Table 3–6: Equipment

Item	Cost	Weight
Backpack	8d	2 lb.
Bedroll	4d	5 lb.
Blanket	6d	2 lb.
Book	2c	1 lb.
Bottle	4d	—
Cage, small	10d	5 lb.
Cage, medium	3s	70 lb.
Cage, large	5s	300 lb.
Candle, tallow	1d2f	—
Candle, wax	6d2f	—
Canvas, 1 yard sheet	4s	1 lb.
Chain, per 3 yards	12s	2 lb.
Chalk, 1 pc.	1f	—
Chest	8d	25 lb.
Crowbar	6d	5 lb.
Grappling hook	1s	4 lb.
Incense, block or stick	5s	—
Ink, 1 oz	8s	—
Lamp	8d	2 lb.
Lantern	1sd3	3 lb.
Lock	£1	1 lb.
Manacles	2s	2 lb.
Mirror, small	15s	1/2 lb.
Paper	4d	—
Pouch/Purse	1s	—
Prayer Book	3s	2 lb.

Table 3–6: Equipment

Item	Cost	Weight
Quill	1d	—
Rope, 10 yards	1s	6 lb.
Sack	1d	1/2 lb.
Soap	6d	1 lb.
Spyglass	£45	1 lb.
Tent	10s	20 lb.
Tinderbox	1s	1/2 lb.
Torch	2f	1 lb.
Waterskin	1s	4 lb.
Whetstone	3f	1 lb.

FOOD AND DRINK

The prices reflect the cheapest edible fare. While lesser quality food is certainly available, it is likely poisonous, infested with vermin, or worse.

Table 3–7: Food & Drink

Item	Cost	Weight
Ale, quart	2f	2 lb.
Beer, quart	1d	2 lb.
Bacon	4d	1 lb.
Beef	2d	1 lb.
Bread, loaf	1f	—
Butter	4d	1 lb.
Cheese	2d2f	1 lb.
Common meal	6d	—
Eggs, 2 doz.	1d	—
Fruit, dried	2d	1 lb.
Mutton, quarter	2s	1 lb.
Pork, pickled	4d	1 lb.
Rations, day	5d	1 lb.
Spices	2s	1 lb.
Veal, quarter	2s6d	1 lb.
Wine, common	6d	1 lb.
Wine, poor	3d	1 lb.
Wine, quality	10d	1 lb.

LODGING AND SERVICES

As with everything, you get what you pay for. Shoddier accommodations means sharing a bed with fleas or worse, while upscale quarters may include personal servants, hot baths, and more.

Table 3–8: Lodging

Accommodations	Cost
Feather bed per night	1f
Feather bed for two per night	3f
Flock bed for two per night	2f
Chamber with 2 beds and furniture per night	4d
Vacant room or stable, per week	4d
Services	Cost
Coach	2d/mile
Guide	1d/night
Ferry	1d/horse
Ferry	2f/man
Messenger	2f/mile
Ship's passage	3d/mile
Whore, common	6d/hour
Whore, excellent	£1/hour
Whore, good	2s/hour
Whore, poor	1d/hour

TOOLS

Tools often have other applications than for what they were intended. Branding irons nicely mark those in service to the Adversary, while a hammer can get a prisoner to talk faster than any threat.

Table 3–9: Tools

Item	Cost	Weight
Branding Iron	6d	5 lb.
Chisel	6d	1 lb.
File	10d	1 lb.
Hammer	1s	3 lb.
Handsaw	1s4d	3 lb.
Hook, fishing	2d	—
Instrument, music	5s+	3 lb.
Ladder	10d	20 lb.
Leeches	5s	—
Line, fishing	2s	—
Magnifying glass	£5	—
Mortar and Pestle	8d	5 lb.
Nails, 24	1s1d	—
Needles, 24	5s	—
Pickaxe	1s6d	5 lb.
Scale	2s	8 lb.
Shovel	1s6d	4 lb.
Tools, armorer	£13 16s11d	50 lb.
Tools, artisan's	£1	30 lb.
Tools, locksmith	£1 10s	10 lb.
Tools, navigator's	£18	20 lb.
Tools, shipwright's	£8	20 lb.
Tools, surgeon's	£20	10 lb.
Wheel, spare	7s	10 lb.
Wheelbarrow	6s	15 lb.

WEAPONS

A trusted weapon may be all that stands between life and near certain death. And despite the rise of gunpowder supplanting of the medieval tools of war, many of the older weapons persist in use. In this game, you'll find swords alongside pistols, axes and clubs in the hands of primitives, and bows, spears, and hammers all proving as deadly as ever. The following tables describe the most common weapons still in use in this era. This list is by no means exhaustive, but it represents nearly all of the weapons one might find.

WEAPON TRAITS

The weapons described include a series of numbers and notations. The information defines the weapon's capabilities. They are as follows.

Cost: All weapons cost something. As well, these are the prices used to determine the number of construction units require to build a weapon from scratch. Be aware that when constructing any piece of equipment, you must pay half the item's cost in raw materials.

C: This entry denotes the weapon's complexity. You take this number as a die penalty to action rolls made to attack.

DM: This entry describes the weapon's Damage Modifier. You add the number of successes on the action to the Damage Modifier to determine the number of hits. Any time you increase or decrease a DM, you simply add or subtract the modifier from the DM. You cannot reduce the DM below +1.

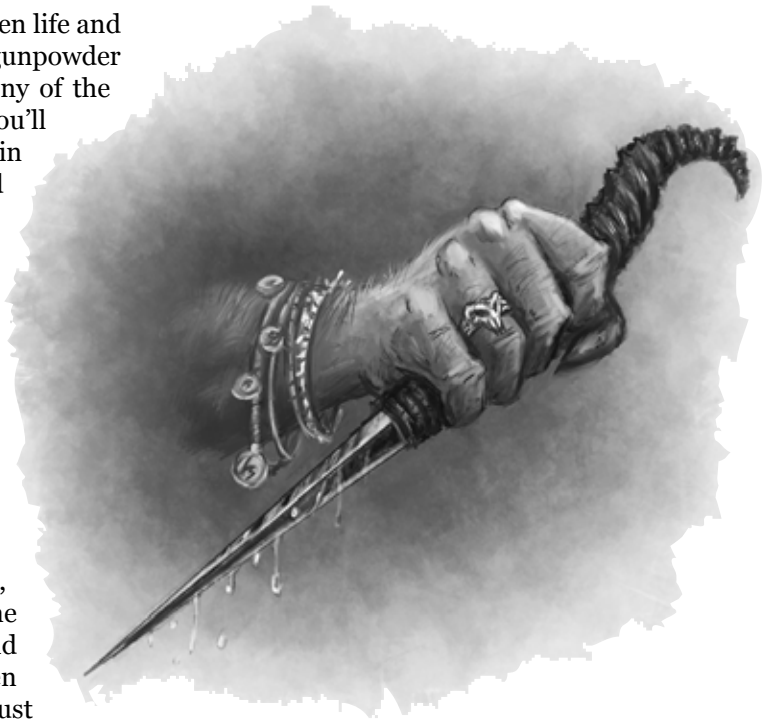
Size: There are three weapon sizes: small, medium, and large. You may wield small weapons while grappling. You need two hands to wield large weapons properly. If you use fewer hands than required, worsen the Complexity by -2 and reduce the DM by 2 (minimum $\times 1$).

Range: Archery, Firearm, and Thrown weapons all list four range values separated by slashes. The first number is close range, the second is medium, the third long, and the fourth extreme. You take a -1 dice penalty to attacks made against foes at medium range, -2 at long range, and -3 at extreme range.

Reload: This entry indicates the number of actions required to reload the weapon. The reload entry applies only to Archery and Firearms.

Weight: This entry indicates how much the weapon weighs in pounds.

T: This entry indicates the weapon's Toughness. This reflects the number of successes needed to shatter the weapon if subjected to a Break attack (see page 106).



WEAPON DESCRIPTIONS

All of the following weapons are used in *Witch Hunter*.

Arrow: You can use an arrow as an improvised weapon.

Axe, Battle: A battle axe is a crescent or bearded shaped blade mounted on a wooden or metal haft. This weapon encompasses all axes used for military purposes.

Axe, Woodsman's: Though a tool, a woodsman's axe is a nasty weapon in the right (or wrong) hands.

Blunderbuss, all: A crude weapon, a blunderbuss fires a barrage of shot or shrapnel. It has a very short effective range. Unlike other weapons, when a blunderbuss is fired, it potentially hits all characters in a 5-yard cone. Roll Firearms (Agility). All characters in the area suffer the same damage and may reduce your successes if they spend their reaction to roll Reflexes (Agility).

Example: Tom fires a blunderbuss at a group of three pirates. Tom rolls Firearms and gets 4 successes. Each pirate in the area may spend their reactions to roll Reflexes (Agility). One pirate gets 3 successes, so he takes 4 hits (1 success + 3 DM). The second pirate gets 2 successes, so he takes 5 hits (2+3 DM). The third pirate gets no successes and so he takes 7 hits (4+3 DM).

Bolt: You can use an arrow as an improvised weapon.

Bow: You cannot use this weapon while mounted and you must have firm footing.

Club: This weapon encompasses just about any kind of bludgeon, from stout cudgels to crude logs.

Composite Bow: This weapon is fashioned from layers of horn and wood. Unlike other bows, when unstrung, it retains its shape. A character using a composite bow may use Strength or Agility for Archery rolls.

Table 3–10: Weapons

ARCHERY WEAPONS

Weapon	Cost	C	DM	Range	Size	Reload	Weight	T
Composite Bow	15s	3	+4	15/30/60/120	Medium*	1	1.5 lb.	2
Crossbow	£1	1	+4	6/12/24/48	Medium	2	8.5 lb.	1
Bow	10s	3	+4	12/24/48/96	Large*	1	1.5 lb.	2
Arrow	1f	—As Improvised Weapon—			1/10 lb.	1		
Bolt	1f	—As Improvised Weapon—			1/5 lb.	2		

*You cannot use this weapon one-handed.

FIREARMS

Weapon	Cost	C	DM	Range	Size	Reload	T	Weight
Blunderbuss	£3	*	+3	*	Large	4	1	25 lb.
Blunderbuss pistol	£12	*	+3	*	Medium	3	1	10 lb.
Musket, double barrel	£22 5s	2	+3	10/20/40/80	Large	3	1	35 lb.
Musket	£5	2	+3	20/40/80/160	Large	3	1	25 lb.
Pistol	£8	1	+2	3/6/12/24	Small	2	1	5 lb.
Pistol, double barrel	£27	1	+2	3/6/12/24	Medium	2	1	10 lb.
Powder and Shot	1s	—	—	—	—	—	—	1 lb.

*See description.

MELEE AND THROWN WEAPONS

Weapon	Cost	C	DM	Range	Size	Weight	T
Axe, Battle	11s1d	3	+4	*	Medium	4.5 lb.	4
Axe, Woodsman's	2s	2	+3	*	Large	4 lb.	3
Club	3d	0	+2	2/4/8/16	Medium	2.5 lb.	3
Cutlass	£1 2s	2	+3	*	Medium	2.5 lb.	4
Dagger	10d	0	+1	2	Small	1 lb.	4
Dart	2d	1	+2	3/6/12/24	Small	.5 lb.	2
Flail	8s	2	+3	*	Medium	5.5 lb.	3
Garrote	8d	‡	‡	—	Small	1 lb.	3
Hatchet	7d	1	+2	2/4/8/16	Small	3 lb.	4
Hook	10d	0	+1	*	Small	.5 lb.	4
Improvised weapon	—	2	+1	1/2/4/8	Varies	1 lb.	3
Javelin	2d	0	+2	6/12/24/48	Medium	3 lb.	3
Mace	5s	2	+3	*	Medium	4.5 lb.	4
Net	2s4d	2	—	2/4/8/16	Large	4 lb.	3
Pick	11s	2	+3	*	Medium	6 lb.	4
Pole-arm	12s	4	+5	*	Large	6 lb.	4
Rapier	£4	1	+2	*	Medium	2 lb.	4
Spear	3d	2	+3	4/8/16/32	Large	5 lb.	3
Staff, Quarter	3d	1	+2	*	Large	4 lb.	3
Sword	£1 10s	2	+3	*	Medium	3.5 lb.	4
Sword, Bastard	£3	3	+4	*	Medium	4.5 lb.	4
Sword, Great	£2 10s	4	+5	*	Large	15 lb.	5
Unarmed	—	0	+0	—	Small	—	—
Warhammer	4s	2	+3	*	Medium	5 lb.	4
Whip	1s2d	3	+2	*	Large	3 lb.	3

*These weapons are not intended for throwing. If attempted, the weapon has a range of 1 and the Complexity worsens by –2 if small, –4 if medium, and –8 if large.

‡This weapon has special rules. See entry for details.

Crossbow: Though slow to reload, crossbows are important because it takes little skill to wield them. It takes so little skill to use that the Church eventually banned their use. While they do pack quite a punch, crossbows are hard to maintain and tend to malfunction over time. They are especially susceptible to water. If immersed in water, the Complexity worsens by -2 until you get enough successes on a Construct (bowyer) roll to equal the weapon's CU.

Cutlass: Favored weapon of seamen, the cutlass is a versatile weapon, equipped with a long, slightly curved blade suitable for slashing or thrusting. These weapons often include an ornate basket hilt to protect the hand.

Dagger: An overlong knife, daggers include a variety of fighting blades such as the dirk and roundel. The typical dagger has a 12-inch blade length or less. Bayonets, also included in this category, and they can fit on the end of any musket for an increase of 2s.

Flail: The common flail is a tool used for threshing wheat, but incidentally deadly in combat. It consists of a long haft fitted with a chain and a block at the end. The military flail is similar to the common flail except it features several chains that end in sharpened rings or smaller, sometimes stylized, heads.

Garrote: To use a garrote, or strangling cord, you must either act first (and slip the cord around your opponent's neck), or achieve a hold with a Grapple roll. If you manage to get the cord around your opponent's neck, the Damage Modifier increases by $+2$.

Hatchet: This is a tool, suitable for cutting brush and small trees.

Hook: This is a simple iron hook.

Improvised Weapon: This class of weapons includes everything from cleavers to frying pans.

Mace: The mace is any hafted weapon with a blunted head.

Musket, Double Barrel: This weapon features two barrels, either side-by-side or over under, essentially allowing you to fire twice without having to reload. You can fire both barrels in the same Action, increasing the DM to $+7$, but the Complexity worsens to -2 . The reload time is per barrel.

Musket: A favored weapons of hunters and soldiers, the musket is a mainstay in the *Witch Hunter* world. If used in melee, it can be used as a club, though it requires two hands to use.

Net: If you get any successes on your Throw roll, you hit the target. The target must spend an action and get a number of success on a Contortionist (Agility) roll equal to the number of total successes you achieved your attack after your opponent's reaction. Until he does, he cannot take any actions.

Pick: Derived from the mining pick, a military pick is useful in breaching heavy armor. Its head features a sharpened spike on one side and a hammer on the other.

Pistol: A common firearm, the pistol includes a range of handguns from fine dueling pistols to pocket pistols. This weapon can also be used as a club.

SHOTS PER POUND OF POWDER

Weapon	Shots per Pound
Blunderbusses	3/lb.
Blunderbuss pistols	6/lb.
Pistols	12/lb.
Muskets	6/lb.

Pistol, Double Barrel: This weapon features two barrels, either side-by-side or over under, essentially allowing you to fire twice without having to reload. You can fire both barrels in the same Action, increasing the DM to $+7$, but the Complexity worsens to -2 . The reload time is per barrel.

Pole-arm: This weapon is actually a variety of weapons, including halberds, bardiches, bills, and many more weapons. Pole-arms typically have a blade mounted on a long pole.

Powder and Shot: All firearms require dry gunpowder and shot. For ease, powder and ammunition sell in 1 pound increments for firearms. See **Shots per Pound of Powder** sidebar for details.

Rapier: A gentleman's weapon, a rapier is a fine fencing sword, often fitted with an elaborate basket hilt. A rapier counts as a small weapon for the purposes of substituting Agility for Strength on Hand-to-Hand rolls.

Spear: The most basic weapon, it consists of a long shaft topped with a wide pointed blade.

Staff, Quarter: This wooden pole is a simple and effective weapon. Better staves are fitted with brass or steel caps.

Sword: The sword, or longsword, is a common weapon, favored for its long straight blade. It is falling by the wayside in favor of the more elegant and faster rapier.

Sword, Bastard: The hand-and-a-half or bastard sword falls somewhere in between a common sword and a claymore. It has an overlong handle to allow the wielder to get the full benefit of his strength. This is an uncommon weapon.

Sword, Great: This enormous sword, sometimes called the zweihander, was used by foot soldiers against cavalry. As the nature of the battlefield has changed, great swords are now mostly relics of the past.

Unarmed: When all else fails, go with your fists. Brass knuckles (8d) increase the Damage Modifier by 1.

Warhammer: A larger, heavier version of the clawed hammer, this nasty weapon may be awkward to use but devastating when it hits.

Whip: The whip is a fast and nasty weapon. Targets that take at least 1 hit from this weapon take a -1 die penalty to all rolls until their next action. All armor grants double the normal protection against attacks made with whips.

Table 3–11: Armor

Armor	Cost	Armor Value	Agility Penalty	Movement Penalty	Weight
Buck Skin and furs	-	2	0	0	2 lb.
Buff Coat	2s2d	2	-1	0	5 lb.
Fencing Jacket	2s	1	0	0	2 lb.
Metal Breastplate	£1 6s	3	-2	-1	20 lb.
Pitch Jacket	5s	2	-1	0	15 lb.
Shield	10d	+1 die	-	0	4 lb.

ARMOR

The introduction of gunpowder to the West has rendered most armor obsolete. Mail is worthless against a musket ball, and while heavier armors grant some protection, they restrict movement. Instead, what armor is available is lighter and more comfortable, allowing the warrior more mobility on the battlefield.

ARMOR QUALITIES

Like weapons, armor is defined by a collection of numbers that define its capabilities. They are as follows.

Cost: This is the armor's price.

Armor Value: When wearing armor, the armor value is the number of points added to Defense at the start of each round. This value is not rolled and is fixed.

Example: Tomas spent some years fighting for the Spanish Empire as a Conquistador. Ingratitude, the Empire allowed him to keep his metal breastplate. In combat, Tomas will roll normally to determine his Defense and then add 3 points to it.

Agility Penalty: Armor slows you down. When wearing armor, your Agility is reduced by this factor. Remember that lowering Agility affects dice pool sizes and skills as well.

Movement Penalty: This entry indicates the penalty in yards you take to your movement.

Weight: The entry indicates the item's weight.

ARMOR DESCRIPTIONS

The following armor types are the ones most commonly seen in the world of *Witch Hunter*.

BUCK SKIN AND FURS

Worn by the Native American Indians, this type of clothing is light but resilient.

BUFF COAT

These long coats are made of cured leather; it's fairly standard armor for most soldiers of the 17th Century.

FENCING JACKET

This light jacket protects against minor injuries.

METAL BREASTPLATE

The metal breastplate and back plate is usually associated with the Spanish Conquistadors, but were used by foot soldiers all over Europe. This armor includes a morion or other open faced helmet.

PITCH JACKET

Fashion from thick linen hardened with pitch, it is worn by sailors and pirates. It is bulky and uncomfortable.

SHIELD

Rarely seen now, shields used to be an indispensable part of a soldier's kit. Now, they are usually bucklers, a much smaller and rounded variety of shield. The shield works differently than normal armor. Whereas armor's defensive value is fixed, a shield must be used actively to deflect damage. When equipping a shield, add one die to your Defense Pool roll.

Example: Emil Zargossa has an Agility of 3 and a Toughness of 4. He wears a Buff Coat (which reduces his Agility to 2) and, knowing he is going into battle, a small shield. When combat begins, Emil rolls his Defense Pool of (2 + 4)/2 + 1 (for his shield for a total of 4 dice. He rolls a 9, 7, 6 and 4 for a total of 2 successes. He then adds the armor value of his Buff Coat (+2). Thus Emil has a total of 4 Defense Points to keep him alive during this round of combat.



CHAPTER FOUR: PLAYING THE GAME

Now that you've created your character, you're just about ready to begin your crusade against evil. But before you rush off headlong into danger, there's a few rules to you should nail down first. This chapter gives you all the information you need to play the game.

THE BASICS

Witch Hunter is an exciting game of fighting, investigation and horror, where players take the parts of characters in an unfolding story. In this game, you may have to battle your way through a band of savages, evade traps while struggling to recover some lost scroll that holds a terrible ritual, convince a guide to lead you through the darkest lands ever imagined, and much more. Considering the scope of this game and the kind of things you'll want to do, a simple mechanic ensures *WH* games are fun, easy, and exciting to play.

ONE MECHANIC

As a roleplaying game, play takes place in the imagination of the players and the Game Master (GM). Since the adventures take place in the heads of the people playing, it's easy to think that anything can happen in this world, and anything can. But just as there are rules in the real world, so too are there rules in this imaginary world.



Luckily, there's one mechanic to cover everything in the game. Once you get this concept nailed down, everything else is just a variation of this core system.

THE ACTION ROLL

Anytime you want to do something with dramatic consequences such as attacking with a sword, swinging from a chandelier, or leaping across a pit, you make an action roll. You roll a number of 10-sided dice determined by the action you're attempting. Every action uses one of your nine abilities. Some actions use skills, which, if you remember, are specific actions that give you more dice on your action roll. Each die that comes up as a 7 or higher counts as a success. Easy tasks may need only one success, while hard tasks may need three or more. If you don't get enough success to complete the task, your effort fails. If you get number of successes required or more, you succeed.

Table 4-1: Difficulties

Difficulty	Description
1	Easy
2	Routine
3	Challenging
4	Difficult
5	Hard
6	Very Hard
7+	Extremely Hard

Example: Olivia tries to bluff her way past a guard. The GM decides the guard is suspicious, so he sets the task as being "difficult" or D4 meaning Olivia needs four successes to convince him she's on the up and up. She decides to use Charm. She has a 3 Personality and a 3 Charm, so she rolls six dice. Each die that comes up as a 7 or more is a success and if she gets four or more, she succeeds.

Difficulty can also reflect progress. When performing extended actions, you take any successes gained from the action roll and hold them in reserve—this is called banking. Each time after the first that you perform an extended action, you add your successes to those you have banked and when you achieve the required number of successes, you complete the action.

Finally, in combat, successes determine damage. When you make an attack, your opponent has the option to negate the successes you rolled with his Defense Points (see below). The weapon's Damage Modifier is the added to the number of successes that remain. This determines the number of hits you score. These hits are deducted from the target's Health track. For more information, see Combat, starting on page 103.

WORKING TOGETHER

Characters can sometimes pool their resources, working together to achieve their goal faster. A character who spends his action to help another character grants half of the relevant ability and levels (round down) to the other character.

Regardless of how many people work together, there are practical limits to assisting another character. The person being assisted can never have a dice pool greater than 2x what he could normally roll.

Example: Stephan is attempting to disarm an Aztec trap. He normally rolls his Disable (Reason) giving him a dice pool of 4. However, his three companions are also knowledgeable in disabling traps and wish to assist him. The companions combined dice pools equal 10, which would give Stephen an extra 5 dice to roll for his check. However, this would put him over his limit of 8 dice (2x 4dice), so he is left with 8 dice to attempt his check.

OPPOSED ROLLS

Sometimes, you'll be called to make an opposed roll, such as when you're trying to Notice a hidden character (who's using Stealth). In these cases, both you and your opponent make action rolls. The character with the most successes wins. If a tie results, the character who rolled the most dice wins. If there's still a tie, roll again until there's a clear victor.

MODIFIERS

Some situations make actions harder or easier to perform. These modifiers are expressed in bonus or penalty dice. For example, when fighting in a gloomy rainstorm, characters take a -1 dice penalty to their attack rolls. This means the character reduces the number of dice rolled by 2. *Modifiers can reduce a character's dice to 1 die or increase them as high as 10 dice. You can never roll less than 1 die.*

CRITICAL 10

Whenever you roll a 10, you may roll that die again and if you get a success, it counts as an extra success. If you roll a 10 on the re-roll, you keep rolling until you don't get a 10, adding each success to those already rolled.

PUTTING IT ALL TOGETHER

So now that you have the basics, here are the actual steps to resolve an action roll.

STEP ONE: ANNOUNCE

Announce your action.

STEP TWO: DIFFICULTY

The GM determines the Difficulty—the number of successes needed to complete the action.

STEP THREE: ROLL

Roll a number of 10-sided dice equal to your ability score and skill levels (if any).

STEP FOUR: DETERMINE SUCCESSES

Each die that results as 7 or higher is a success.

STEP FIVE: RESULTS

Total the number of successes and compare them to the Difficulty. If the total number of successes meets those required, you complete the action or make progress toward some goal (such as with the Construct skill).

COMBAT

The world of *Witch Hunter* is a dynamic place, full of threats, horrors, and disturbing environments. It is a place where otherworldly powers vie for the mastery over souls, where the minions of the Adversary rank up against the armies of God in an interminable conflict that transcends the petty concerns of mortals. While serving your celestial master and advancing His goals in the mortal plane, you face many challenges. How you react to these threats and how well you use your talents determines the likelihood that you will survive the dangers of the Invisible World.

Combat is an important part of what makes adventure games fun. The heat of the battle, the danger, the excitement all combine to make fighting one of the most thrilling aspects of the game. Of course, there is far more to *Witch Hunter* than exchanging blows or spells with enemies. There's investigation, exploring, and above all roleplaying. But combat is where the action is, making it one of the most important parts of the game.

When a combat occurs, game play is broken into rounds. A round is approximately 10 seconds long. Each character gets a turn to act in the round, taking turns until everyone has acted. This continues each round until combat is over. Be aware that this is a game, not an exercise in simulating reality. Certain concessions are made to make *Witch Hunter* fun to play and the action moving forward.

THE ROLE OF TIME

Witch Hunter uses the standard measurements of time (days, hours, minutes, *etc.*) but also makes use of a few special time units that apply to game play, specifically combat.

Scene: A scene is a variable length of time that encompasses an entire encounter. A scene can be as short as firing a single shot that kills a guard to a protracted battle lasting for hours or even a whole day!

Round: A round equals roughly 10 seconds. Each round, every character gets to act once.

Scenario: A group of encounters that tell a story, with a beginning, middle and an end. The ending may be a cliff-hanger or may leave plot threads still dangling, but some sort of conclusion is usually reached.

Campaign: A campaign is when a series of scenarios all tie in together, creating an epic story. There is no hard and fast rule to determine how many scenarios make up a campaign. Some are only three or four scenarios while others are years in the making.

Combat's flow is relatively simple, with each character taking an action when it's his turn. But though the basic mechanisms that underpin the system are easy to learn, combat can be much more involved than a simple exchange of attacks.

STEP ZERO: AWARENESS

The first step in any combat encounter is to determine which side is aware of the other. Generally, this can be resolved without any dice rolls. Opponents are just as aware of each other if they happen to stumble into one another in the fog as they are if they have been speaking for a few minutes before hand. But if one side is unaware, the attackers gain a significant advantage during the initial round.

AMBUSH

Sometimes one side gets the jump on the other. When one side is aware and the other is not, this is called an ambush. If a group lies in wait to ambush another group, have the character with the worst Stealth (Agility) make a check. Each member on the unaware side gets to make a Notice (Intuition) roll. If a character's successes exceed those of the Stealth roll, they are not ambushed. If they do not, they are ambushed.

CONSEQUENCES

When rolling for initiative (see **Step One**), ambushed characters take a -2 dice penalty to their Reflexes (Agility) roll, while the ambushers gain a +2 dice bonus on their Reflexes (Agility) roll for the first round only. An ambushed character's Agility is zero (0) when determining the Defense pool.

These penalties and bonuses apply only to the initial round.

STEP ONE: INITIATIVE

All participants in the combat roll Reflex (Agility) and count up their successes. The GM ranks the participants in order from highest to lowest. In case of a tie, the character that rolled the most dice goes first. If there's still a tie, the characters roll again until there is a clear victor. When the GM is controlling a group of minions, he will roll for them as a group.

Don't forget that armor, while effective in diminishing the severity of your opponent's attacks does reduce your Agility dice and by extension your Initiative. Initiative is rolled once per combat.

STEP TWO: DEFENSE POINTS

Each round, you will roll for your Defense Points. Defense Points are used to negate an attacker's successes and thus reduce the damage taken. One Defense Point eliminates one attack success.

The Defense Points Pool is calculated as the average of your Agility + Toughness (rounded up). Roll these dice and any successes you achieve (7s or better) are your Defense points.

Armor also adds to your Defense pool. See *Armor* pg. 101.

Defense Points are gone at the end of the round whether they are used or not. You cannot carry over any used Defense Points to the next round.

Example: *Luther has a 2 Agility and a 3 Toughness. His Defense dice pool is 3. He rolls 3 dice and gets a 4, 7, and 9, a total of 2 successes. This means that he has 2 Defense Points available to him this round to negate attack successes.*

STEP THREE: ACT

In order from the highest initiative to the lowest, the participants each get a turn. All characters get one action per round. This action might be to attack, use a skill, perform a special maneuver, cast a rite, or even just move.

ATTACK

On your turn, you may attack your opponent. How you attack and what skill you use depends on the weapon you're wielding. If armed with a Hand-to-Hand weapon, you need to be adjacent to your enemy. Otherwise, you can use ranged weapons—thrown weapons, bows, pistols, and so on—as long as the target is within extreme range or closer.

The number of dice you roll on your attack depends on the weapon you're wielding.

- If it's a Hand-to-Hand weapon such as a sword or a mace, you roll a number of dice equal to your Strength plus any levels you have in Hand-to-Hand. Note, you may substitute your Agility for Strength when wielding a rapier or a small weapon.
- If it's a Thrown weapon such as a dagger or dart, you roll a number of dice equal to your Strength plus any levels you have in Throw.
- If it's an Archery weapon or Firearm, you roll a number of dice equal to your Agility plus any levels you have in the appropriate skill.
- Reduce the number of dice you roll by the weapon's complexity.

Roll the dice. Each die that comes up as a 7 or higher is a success. Your opponent may expend Defense Points to negate your successes. If you have any successes remaining, add your weapon's Damage Modifier to determine the damage your attack dealt.

INTERACTION

While involved in combat, you may interact with other characters within reason as a free action, which means, it doesn't take your action for the round. Under most circumstances, you can speak brief phrases. Extended conversation, though, at the GM's discretion, may cost you your action. Most Interaction skills are impossible to use while engaged in combat. Those that can be used, follow:



Command: As an action, you can issue a command to another character by making a Command (Courage) roll. For details, see the **Command** skill on page 59.

Intimidate: As with Command, you can strike fear into the hearts of your enemies by spending your action to make an Intimidate (Personality) roll.

MOVE

Movement does not require an action roll, you simply move from one location to another. During any kind of movement, you may not move into a space occupied by another creature unless that creature is significantly larger than you, though, obviously, you may mount another creature, such as a horse.

Crawl: As an action, you may crawl up to 1 yard.

Cautious: As a free action, you can move up to 3 yards. You are limited to one cautious move per round.

Move: For an action, you may move up to 9 yards.

Run: For an action, you may move up to 15 yards. If so, you do not get to reduce your opponent's successes with your Agility, however all ranged attacks made against you are at a -3 dice penalty.

Movement Skills: For an action, you may use any Movement skill, such as Acrobatics, Climb, and so on.

Fall Prone: As a free action, you can drop to the ground.

Stand Up: As an action, you may stand up.

EFFECTS OF ARMOR

As noted in **Chapter Three: Wealth and Equipment**, armor adds to your Defense Points but reduces your Agility and movement by a number of yards. This reduction applies to all three forms of movement. It cannot reduce your movement below 1 yard.

USE A PROFESSIONAL SKILL

Most Professional skills can't be used in combat. In some situations though, a character might work in the background, such as picking a lock to open a door while his comrades fight. In such cases, the character is working in the background, spending each action to complete the task. When the proper time has passed, the character may make his action roll.

REACTIONS

Reactions are special skills that allow you to respond to other actions. Reactions can be used any time in the round. Most Reactions skills are used to negate your opponent's skill successes made against you.

Balance: You make Balance (Agility) rolls to keep your feet such as when subjected to a knock-down attack (see page 57) or while on the deck of a storm-tossed ship, or even when just navigating treacherous terrain. This is usually a free action.

Concentrate: Concentrate (Will) serves two purposes in combat. First, whenever you take at least 1 hit, you lose all banked successes that apply towards the casting of a spell, prayer, or hex. You can roll Concentrate to retain

them as a free action, keeping one banked success for each success on the Concentrate roll. Concentrate also allows a practitioner who takes damage in the middle of casting to continue the rite.

Endurance: Some successes from targeted supernatural attacks as well as a variety of physical hazards (disease, fire, poison, and so on) can be negated with an Endurance (Toughness) roll. This is always a free action.

Notice: You make Notice (Intuition) rolls to detect hidden enemies, small details, and unexpected threats. This is a free action.

Resolve: Resolve (Courage) is used to resist fear effects. Resolve is usually is a free action.

MISCELLANEOUS ACTIONS

Attacking, moving, and reacting are the most common sorts of things you'll do in a round, but there are a few other options that bear mentioning.

Draw: You may draw a single weapon as a free action. Alternatively, you may draw two weapons as an action.

Drop: You may drop an object you have in your hands as a free action.

Hold: You may wait to take your turn to any point later in the round. This is not an action.

Pick-up: You may spend an action to pick an object up.

Reload: Archery weapons and firearms require time to reload between uses. Some are faster than others. A bow only takes 1 action to reload, while a blunderbuss requires 4 actions. When reloading a weapon, the actions you spend must occur over consecutive rounds. If you are interrupted, such as when you spend an action to attack with another weapon or parry, you have to start the reload from scratch.

Retrieve a Stowed Item: You may spend an action to retrieve a stowed item from a backpack, pouch or some other location on your person. If the item can be conveniently retrieved, you would use the Draw action instead.

COMBAT MANEUVERS

Combat is more than just an exchange of dice rolls; it is a strategic game within the game. Characters maneuver to best position themselves to attack and use a variety of skills, qualities, equipment, and even supernatural abilities to best overcome their foes. All of the following combat maneuvers are either special actions or are modifications for other actions. All characters can make use of any of these combat maneuvers.

ACTIVE DEFENSE

When armed with a Hand-to-Hand weapon, you may take a -1 die penalty to your roll to gain an extra point of Defense for the round.

AIM

On your turn, you may spend an action to do nothing else but aim at your target. Each action spent aiming grants

a cumulative +1 die bonus, but your next non-aim action must be an attack with the weapon you wield or you lose this bonus.

BREAK

During combat, you may decide that it's a better strategy to bust down a door, smash a window, or snap your foes sword. All of these are instances of the Break action. Whenever you would use brute force on an unattended object, roll Hand-to-Hand (Strength). The harder the object, the more successes you need (as shown on the following table). You gain bonus dice if you use a weapon to break the object. The number of dice equals the weapon's Damage Modifier, such that +3 grants +3 dice, +2 grants +2 dice, and +1 grants +1 die.

Material	Successes
Glass	1
Wood	2
Stone	4
Metal	6
Construction	Difficulty Modifier
Brittle	-2
Average	+0
Reinforced	+2

Break can also be used to destroy an opponent's weapons. Resolve this as a normal Hand-to-Hand attack, but your target cannot use Parry successes to negate your successes. If you achieve a number of successes equal to the weapon's Toughness, the weapon breaks.

CHARGE

You can throw caution to the wind and charge straight into your enemies' teeth. To make a charge, you must expend two Defense Points, move at least 4 yards, and be armed with a melee weapon. You can move a number of yards up to your run speed (typically 15 yards) and if you manage to get any attack successes against your opponent, you increase the Damage Modifier of your weapon by 2.

DISARM

Instead of making an attack, you can try to disarm your opponent. You and you opponent both make opposed Hand-to-Hand (Strength) rolls. The character with the most successes knocks the others' weapon 1d10 yards away. Your opponent may spend Defense Points to negate your successes.

DODGE

Instead of performing any action this round, you leap behind cover, back-peddle hastily or just cover your head and duck. Doing so gives you two extra points of Defense for this round. If you have already performed an action this round, you may not Dodge.

FEINT

Instead of making an attack you make your opponent think you're attacking where you are not. Make an opposed Perform (Intuition) against your opponents Empathy (Intuition). If you succeed, that opponent's Defense Points are halved during the next round.

GRAPPLE

Grappling, or wrestling, is an important combat action that allows you to neutralize an opponent even when not armed. This skill is described in extensive detail in the Skills section of **Chapter Two: The Making of a Witch Hunter**.

KNOCK-DOWN

You can knock your opponent to the ground. Make a Strength roll against your opponent's Strength or Balance (Agility). If you beat your opponent's successes, you knock him down. You may combine Knock-down with a run. If you do, gain a +2 dice bonus to your Strength roll, but halve your Agility (round down) for the rest of the round. Your opponent may spend Defense Points to negate your successes.

PARRY

You can only Parry a melee weapon if you have a melee weapon in hand. Parry is considered a *Reaction* skill and can thus be used if you have acted this round or not. When attacked, you may make a Parry (Agility) roll and may use these successes to negate an attacker's successes before applying any Defense Points.

RAPID ATTACK

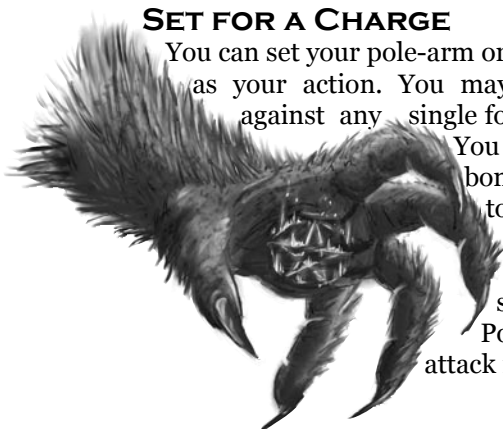
You can attack your foes with a series of quick blows. When making a rapid attack, take a -1 dice penalty per opponent to your attack roll. You may then split up the remaining dice to make multiple attacks against separate foes during the same action. You must announce how you're splitting up your dice before you roll. You may only use the Rapid Attack maneuver with melee weapons.

RECKLESS ATTACK

As part of a normal Hand-to-Hand roll, you may voluntarily take a -1 die penalty. If you have at least one success after your opponent has applied any Defense Points, your attack counts as having gained an additional two successes above those that you rolled.

SET FOR A CHARGE

You can set your pole-arm or spear for a charge as your action. You may make an attack against any single foe that attacks you. You gain a +2 dice bonus to your Hand-to-Hand roll. While waiting to attack, you may not spend Defense Points until your attack roll is resolved.



SUBTERFUGE

You can make a Subterfuge (Agility) roll to snatch something from an opponent's body as described under the Subterfuge skill in Skills section of **Chapter Two: The Making of a Witch Hunter**.

TWO-WEAPON ATTACK

You may fight with two weapons at once, such as a sword and dagger, sword and shield, or sword and pistol. You get two attacks on your action, but the attacks are made at a penalty. If wielding two medium weapons, you take a -4 dice penalty to each attack, or if one of the weapons is small, you take a -3 dice penalty to each attack. Finally, if both weapons are small, you take only a -2 die penalty to each attack.

Example: Tom, armed with a cutlass and dagger, faces two pirates. Rather than directing his full attention against a single foe at a time, decides to attack both targets. Tom's normal Hand-to-Hand is 6. In one hand, he wields a sword and in the other, a dagger—a medium and small weapon, giving him a -3 dice penalty. Since he's attacking with both weapons, he rolls 2 dice for one attack and 1 die for the other.

WALL OF STEEL

While wielding a melee weapon, you may take a dice penalty on your attack roll to gain additional Defense Points. Choose a single target with whom you are engaged. You may take a dice penalty up to your Hand-to-Hand skill to gain an equal amount of Defense Points. So, if you take a -2 dice penalty on your attack, then you would gain an additional 2 points of Defense. In exchange, you may only use Defense Points against your chosen opponent for the entire round.

FIGHTING CIRCUMSTANCES

Though the relative skill of the combatants plays a vital role in determining the outcome of combats, canny warriors learn to use the battlefield to their advantage. Diving behind a low wall for cover against a hail of bullets or fighting from behind a tree serves as another layer of protection against all attacks. Characters fighting from higher elevation or horseback have decided advantages over those enemies on foot or beneath them, while visibility, dimmed by bad lighting, smoke, or fog can mean all the difference between a hit and a miss.

Many circumstances can aid or hinder combatants on the battlefield. Fighting in cramped quarters, or from higher ground, or even just surrounding an opponent can all make a big difference in bringing a fight to a rapid close. Though what modifiers should be imposed is up to each individual Grand Master, the table below gives you a series of guidelines that may be followed. See **Table 4-2: Fighting Modifiers** for details. All modifiers are cumulative.

Table 4–2: Fighting Modifiers

Condition	Dice Modifier
Environmental Conditions [‡]	
Mild	-1
Moderate	-2
Severe	-4
Situational Conditions	
Attacker is on a moving steed	-1 die
Attacker is in a moving vehicle	-2 dice
Attacker is on higher ground	+1 die
Cramped quarters	-2 dice
Point Blank**	+2 dice
Prone Target	+2 dice (Hand-to-Hand)/-2 dice (all others)
Ranged attack into melee*	-2 dice
Target is in a moving vehicle	-3 dice
Target on a moving steed	-2 dice
Target's last action was a run*	-1 die

*This penalty applies only for Archery, Firearms, and Thrown Attack rolls.

** Point Blank range is considered being within melee range of the target, i.e. adjacent.

[‡]Environmental Conditions are split into three categories: mild, moderate and severe.

Mild: Examples of mild conditions may be combat taking place in dim lighting or dusk, in a light rain and with a stiff breeze blowing.

Moderate: Examples of moderate conditions may be combat taking place at night time with only moonlight as illumination, a heavy rainstorm with a strong wind blowing.

Severe: Examples of severe conditions may be combat taking place in total darkness, in a tropical storm or hurricane, with gale force winds blowing through the battlefield.

COVER

Cover occurs whenever a character stands behind another object. Cover offers additional protection, making it harder for your opponents to hit you in combat by reducing the size of a target that you offer. Cover is broken down into four broad categories.

Light Cover: Light cover could be a low stone wall, shallow ditch, or a small tree. It hides about 25% of your body. Light cover automatically negates 1 success to hit you.

Moderate Cover: Protecting about half of your body, moderate cover might be a stone wall, deep ditch, good sized tree, or another person. Moderate cover automatically negates 2 successes to hit you.

Heavy Cover: Heavy cover conceals and protects about 75% of your body, such as when you are surrounded by several opponents, fighting from around a corner of a building, or standing behind a tall wall. Heavy cover automatically 3 successes to hit you.

Total Cover: When you have total cover, you are completely protected, such as if you were standing behind a door, wall, or an army of men. You cannot be attacked while you have total cover.

Table 4–3: Cover Modifiers

Cover	Hits Negated	Attack Penalty
Light	1	0
Moderate	2	-1
Heavy	3	-2
Total	All	Cannot Attack

DAMAGING COVER

When you attack a target benefiting from cover, resolve the attack normally. All successes negated by the cover instead apply to the cover. Multiply these successes by the DM as normal and deduct the hits from the cover (see following). If the hits exceed the cover's Max Hits, you destroy a 1-yard square section of cover. Cover has max hits depending on the material.

Table 4–4: Damaging Cover

Material per Inch	Max Hits
Wood	16
Stone	32
Metal	40

Of course, circumstances may warrant attacking the cover itself. In such cases, the attacker need only make a normal attack and count up the successes as normal.

USING COVER

Though cover is an excellent defense, it does have its drawbacks. Whenever you make an attack roll while benefiting from cover, you take a -1 die penalty for moderate cover and -2 dice for heavy cover. You cannot make attacks against opponents to whom you have total cover.

DAMAGE

An inevitable consequence of combat is damage. The exchange of gunfire and sword blows take their toll quickly, and in *Witch Hunter*, sometimes all it takes is just one well-placed shot, or the expert swing of a mace to end the contest abruptly.

Characters keep track of their damage with their Health track. The Health track has five levels and each equals a modified Toughness (T) score. They are, Healthy (T×2), Light (T×1.5), Moderate (T), Heavy (T), and

Dying (T×.5). When you take hits, record the number in the space provided. If the number of hits exceeds those allowed for the particular level, excess hits are placed on the next lower level. This continues until the total hits exceed the Dying level at which point you're dead (unless you have an available Hero Point).

EFFECTS OF DAMAGE

The most basic effect of damage is the gradual worsening of a character's capabilities. So long as the character has no damage in excess of the healthy level, he may act normally. But if damage takes him to light or worse damage, he begins to feel the effects of injury.

Each injury level below healthy imposes a die penalty to all rolls. Light injury imposes a -1 penalty, moderate -2, heavy -3, and dying -4. Dice penalties gained from injuries cannot reduce a character's dice below one. There's always a chance for success.

LOSING CONSCIOUSNESS

Characters that are moderately injured or worse are also at risk of losing consciousness. At the end of each round, characters who have taken more than light damage must roll Endurance (Toughness), Will, or Courage to retain consciousness. The difficulty is determined by the injury level, with moderate injury needing just one success, heavy injury two successes, and dying needing three successes. Failure to attain the required number of successes means the character falls to the ground unconscious.

An unconscious character is helpless and can take no actions. Each round, an unconscious character may make another roll against the same difficulty to regain consciousness. If he succeeds in removing at least one hit, the unconscious character may immediately make another roll against the Difficulty determined by his injury level.

HEALING

Immediately after combat ends, characters can catch their breath and shrug off minor scratches and bumps as well as the overall stress of fighting for your life. They may now recover a number of hits equal to their Toughness score. Seriously injured characters, even if without medical attention, do recover over time. After 8 hours of sleep or rest, an injured character automatically removes a number of hits equal to his Toughness score. In addition, a character may make a Toughness (Endurance, Will, or Courage) roll. Every 2 successes indicate the character removes another hit.

The GM may grant penalties or bonuses depending on the character's activity during the day. Characters spending the day resting, gain a +2 dice bonus, while those who are active, such as riding, fighting, carousing, take a -2 dice penalty.

The Heal skill speeds this process greatly, allowing the healer to remove additional damage with extended care or first aid.

ABILITY DAMAGE

Some hazards, notably ailments and poison, inflict ability damage. Since abilities cap the number of skill levels, such damage can also affect your skills.

Example: Rudolpho has 3 Strength and 3 levels in Climb. His Strength is reduced to 1 from sickness, so when he rolls Climb (Strength), he only gets 2 dice. Lost ability points return at a rate of 1 point per day. Skills reduced because of a reduction automatically recover with the ability.

STEEDS AND VEHICLES

Steads and vehicles grant several advantages in combat. Steeds grant better mobility as well as height advantages, while vehicles provide cover to the passengers and often height advantage too.

Steads: Steeds function as extensions of their riders. They have their own statistics (see **Chapter Ten: Creatures and Adversaries**) and can damage like other characters, but while they bear riders, they go on their riders' turns.

Normally, you don't have to make Ride rolls. You need only make Ride rolls whenever you would perform a dangerous maneuver, in which case you must make a Ride (Agility) roll. The number of successes required depends on the maneuver. See **Table 4-5: Maneuvers**.

Table 4-5: Maneuvers

Difficulty	Maneuver
1	<i>Little danger:</i> Urging a steed or team of horses into a dark cave in which it (or they) cannot see
2	<i>Some danger:</i> Urging a steed to leap over a fallen log or to enter a river. Rowing a boat through rocks.
3	<i>Danger:</i> Urging a steed to leap over a narrow crevice or to enter a fast-flowing river. Sailing a ship through large rocks.
4	<i>Significant danger:</i> Directing a steed to move through a fire. Piloting a boat through treacherous waters.
5	<i>Grave danger:</i> Urging a steed to leap over a wide crevice. Piloting a boat through a dangerous storm.
6+	<i>Incredible danger:</i> Urging the steed to ride between the legs of a massive fiery demon. Piloting a boat through a hurricane.

Unless the steed is trained for war, however, you must spend an action to control your steed. Roll Ride (Agility). Each success buys you one round before you need to roll again. If you get no successes, the mount flees the combat.

While riding a steed in combat, you use the steed's movement in place of your own, though you suffer the same drawbacks for walking or running. Warhorses and other trained steeds may also make attacks in combat,

using their hooves or teeth. When making attack rolls against opponents on foot, you gain a +1 die bonus to the roll.

If you wield a large weapon while mounted, you take a –2 dice penalty to your attack rolls. Should your steed fall in battle, either from unconsciousness or death, you must immediately roll Ride (Agility) as a free action.

1 Success: You are pinned by the dead mount. Take 2d10 hits as the steed's carcass crushes you.

2 Successes: You are partly pinned by the dead mount. Take 1d10 hits. You cannot move, but a D3 Strength or Contortionist (Agility) roll allows you to get free.

3 Success: You leap free of the collapsing steed.

Attacking Steeds: Steeds may be attacked normally. As minions though, they follow the Minion Rule, see **Chapter Ten: Creatures and Adversaries**.

VEHICLES

As with steeds, vehicles are extensions of their pilots or drivers. All land vehicles are drawn by animals and so the same rules that apply to steeds also apply to animals pulling a cart, carriage, or wagon. Watercraft are propelled by manpower (oars) or by the wind (sailing vessels), using the Row skill or Sail skill respectively. Generally, you don't have to make Drive, Row, or Sail rolls unless there is a consequence of failure, such as the ship being capsized or when performing a special maneuver.

When piloting a vehicle, you use the vehicle's movement in place of your own, though you suffer the same drawbacks for walking or running. Passengers get the benefit of cover (quality varies depending on the vehicle and the passenger's actions). All passengers gain a +1 die bonus to attack rolls against foes on foot.

While driving any vehicle, you may not use large weapons and you take a –2 die penalty when using a medium weapon. Passengers are not restricted in their weapons, but take a –2 dice penalty at walking rate and –4 at a run. Also, while at a run, passengers must make a D3 Balance roll each turn if they do anything but stay seated. Characters that do not gain the required successes fall prone in the vehicle. Characters that get no successes fall out of the vehicle and take 1d10 hits at walking speed or 2d10 hits at a run.

Attacking Vehicles: Enemies can attack vehicles as if they were creatures. A vehicle can be struck as normal by making an attack roll, though attackers may take dice penalties based on the vehicle's movement. All vehicles described in **Chapter Three: Wealth and Equipment** have Toughness, which indicates the maximum number of hits it can take before being rendered inoperable.

ATTACKING WITH STEEDS AND VEHICLES

A war-trained steed can make attacks as other characters. On your turn, if your steed can, it makes an attack as part of your attacks against an adjacent foe. Resolve the attack normally.

You can also use a vehicle to ram or trample opponents or other vehicles. To do so, roll Drive (Agility),

Row (Strength), or Sail (Agility) roll. The target may use Defense Points to negate any successes achieved. If you have any successes remaining, apply the steed or vehicle's Damage Modifier.

PURSUIT

Unless a character has invested in a talent or is mounted on a steed or in a vehicle, player characters move at about the same rate. In the thick of combat, this is often sufficient; however, there are bound to be instances in game play where the subtle differences in speed become important. Nowhere is this truer than with pursuit.

Pursuit, simply, is a loose system for handling chase sequences between two or more characters. You can use these rules to emulate characters mounted on horses, racing across the countryside, or in a thrilling foot chase through the streets of New Amsterdam. In many ways, pursuit functions like combat, in that characters determine initiative, take actions, and respond to other actions. But there are key differences since the participants are generally assumed to be moving at full speed, either to get away or to catch up to their prey.

WHEN TO USE PURSUIT

When one or more characters seek to escape another group of characters or creatures, the GM may use pursuit rules, but he doesn't have to. Should the fleeing characters stand a good chance of escaping and have a significant advantage over their pursuers, such as closing and locking a door behind them or leaping onto a fast moving carriage and riding it at breakneck speed out of the encounter, pursuit rules are not just impractical, they are unnecessary—the fleeing characters simply get away. Alternatively, fleeing characters may simply not be able to escape the opponents in which case combat continues as normal. Ultimately, the GM decides whether or not to shift the encounter into pursuit based on the circumstances of the encounter and the dramatic impact it will have on the story.

To use pursuit rules, there must be plenty of running room and there must be opportunities to escape. A pursuit cannot take place if there is finite room for running, such as running toward the edge of a cliff or contained within a locked house or some other building. If there isn't enough room for the characters to run full bore for a number of minutes and if there aren't any opportunities to escape, then resolve the encounter using the normal combat rules.

PURSUIT BASICS

The participants in any pursuit have one of two clear objectives: either to escape or to catch their prey. To track progress as well as to give fleeing characters a clear objective and chance to get away, pursuit functions in an abstract environment that measures relative distances between the pursuer and the pursued. A pursuit typically has five levels of relative distance called positions. The five positions are Near, Close, Distant, Far, and Very Far. Each round, fleeing characters make Reflexes (Agility)

rolls (or some other relevant skill such as Drive or Ride) and count up their successes. Every two successes gained, moves them one position further from their pursuers. Then, pursuing characters make skill or ability rolls to close the distance, and every 2 successes reduces the position. When a fleeing character moves beyond the Very Far distance, he's said to have escaped his pursuers at which point the pursuit ends. Or, should the pursuing character reduce the position below Near, the pursuit immediately ends and the focus shifts to combat again.

PURSUIT DETAILS

As mentioned, the pursuit rules share some similarities to combat, but there are also several differences, which are highlighted in the following sections. The core of the pursuit system is simple, but you can add additional complexities to make the pursuit encounter as thrilling as the most harrowing combat encounters.

SET-UP

The first, and obvious, step is the set-up. At this point, it's determined who's involved in the pursuit, who's fleeing and who's chasing. Since pursuit does fall into rounds, it's possible to run a pursuit at the same time as the other players resolve a combat.

For example, Sam, Jon, and Will are playing witch hunters who are fighting a band of six cultists. Sam and Jon are in the thick, battle two madmen each. Will slays one cultist, but the other decides the fight's not worth it and tries to flee. Will doesn't intend to let the bastard get away, so he declares he's going to chase the cultist down. Thus, Sam and Jon are still engaged in the combat, while Will and the fleeing cultist are engaged in pursuit.

In addition, the GM determines the starting position of the pursuit. If the chase sequence begins in hand-to-hand combat, the starting position is near. Otherwise, the GM determines the position based on the circumstances of the encounter, with the default position being Close.

Since the pursuit began in hand-to-hand combat, the GM rules the pursuit begins in the Near position.

INITIATIVE

All participants in the pursuit determine initiative by normal means, however, instead of determining who goes when, initiative determines who has the advantage. Any fleeing characters that beat their pursuers in initiative gain a +1 die bonus on their roll to flee, while any pursuing characters that beat the pursued gain a +1 die bonus on their roll to pursue.

Back to the original example, the cultist and Will both make Reflexes (Agility) rolls to see who goes first. The cultist gains 3 successes, while Will gains 2 successes. Since the cultist won the initiative, he gains a +1 die bonus to his Reflexes (Agility) roll to flee.

FLEE

The fleeing character always goes first and makes a Reflexes (Agility) roll. If the fleeing characters are using

a mount or vehicle, they should make a roll using the associated skill (or ability). For every two successes on the roll, a fleeing character widens the position between himself and each pursuer by one step. If the fleeing character achieves no successes, he shrinks the position between himself and each pursuer by one step for every 2 ones rolled.

The cultist has a 2 Agility and 2 Reflexes, giving him four dice. However, he won the initiative, giving him an extra die. He rolls the dice and gets a 10, 7, 5, 2, and 2. Since he rolled a 10, he gets to roll that die again, but only got a 5. He counts up his successes, getting 2. This puts the cultist into Close position.

PURSUE

Once all the fleeing opponents have gone, it is now the pursuer's turn. He makes a Reflexes (Agility) roll (or some other roll if on a horse or vehicle) and counts up his successes. Every two successes gained indicates he closes the distance between himself and each pursuer by one-step. If the pursuer achieved no successes, he widens the position between himself and each fleeing character by one step for every 2 ones rolled.

It's now Will's turn. He has a 2 Agility and 1 Reflexes, giving him three dice. He rolls and gets a 10, 9, and 1. He re-rolls the 10 and gets a 5. So he counts up his successes and notes he got two. This is enough to reduce the Close position back down to the Near position.

SUBSEQUENT ROUNDS AND OUTCOMES

Play continues in this way until the fleeing character or characters moves beyond the Very Far position, at which point they're said to have escaped, or when the pursuing character closes the gap below the Near position, at which point the participants return to the normal combat rules, if necessary.

On the second round, the cultist rolls five dice again, desperate to get away. Unfortunately, out of five dice, he gets just one success, meaning he doesn't move fast enough to advance his position, leaving Will hot on his heels. It's now Will's turn and he rolls his three dice, getting a 10, 9, and 2. His re-roll from the 10 results in another 10, which results in a 4. Adding up all of his successes, he finds he has three successes, more than enough to drop the position below Near and returning to the normal combat rules, assuming the cultist doesn't just surrender.

DISTANCE TRAVELED

It may be important to determine just how far a pursuit goes from the starting point. Characters are assumed to be moving at their running rates (slightly up and down based on the circumstances of the pursuit). Track how many rounds have passed and multiply the rounds by the characters' normal rates (usually 15 yards). The product is the distance between the start of the pursuit and when it ends.

COMPLICATIONS

The above rules are useful for adjudicating quick pursuit resolution, but you can add additional complexities by accounting for talents, mixing in creatures with different speeds, adding extra participants, as well as accounting for the environment. The following sections are considered advanced rules and are intended for players and GMs who have a good understanding of the basic pursuit rules.

MORE THAN TWO PARTICIPANTS

Tracking the relative positions of one fleeing and one pursuing character is rather simple. It's just a matter of shifting up and down the positions in response to the number of successes gained each round. However, things get a bit stickier when you have several fleeing characters, several pursuing characters, or both. Regardless of the circumstances, you should track each character's relative position to each of his pursuers on the roll, and when the pursuers roll, they reduce the position between themselves and all of their prey.

For example, Sam and Jon chase after three cultists. The cultists have 2 Agility and 2 Reflexes and they won initiative, so they get 5 dice on their turn. The GM rules the starting position is Near. The first cultist rolls and gets 2 successes, so he enters the Close position. The second cultist rolls, gets 2 successes, so he's also in the Close position. The last cultist rolls and gets 3 successes, putting him in the Close position too.

It's Sam's turn. He has a 3 Agility and 2 Reflexes, so he rolls, but only gets 1 success, so all three cultists are in the Close position to him. Jon has a 2 Agility and 2 Reflexes. He rolls and gets 4 successes! He drops the position by 2 steps which is enough to end the pursuit for him.

GROUPING

As an optional rule, you can deal with fleeing characters in groups, such that all the position is determined by one roll for each group, using the skill and ability of the slowest member of the group. The benefit is that it's easier to track progress, but at the expense of a more dynamic environment that reflects the jockeying of positions.

CATCHING UP

Under normal circumstances, once the fleeing character gets away, the pursuit rounds end, however, when there are multiple pursuers and fleeing characters, it is possible for pursuers to catch up if they drop out of the pursuit. These characters can catch up if one of the pursuers catches the pursued. Simply track the number of rounds of pursuit that occurred between when a character fell behind and when the pursuit stopped, presumably for a fight. Characters that fell out of the pursuit may continue running each round until they catch up.

Sam, Jon, and Will are chasing a demon through the streets of Boston. Jon and Will eventually fall behind, but Sam presses on and finally catches up to the horror. Sam and the demon continued their pursuit for four rounds after both Jon and Will fell behind, so Sam will face the

monster alone for these four rounds at which point Jon and Will catch up.

JOINING A PURSUIT

As a pursuit unfolds, other characters the pursuit passes may join the pursuit. Characters that decide to follow after a pursuit in progress, such as a thief fleeing from a constable down a street, begin at the Close position or further away depending on the circumstances. From this point on, the new pursuer follows the normal pursuit rules.

NATURAL ADVANTAGES

Sometimes, a participant in a pursuit has an advantage over the others. This can be a faster than normal speed, the benefit of a steed, or particular slow prey. Such advantages affect pursuit rules by adding bonus dice to the Reflexes (or other skill) roll. This said, as a rule of thumb, if the pursuer has more than twice the running speed of the pursued or vice versa, the pursuer automatically catches the pursued or the pursued automatically escapes.

TALENTS

The Talents section presents a small selection of talents that improve a character's abilities when running. These talents include Agile Runner, Grace and Speed, and Swift. For each talent a character has, he gains a +1 die bonus on Reflexes rolls when involved in a pursuit. A character that's riding a steed and involved in a pursuit gains a +2 die bonus for the Expert Rider talent.

MIXED PURSUITS

Pursuits need not be just between characters on foot, they can mix mounted characters, characters in vehicles, and characters on foot. Provided a vehicle or mount can navigate the scene of a pursuit—an open field, down a wide street—such vehicles can participate in the pursuit sequence. Just compare speeds and assuming that the mount or vehicle doesn't exceed twice the top speed of the prey or pursuer, whichever the case may be, the character or characters with the faster speed gain a +2 dice bonus.

SLOWING PURSUIT

Characters have a few options to slow their pursuers while fleeing. A fleeing character may sacrifice any number of successes to impose a dice penalty equal to the successes sacrificed to his pursuer or broken up among his pursuers. This reflects a fleeing character, pulling down barrels behind him, diving into crowds, or kicking tiles on a roof to slow his opponent.

In the third round of pursuit, the cultist and Sam are in the Near position. On the cultists' turn, he gets three successes. Two successes are enough to increase the position to Close, but the extra success doesn't increase his distance, so the cultist sacrifices the success to impose a -1 die penalty on Sam's Reflexes (Agility) roll.

When a character slows pursuit, the player or GM should describe some complication in the scene that

causes trouble for the pursuers. So in the above example, the GM describes that the cultist dove into a busy shop and is running through a kitchen, leaving chaos in his wake, and thus imposing the -1 die penalty on the pursuing character.

When chased by multiple pursuers, the fleeing character can sacrifice as many successes as he likes and allocate dice penalties in whatever way he decides to his pursuers. So, a fleeing character pursued by three villains might sacrifice five successes and impose a -3 die penalty on the villain closest to him and a -1 die penalty for each of the other two.

COMBAT AND PURSUIT

Rather than giving chase to a fleeing opponent, characters may use ranged attacks against fleeing characters provided they have a clear shot. Note the distance the fleeing character moves and determine the range normally. If an attack occurs in mid-pursuit, the multiply the running speed (usually 15 yards) by the number of Positions between the pursuer and the pursued, such that Near would be $\times 1$, Close $\times 2$, and so on. A character that makes an attack in a pursuit round does not make a Reflexes (Agility) roll that round to catch up to his prey. The exception to this rule is if there are multiple characters on a vehicle or mounted on a steed. Any characters that are being carried and are not controlling the vehicle may make ranged attacks without sacrificing the chance to give chase. However, such attacks should be suitably penalized due to the high speeds—a -1 to -3 dice penalty is appropriate.

DYNAMIC ENVIRONMENTS

There's little exciting about a pursuit that takes place on an open field, especially compared to a thrilling chase across the rooftops, where the characters involved have to leap across gaps between buildings. Likewise, a chase through a busy street can be equally thrilling as the prey weaves through crowds, ducks into buildings, and slips through alleys and other shortcuts to get away. While many of the obstacles described here are reflected by the ability of the fleeing character to sacrifice successes to reduce his opponents' dice rolls, the GM may call for other rolls depending on the environments. A chase across the rooftops might require Balance rolls, while a pursuit by coach may require Drive rolls. When characters are required to leap across gaps, the GM might call for Jump rolls too. In each case, the environment dictates the skill used for that round of pursuit, so a race across the rooftops may require Balance rolls on one round while the characters run across a peaked rooftop, Jump rolls on the second when the characters must leap across the space between two buildings, and finally Reflexes when running across a flat roof of a big warehouse. The GM should be creative and always account for the environment of the pursuit to ensure it is exciting and memorable, and not just an exercise in dice rolling.

MOVEMENT

For simplicity, characters move at approximately the same rates. In combat, this means all characters move 3 yards at the cautious rate, 9 yards when walking, and 15 yards when running. The Swift quality allows characters to move more quickly. See **Table 4-6: Movement Rates** for a summary of speeds.

Table 4-6: Movement Rates

Rate	—Speed—		
	Cautious	Walking	Running
Miles per Hour	1	3	5
Yards per Minute	30	90	150
Yards per Round	3	9	15

MOVEMENT AND TERRAIN

The speeds described on **Table 4-6: Movement Rates** assume characters are moving over relatively level and unobstructed ground. Characters move a lot slower when moving through broken terrain, dodging trees, moving around large rocks, and so on. **Table 4-7: Terrain** shows how different types of terrain affect movement. Simply multiply the movement rate by that for the predominate terrain to show how much ground the characters cover.

Table 4-7: Terrain

Terrain	Movement Modifier
Desert, broken	$\times 1/2$
Desert, sandy	$\times 1/2$
Forest, light	$\times 3/4$
Forest, moderate	$\times 1/2$
Forest, dense	$\times 1/4$
Hills, low	$\times 3/4$
Hills, steep	$\times 1/2$
Mountains	$\times 1/4$
Plains, clear road	$\times 1$
Trail	$\times 3/4$
Water, shallow	$\times 1/2$

CLIMATE

Another obstacle that you will face in your travels is climate. Cold temperatures, scorching heat, rain storms, and more can all chip away at your ability to contend with the evil you hunt, and when unprepared, nature itself can be an implacable foe. For the most part, you can sustain yourself outdoors indefinitely so long as you are properly dressed and not faced with temperature extremes.

COLD

Whenever exposed to freezing temperatures, you must make an Endurance (Toughness) roll. The Difficulty depends on the intensity of the cold. At 32 degrees, the difficulty is 1. For every 10 degrees colder, the difficulty increases by 1. Each success buys you one hour before you need to make another roll. If you fail, you take a number of hits equal to the difficulty. These hits cannot be healed until you are in an environment that's above freezing. If you are not wearing appropriate winter clothing, you take a -2 dice penalty.

HEAT

Extremes of heat can be just as deadly, requiring an Endurance (Toughness) roll so long as you are exposed. At temperatures of 100 degrees, you need one success on an Endurance roll. Every 10 degrees hotter, the Difficulty increases by 1. Each success buys you one hour before you need to make an additional roll. If you fail, you take a number of hits equal to the difficulty. These hits cannot be healed until you are in an environment that's below 100 degrees. If you do not have a ready and constant supply of water, you take a -2 dice penalty.

GETTING LOST

Traveling through the wilderness has many risks, but besides the dangers, characters are at risk of becoming lost. Unless the characters travel on a road, each hour they move through the wilderness, the leader must make a Survival (Intuition) roll or become lost. See the Navigation skill (page 65) for details.

CARRYING, LIFTING, SHOVING, AND THROWING THINGS

It's not necessary to track weight of all the items a character carries. For the most part, characters can carry whatever equipment they like, within reason. What a character can reasonably lift can be important in particular situations, such as when lifting a heavy iron grate, pushing a cart out of a muddy rut, or rolling a boulder out from in front of a cave.



A character's ability to carry, lift, and move things depends on the sum of his Strength and Toughness abilities as described on **Table 4-8: Carrying, Lifting, and Shoving**.

Table 4-8: Carrying, Lifting, and Shoving
Strength +

Toughness	Carry	Lift	Shove
2	10 lb.	20 lb.	40 lb.
3	25 lb.	50 lb.	100 lb.
4	50 lb.	100 lb.	200 lb.
5	75 lb.	150 lb.	300 lb.
6	100 lb.	200 lb.	400 lb.
7	125 lb.	250 lb.	500 lb.
8	150 lb.	300 lb.	600 lb.
9	200 lb.	400 lb.	800 lb.
10	250 lb.	500 lb.	1,000 lb.
+1	+100 lb.	+200 lb.	+400 lb.

If you exceed your carrying limits, you are encumbered. While encumbered, you reduce your Agility score by 1 (minimum 1) and your movement is reduced to 2 yards for cautious, 7 yards for walking, and 12 yards for running. If the weight you're carrying exceeds your lift value, your Agility drops by 2 (minimum 1) and your movement is reduced to 1 yard for cautious, 5 yards for walking, and running is impossible. You can shove an object 1 yard per round.

FEATS OF STRENGTH

The weights listed under **Table 4-8: Carrying, Lifting, and Shoving** are all fixed values that reflect how much a person can carry and lift every time without straining. There are times, though, when a character must push against his limits to achieve some heroic act. This is called a feat of strength. To make a feat of strength, roll Strength. The difficulty is determined by finding the Strength and Toughness required to carry, lift, or shove the weight. Subtract your Strength and Toughness from this value. The result is the Difficulty. For every success you achieve, you can carry, lift, or shove the weight 1 yard.

Tom has a 4 Strength and a 4 Toughness. He's trying to lift 900 pounds, which could be achieved if the sum of his Strength and Toughness was 12. He subtracts 8 (the sum of his Strength and Toughness) from 12, giving him a Difficulty of 4. He rolls Strength and with 4 dice he gets a 10, 8, 7, and 1. He re-rolls the 10 and gets a 7 for a total of 3 successes.

THROWING THINGS

You can throw any object you can lift up to 1 yard away. For every point above the minimum Strength and Toughness required to lift the object, you can throw the object 1 additional yard. If you're throwing an object as an attack, treat the item as an improvised weapon and



resolve the attack with the Throw skill. This rule is only for throwing bulky or heavy objects that are not normally intended to be thrown.

Saul has a Strength of 3 and a Toughness of 4, giving him a 7 total. He wants to throw a 50-pound sandbag at his opponent, who's standing 5 yards away. To throw 50 pounds, a character needs to have a total Strength and Toughness of 3. Saul exceeds this by 4, so he can throw the sandbag 5 yards.

HAZARDS

Aside from adversaries, there are dangers aplenty in the world of *Witch Hunter*. From the mundane to the magical, there are many ways to die.

DISEASE

One of the most insidious threats is plague. Malaria, yellow fever, and syphilis are widespread problems in this era, and characters exposed to these epidemics must have the fortitude to resist them. And if they catch them, they need the durability to survive them.

When you encounter a disease, you must make an Endurance (Toughness) roll against the disease's Difficulty. If you get the required number of successes, you manage to resist the disease. If you don't you suffer the disease's effects. You are entitled to a new Endurance roll at intervals described under the disease.

FALLING

A fall from any height is dangerous. You take 5 hits for every three yards you fall. Every two successes on a

Toughness roll reduces this damage by 1 hit. The Break Fall trait allows you reduce the number of hits by one for each success.

FIRE

Whenever you come into contact with fire, the flames deal hits depending on their size. See **Table 4–9: Fire Damage**. You may make a Reflexes (Agility) roll, with each success negating 1 hit. If you achieve no successes, you catch fire and take 1d10 hits on the following round. This continues until you are dead or until you negate all the hits. If you roll around on the ground, you gain +3 Dice to your roll.

In addition to the damage from the fire, you must also contend with the smoke. See **Suffocation** for details.

Table 4–9: Fire Damage

Size	Example	Radius	Hits
Tiny	Candle	—	1
Small	Torch	—	3
Medium	Campfire	1 yard	5
Large	Bonfire	3 yards	1d10+5
Huge	Burning Building	6 yards or more	1d10+10

HUNGER

Like real people, characters need to eat. You must have at least one good meal each day to sustain yourself. If you go more than a day without food or three days with sporadic amounts of food, you take 4 hits. You may roll Endurance (Toughness) to negate these hits. Each day thereafter, you take 4 hits plus 1 hit for each day you've gone without food. You may continue to make Endurance rolls to negate these hits. These hits cannot be healed until you eat. This continues until you die or until you eat at least one meal per day for three days straight.

POISON

Whether ingesting a tainted meal or stung by a fearsome beast, poison is a terrible danger. When exposed to a poison, you roll Endurance (Toughness) against the poison's potency. The GM adds the successes by which you failed the check to the poison's DM. You take the result as hits.

Poison also has a potency rating. This is the number of rounds that the poison is effective in the victim's body. A victim must make an Endurance (Toughness) check each round following the rules above.

A successful Heal (Intuition) check with a difficulty equal to the poison's potency will stop the spread of the poison and stop the need for the victim to make further Endurance (Toughness) checks. See **Table 4-10** for sample poisons.

Table 4–10: Poison

Poison	Potency	Damage Modifier
Spoiled Food	1	+1
Exotic Insect	2	+3
Dangerous Snake Poison (Rattlesnake, Water Moccasin, etc)	3	+4
Deadly Snake Poison (Cobra, Coral Snake, etc.)	4	+6
Gila Monster	4	+6
Arsenic	3	+5

SENSORY LOSS

Many mystical effects and ailments can temporarily remove one of your senses. When so deprived, you take the following penalties.

BLINDNESS

When blinded, you function as if you were in darkness. You take a –3 dice penalties to all Fighting and Reaction skill rolls. You also take a –2 dice penalty to Intuition skill rolls. Finally, you can move up to your walk speed, but if you move faster, you must make a Balance (Agility) roll to keep your feet, needing one success per 2 yards traveled.

DEAFNESS

When deafened, you automatically fail all Intuition rolls based on hearing. You also take a –2 dice penalty to Intuition and Reaction skill rolls.

OTHER SENSES

Losing touch, taste, and smell all have variable effects, though none of which affect combat. Taste and smell may prevent you from sensing spoiled or poisoned food. Generally, such losses result in a –3 dice penalty to associated skills, such as Notice (Intuition) rolls to find a hidden door when touch is lost.

SUFFOCATION

All characters can hold their breath a number of rounds equal to their Toughness score (unless they have the Strong Lungs talent). If you go past this point, you must make a Endurance (Toughness) roll. You need one success to start. Each round thereafter, you need an extra success (D1, D2, D3, and so on). If you fail to hit the required successes, you release your breath and instinctively attempt to inhale. You take 10 hits each round thereafter until you die.

THIRST

Just as characters have to eat, they have to drink. If you go more than a day without water or three days with sporadic water, you take 8 hits. You may roll Endurance

(Toughness) to negate these hits. Each day thereafter, you take 8 hits plus 1 hit for each day you’ve gone without water. You may continue to make Endurance rolls to negate these hits. These hits cannot be healed until you drink water. This continues until you die or until you drink a normal amount for three days straight.

HOLY WATER

Some creatures from the Invisible World are so unholy and vile, that they take physical damage from just coming in contact with Holy Water. Holy Water is created by certain artifacts or by having a priest bless a container of water; usually one gallon of water may be blessed per hour.

When used as a weapon to attack a creature from the midnight realm, the Holy Water has a DM equal to the True Faith score of the priest who blessed it. Obviously, water by itself has no inherent damage, so the DM alone is taken as hits for any creature who has the Price – Damage and/or Vulnerability.

FEAR

Many creatures of the Invisible World inspire fear in those who encounter them. As well, some circumstances, such as seeing a comrade hacked to pieces, scenes of disturbing brutality, and more can inspire fear. To reflect the unnatural nature of the awful things haunting the Witch Hunter world, creatures and situations have a Fear Difficulty. This value describes the number of successes you need on a Resolve (Courage) roll to overcome the fear. If a character fails to meet the required number of successes, they suffer effects based on how many successes they failed by.

Fear ratings for situations and creatures/opponents are cumulative as well. Seeing a werewolf in the distance howling at the moon is frightening enough, but seeing the same creature in a room awash with blood, ripping chunks of meat off of a torn body is even more horrific.

When faced with a situation where more than one creature with different Fear Ratings are present, only use the highest Fear rating for the Resolve (Courage) check. If there is a terrifying scene as well, add the Fear rating of the event to the Fear rating of the creature to arrive at the final Fear check difficulty.

Table 4-11: Situational Fear Ratings lists a small number of scenes and the Fear rating that each would have as guidelines when crafting your own scenarios. Published Witch Hunter: The Invisible World scenarios will list any and all Fear ratings as needed.

Table 4-11: Situational Fear Ratings

Event	Fear Rating
Coming across a dismembered body	0
Said dismembered body is moving	1

Table 4-11: Situational Fear Ratings

Event	Fear Rating
Speaking with the Dead*	1
Undergo torture**	2
Enter a room smeared in blood and gore	1
Witness a human sacrifice	1
Witness a ritual which calls up a demon(s)	2
Witness a cannibalistic ritual in process	2
See a ritually slain person left as a warning to you	2

*Necromancers are immune to such Fear checks

**Magi receive +4 bonus dice to resist due to their having undergone the Ordeal.

SHAKEN (1 SUCCESS)

A shaken character is mildly frightened. Whenever he makes an action roll, he must re-roll the highest die rolled and take the worse result. This condition remains for the remainder of the scene or for 1 minute, whichever comes first.

STUNNED (2 SUCCESSES)

A stunned character is paralyzed with fear. He loses his next action. In addition, affected characters take a -1 die penalty to all Resolve rolls for the rest of the scene.

TERRIFIED (3 SUCCESSES)

A terrified character is overcome with horror, appalled by its awfulness. On the character's next action, he must take flee from the source of his fear. If there is no exit or obvious means of escape, the character turns away from the sight and cowers. All attacks against these characters gain a +1 die bonus. In addition, affected characters take a -2 dice penalty to all Resolve rolls for the rest of the scene.

STRICKEN (4 SUCCESSES)

Stricken characters are so overcome with fear that they can do nothing but gibber and whine for the duration of the encounter. The character takes no actions. For the rest of the scene, the character takes a -3 dice penalty on all Resolve rolls.

TOUCHED IN THE HEAD (5 - 6 SUCCESSES)

When faced by unrelenting horrors on almost a daily basis, it is not uncommon for a Witch Hunter to be plagued by a few mental scars. A character who has suffered such a shock to his system develops a minor phobia or psychosomatic symptom. Below are examples of mental maladies that the Witch Hunter may suffer from. Phobias and psychosomatic symptoms suffered from failing a Fear check lasts for a number of game sessions or scenarios equal to the number of successes the check was

failed by. Therefore a phobia developed from a failure of 5 successes lasts for 5 separate game sessions. After this amount of time passes, the Witch Hunter is able to pull himself together and shake off the effects of the malady.

LUNACY (7-9 SUCCESSES)

Some horrors are just too terrible for the human mind to grasp. These experiences begin to truly damage the mental faculties and manifest in the Witch Hunter's behavior in bizarre ways. Failing a Fear check by 7 to 9 successes first causes a temporary Ability loss of -1 to the Witch Hunter's Reason and Will scores. In addition, the afflicted Witch Hunter receives a severe mental disorder. Both the Ability loss and the disorder last for a number of scenarios or game sessions equal to the number of successes the check was failed by. After this amount of time passes, the Witch Hunter is able to shrug off the worst of the effects but may still retain minor symptoms related to the illness.

STARK RAVING MAD (10+ SUCCESSES)

A character who fails by 10 or more successes has had his mind shattered. For the rest of the scene he is catatonic, unable to move or respond to stimuli (though screaming incessantly until his throat is raw would be appropriate). After the scene ends, he may act as normal, but is afflicted by a phobia/psychosomatic symptom and a severe mental illness. In addition, his Will and Reason suffer a -2 penalty for the duration of the illness. Finally, when faced with a stressful situation, such as combat or attempting to perform a skill or rite, he must make a D3 Will roll to act normally. If this Will check is failed, he may do nothing but relive the horror that fractured his mind.

Unlike other disorders and mild mental maladies, this illness does not go away until the Witch Hunter has expended 10 Hero Points. These Hero Points need not be spent all at once, but may be accumulated over time, like banked successes. When the final Hero Point is expended, the Witch Hunter's long road to recovery is complete and he may function as normal.

SELECTING MENTAL ILLNESSES

The following phobias, psychosomatic symptoms and severe mental illnesses should be chosen based on the stimulus that caused the illness in the first place and not just randomly chosen.

Example: A magus who undergoes the Ordeal may choose as his phobia a fear of the color red or perhaps the sound of jingling as one is reminiscent of the color worn by the Cardinal that oversaw his "purification" while the jingling of keys always meant that another session of Judgment was about to begin.

Likewise a Witch Hunter who sees a werewolf splattered with the remnants of latest victim may be startled or apprehensive when in the presence of a large shaggy dog or other beast.

The idea is to always marry the effect to the cause. Randomly choosing an illness does a disservice to the player's as well as your carefully crafted scenario.

Examples of Phobias include the fear of a particular color, sound, or object. You could have a fear of a particular environment like the cold, rain, heights or enclosed or small places. Animals, places even times like midnight can cause you to shiver.

Psychosomatic disorders manifest as physical illness but are all in the mind. Examples could include a facial tic, an uncontrollable shiver, always feeling cold/hot, paralyzed limb, phantom pains, blinking excessively, or the need to spit often as you have excessive saliva.

Other types of mild mental disorders can be categorized as manias, such as being unable to stop snapping your fingers in stressful situations, seriously believing that stepping on a crack will really break your mother's back, having to flip a coin before making a decision and actually letting the coin decide, wearing your hat backwards or else you will fail in your task, chewing your nails, mumbling uncontrollably, or saying a rhyme three times fast before performing a task.

Severe mental disorders include schizophrenia, amnesia, obsession with an object, behavior or cause, megalomania, severe paranoia, delusional, or even manifest multiple personalities.

EFFECTS OF MENTAL DISORDERS

Having a minor mental disorder such as a phobia or a psychosomatic symptom has no actual in-game effect. It does not give you a penalty to your dice pool. It is simply a role-playing handle to give your character a new and different dimension to delve into. Grand Masters are encouraged to award one Hero Point to players who truly play up their illness especially if it complicates their lives or that of their fellow players.

Remember that all these disorders are temporary. Have fun playing a big burly ex-fur trapper who now thinks he is Queen Isabella, the learned and powerful magi who shakes at the sight of corn stalks or the always correct, prim and proper gentlemen Witch Hunter who has no inner monologue, blurting out exactly what he's thinking. Enjoy!

REWARDS

After a particularly grueling battle with the forces of Darkness, a Witch Hunter gives thanks for not only triumphing, but for mere survival. So how does the Grand Master reward worthy Witch Hunters? Monetary rewards and public accolades do not mean much to a Witch Hunter. Providence provides what is needed and too much attention might actually hinder his crusade against the Adversary.

While most Witch Hunters consider putting down evil reward enough, the players may wish to have a small token of appreciation for their diligence and quick wits. This normally will take form in one of three ways:



1. Knowing that a blow against Evil was struck, an additional Hero Point could be awarded. This Hero Point could be used immediately to eliminate one point of Damnation. However, a Witch Hunter that strayed too far into the darkness of his soul may not receive one. As always, this reward is at the Grand Master's discretion.
2. A holy relic, tome or other item that may help the Witch Hunters. This could be anything as simple as rosaries that when dipped in water turns it into holy water to an ancient sword wielded by a particularly pious Crusader. For examples of this, see **Chapter Eight: Grimoires and Relics**.
3. Lastly, Survival Points should be awarded at the end of each session. The number of survival points depends on how the session went, but awards should range from 1 – 5 points. This range can be broken down as 1 – 3 points for defeating the villain/plot/situation, 1 point for good roleplaying and one point for outstanding play, such as a brilliant plan, self-sacrifice or some other way in which the player or players rose to the challenge and went above and beyond what was necessary.

SURVIVAL POINTS

The table below details the manner in which Survival Points may be spent. There is never a need to expend SPs immediately and they may be saved over the course of play for more costly or multiple items.

Table 4–12: Survival Point Expenditure

Item	SP Cost
Ability Scores	
1 – 2	10
2 – 3	10
3 – 4	20
4 – 5	30
Skills	
Background	5/per level
Elective	10/per level
Talents	
Basic	5
Greater	10
Heroic	20

CHAPTER FIVE: THE THREE CIRCLES OF SORCERY

When crafting the Great Seal that would separate the Invisible world from that of man, Solomon paused to consider the ramifications of his work. As originally designed, the Great Seal would banish all things supernatural from the earth, including all magical power. The wisest of Kings realized that during some age far in the future, his Seal would falter, thus releasing all that was banished back to an unsuspecting and unprepared world. Without the knowledge of magical ritual, the very doom that Solomon strove to forestall would inevitably thrust mankind into slavery, and ultimately, extinction.

Conferring with his closest and wisest advisors, Solomon rendered his Great Seal in such a way as to allow a small portion of magical essence to escape, returning to the world of Man. He then tasked his greatest advisor, Absinar, to gather to him those mightiest workers of magic, great sages tasked with passing the knowledge of magic on from one generation to the next. These men (and ultimately women as well) became the first of the Magi.

Man is always a cunning and imaginative race. While the common multitude had not the discipline to command the essence of magic, there were many who could cajole or control those beings that could. The

Faithful will tell you that God gave mortals power over all beasts, birds, and fish of the sea, and all spirits and angels as well; the latter perform feats, commonly called miracles for the mortals who are pure of faith and know how to ask for their services. Animists believe that humans and spirits are bound by an ancient pact, or perhaps a shared ancestry, that allow them to communicate and exchange favors. Servants of the Adversary sell their very souls for the services of demons.

Regardless of the trappings, the varying cults, religions, and traditions which practice magic refer to three levels of power, three “circles.” These levels refer not only to how dramatic the feats that can be accomplished, but also to how powerful and demanding are the beings that must be placated, persuaded, or bargained with in order for the rite to be performed. Thus, the First Level of Sorcery, often called Hedge Magic, is the weakest, simplest level of magic, and requires no great sacrifice on the part of the practitioner; the Third Level of Sorcery, called Apocalyptic Magic, on the other hand, may require the direct participation of a powerful entity, and if the ritualist fails to perform the rite correctly, that being may extract a great price.



THE SIX TRADITIONS

Table 5-1: Sorcerous Traditions

Tradition	Ability Used	Description
Animism	Will	Natural effects, shaped or sped up
Diabolism	Personality	Trading the soul for dramatic, dangerous effects
Hermetic	Education	Versatile, but slow
Necromancy	Reason	Uses sympathetic magic to bypass life and death
Prayer	Courage	Defensive, few visible effects
Witchcraft	Intuition	Seductive, simple, but evil magic

rites

Regardless of the tradition a character practices, one accomplishes magical or miraculous effects by either directly manipulating the subject's essence or by communicating with the denizen of the Invisible World. Each tradition uses a different method to accomplish this, but all traditions use rites. A rite is a series of words, gestures, symbols, or actions that either communicates the caster's desires to the spirits around him or is used to focus the mind to engender the effect that a magus might wish.

Before a character may use rites of the First Circle of Sorcery, he must take the Basic talent for that tradition. He must then take a Basic talent for each rite he wishes to learn. The same holds true for each tradition, for each Circle of Sorcery within that tradition, and for each rite within that circle.

ENACTING A RITE

Enacting a rite uses the same fundamental mechanic as any other action in Witch Hunter. All practitioners of the art, regardless of tradition, should have the skill 'Sorcerous Tradition' (see Skills section of Chapter Two). **Table 5-1** above shows the corresponding Ability for each of the traditions. To enact a rite, roll dice equal to your Ability and skill in Sorcerous Tradition.

Note that though any God-fearing Witch Hunter would bristle at hearing a miracle being called a rite or Sorcery, this term is used throughout the text for convenience and space considerations.

RITE FORMAT

Each rite uses the following format. Specific terms are described in more detail below.

Name (Level of quality required to learn)

Devotion: Where applicable, this denotes the different ways the tradition is practiced.

TRADITIONS WITHIN TRADITIONS

The Sorcerous Traditions of the world of Witch Hunter vary widely. With few exceptions, most of the Sorcerous practices are grouped into six broad categories. For example, the Shamanistic magic used by American Indians, Voodoo magic from Africa and the Runic magic taught by the ancient Nordic Skalds are all varying aspects of Animism. These six magical traditions are therefore painted in deliberately broad strokes.

The term Animism refers to any system of sorcerous beliefs that calls upon the diverse spirits of nature in the world. Prayer is the use of any magic that holds to the core belief that miracles are granted by a benevolent, omnipotent deity. An Orthodox Jew, a Catholic Priest or an Islamic Imam can all practice Prayer magic, regardless of their different languages and the different ways in which they envision and worship their god. What matters is the conviction each person possesses and the sacrifices he is willing to make to empower the effect. In many ways, the details of the magical tradition that a character practices is up to the player or GM, much like his culture, personal history, and even religious beliefs. But, like those aspects of a character, the magical tradition an individual practices is not merely "flavor." It can have dramatic effects on how the character is perceived by others; for instance, a Witch Hunter whose animist practices use blood and require the ritual sacrifice of animals may have a difficult time explaining himself to his peers, whereas one who communes quietly with the natural world and gives praise to "the invisible watchers" around him should easily work with others.

Requirements: Any skills, talents, traits, or abilities necessary before being able to perform the rite.

Difficulty: Number of successes required on a roll to successfully perform the rite. If the term *Ritual* is listed here, it means that the caster may bank successes to complete the rite. Banking means that not all the successes must be rolled in one round and instead is accumulated each and every round until the Difficulty is reached. Each roll of the skill takes an additional amount of time as listed in *Time* below.

Time: Amount of preparation time required before a rite may be attempted/number of turns, minutes, or hours that must be spent, uninterrupted, performing the rite. The preparation of the rite must immediately be followed by the performance of the rite, unless otherwise stated. The exception to this rule is Hermetic Magic which allows the practitioner to prepare a rite in advance of enacting it.

Duration: Amount of time the rite's effects persist.

Strain: The number of rounds the practitioner should wait before he can enact another rite safely. Should another rite be attempted before the number of requisite rounds have passed, the practitioner immediately takes a number of wounds equal to the Strain.

Damnation: Certain rites are so heinous in the sight of God and good men and women everywhere, that they carry a Damnation point penalty for enacting it. This is

TRUE NAMES

Everything has a True Name, a word in the language of creation that gives the speaker power over that creature or object. Most Animists would agree that while all things may have a spirit within them, some are so small and weak that they are not Awakened and thus do not have a True Name. Not every droplet of water, sapling or small rock can respond to a summons to speak. Only after a long time is there even a chance for an object's spirit to awaken and be communicated with, such as with ancient boles, weathered hills and mountains, lakes or streams.

To learn the True Names of such spirits is an arduous task, sometimes beyond the power of even the most learned magus or sensitive shaman, for as rare as it is for a spirit to awaken, it is even rarer for it to have such trust in a mortal as to confide in him its True Name. Thus shamans and other practitioners must rely on their guile and bargaining skills if they wish to learn a certain spirit's True Name. There is a hierarchy in the spirit world, the older and more powerful entities have within their possession the True Names of those beneath them. Thus, the mighty ocean may have in its possession the True Name of a large lake or rivers, while a lake may only know the True Names of rivers and streams which it may feed. Yet these spirits are reluctant to share this knowledge with mortals for fear that they may harm these lesser entities. To have them part with this special knowledge will require conveying the petitioner's urgent necessity or successfully bargaining with this greater spirit. The details of what such a spirit would require in exchange, whether a service or item (or both!), is left to the Grand Master to decide.

Learning a True Name from a spirit requires a successful D4 Concentration (Will) roll. Doing so will allow the listener to perfectly speak and write the True Name given to them.

Some theologians speculate that the angelic hosts and the demonic hordes operate in a similar hierarchical fashion. Bargaining with these powerful forces would normally be suicidal for any but the most learned and powerful of practitioners. Luckily, ancient magi and other powerful sorcerers have a habit of writing down True Names of angels, demons and other spirits which they have had dealings with or have discovered through their many years of life. Often they are written in code within their ancient grimoires or holy scripts, but woe to the unwary who speak these names recklessly, for the writers often purposely omit or add small nuances to these names so that speaking them merely alerts the spirit of the interloper's attempt without binding them to the orator. And there is nothing more vengeful than an arch-angel being summoned before an unprepared and defenseless Diabolist.

Normally learning a True Name from a grimoire or text requires a D3 Speak (language in question) (L) (Reason) roll, but a GM may increase the number of successes necessary due to a particularly difficult code.

The True Names of mortals works slightly different, however. Theologians say that as the soul of a human being is crafted by God and only by God, no other spirit, whether it be the most powerful arch-angel or the Adversary itself can know a mortal's True Name. Even a parent who named their child is incapable of speaking their True Name correctly. Only each individual is blessed with the knowledge of how to speak their True Name. This is because of subtle cadences and other verbal nuances that, at times, are beyond the ability of a mortal to comprehend and perfectly emulate.

Should a mortal be foolish or desperate enough to entrust another with their True Name, the recipient must succeed in a D5 Concentration (Will) roll. Doing so will allow the listener to perfectly speak and write the True Name given to them.

either because the caster is either committing horrible acts, such as blood sacrifices or is turning from the face of the Lord, bending knee to the dark powers of the Adversary.

These rites will have an entry called Damnation followed by two numbers separated by a slash (/), such as 2/4. The first number signifies the amount of Damnation the caster (including all involved in assisting the caster) receives when attempting the rite. The second is the maximum Damnation score the caster must have before he no longer receives Damnation points from enacting this rite.

Example: *Ethan Marshall, the Diabolist enacts the rite of 'Limned in Fire'. This rite has a Damnation score of 2/4, meaning that Ethan gains 2 points of Damnation each time he enacts this rite until his Damnation score is 4 or greater. At that time, he no longer gains any more Damnation points from enacting this rite.*

The rites for the Diabolism, Necromancy and Witchcraft can be found in **Chapter Ten: Creatures and Adversaries**.

Description: Outlines the casting and the possible effects of the rite.

Range: Unless otherwise noted, a rite has a range of 5.

Additional Successes: For many rites, the caster has a choice of increasing the duration, area affected, number of beneficiaries, or benefits per additional success on his Sorcerous Tradition skill check beyond the base difficulty. Each additional success may only be spent toward a single increased effect. So for instance, if a caster scored 5 successes on a D3 rite, he could spend one success on increasing the rite's duration, and one success on expanding the number of beneficiaries; but he could not spend both successes on both effects.

Ties: Many rites require opposed rolls. Unless otherwise stated, a tie goes to neither the performer of the rite or to the target, but rather causes the rite to be repeated at its base duration, at the end of which the opposed skill checks are rolled again.

ANIMISM

In the most basic of terms, Animism deals with the belief in souls or spirits. As such, this basic tenet can be found in most religions, including Christianity. However, Animism goes one step further, believing that all beings as well as objects and even ideas have a spirit which should be respected, at times entreated and even venerated.

In the world of Witch Hunter, there are many possible belief systems which fall under the category of Animism. For example, the "religion" practiced by the American Indians can easily be characterized as Animism, but so could anyone who practices the "Old Ways". There are some who believe that certain spirits are so powerful that they can act as gods. Thus those who supplicate the ancient Egyptian gods for their blessings as well as the ancient warrior skalds, who beseech the mighty Odin for victory in battle, practice a form of Animism.

In this tome, the focus will be on the beliefs of the American Indians and the Shamans who are able to tickle the ear of mighty spirits and ask them for their favor. As detailed in the Orders of Witch Hunters section, Shamans of the Ghost People are some of the most powerful practitioners of spirit magic. Through their own purification rites they are prepared and tested physically, mentally and spiritually. Many perish, in one form or another, while the few who are found worthy of the mantle become known to many of the spirits in the Invisible World. This allows Shamans to have a greater chance of being heard and heeded by spirits of the air, lakes, rivers and stone than any other. While this is a great benefit to the Shaman, it is also very dangerous as the Manitou or evil spirits have also heard his name and will do what they can to twist the Shaman to their will or leave his broken body for the scavengers.

BASIC ANIMISM RITES

AWAKENING

Devotion: All

Difficulty: 2

Time: 2 rounds/1 round

Duration: 1 minute +1 minute per additional success

Strain: 1

Description: The shaman smears his closed eyes with sacred soot, tar, or mud, and begs for a wise spirit to grant him insight into the invisible world. The caster's eyes water as the sacred substance stings his eyes; by squinting through the tears, he can make out the vague form of spiritual forces nearby. This includes things normally invisible to the naked eye, such as ghosts, the auras surrounding Corrupted or enchanted individuals, ley lines, and the like.

The shaman's ability to perceive the mundane world clearly is hampered, and as such he suffers a -1 penalty to all Fighting and Reaction skill rolls against non-supernatural opponents. Awakened

shamans suffer none of these penalties when facing invisible foes, and when facing any type of supernatural foe at all, suffer no penalties that would normally be caused by poor lighting and other conditions. This rite may be used on others. (Moved up a line.)

EMBODYING THE TOTEM

Devotion: Shamanistic

Difficulty: 3

Time: 10 minutes/2 rounds

Duration: 10 minutes + 10 minutes per additional success

Strain: 2

Description: Calling upon his people's ancient traditions, the shaman calls upon a totem of war, hunt, and survival. This rite was historically performed upon braves going into war, going on a hunt, or forced to travel into dangerous territory. For the Ghost People, it has become too common an occurrence.

By dancing, painting himself in natural dyes of the appropriate substance and color, and chanting the name of his tribe's totem, he offers that totem a physical vessel to inhabit for a time: himself. In return for this boon, the totem lends its strength, agility, or other physical attributes to the shaman. The shaman may choose one aspect plus one additional aspect per five additional success.



Seeing the Unseen

Awakening, Diagram of Insight, and other rites allow characters to “see” not only spirits and invisible creatures, but magical auras as well. While able to view them, the character may use visual clues to attempt to interpret the general nature of sorcerous effects and supernatural auras with a D4 Sorcerous Tradition (appropriate Ability for his tradition) roll. For each level of the rite beyond Basic that has created the aura, add +2 to the difficulty; for each 10 points in the cost of a supernatural creature that created the aura, add +1 to the difficulty (rounded up).

Aspect of the Hunter: The shaman gains +2 dice on Track skill rolls, +1 die on Stealth skill rolls, and the Ambush Attack greater quality.

Aspect of the Survivor: The shaman gains +2 dice on Stealth skill rolls, +1 die on Reflex skill rolls, and the Swift greater quality.

Aspect of the Warrior: The shaman gains +2 dice on Hand-to-Hand skill rolls, +1 die on Parry skill rolls, and the Tough greater quality.

Aspect of the Explorer: The Shaman gains +2 dice on Resolve skill rolls, +1 die to the Defense pool rolls, and the Agile Runner greater quality.

KNIT THE FLESH

Devotion: All

Difficulty: 3

Time: 1 minute/1 round

Duration: Immediate

Strain: 3

Description: The shaman forces torn flesh together with salve, needle and thread, or perhaps his own hands, then convinces benevolent spirits to heal the wound. The shaman heals 1 hit + 1 hit per additional success, to a maximum of all hits in the targets current health level.

SPEECH OF THE FIRST TIMES

Devotion: All

Difficulty: 2

Time: 1 round/1 round

Duration: 1 minute +1 minute per additional success

Strain: 2

Description: By cutting his own tongue and dabbing the blood that wells up into his ears, the shaman invites thirsty spirits to reside in his mouth and ears. As they feed off his life force, they allow him to speak to and understand, whether they be mammals, birds, reptiles, fish, and even insects, as humans supposedly could during the earliest days of mankind. The more complex the creature, the more complex the ideas it can communicate and understand.

This rite does not force the beasts near the shaman to listen or speak to him, much less follow his demands or answer his questions truthfully. Some kind of incentive, whether it be food, protection, or information, is likely needed to convince the animal to deal with the shaman.

SPIRIT SON

Devotion: Shamanistic

Difficulty: Varies

Time: 1 hour/10 minutes

Duration: 1 minute + 1 minute per additional success

Strain: 2

Description: By first purifying himself and his surrounding, then chanting a powerful nature spirit's name in an ancient tongue, the shaman begs for an audience with the spirit. The difficulty of the roll is equal to the spirit's Will score. If the shaman is successful, the spirit answers his call and engages in peaceful dialogue with the shaman. The spirit and the shaman remain on separate planes, and communicating from their current locations and neither can perceive the whereabouts of the other. The spirit cannot manifest physically, and cannot use any of its power that directly affects the physical world. This means that the shaman is safe from the spirit's wrath, should he incur it, but is also unable to use the spirit for its physical power. At best, the spirit will provide information or use divinatory abilities; information that it prefers to keep secret or knowledge that could ultimately harm it would require the shaman to offer it a substantial boon or sacrifice, and succeed at an Interaction check. GMs are final arbiters in deciding the spirit's disposition, but as a rule of thumb, minor sacrifices should engender an 'Indifference' disposition. Greater sacrifices, boons, etc should move the Disposition up from there. At worst, it will threaten the shaman and attempt to track him down later.

Before a spirit can be summoned, it must either have been encountered previously by the shaman or be one commonly known to exist such as spirits in lakes, rivers, hills, mountains, etc. If the shaman is attempting to summon a spirit he has not previously encountered, the spirit's disposition begins at 'Dislike' for the purposes of the Interaction check. Finally, a shaman can attempt to summon any spirit who's True Name he knows.

TRANCE OF SUFFERING BANISHED

Devotion: Shamanistic

Difficulty: 2

Time: None/1 round

Duration: 1 minute + 1 minute per additional success

Strain: 2

Description: By focusing on esoteric breathing patterns, creating visions of his totem spirit, or sending his perception “out of body,” the shaman removes himself from the immediacy of his body's situation. This allows him to ignore all penalties suffered by wounds for the duration of the rite.

GREATER ANIMISM RITES

BOND OF BLOOD

Devotion: Shamanistic

Difficulty: 3

Time: None/10 minutes

Duration: 1 hour + 1 hour per additional success, so long as the shaman concentrates and remains motionless.

Strain: 4

Description: While meditating to attune himself to the rhythm of the land or water around him, the shaman cuts himself and lets the blood flow into the surrounding landscape. So long as he remains motionless and concentrating, he may then sense events and circumstances within 1 mile of his location as if he were the plants or animals, water or stones, of the land itself. First of all, he gains a general idea of the types, amount, and health of the area's flora and fauna. He also senses the general location of any supernatural creatures or effects, though not their specific natures. He is able to pinpoint any areas where the land is "being harmed" or is "cut off," such as roads, man-made buildings, Hellpoints, and so on. Finally, the shaman can precisely pinpoint, and knows the exact state of, any creature whose True Name he knows.

For each additional success beyond the rite's difficulty, the shaman may extend the radius of the area sensed by 1 mile.

COCOON OF THE WEAVER

Devotion: Shamanistic

Difficulty: 3

Time: 1 hour/1 evening

Duration: One night, from sunset to sunrise.

Strain: 3

Description: The shaman weaves a net of spider silk, plant fronds, human hair, and rope around an injured person (or human-sized creature; if the recipient of the rite is larger or smaller, the preparation time is proportionally longer or shorter). After the injured person is wrapped in the cocoon, the shaman chants over his form, massaging his limbs until the injured person falls into a deep sleep. The shaman must then care for the subject throughout the evening. Assuming the casting roll is successful, when the recipient awakens the next morning and emerges from the cocoon, he is healed of all hits from a single health level.

For each additional success beyond the rite's difficulty, the subject may be healed of all hits from an additional health level.

Shamans may not perform this rite upon themselves, and gain no rest during the evening that they are caring for another. The benefits of this rite may be combined with that of the healing skill. Assuming he commits to the additional preparation time of one hour per recipient, the shaman may attempt to care for multiple recipients per use of this rite. If he does so, the shaman must divide his Sorcerous Tradition (Intuition) dice pool among all of the recipients, requiring 4 successes per recipient to cause successful healing.

MASTERY OF THE ELEMENTS

Devotion: All

Difficulty: 4

Time: 1 minute/1 round

Strain: 3

Duration: Concentration, to a maximum of 4 rounds + 1 round per additional success

Upon entreating the spirits of air, water, earth, fire, or plant life, the shaman gain control over 10 cubic feet of the material, plus 10 additional cubic feet per additional success. The rite has the following potential effects, depending on the material chosen.

Air: The shaman's hair whips about his head and his clothes rustle in an unfelt breeze, as he calls out to the spirits of air, causing dust devils to appear and the wind to moan in response. The shaman controls the winds within the area of effect, changing the existing breeze's direction, directing it to blow up, down, or swirl around the area. He may also change the wind's intensity. Each round he maintains the wind in the area, he may increase or decrease the wind's intensity, such as from a breeze to a gust, or a tornado to a hurricane, by one step. He may increase or decrease the wind's intensity by an additional step each round for every round by which he is willing to reduce the rite's duration.

Earth: The shaman can convince the spirits of the earth to act as you wish. The most elementary effect of this prayer is to change the consistency of earth, whereby the shaman can cause it to loosen or harden, making it easier or more difficult to excavate the earth. Mechanically, the shaman can increase the number of hits the earth can take before it is shattered. Stone can take 32 hits per 3-cubic-foot section. Packed earth has about half of this value or less (determined by the GM). Each round the shaman sustains this prayer, he can increase or decrease the hits a section can take by 1d10 (plus an additional 1d10 for every round by which he is willing to reduce the rite's duration). Should a shaman reduce the number of hits the earth can take to 0 or less, the area is reduced to dust.

Fire: The shaman may call upon the spirits of fire to lend their aid. Upon casting this prayer, he takes control over a single fire within range. He may increase or decrease the size of the fire by one step (such as causing a candle to flare to the size of a torch, or snuffing the candle out altogether) each round that he maintains the rite, plus one step for every round by which he is willing to reduce the rite's duration.

Water: The shaman can move and shape the water as he likes. This rite gently modifies the water, but can force it to defy the laws of gravity. This rite can be used to part waters, lift aside waterfalls, protect against rain, hail, snow, and so on. The shaman may lessen the amount of precipitation in the area by one step, or the strength of a water current by one step, each round that he maintains the rite. Alternatively, for every round by which he is willing to reduce the rite's duration, he may alter the precipitation or water current strength by one additional step.

Plant Life: The most elementary effect of this rite is to cause the plants in the area of effect to grow in abundance. All plants yield twice the normal amount of food. In areas where there are no plants, the shaman can cause manna (an edible fungus) to grow. Each round that he maintains

this effect, he creates enough food to feed one adult for one day.

This version of the rite may also be used to harmlessly move plants aside to allow easier passage. For as long as the shaman maintains this prayer, which has a special duration of 4 minutes + 1 minute per additional success, he and up to one human-sized companion per additional success can move through undergrowth with no penalty to their movement, allowing them to treat light, moderate, and heavy forest as clear roads (see **Table 4–7: Terrain**).

SPIRIT BROTHER

Devotion: Shamanistic

Difficulty: Varies

Time: Special/1 round

Duration: 10 minutes + 10 minutes per additional success

Strain: 1

Description: This rite must be performed during the Spirit Son rite in order for any benefit to be gained. First, the shaman must perform the Spirit Son basic rite. Instead of the spirit granting him information, however, the spirit must instead agree to grant the shaman one of its powers. The GM may call for a sacrifice and an opposed Interaction roll, as normal, depending on the nature of the power bequeathed and the shaman's intended use for it.

Thereafter, at any point during the duration of the rite, he may call upon the spirit to grant him the use of one of its powers as a 1-round action. This requires a second successful Sorcerous Tradition (Intuition) roll, this time with a difficulty of 2 for basic powers, 4 for greater powers, or 6 for heroic or villainous powers. If the shaman knows the spirit's True Name, this difficulty is halved. If the shaman fails the roll, he may make another attempt later on during the duration, continuing to make attempts until he succeeds once or the duration of the rite expires.

Detailing each and every spirit that could be summoned is beyond the scope of this book. GMs should either create available spirits that the Shaman may summon or make use of ones listed in other printed products and adventures.

HEROIC ANIMISM RITES

WEARING THE BEAST'S SKIN

Devotion: Shamanistic

Difficulty: 6 (Ritual)

Time: Special/3 rounds

Duration: Unlimited

Strain: 4

Description: This rite requires more preparation than any other known animism rite, and it is the most renowned of the powers possessed by the medicine men and wise women of the Indians of the new world, as well

as other cultures that are more in tune with nature than those of Europe. It allows the shaman to choose one alternate form, into which he may change shape whenever he wishes.

The first step, and the lion's share of the preparation, is the acquisition of the shaman's chosen beast skin. He must personally track or capture, then ritualistically slay, the animal whose form he wishes to acquire. Only organic weapons crafted by the shaman may be used in this process; catgut snares, a bow made from antler, or a spear crafted from wood, bone, and obsidian could all be used, but a revolver or a steel-jawed bear trap could not. The animal must then be skinned, its corpse burned until nothing but ash exists, and its skin then ritually prepared to create a robe or cloak that completely covers the shaman's form. The robe or cloak may only be comprised of parts of the animal, such that any thread used must be from the animal's own guts, any buckles and clasps from the animal's bones, etc. In the case of smaller animals, this may mean the killing and cleaning of dozens or even hundreds of the creatures. The GM may require the character to succeed at a Construct skill roll; crafting a robe from a single large animal, like a bear or lion, would be fairly easy, with a difficulty of 2 or 3. Crafting a robe from smaller animals would be increasingly difficult, with a fox or cat being difficulty 4, eagle or other large bird being difficulty 5, rodents or medium birds being difficulty 6, and insects or small birds being nearly impossible, at difficulty 7.

Once this is accomplished, the shaman must don the cloak or robe and wear it, fasting and meditating, for three days in isolation, in a natural location appropriate for the creature in question. During the three days the shaman suffers excruciating pain, as his body slowly becomes that of the creature whose shape he wishes to acquire. He makes the D6 Sorcerous Tradition (Intuition) roll at the end of this time, and if he is successful, he has fully changed shape into the creature in question. Thereafter, with a successful D6 Sorcerous Tradition (Intuition) roll, he may shift between that form and his natural form at will over a painful 2 rounds.

While in his beast form, the shaman gains all of the abilities, qualities, and skills of the animal, including its intelligence, with one exception: he retains his own Concentration skill score. He operates almost entirely on instinct, and only by concentrating solely on his intended task can he travel to a specific destination or perform a specific task. For the first 10 minutes of human-like behavior the shaman attempts to perform, this requires a D1 Concentrate (Will) skill roll. For every 10 minutes of human-like behavior thereafter, the difficulty of the skill roll increases by 1.

Because the shaman is using his new form's Will score, the further removed the animal is from a human level of mindset (large mammals being most similar, insects, birds, and reptiles being least similar), the more difficult it is for the shaman to behave as anything other than an animal.

Regardless of which form the shaman is in, he remembers people, places, and experiences from his other existence, albeit in a dreamlike way. Positive memories allow friends and safe places to be trusted, or at least not harmed, regardless of form; negative memories, meanwhile, ensure that people and places remembered to be dangerous will be attacked or fled from.

A Strip Power rite or similar rite can force the shaman to return to his normal form, as can anyone speaking the shaman's True Name within close range.

SPIRIT FATHER

Devotion: Shamanistic

Difficulty: Varies

Time: Special/1 day

Duration: 1 day + 1 day per additional success

Strain: 1

Description: This rite is among the most powerful, and the most dangerous, that a shaman may undertake. It can only be performed on a spirit that the shaman truly knows, and whose many powers and natures the shaman understands. The shaman must not only have established contact with the spirit via the Spirit Son rite, he must also have called upon each of the spirit's powers at least once using the Spirit Brother rite.

Once those two things, which are the rite's preparation, have been accomplished, the shaman may attempt to bind the spirit to his him as an ally or slave. He enters a meditative state, casting his consciousness inward and outward into the spirit realm, seeking the spirit in question; as soon he begins this search, the spirit he seeks learns of the shaman's intent and may attempt to stop him. The spirit may search for the shaman in the physical world, attempting to do physical harm, or it may lash out at him with its supernatural powers, if it has any that might be of use in warding off astral travelers or mental control. The spirit does not automatically know the shaman's location, though he may use divination or mundane means to attempt to find him.

Regardless, if the spirit has not managed to disrupt the shaman's concentration by the time the earth has traveled a full circuit around the sun after the shaman began the rite, the two beings must then make opposed Concentration (Will) rolls. If the shaman succeeds, he binds the spirit to his service; if the spirit succeeds, the shaman may not attempt to bind the spirit again for a year and a day unless he knows the spirit's True Name, in which case he may attempt to bind the spirit again after one cycle of the moon. If there is a tie, the spirit and the shaman are locked in psychic battle for another entire day, at the end of which they make the test again. Both are considered helpless and comatose during this day, and the process may be repeated indefinitely if there are further ties.

A bound spirit must do the shaman's bidding for the duration of the rite. For every point beyond the first by which the shaman won the opposed roll, the duration is extended by a single day. Assuming the duration of the

initial rite was long enough, the shaman may attempt to prolong his control of the spirit with another daylong ritual, timed to begin just as the first one ends; he gains a +1 bonus to the opposed Concentration (Will) roll for every 3 consecutive days that the spirit has been bound to him.

If a spirit is not forced to do anything against its nature or its will while bound, it may hold no ill will toward the shaman after its servitude; indeed, some causes are so necessary that a spirit volunteers to be bound by a shaman so long as the shaman gives some assurance that he will not to attempt to prolong the binding. However, if a spirit is bound against its will and forced to perform deeds against its will or nature, it will likely consider the shaman an enemy to be hunted down and destroyed at the earliest opportunity.

HERMETICISM

Hermetic Magic is a complex and grueling form of magic. It differs from all the other traditions described here in that it is the only tradition wherein the practitioner does not use an intermediary to cause an effect, but rather the Magus herself shapes magical essence with her own will.

Those who practice Hermetic magic are no different than any other human being. They are not born from a specific bloodline nor are they blessed (or cursed) by those beyond the ken of mortal man. Their sole unique characteristic is their focused dedication to the Art. Anyone can learn higher mathematics, such as calculus, but few apply themselves to the years and years of study and preparation necessary to master it. So it is with Hermetic magic. It is the rare gifted person who would be able to truly master the Art without beginning his studies from a very young age.

At its core, Hermetic magic manipulates the ambient mystical energy that enfolds the world. Though Solomon erected a wall separating our world from the 'Invisible World', he crafted the barrier so as to allow a small amount of eldritch power to leak through. It is this magical essence that the Magi mold and bend to their will. It is often used to empower sigils and wards such as those used in various Circles, but it can also be used for myriad other purposes. While the image of magi hurling bolts of lightning or transforming persons into frogs is a product of the fevered imagination of the uninitiated, a magus' power is not solely defensive. In extreme cases, a Magus is able to unleash raw energy in the form of a blast of eldritch power, but only those truly in command of the Art are able to do so without a focus of some sort, such as a staff or rod.

Feared and vilified by the ignorant, distrusted and constantly tested by the faithful but called upon by the powerful, the life of a Magus is one of long stretches of emotional solitude punctuated by moments of terror during life or death struggles.

BASIC HERMETIC RITES

FIRST CIRCLE OF BINDING

Difficulty: Varies

Time: 1 hour/1 round

Duration: 1 day or special (see below)

Strain: 1

Description: The Circle of Binding is the most basic of hermetic techniques; without it, a magician will find himself defenseless against a good many of the forces he encounters. The preparation time for the rite involves drawing or inscribing the mystical diagram upon a solid surface, and the casting itself requires merely the shedding of a drop of the magician's blood upon the diagram, the work of a moment. That moment also involves, however, considerable focus of will

A Circle of Binding is roughly 3 feet in diameter, large enough to block a doorway or contain a human-sized being, nothing more. The base time to draw such a circle is 1 hour.

The true measure of the circle's power and the magician's skill comes when he attempts to empower the circle. To do so, he pricks his own finger and lets the blood drop upon the pattern he has created, making at that moment the Sorcerous Tradition (Education) roll to perform the rite. The number of successes gained

determines the circle's power; the magician may strengthen or weaken the circle's power by extending or decreasing its desired duration. For every level of the base duration (from 1 day to 1 hour, 1 hour to 10 minutes, 10 minutes to 1 minute, and 1 minute to 1 round) by which the magician shortens the circle's duration, one success is added to the circle's power. For every doubling of the base duration (from 1 day to 2 days, 2 days to 4 days, 4 days to 8 days, and so on), one success is removed from the circle's power.

Once the circle is activated, it has the potential to bar the passage of a spirit of any kind (nature, demonic, angelic, necromantic, or other), whether physically manifested or not, as well as those spirits' powers. In order to bypass a circle of binding, the creature must make a Resolve (Courage) test with a difficulty equal to the circle's power. If it succeeds, it may ignore the circle completely. If it fails, neither it nor its powers may bypass the circle for the rest of the circle's duration. Purely corporeal supernatural creatures, like lycanthropes, Accursed humans, Vampires or harpies are only restricted by circles of binding if something of their being has been worked into the circle, such as hair tufts, feathers, nail clippings etc.; corporeal creatures' powers are universally blocked by the circle, however, regardless of whether their True Names were used. So long as such a creature was also restrained physically, a circle would have the potential to block it from possessing others, using ranged supernatural attacks, or even performing rites.

If a circle is used defensively (with the magician or another ally inside the circle), or if anyone attempts to use sorcery to attack a creature bound within a circle, they must overcome the circle's power as normal. A magician can never overcome his own circle's power, preventing him from using sorcery to directly attack any spirit he has bound.

If a circle is obscured or interrupted by any physical object, whether it be the markings in sand being wiped away, a drawing in chalk being erased, or a stone inscription being gouged out, the circle's power immediately ends. A supernatural creature bound by the circle is unable to affect the circle in any way, but mundane allies of the creatures can attempt to disrupt it, as can any creature that has overcome the circle's power.

While being blocked by a circle is merely an inconvenience, annoyance, or obstacle to be overcome, being bound within a circle is a singularly painful experience. Any magician who binds a spirit can expect that spirit to be his enemy forever after, regardless of their mutual interests. However, for as long as the spirit is bound, it is at the magician's mercy. The magician can threaten, cajole, trick, entice, interrogate, or otherwise bargain with the spirit while



INSCRIBING THE CIRCLE

A circle is usually 3 feet in diameter, and most magicians find that an hour is enough time to draw it precisely. For every 10 minutes less that the magician takes as preparation time, he suffers a -1 penalty to his Sorcerous Tradition (Education) roll when performing the rite, to a normal maximum of a -5 penalty for a circle being drawn in a normal minimum of 10 minutes. A truly reckless or desperate magician can attempt to draw a circle in one tenth the normal minimum time, however, taking only 1 minute, but doing so causes a -10 penalty to the subsequent Sorcerous Tradition (Education) roll to perform the rite. On the other hand, more cautious magicians may spend extra time checking and double-checking their circle, its markings, and its measurements. For every doubling of the magician's preparation time in drawing the circle, he gains an additional +1 die to his Sorcerous Tradition (Education) roll to perform the rite; so for instance, a magician taking 2 hours to draw a circle gains a +1 bonus, a magician taking 4 hours gains a +2 bonus, a magician taking 8 hours gains a +3 bonus, and so on.

On the other hand, a magician may wish to increase the circle's diameter. A larger circle not only

takes more time to draw, but more skill and power to activate as well. For every 3 feet he wishes to add to the circle's diameter, the magician must spend an additional hour drawing the circle and he suffers a -1 penalty to the Sorcerous Tradition (Education) roll to perform the rite. The same penalties as above apply for a rushed drawing of a larger circle, altered slightly for the size. For every 3 feet of the circle's diameter, the increments of rushed time causing a -1 penalty are increased by 10 minutes. So a 6-foot-diameter circle could be rushed by 20 minutes with a -2 penalty (-1 for rushing and -1 for the difficulty of the increased size), by 40 minutes with a -3 penalty, and so on, to a normal maximum of rushing by 100 minutes (for a total of 20 minutes of drawing time) with a -6 penalty. As above, the truly reckless magician can take one-tenth the normal minimum time, 2 minutes, to draw a 6-foot diameter circle with a -11 penalty.

Example circle sizes and penalties are presented in **Table 5-2**, below. There is theoretically no limit to the potential size of a binding circle, but the penalties that accrue as the circle's diameter increases make circles greater than 20 feet in diameter nearly impossible to activate.

Table 5-2: Circle Sizes and Effects

Diameter	Base Prep Time	Base Penalty	Rush Drawing Increment	Max Rush	Reckless
3 feet	1 hour	-0	10 minutes	-5/10 minutes	-10/1 minute
6 feet	2 hours	-1	20 minutes	-6/20 minutes	-11/2 minutes
9 feet	3 hours	-2	30 minutes	-7/30 minutes	-12/3 minutes
12 feet	4 hours	-3	40 minutes	-8/40 minutes	-13/4 minutes
15 feet	5 hours	-4	50 minutes	-9/50 minutes	-14/5 minutes
18 feet	6 hours	-5	60 minutes	-10/60 minutes	-15/6 minutes
21 feet	7 hours	-6	70 minutes	-11/70 minutes	-16/7 minutes
24 feet	8 hours	-7	80 minutes	-12/80 minutes	-17/8 minutes

it is thus bound, forcing the spirit to promise whatever he wishes. Although the magician does not have specific control over the being, he is aided in his bargaining by a useful property of the circle: while bound, a creature cannot tell an untruth, including making false promises.

DIAGRAM OF INSIGHT

Difficulty: 2

Time: 1 hour/1 round

Duration: 1 minute +1 minute per additional success

Strain: 1

Description: The Diagram of Insight is much larger than the Circle of Binding, averaging 15 feet in diameter. It is a supernatural lens, a glass through which the magician and anyone else can see into the Invisible World. Circles of Binding are often inscribed within Diagrams of Insight, ensuring that a magician will be able to see whatever he has caught.

When within a Diagram of Insight, any creature, item, or aura that would be invisible is made visible to everyone and everything else, whether they are within or outside the diagram. For additional effects, see the "Seeing the Unseen" sidebar, page 123.

Diagrams of Insight may be drawn with larger diameters, just as can Circles of Binding. The Diagram is much simpler, however, requiring a base time of 1 minute per 5 feet of the circle's diameter beyond 15 ft. As with the Circle of Binding, the magician must have a clear area on which to inscribe the circle. The more obscured the circle becomes by material or the more blurred the outline (if he uses chalk, paint, or something similar), the more blurred and unclear the visibility of invisible things and auras within.

MAGICIAN'S MARK

Difficulty: 2

Time: 1 round/1 minute

Duration: 1 day +1 day per additional success

Strain: 1

Description: Using vinegar, mercury, or some other liquid, the magician inscribes an invisible version of his personal rune upon a willing person, object, or creature. Thereafter, he always knows the general status and well-being of the marked person or thing. If it is an object, he knows if it is whole or damaged, and if it is being carried or is immobile. If it is a person, he knows if she is healthy or harmed, conscious or unconscious. If it is within approximately 1 mile, the magician always knows its general direction and distance. If it is farther away, the magician must concentrate for 1 round to sense general direction, and for 1 round per mile away to sense approximate distance (to within 1 mile).

The rite is usually used to allow a magician to protect or be able to track down items or people he wishes to guard. It could conceivably be used to mark an enemy or prisoner, however. This would involve, first of all, the unwilling individual being tied down or knocked unconscious and made motionless while the magician performed the rite. However, the rite can be easily undone by anyone who knows that it has been performed: the surface in question must simply be scoured clean of the mystic "stain" left behind by the Magician's Mark. This can be quite painful when the surface in question is living flesh, but it is easier than, say, scouring a valuable painting with the mark inscribed on it.

If a magician knows both his and the target's or item's True Name and wishes to inscribe both on the target, the Magician's Mark is permanent until cleansed. This option is very risky, however, as anyone who sees the mark would also see the True Name. If they could determine whose True Name it was, the viewer would then have some measure of power over the magician.

ELDRITCH BLAST

Difficulty: See below

Time: 2 rounds/1 round

Duration: Instantaneous

Strain: 4

Description: For those with a meager understanding and control of the arts, this rite is by far the most dangerous and difficult to control. The magus opens herself to the mystical energies swirling around her and begins to absorb as much as her body can contain, this usually manifests as a bright nimbus of light surrounding her being. When she has as much she can possibly hold, she releases this power in a crude, unfocused blast that is aimed in the general direction of her target.

Make a Sorcerous Tradition (Education) roll. Your opponent may expend Defense, including armor, to negate your successes. If you have any successes remaining, multiply them by the blasts' Damage Multiplier (x4) to determine the damage your attack dealt.

In addition, any other beings within a small radius around the initial target (approximately 5 feet) are also struck by the volatile energy. They may also apply Defense to the original successes rolled and any remaining are multiplied by a Damage Multiplier of x1.

If the magus were to Botch this roll, make an additional Sorcerous Tradition (Education) roll as normal, but apply all successes generated to the magus instead of the target, as the energy she fought to contain slips from her control and burns out through her body. No Defense may be applied to lower the successes generated.

SIGIL OF warding

Difficulty: 3

Time: 1 minute/10 minutes

Duration: 1 day +1 day per additional success

Strain: 2

Description: The magician inscribes a door, chest, book, archway or other item or area with an invisible sigil that can have varying effects when triggered. The sigil is triggered whenever someone or something without the proper key (which can be a phrase, an item, a type of item or material, or even a certain level of Damnation) attempts to open it, passes over or beneath it, or reads it. The magician determines the triggering circumstances when he inscribes the sigil.

The magician chooses one of the following effects when inscribing the sigil. For every day by which he is willing to decrease the duration of the sigil, he may choose one additional effect. Unless otherwise noted, sigils continue to operate after triggered until their duration expires.

If a magician knows his True Name and wishes to inscribe it along with the sigil, the Sigil of Warding becomes permanent until cleansed. This option is very risky, however, as anyone who sees the sigil could also see the True Name. If they could determine whose True Name it was, the viewer would then have some measure of power over the magician.

Alarm: The sigil gives off either a silent alarm that only the magician can hear (at any distance), or a keening wail that seems like to wake the dead. The alarm goes off until the magician silences it with a mental command or for 1 minute per remaining hour of the sigil's duration. Each minute of the alarm's activity drains one hour from the sigil's duration.

Terror: The triggering individual must make a D3 Resolve (Courage) skill check or be physically unable to open the door, move through the portal, and so on, for 1 hour per point by which he failed the skill check. For every day by which the magician is willing to decrease the duration of the sigil, the difficulty of the skill check increases by 1.

Blaze: The triggering individual must make a D3 Endurance (Toughness) skill check or be blinded for 1 hour for every point by which he failed the skill check. For every day by which the magician is willing to decrease the duration of the sigil, the difficulty of the skill check increases by 1.

Seal: If placed on a door or chest, this sigil fuses and melts the lock when it is triggered, making it impossible to open short of smashing the door or chest, causing a 3-hit burn to the triggering character if he fails a D3 Reflexes (Agility) check. If placed on the floor, the sigil magically prevents the triggering character from moving away from the sigil unless he succeeds at a D3 Jump (Strength) test; if he fails, he is trapped for 1 minute per remaining hour of the sigil's duration. All versions of this sigil end after being triggered.

Binding: The triggering of the seal activates a Circle of Binding that had been heretofore made invisible thanks to the sigil's magic. The Circle of Binding must be performed separately, and uses all of the rules as described under that Rite.

SUMMONING OF THE UNSEEN

Difficulty: Varies

Time: 1 day/1 hour

Duration: Instantaneous

Strain: 2

Description: The magician performs exhaustive research into a spirit's history, nature, weaknesses, and desires, then arranges a series of runes and items in a pattern that will lure the spirit to him like a moth to flame. The research, which is the preparation time, requires at a minimum a day of cross-referencing and note-taking; the arranging of the runes and items requires one hour of uninterrupted work. If a magician knows a creature's True Name, there is no preparation time necessary.

As soon as the magician begins the 1-hour rite, the spirit immediately knows not only that it is being summoned, but also the exact position to which he is being summoned. The spirit has one hour to attempt to disrupt that summoning, whether it means by traveling to the magician's location and attacking him, sending minions to do the work for him, or even causing foul weather or earthquakes (if it is a spirit of such power that it can perform those deeds) to attempt to disrupt the magician's concentration). At the end of that hour, if the magician has not been disrupted, he makes a Sorcery (Education) skill check opposed by the spirit's Concentration (Will). If the magician succeeds, the spirit immediately appears directly in front of the magician (the magician may designate roughly where the spirit appears . . . such as within the Circle of Binding in the center of the room). If the spirit succeeds, the magician may not attempt to summon the spirit again until the moon has completed one full cycle. If there is a tie, the spirit and the shaman are locked in psychic battle for another entire hour, at the end of which they make the test again. Both are considered helpless and comatose during this hour, and the process may be repeated indefinitely if there are further ties.

Once the spirit appears, it is free to act however it likes, but most magicians make sure to prepare a Circle of Binding before attempting a summoning.

GREATER HERMETIC RITES

MARK OF THE MINION

Difficulty: 3

Time: 2 rounds/10 minutes

Duration: 1 day +1 day per additional success

Strain: 2

Description: This rite is a more advanced version of Magician's Mark, which must be learned before this one. Rather than merely knowing the general state of the item or person marked, the magician can actively see through the area around the mark as if he were there (in the case of a person, as if he were looking through that person's eyes). Also, if he knows any rites (such as from other traditions) that can be used to heal, support, or enhance an object or person, he may perform them upon the person or object as if they were present.

If a magician knows both his and the target's True Name and wishes to inscribe both on the target, the Magician's Mark is permanent until cleansed. This option is very risky, however, as anyone who sees the mark would also see the True Name. If they could determine whose True Name it was, the viewer would then have some measure of power over the magician.

OPENING THE WAY

Difficulty: 3

Time: 3 rounds/1 round

Duration: 2 rounds

Strain: 3

Description: The Great Seal may have erected a barrier to separate the Invisible World from the mortal realm, but it could not completely sever the ties between the two. As the centuries have passed, so too has the power of the Seal waned, making passage from one world to the next possible, but never routine. There are some areas on Earth where the barrier is thinner than in others. Some, like those around faerie circles are so thin, that any mortal may inadvertently find themselves walking towards the great palaces of the Seelie Courts. Yet, with rare exceptions, practitioners who know how can slip the chains of the mortal world and travel into the Invisible World.

The magus who wishes to travel bodily into the Invisible World needs first concentrate on where she wishes to journey to, specifically if a particular location is desired or at least to what layer, see **Chapter Seven: The World of 1689**. With this image firmly in mind, the magus begins to slowly unravel a small portion of the Great Seal. This manifests as a small rip in the very fabric of reality in front of the magus. This tear is normally large enough for an adult human to pass through, though additional successes can be used to enlarge or to increase the duration of the opening. The magus must succeed in a D3 Sorcerous Tradition (Education) for this to occur. Failure to make the necessary check results in the opening snapping shut before anyone can pass through.

The rip normally remains open for 2 rounds, though the magus may close it before the time has elapsed. Anyone caught within an opening as it is snapping shut has a 50/50 chance of being thrown back out to the mortal realm or through to the Invisible World.

Magi in the Invisible World who desire to travel back to the mortal realm must enact the rite again.

SHIELD

Difficulty: 3

Time: 2 rounds/1 round

Duration: See below

Strain: 2

Description: The magus' control over the ambient mystical energy has increased to the point where she can now focus it into a hardened shell about her. This mystical shield is invisible to the naked eye, becoming visible only when deflecting attacks.

To craft her shield, the magus must concentrate for 2 rounds forming a loose cocoon of energy about her. This cocoon remains until its energy is depleted or the end of the scene occurs. The shield has an armor value of 5, but unlike armor, this rite automatically grants the magus 5 points to deflect damage. The downside to this rite is that once the Shield has deflected 5 points of damage, it must be cast again.

Note that the damage reduction from the Shield rite must be used as the damage is accrued.

Example: Abigail Howard casts the Shield rite moments before facing off with a cultist. During the battle, the cultist slashes at Abigail and rolls 4 successes. Abigail has a 3 Defense. She has the option of expending any or all of her Defense to deflect some of the damage, in this case she decides to apply only 1 point of Defense as there are other Cultists nearby. This reduces the damage to 3. She must now apply the armor value of the Shield to the remaining damage, negating the attack completely, but dropping her Shield value to 2. She'll have to be careful as the Shield value does not replenish at the start of the next round.

SIGIL OF SUNDERING

Difficulty: 3

Time: 1 minute/1 hour

Duration: Special

Strain: 3

Description: The magician inscribes a destructive sigil on a solid object, whether it be a wall, tree, bridge pylon, archway, or the like. If a Sigil of Warding is inscribed along with it, the Sigil of Sundering can be set to be activated along with the Sigil of Warding. Otherwise, the magician must make Concentration (Will) checks every minute after the sigil's completion, with a difficulty of 1 + 1 per check already made.

When the sigil triggers, whether by being activated by a Sigil of Warding or through the magician losing (or voluntarily releasing) his hold on the destructive potential within, the sigil's energy is unleashed into the object,

shattering it completely. A Sigil of Sundering completely destroys 1 cubic foot of material, +1 per success beyond 3 on the magician's Sorcery (Education) skill check. The GM is the final arbiter of what effect this has on any structure, but even at its lowest level of destructive potential this sigil can at the fell trees, collapse walls, and significantly weaken bridges and other tall structures.

HEROIC HERMETIC RITES

MARK OF DOMINION

Difficulty: 5

Time: 1 hour/1 day

Duration: Permanent

Strain: 5

Description: This rite is a more advanced version of Magician's Mark and Mark of the Minion, both of which must be learned before this one. In addition to the benefits provided by those marks, this mark allows the magician to act for all intents and purposes through another living being, controlling his body, using his skills and qualities, and even speaking in his voice. The magician may extend his awareness and control of the marked minion, or retract it, as an action during a single round. While controlling his minion, the magician's body is helpless and senseless. If the marked minion is knocked unconscious while the magician is controlling him, the magician must make a D3 Endurance (Toughness) test or be knocked unconscious; if he dies while the magician is controlling him, the magician is knocked out, and must make a D5 Endurance (Toughness) test or die.

Unlike the other two marks, this mark requires that both the magician's True Name and the subject's True Name be inscribed along with it.

PRAYER

Ask any of the Faithful if what they call miracles are actually rites or spells and they will bristle indignantly at best or smite you with the Holy power of God at worst. "They are gifts and benedictions from the Almighty", they will respond. But these are gifts that only they seem to be able to ask and receive, seemingly fueled by their endless faith in God.

The Prayer Tradition is steeped in the mystical lore of Judeo-Christian faith. The miracles that the Faithful are able to call upon are not, they say their doing. They are only the messenger; the supplicant. It is the power of God, either delivered by his angels or by His hand. Yet, it seems that a critical component of actually calling upon His power is the amount of faith the petitioner has. This component is measured in the game by the True Faith score. All rites in this tradition have a minimum True Faith score which the Faithful must have before being able to attempt the miracle, otherwise his prayers are remain unanswered. Remember that a character's True Faith score can never be higher than 10- (character's current Damnation score).

While certain rites seem characteristically or historically Judaic, Christian or Islamic, they all fall under this tradition. Thus, the 'Divine Reward' rite' may appear to be under the purview of Christians alone, Rabbis or Imams might also attempt to pray for this rare miracle, as long as they can overlook their own prejudices and look beyond the trapping of the rite and see it for the wonder that it is.

BASIC PRAYER RITES

BLESSING

Difficulty: 1

True Faith: 1

Time: None/1 round

Duration: 1 day + 1 day per additional success

Strain: 1

Description: This rite is the most well-known of the prayer rites, and is used for everything from blessing food before it is eaten, to asking God to watch over the devout, to warding soldiers before battle. The various effects of this rite are as follows.

Food or Drink: This version affects 10 place-settings of food and drink as a base, but may affect 10 additional place-settings per additional success. The food and drink is cleansed by holy power, as much as possible, and those who must make Endurance (Toughness) checks as a result of the food being spoiled or poisoned receive a +1 bonus to the skill check, and the priest may increase this bonus by +1 per additional success.

Item: This version affects 1 weapon or other item of 3 cubic feet (about the size of a sword, rifle, or bow) as a base, but may affect an additional item or additional cubic foot per additional success. A devout worshipper of the same deity as the blessing priest may receive a single +1 bonus to any skill check when using that item during the duration of the blessing. The priest may increase this bonus by +1 per additional success. In addition to the bonus on a skill check, a Blessed item may have other effects with regards to supernatural creatures.

Although a Blessed ranged weapon gains the benefit of the bonus to a skill check, its ammunition is not considered Blessed with regards to its effects on supernatural creatures.

Location: This version affects a 30-foot-radius as a base, but may affect a radius that is 5 feet wider per additional success. A devout worshipper of the same deity as the blessing priest may receive a single +1 bonus to any one reaction skill check during the duration of the blessing. The priest may increase this bonus by +1 per additional success. In addition to the bonus on a skill check, being in a

Blessed location may have other effects with regards to supernatural creatures.

Person: The rite affects 1 creature as a base, but may affect 1 additional creature per additional success. A devout worshipper of the same deity as the blessing priest may receive a single +1 bonus to any one reaction skill check during the duration of the blessing, after which the blessing ends for that person. The priest may increase this bonus by +1 per additional success. In addition to the bonus on a skill check, being Blessed may have other effects with regards to supernatural creatures.

EXORCISM

Difficulty: Varies (Ritual)

True Faith: 2

Time: None/3 rounds

Duration: 1 day + 1 day per additional success

Strain: 2

Description: The priest speaks a series of forceful utterances that strikes fear into spirits of the Invisible World. If he has three successes after a Sorcerous Tradition (Courage) roll opposed by the creature's Resolve (Will), the creature is banished from the physical world. If the spirit was possessing a mortal, it releases her, and cannot attempt to possess that same mortal for the duration of the rite; if it was manifested, it is banished back into spiritual form, and cannot manifest again for the duration of the rite.

If the priest knows the spirit's True Name, he gains a +3 bonus on his skill check.



HALO OF AWE

Difficulty: 1

True Faith: 1

Time: None/1 round

Duration: 1 minute + 1 minute per additional success

Strain: 2

Description: As the priest raises his eyes to the heavens and beseeches God for aid, an invisible ring of golden energy forms in a halo over his head. His presence becomes intolerable to creatures that serve the Adversary. Any creature that attempts to attack the priest or target him with a rite takes a -1 die penalty. The priest may increase the penalty by -1 per minute by which he is willing to reduce the duration of the rite.

JUDGMENT

Difficulty: Varies

True Faith: 2

Time: None/3 rounds

Duration: Instantaneous

Strain: 2

Description: The priest pronounces a dreadful judgment on a sinner, punishing them for their wickedness. The priest makes a Sorcerous Tradition (Courage) roll opposed by the target's Concentration (Will) roll. If the priest succeeds and his target has any Damnation points, the target of this prayer is wracked by pain, suffering a -1 penalty on all skill checks, plus an additional -1 per additional success by the priest. This pain continues for a number of minutes equal to the target's Damnation. Characters without Damnation points are immune to this prayer.

PROPHETIC VISION

Difficulty: 3

True Faith: 1

Time: 1 minute/3 minutes

Duration: Instantaneous

Strain: 1

Description: The priest begs his deity for insight and guidance, entering a calming state of meditation or prayer. The priest receives a cryptic vision that guides his and his allies regarding their activities during the next day. For every success rolled beyond the base difficulty, the priest may extend the value of the vision to a mission, destination, or event one day further in the future.

SOOTHING SONG

Difficulty: Varies

True Faith: 1

Time: None/3 rounds

Duration: 1 minute + 1 minute per additional success

Strain: 1

Description: The priest sings a calming hymn that sedates a target, dulling its emotions. The priest makes a Sorcerous Tradition (Courage) roll opposed by the target's Intimidate (Personality) roll. If the priest has at least two successes remaining after the opposed roll, the

target become calm. While under the effects of this spell, the target cannot use Fighting skills. The effects of the rite end if the target is attacked.

GREATER PRAYER RITES

EXCHANGE OF HURTS

Difficulty: 3

True Faith: 2

Time: 1 minute/1 round per hit

Duration: Permanent

Strain: 4

Description: The priest practices the ultimate sacrifice, taking on the wounds of another in order to heal the target. Both individuals must enter a state of prayer and meditation, joining hands for 1 minute before the rite begins. Then the priest must make a D3 Sorcerous Tradition (Courage) skill check. If successful, the target heals one wound point and an additional wound point for each success rolled above the Difficulty. The priest also takes one point of damage.

If the priest is willing, this continues each round with the priest rolling a new D3 Sorcerous Tradition (Courage) skill check, including any penalties from current hits. Each round that he makes a successful check, he takes on one additional hit. If the priest ever fails the skill check, or if the physical link between the priest and the target is broken, the rite ends.

If an Exchange of Hurts rite ends prematurely or with the target still suffering from hits, the priest cannot attempt to take on that target's hits again until the target has fully healed at least once.

If a priest knows his target's True Name, he automatically succeeds at the Sorcerous Tradition (Courage) skill check each round.

HEAVENLY SHIELD

Difficulty: 4

True Faith: 3

Time: None/2 rounds

Duration: 1 minute + 1 minute per additional success

Strain: 2

Description: The priest speaks a prayer of power, and an invisible tongue of fire appears above his brow, shielding him from his enemies. While under the effects of Heavenly Aura, opponents who cast rites at the priest must add +2 to the Difficulties of their rites. In addition, the heavenly shield protects the priest from mundane harm. Whenever he is attacked, he automatically negates 2 successes before assigning any Defense. Finally, the priest gains a +2 dice bonus to Resolve (Courage) skill checks.

After seeing the results of any of the above skill checks or actions against him, the priest may increase the Difficulty, number of negated successes, or bonus by +1 per minute by which he is willing to reduce the rite's duration.

HOLY WEAPON**Difficulty:** 4 (Ritual)**True Faith:** 3**Time:** 1 minute/1 minute**Duration:** 1 hour + 1 hour per additional success**Strain:** 2

Description: First, a weapon must be anointed with holy water and raised to the heavens. Then the priest must spend one minute whispering prayers over the weapon. Upon completion of the rite, the weapon shines with clean light and is imbued with holy power hateful to creatures of the Adversary. The weapon is considered blessed, and whenever the wielder inflicts at least one hit with this weapon, the target takes a number of additional hits equal to its Damnation score. These extra hits cannot be negated. Opponents that do not have Damnation scores are immune to this extra damage.

This rite ends immediately if the weapon leaves the wielder's hands. Ranged weapons confer the above benefits to their ammunition.

STRIP POWER**Difficulty:** varies**True Faith:** 4**Time:** None/3 rounds**Duration:** 1 minute + 1 minute per additional success**Strain:** 3

Description: This rite is similar to Exorcism, but applies equally to mundane ritualists, corporeal supernatural creatures, and existing rites. The priest calls down the power of his deity and asks Him to prove to the lesser creatures that His power is the only true power. This has the following effects, depending on its purpose.

If the priest knows the target's True Name, or that of the character who cast the rite, he automatically succeeds at the first skill check made to suppress an effect.

Strip a Creature: The priest makes a Sorcerous Tradition (Courage) skill check opposed by the target's Resolve (Courage) skill check. If the priest has any successes after the opposed roll, he may cause a single rite affecting the target or a supernatural item carried by the target to be suppressed for the duration of this rite. For each additional success, the priest may suppress one additional rite or item affecting or carried by the target.

Strip a Rite: The priest makes a D3 Sorcerous Tradition (Courage) skill check against a Basic rite. The difficulty increases to D5 for a Greater rite and to D7 for a Heroic or Villainous rite. If the priest succeeds, the target rite is suppressed for the duration of the Strip Power rite.

Strip a Target's Abilities: The priest makes a Sorcerous Tradition (Courage) skill check opposed by the target's Resolve (Courage) skill check. If the priest has any successes after the opposed roll, he may spend a single success to suppress the target's ability to perform a Basic rite or use a Basic supernatural ability; he may spend three successes to suppress the target's ability to perform a Greater rite or use a Greater supernatural ability; or he

may spend five successes to suppress the target's ability to perform a Heroic or Villainous rite or use a Heroic or Villainous supernatural ability. The priest may divide up his successes between different abilities as he wishes, but the priest may only strip rites or abilities that the priest knows about.

HEROIC PRAYER RITES**COMPEL TRUTH****Difficulty:** Varies**True Faith:** 4**Time:** 1 hour/1 minute**Duration:** Special**Strain:** 4

Description: This rite involves an hour of preparation that is similar to torture, requiring that the target be kept isolated, in the dark, and subject to a barrage of prayer and chanting from one of the priest's assistants. For every doubling of the preparation time (2 hours, 4 hours, 8 hours, 16 hours, and a maximum of 32 hours), the target suffers a -1 penalty to the Resolve (Courage) check described below.

After the period of isolation, the target is brought out into a place of bright light, whether natural daylight or a brightly lit room. The priest places his hand upon the target's brow, and compels him to speak the truth in the name of the Almighty God. The priest then makes a Sorcerous Tradition (Courage) skill check opposed by the target's Resolve (Courage) check. For each success the priest has after the opposed skill checks, he may demand a truthful answer to one question. That question must be answerable with "Yes," "No," or with the full name of a person, place, or thing.

If the priest knows the target's True Name, he gains a +3 to the opposed skill check.

DIVINE REWARD**Difficulty:** 10 (Ritual)**True Faith:** 5**Time:** 1 hour/1 minute**Duration:** Instantaneous**Strain:** 2

Description: After praying for the target for one hour, the priest baptizes the target in a holy ritual, allowing him to be reborn in mind, body, and soul. The target immediately removes a number of hits equal to its True Faith score. At the target's option, he may exchange four hits to remove a poison, six hits to remove a disease, or eight hits to recover a lost organ (eyes, arm, leg, and so on).

A target may only benefit from this rite once in his lifetime per point of his True Faith score.

CHAPTER SIX: FIGHTING TRADITIONS

Whilst the magically gifted may call upon wondrous rites beyond mortal ken, there are those who, due either to God-given talent or pure determination, are veritable wizards of the blade. While anyone can swing a sword about in the hopes of defeating a foe, a true swordsman can awe onlookers and strike fear into the hearts of their enemies.

This section contains a sampling of traditions for those gifted few to whom the wielding of a blade is an art form. While by no means exhaustive, the traditions listed here should provide enough variety of styles and weapons to make each swordsman unique.

Much like the magical traditions, you must first select the talent “Basic Fighting Tradition” and choose a particular fighting style. Doing so grants access to the individual maneuvers within that style. If you wish to learn a maneuver from a different tradition, you’ll need to buy the Basic Fighting Tradition again to be eligible to learn that school’s maneuvers. Once you have purchased this talent and have selected a style, you may purchase each individual maneuver as a separate talent.

Example: *As you are creating your first character for Witch Hunter, you envision her as a woman who has had the best things in life available to her and that includes opening the door to the local Fencing Guild in Madrid. While selecting your character’s talents during character creation, you expend one of the four available talents to learn Fe en Acero, the Faith in Steel fighting style. Having three talents left to choose from, you decide to select two Basic talents from that school, “Balanced Strikes” and “Faith is My Armor” leaving you with one more talent that you can choose to round out your character.*

Unless otherwise indicated, one must be using a style’s chosen weapons to make use of its maneuvers.

ACCIAIO MANTELLO (STEEL CLOAK) HISTORY

Legend has it that Guido di Luca, one of the finest fencers in all of Italy, was accosted by a group of ruffians upon leaving an opera house. Armed with naught but a small dagger, he confounded his foes by using his fine cape to best his attackers. Inspired by the night’s events, di Luca spent months perfecting the fighting style. His methods were eventually codified and greatly influenced his student, Achille Marozzo’s inspired work, *Opera Nova dell’Arte delle Armi* or *The New Text on the Art of Arms*.

Achille’s son, Amadeo, eventually founded an academy that taught a wide variety of styles, ranging from sword and buckler to two-handed swords and even pole arms. Yet despite the multitude of accolades for professionalism and expert training, the academy is best known for teaching Guido di Luca’s unconventional methods of using a cape in combat.

REQUIREMENTS

Agility 3, Hand-to-Hand 3, Perform (Dance) 3

CHOICE OF WEAPONS

Rapier or Dagger, and Cloak

BASIC TALENTS: ANDANTE

CLOAK AND BLADE

Flashy, stylish, and best of all, unexpected, the use of the cloak can confound your enemies and make the difference between life and death. When in combat, your cloak acts as an extra die of armor (similar to equipping a shield). This bonus only applies while wearing armor with an armor value less than 3 and cannot be used while carrying a shield. As an additional benefit, the snap and rush of a cloak distracts your opponent. He loses one point from his Defense pool when in combat with you.

CLOAK MASTERY

Your cloak dances and glides like a zephyr across the vales. When wielding a cloak you gain +2 dice to all Parry rolls as well as a +1 bonus die to all Disarm attempts.

HIDDEN BLADE

Besides a certain style and panache, your cloak may conceal a deadly surprise within its folds. After performing a normal attack, you may make an opposed Subterfuge (Agility) check against your opponent’s Reflexes (Agility). For every success above your opponent’s opposed roll you inflict 1 point of damage that cannot be negated by points from your opponent’s Defense pool.

GREATER TALENTS: ALLEGRO MODERATO

CLOAK DANCE

The swirling and elegant cloak dance is as mesmerizing as it is deadly. When using the Wall of Steel maneuver, you are also considered to have *light cover*.

LOST IN THE FOLD

Confusion and misdirection are key to survival. If your opponent expects you to attack high, strike low. Before making an attack roll, you may perform a feint against your opponents. Make an opposed Perform (Personality) check against your opponent’s Empathy (Intuition) as in a normal Feint maneuver. If you succeed, that opponent’s Defense pool is halved during your attack and you immediately make your normal attack against that opponent.

HEROIC TALENT: ALLEGRO ASSAI

FINAL DANCE

Faced with many opponents, the swordsman must use guile and wit to complement his innate grace and elegance. When performing a Rapid Attack, you suffer only a -1 to your attack pool. In addition, make a Perform (Personality) check at the beginning of combat. The successes generated may be added to either your attack or Defense pool.

FE EN ACERO (FAITH IN STEEL)

HISTORY

During the late 15th Century, Pietro Monte was a Spanish master of arms who lived in Italy. A contemporary of Leonardo da Vinci, it is said he taught the maestro how to play darts. Equal parts scholar, warrior and theologian, Monte impressed da Vinci with his unwavering faith and encyclopedic knowledge of the ways of the blade. Da Vinci convinced Monte to found an academy in order to pass on his unique fighting styles to a worthy few. He confided in Monte, telling him of the Adversary and his minions, convincing the sword master that a sword school that married faith with steel would prove a powerful weapon against the primal evil.

The Monte Fencing Guild of Spain, founded in 1502, taught a variety of styles and weapon mastery but was famed for the *Duelo Acero* or dual steel style of fighting. This tradition focused upon the use of two weapons, commonly the rapier and dagger, but some students insist on learning the flashier yet considerably more complex *Spadone* – duel swords or duel rapiers.

REQUIREMENTS

Hand-to-Hand 3, True Faith 2

CHOICE OF WEAPONS

Sword and Dagger, Rapier and Dagger, or double Rapiers.

BASIC TALENTS: MI ALMA ES MI FUERZA (MY SOUL IS MY STRENGTH)

BALANCED STRIKES

When performing a two-weapon attack, your penalties are reduced by 1. Thus if you are wielding two medium weapons, each of your attacks would suffer a -3 dice penalty. If attacking with one medium and one small weapon, your penalty for each attack would be -2 and if both were small weapons, then each attack would suffer a -1 penalty.

FAITH IS MY ARMOR

A devotee of this style is taught that the weapon is merely an instrument in his hands, much like he is an instrument

in the hands of God. As the weapon has no choice but to have faith in the swordsman, so too must the swordsman have faith in the Almighty. Once per scene, if the swordsman is wearing armor that has an armor value of less than 3, he may add half of his True Faith score (rounded down) as bonus dice to be rolled in addition to his armor dice.

BIND AND SHOULDER SMASH

The use of two weapons makes for a very versatile style with many advantages. One such maneuver is the Bind and Shoulder Smash. During combat, you may attempt a Disarm maneuver against your opponent. If you succeed, you have pinned his weapon with the two of yours against a wall, the ground, or other object. You may then follow up with a Knockdown maneuver, but your opponent receives a -2 dice penalty for being off balance. If successful, you knock your opponent prone and inflict 1 point of damage that can only be negated with armor points. This maneuver cannot be combined with a run like the normal Knockdown maneuver.

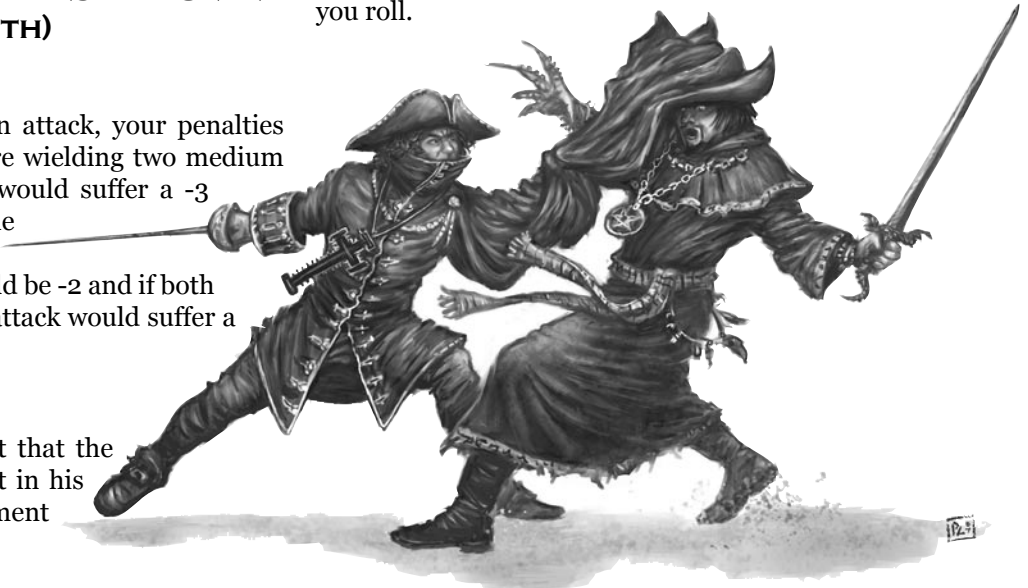
GREATER TALENTS: MI MENTE Y MI CUERPO SON UNO (MY MIND AND BODY ARE ONE)

DUAL THRUST

One of the deadliest maneuvers available to a swordsman, the double thrust sacrifices the user's safety for a devastating attack. When using this maneuver, your Defense pool is halved for both this and the following round as you throw everything into your blow. Make your attack roll as normal, but the weapon's damage modifier is increased by 3.

A HUNDRED BLOWS AT ONCE

Much like a chess grandmaster, you can anticipate the moves of multiple foes at once. When attacked by multiple opponents, you may split your attack pool dice to attack them all. You may only attack a number of opponents up to your Reason score. These opponents must be adjacent to you to attempt this maneuver. Much like Rapid Attack, you must announce how you're dividing your dice before you roll.



HEROIC TALENT: MI FE ES MI ARMA (MY FAITH IS MY WEAPON)

FAITH GUIDES MY HAND

Your trust in God and in your abilities is in perfect harmony. You know that you are destined to win the day, because right is on your side. Once per scene, you may add bonus die equal to half your True Faith score (rounded down) to either your attack roll or defense pool.

FLOR DI BATTAGLIA (THE FLOWER OF BATTLE)

HISTORY

Based off the works of Fiore dei Liberi, one of the finest medieval arms masters, as detailed within his manuscript, the *Flos Duellatorum*, this style features a wide variety of weapons and combat techniques. Adherents of the Flor di Battaglia do not specialize in any one weapon but attempt to master all, even unarmed combat.

REQUIREMENTS

Strength 3, Hand-to-Hand 3, Attack Focus in at least one weapon, Pugilist

CHOICE OF WEAPONS

Any

BASIC TALENTS: PRUDENTIA E CELERITAS (PRUDENCE AND SPEED)

PATIENCE OF THE LYNX

Much like this talent's namesake, you toy with your prey, batting aside his attacks until an opening presents itself. If at any time an opponent fails to roll any successes on an attack, gain +2 bonus dice on your next attack against that opponent.

SPEED OF THE TIGER

When using a smaller weapon than your opponent (a small vs. a medium, a medium vs. a large, etc) you close quickly within his arc of attack. This forces your opponent to withdraw if he desires to attack this round. Your swift move imposes a -2 dice penalty on your opponent's next attack.

NEVER UNARMED

Even when you have no weapons at the ready, you are deadly and a force to be reckoned with. Your fists are like steel. Your Hand-to-hand (Unarmed) attack's modifier is increased by 1.

GREATER TALENTS: FORTITUDE E AUDATIA (FORTITUDE AND COURAGE)

HEART OF THE LION

Anyone may know fear, but a true warrior finds the courage to overcome it. When making a Resolve (Courage) check

against fear, you gain an additional 2 bonus dice to the roll.

MASTER OF ALL WEAPONS

You underwent extensive training in a wide-variety of weapons. In your hands, any melee weapons' Complexity is reduced by 1. In addition, you ignore the Complexity rating on all improvised weapons.

HEROIC TALENT: PERIZIA TECNICA (TECHNICAL BRILLIANCE)

FLAWLESS TECHNIQUE

You are as comfortable with any weapon as you would be in the embrace of your lover. Your skill is such that the weapons know when and where to strike without conscious thought. When making any attack roll, you may re-roll any and all 1s. Continue to re-roll 1s until none appear.

FREIFECHTER FENCING GUILD

HISTORY

The Guild, founded in Prague in 1570 by expert swordsmen of an upstart mercenary company, teaches a style of fighting that eclipsed even the technique of the famous *Marxbruder* (the Brotherhood of St. Marks). After being admitted by the Council of Frankfurt and later recognized by Rudolph II, the Holy Roman Emperor in 1607, this fencing guild became one of the most prestigious in all of Europe. A person trained in this guild is a person to be respected and feared.

REQUIREMENTS

Strength 3, Hand-to-Hand 3, Attack Focus in Sword, Bastard Sword or Great Sword

CHOICE OF WEAPONS

Great Sword

BASIC TALENTS:

ALLER ANFANG IST SCHWER

(THE FIRST STEP IS THE HARDEST)

SACRIFICES MUST BE MADE

Precision and speed are opposite sides of the same coin. One must know when to sacrifice one for the other. At the start of any combat round, you may either take a -1 die penalty to your attack roll to gain +1 bonus die to your Defense Pool roll, or take a -1 penalty to your Defense Pool roll to add a +1 bonus die to your attack roll.

LIKE AN EGGSHELL BEFORE A HAMMER

Your sword is a man's weapon, not one of these dainty little pig-stickers the rest of Europe seems to fancy these days. Nothing brings a smile to your face quite like seeing

their finely crafted blade snap like a twig beneath your onslaught. When making a Break combat maneuver, if you score any successes against either your opponent's armor or weapon, add +2 to your successes after applying your weapon's Damage Modifier.

A DISARMING BLOW

As long as you hold your blade, you are a juggernaut and woe to he that tries to take it from you. If an opponent attempts to disarm you with a weapon of a smaller size category than the one you are wielding (rapiers are considered Small in this case), and the Disarm maneuver fails, you may immediately attempt to disarm him.

GREATER TALENTS: WIE ES IM BUCH STEHT (A TEXTBOOK EXAMPLE)

THE BITING BLADE

Your blade is like a scythe cutting through wheat, only the heaviest armors are of any use against your strike. An opponent may not add an armor value less than 3 to their Defense pool.

MEETING THE CHARGE

When charged, you may perform one of the following maneuvers:

Set versus Charge: Normally this can only be done with a pole-arm or spear. You may make this maneuver with a great sword.

Unseat Charger: When charged, but before the charger makes his attack, you may make a Hand-to-hand check at a -2 dice penalty. If you score any successes after Defense is applied, you have knocked the rider from his mount and he loses his attack. The unseated opponent takes only 1 hit from falling off his mount. This maneuver can also be used in certain circumstances against opponents riding vehicles, but the GM must determine if appropriate.

HEROIC TALENT: DAS TUT MIR IN DER SEELE WEH (YOU CUT ME TO THE QUICK)

LIKE A HOT KNIFE THROUGH BUTTER

In your hands, the great sword sings and dances like a dainty thing and you are able to use it to astonishing effect. Once per scene, you may make an attack roll against your opponent at a -2 penalty. If you have any successes remaining after any Defense points are used, your Damage Modifier doubles for this one attack.

LA VERDADERA DESTREZA (THE TRUE SKILL)

HISTORY

Spain's premier fencing style is based upon the writings of Camillo Agrippa's definitive works on the subject. The two primary authors don Jerónimo Sánchez de Carranza and his student, don Luis Pacheco de Narváez built upon

Agrippa's theory, building a fighting style based on reason and geometry. Most fighting styles of the time focused on linear attacks and defense. The True Skill makes use of the space around you and uses unique circular footwork to confound your opponent.

REQUIREMENTS

Agility 3, Reason 2, Hand-to-Hand 3, Reflexes 3.

CHOICE OF WEAPONS

Dagger and Rapier

BASIC TALENTS: EL PRIMER CIRCULO (THE FIRST CIRCLE - DEFENSE)

BLADE AND MIND ARE ONE

You have trained long and hard, and know your blade is a part of you. When parrying, you may add bonus dice equal to half your Reason (rounded down) to your roll.

NO BLADE MAY TOUCH ME

When using the Active Defense maneuver, you may take a -2 die penalty to your roll to gain two extra points of Defense for the round.

MY BLADE IS MY ARMOR

When wielding a rapier you gain an additional Defense point each round. This point is lost if you are wearing any armor weighing more than 5 lbs.

GREATER TALENTS: CIRCULO DE ACERO (THE STEEL CIRCLE – OFFENSE)

STRIKE OF PRECISION

In your hands, the rapier is like a deadly viper – one quick thrust may well mean death. As part of an attack roll, you may take up to -2 die penalty. If you have at least one success after your opponent's Defense, your attack counts as having gained an additional three successes.

CIRCLE OF BLOOD

When facing more than one opponent adjacent to you, you may attack each one without the usual dice penalty for a Rapid Attack. Target your first opponent. If you score at least one wound, then attack the next, and so on until you either fail to score one wound or run out of opponents.

HEROIC TALENT: CIRCULO IMMACULADO (THE IMMACULATE CIRCLE)

THE PERFECT UNION

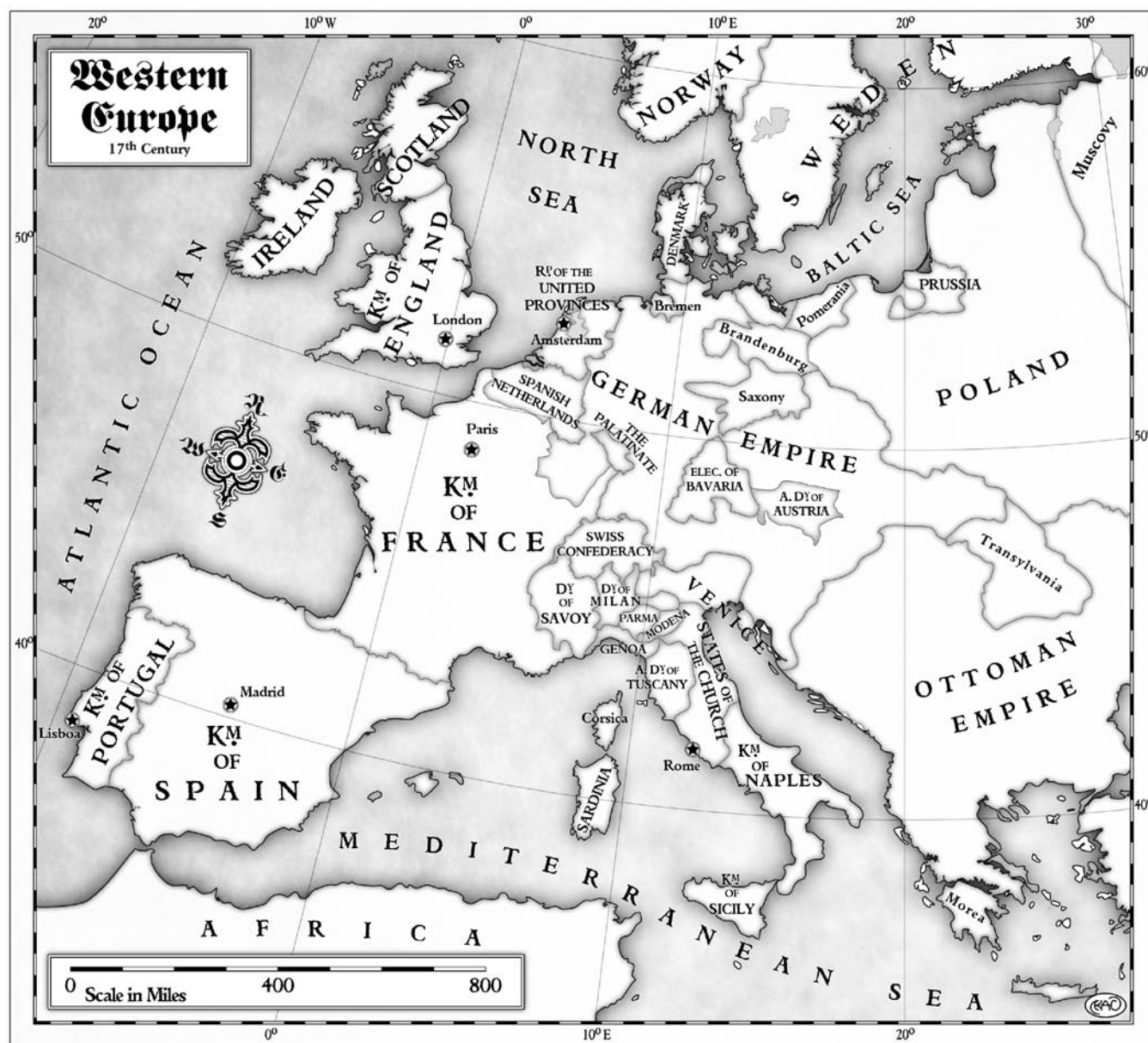
Once per combat, for one round, the swordsman gains a number of bonus die equal to his Reason score. These bonus dice may be used to augment his attack rolls or his Defense pool. Note that these are bonus die and not automatic successes.

CHAPTER SEVEN: THE WORLD OF 1689

Being a detailed Examination of the World of the Witch Hunter, including Discussions of the divers States and Nations therein, and the daily Lives of the men and women therein dwelling

Reader, I know not where you dwell, nor where you were born, nor what land – if any – you now call home. But if you have been called as a Witch Hunter, you will likely find yourself travelling in strange lands more than once, for the duty of the Witch Hunter will oft draw you far from the familiar. Most men and women have the luxury of calling one place their home and knowing it well; even those sailors who travel to distant ports have a ship to call their own, a comforting note of familiarity in a distant place. You, however, may have no such luxury.

Thus, in an effort to ease your transition to unfamiliar places, I have assembled a collection of writings by various Witch Hunters, and occasionally by other knowledgeable persons, which may serve as a general guide to some of the places in which you might find yourself. There are, of course, far more things to know about any one city than could fit in a book ten times this size, but mundane matters can be learned anywhere; therefore, the texts below will focus on the machinations of the Adversary, and other items of which Witch Hunters in particular must be aware. Hopefully, this will be enough to get you started wherever God may lead you, and with luck, you may find other Witch Hunters at your destination that can provide you with further aid and knowledge.



CHRISTENDOM

We begin, naturally enough, with an introduction to the most important lands of Christendom, starting with my own homeland.

ENGLAND

by E.L. of London

If I am to tell you of England, the tale must be divided into two parts, for England properly consists of two regions – London, and Every Thing Else. That which is not London is somewhat easier to describe, for it has changed little in the last five centuries. England is a land of villages, farmers, and sheep-herds, its people ranging from the landed nobility to the rootless vagabond labourer. This pastoral and seemingly innocent land-scape is also well known for its fairies, of which there are endless varieties. Some, such as the simple house-fairies, who do simple chores in exchange for gifts of food and milk, are seen to be helpful if properly treated; however, even these often tempt simple folk to dabble with the supernatural, and can lead to further corruption. Lead miners in Derbyshire, in particular, are known to make generous offerings to the “knockers” who, they claim, point out particularly rich veins of ore.

Other fairies are mischievous, playing simple tricks which can lead otherwise goodly people to become wrathful, swear ill-thought-out oaths, or otherwise begin on the road to Perdition. Finally, some fairies are wholly dangerous, such as the pike-wielding Redcaps. These fiendish creatures stalk travellers in remote areas, chasing and tormenting them for hours before finally murdering them and using their life’s-blood to dye the fairies’ infamous red caps. A particularly vicious Redcap is believed to dwell in the ruins of Castle Goodrich in Herefordshire; at the least, *some-thing* is responsible for the fact that visitors to the ruins have been disappearing for nearly forty years. Locals will not even approach the ruins now, and will generally warn travellers away from the site as well, although a visiting French Catholic was advised that the ruins were a good place to stay some months ago, and has not been heard from since.

Another common danger in rural England is the plague of monstrous black hounds that are known to roam many parts of the land, their great glowing eyes striking terror into all those they encounter. They are known by many names – Barguest, Black Shuck, Gytrash, Tchico, Wisht Hound, and others – but all are terrifying and potentially deadly to any who may be wandering alone of a night. On occasion, however, these beasts have instead been known to protect travellers. A gentleman travelling from Northampton to Cambridge late one night was confronted by a growling, red-eyed hound, which chased him back the way he had come for the better part of an hour before he reached a village. Upon returning the next day, he discovered a massive hole in the centre of the bridge he had just set foot on when the hound appeared. Had the beast not scared him off, he would doubtless have plummeted into the deep water below and been drowned.

Despite this tale, there are far more instances of such devilish dogs attacking travellers, and any such beasts should be given a wide berth unless you feel confident in your ability to destroy them.

Apart from the port towns of Bristol and Norwich, there are no settlements of appreciable size outside of London itself. The English countryside does house two of Europe’s finest universities, at Oxford and Cambridge, both possessed of formidable libraries which research-minded Witch Hunters may find useful, if they can worm their way past the equally formidable librarians. Witch Hunters visiting Cambridge should be particularly careful regarding the scrutiny of Professor Isaac Newton, a gifted mathematician and alchemist who takes a keen interest in matters supernatural. Professor Newton develops a singularity of purpose and a mastiff-like grip when he learns of something which does not appear to obey the Laws of Nature, and where he goes, the attention of Cambridge – and much of the Royal Society – follows. This means that Witch Hunters who attract Newton’s interest are likely to find themselves under a great deal of close scrutiny by surpassingly intelligent individuals, which often makes the subtle practice of their duties most challenging.

London

Nearly one of every ten Englishmen – over six hundred thousand of them – lives in London, and it is as different from the pastoral countryside as night from day. London is a City in the truest sense, a bustling hive of brick and stone that rises, like the Arabian Phoenix, from the ashes of the Great Fire. One who first sees London, whether from the countryside or the sea, might be forgiven for believing that that Fire is still smouldering, for London is constantly enveloped in a thick haze of coal-smoke from the countless chimneys, ovens, and kilns of the city. Those new to the city are often wracked with coughs due to this smoke, but those who live in London eventually grow accustomed to the foul air. While fire is known as a cleansing agent, do not be deceived into thinking that the Great Fire purged London of the evils which plagued it. If anything, the smoke and stink of London air make it easier for agents of the Adversary to go about their wicked business unseen.

The City of London proper – that is, the walled portion of the city – is perhaps a mile square, and is home to those prosperous merchants and traders who are making London into Europe’s new centre of commerce. This is where the Fire did most of its damage, and the ancient streets are thus lined with new buildings of stone and brick, and are themselves gradually being paved with stone. The Royal Exchange, where goods from across the globe are traded, lies at the centre of the City, both literally and figuratively. The men found here often value gold more than God, and are easily tempted by demons promising wealth in exchange for simple and seemingly harmless tasks.

One trader, Edmund Wellesley, has become known – and shunned – for his ability to make seemingly

ENGLAND – THE FACTS

England is a nation in flux, having just concluded a brief civil war referred to as the Glorious Revolution. Only a year ago, the throne was occupied by James II, a much-hated Catholic King in a predominantly Anglican nation. In late 1688, however, James fled to France in the face of a massive invasion (and popular revolt) led by his son-in-law, William of Orange, a popular Dutch Protestant. William and his wife Mary, James II's daughter, have been jointly crowned William III and Mary II, King and Queen of England and Ireland, and Scotland is soon expected to follow suit; William is also the Stadtholder of the Netherlands in his own right.

RELIGION

The primary religion in England is, not surprisingly, the Church of England (also known as the Anglican Church). The Church of England broke away from the Roman Catholic Church primarily for political, rather than religious, reasons in 1534. Like Protestants, Anglicans do not acknowledge the rule of the Pope, but their beliefs and sacraments are generally closer to Catholic practices than Protestant ones. Despite this similarity, Anglicans are generally virulently opposed to any hint of Catholicism. Catholics have been blamed for many of the ills that have befallen England in the last century, including the Great Fire of London and the outbreak of plague that preceded it.

Now that James II has been deposed, only Anglicans can hold public office. Most of those English Catholics who felt themselves welcome under James II's rule have fled to France along with him; those Catholics who remain behind are much despised by their neighbors, though this rarely leads to open violence. There are also a number of Nonconformist Protestants in England, mostly Puritans (Presbyterians, Baptists, and Congregationalists) and Quakers, though many of these have immigrated to the colonies in the New World. These Nonconformists are generally somewhat more easily tolerated than Catholics, and are expected to gain improved civil rights under William and Mary. Still, many of them find the increased religious freedom of the New World colonies welcoming.

prescient investments which invariably result in great profit for himself, and pain and sorrow for others. For example, he recently invested heavily in olive oil when others were selling it cheap, given that a large shipment was expected from Spain. However, the day after Wellesley made his purchases, the Spanish ships were struck by a fierce late-season storm, and three of the four sank with all hands. Prices shot up, and Wellesley made a handsome profit. After a number of such incidents, Wellesley is quite wealthy, publicly feared, and – by all appearances – a nervous wreck. He seems loath to make further investments for fear of what may happen next, but also seems unable to stop himself.

WITCH HUNTERS

As with most of the normal English population, most English Witch Hunters are members of the Church of England, and most of these are members of the highly-regimented Order known as the Soldiers of Christ Triumphant. While they have consistently proven themselves able to track down and eliminate threats from agents of the Adversary in England, they have also been a consistent thorn in the sides of non-Anglican Witch Hunters, particularly those with Catholic leanings. Witch Hunters from other Orders are generally advised to keep an even lower profile than usual while in England, since the Soldiers are known to adhere only loosely to many provisions of the Accord.

INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS

England and France have been enemies for centuries, although James II was a known ally of King Louis XIV (another reason for James' unpopularity in England). Even before taking the throne of England, William of Orange has long been a thorn in Louis' side; he is currently a prominent military leader in the Grand Alliance, an anti-French alliance between the Netherlands, Spain, Portugal, Sweden, various states of the Holy Roman Empire, and (now that William is King) England. England's relations with Spain and Portugal are rather curious; these nations are considered enemies because they are strongly Catholic, but they are allies in the sense that they are, like England, enemies of France. As a result, Spanish and Portuguese Catholics are tolerated, but most Englishmen still prefer that they keep a healthy distance away.

Other than France, William's most notable enemies are the Catholic residents of Ireland, who are still loyal to James II and are expected to aid any bid James makes to retake the English throne. Likewise, many residents of the Highlands of Scotland are supporters of King James, and there is ongoing violence between these so-called Jacobites and the forces of William and Mary. Most of the Roman Catholics remaining in England also have some Jacobite leanings, and if James II does make an attempt to reclaim his throne, he is likely to find numerous supporters throughout the British Isles.

The city has spread far beyond its ancient walls, predominantly eastward and westward along the north bank of the River Thames. The West End is where most of London's Nobles and Lords have relocated since the Great Fire. This serves not only to put them closer to Whitehall Palace, where they may practise their intrigues at the Royal Court, but also to place them upwind of the City, thus sparing them the worst of the city's smoke and stench. Manors and mansions are constantly being built in the West End, each more ostentatious than the last, as each new arrival strives to outdo his neighbours.

Contrariwise, the East End is home to London's poorer citizens – day-labourers, whores, Jews, and the like. Craftsmen who cannot afford to open a shop within

the City often do so here, including many of the weavers, dyers, spinners, and finishers of the cloth trades. The buildings in the East End are older and more closely packed together, and many of the streets are as filthy as they are crowded. Here, more than a few poor souls simply vanish utterly each week, often unknown and quite possibly un-mourned. Some, doubtless, fall victim to ordinary crimes or accidents, or perhaps take ship elsewhere in hopes of a better life. But increasingly, tales are told of "vanished" East Enders reappearing in a dark alley-mouth, staring balefully at a former friend or acquaintance, and then seemingly drifting away in the smoke when spoken to. Most of these tales centre around the neighbourhood of Bethnal Green, though no explanation for it has yet been found there.

Southwark, that part of London which lies south of the Thames, is, if possible, even more disreputable than the East End. Here can be found countless alehouses, bawdy-houses, gambling-houses, theatres, and other such dens of iniquity, stretching as far as the eye can see. Beggars and thieves are everywhere in Southwark, but many otherwise respectable citizens can be found here as well, either to exercise their baser passions far from the prying eyes of the City, or merely to observe such spectacles as cannot be seen north of the Thames, such as packs of dogs being set upon bulls or bears. Some honest work is done here as well, mostly in such noisome trades as skinning and leatherworking, but Southwark is far better known for its more sinful tenants.

SPAIN

by D.S. of Santiago de Compostela

What do you think of, reader, when you hear the name of Spain? Most likely, you think of war; and, though it pains me to write it, you are not likely to think of wars being won. Once, we were the mightiest people in Europe, but for the last half-century, the Empire of Spain has seen its prize lands plucked away by enemies from without and rebels from within. The recent "miraculous" recovery of King Carlos II from the disease that had plagued him all his life has led most Spaniards to believe that Spain is truly blessed by God, and ready to rise to glory once more. I, however, have grave doubts, and fear that Spain stands instead on the very precipice of damnation.

Since childhood, the King had been trapped in a weak and sickly body, unable to speak clearly or walk unassisted; he was called *El Hechizado*, the Bewitched One, and not without reason. His mother acted as regent, and a cabal of courtiers ruled Spain in all but name – and they did not rule

well, though I believe that they honestly tried. All of that changed in 1687, however, when a traveling Hospitaller monk giving his name as Rafael Beltran arrived at the King's court. Barefoot, ragged, and seemingly, humble, he asked softly if he might be permitted to pray over the King. His request was granted, at which point he asked to perform his prayers in private, with only the King and himself present, "in the sight of none save Almighty God." Many in the Court grew suspicious of this, but King Carlos himself seemed fascinated by Beltran, and insisted (as well as he could) that the monk be allowed to meet with him for private prayer. Despite the Regent's reluctance, Carlos was still the King; matters were arranged as Beltran had requested, and the monk and the deformed King went to the royal chapel to pray.

When they emerged an hour later, the King was, to all appearances, healed. His mind and speech were clear, his steps sure, his body and face straight and handsome, though traces of his pronounced Habsburg jaw were still apparent. A day of prayer and celebration was proclaimed through all Spain, and Brother Beltran was offered the post of Archbishop of Madrid; he declined, though he is still a close advisor to the King. Since that day, His Majesty has seemed exactly the sort of King every Spaniard desired: strong, decisive, faithful, kind, generous, and other wise perfect. He has rallied the army to a most fierce defense against the French invaders, reined in the excesses of certain courts of the Inquisition, and is gathering support in an effort to convince the Pope to declare a new Crusade against the heathen Aztecs.

In my heart, I hope that this transformation is exactly as it appears, a miracle from God bestowed upon Spain and its King. However, I have grave misgivings. Brother Beltran seems humble and pious enough, but something in his eyes makes me distrust him. More and more "Hospitallers" have been appearing at court; there seems to be one around every corner, listening to every conversation for traces of treason or heresy (which, for them, are one and the same). The courtiers of Madrid, abruptly weakened by the sudden emergence of a powerful King, are every whispering in corners now, casting suspicious eyes at one another; they were never so divisive when they had to rule Spain together. And the King himself...I pray that his mind is his own, and healed of the sickness that mastered it for so many years. But when he speaks, there are sometimes strange pauses, as though he were waiting for words from somewhere



SPAIN — THE FACTS

Spain has been a nation in decline for most of the seventeenth century. Constant, costly wars with France and the Aztecs have devastated the economy, Portugal has reclaimed its independence from the Spanish crown, and the increasingly inbred Habsburg kings of Spain have been unable to control the stifling bureaucracy that their predecessors built. Years of alternating droughts and floods have only added to the nation's problems, and the country would long ago have been conquered by France if not for the anti-French alliances arising elsewhere in Europe.

The cities of Spain are full of the unemployed and desperate poor, who often survive on crime and vice if they are not drafted into the poorly-trained and unpaid armies of the Crown. Despite the dangers of life on the frontiers of the New World, vast numbers of Spaniards flee there every year, hoping to improve their wretched lot. In Madrid, meanwhile, nobles live a life of conspicuous consumption and excess, taking loans they cannot afford to spend money that they don't have. The most hard-working individuals in Spain are, increasingly, not Spanish at all, but rather immigrants from Italy, France, Portugal, or the Spanish Netherlands.

With the mysterious recovery of King Carlos (Charles) II, however, the people of Spain have undergone a powerful surge of hope, faith, and nationalistic pride, and there is a strong sense among the common people that Spain is preparing to return to the world's stage in force. The Spanish nobility, on the other hand, are just as concerned as D.S. over the changes in King Carlos, and some have been sending out quiet "feelers" in search of Witch Hunters who may be able to determine the truth of the situation.

RELIGION

Thanks to donations by pious kings and nobles, the Roman Catholic Church is by far the biggest landowner in Spain — owning nearly a fifth of the country — and is the most wealthy and powerful entity in Spain. Despite this wealth, the majority of the Spanish clergy have not fallen into decadence; the Church runs many schools, orphanages, soup kitchens, and other charities for the country's poor. The Church is afflicted by the same bureaucracy that affects the Spanish government; infighting among the various religious orders is commonplace, often over the smallest of details, such as the design of clerical clothing. The Carmelite and Jesuit orders, in particular, have been known to come to blows over obscure points of philosophical debate. In addition to these two, the Franciscan order is quite powerful in Spain, and the Brothers Hospitallers are seeing a surge in popularity and membership since Brother Rafael's miraculous healing of the King.

Literally everyone in Spain is baptized as a Catholic, though not all of them take their faith seriously; many of Spain's nobles live lives of decadence and

sin which are quite at odds with their supposed piety. In addition, Spain's Jewish and Muslim populations were forcibly converted to Christianity in the fifteenth century, and many of their descendants still practice their original faiths in the privacy of their own homes, while still attending Mass at their local cathedral. While the Spanish Inquisition's enormous power is beginning to fade, it still actively seeks to find and "correct" these dissemblers.

WITCH HUNTERS

The Catholic Church officially denies the existence of Witch Hunters. Privately, a debate rages in the highest levels of the Vatican. The Society of Jesus (more commonly called the Jesuits by outsiders) has been urging the Pope to declare all Witch Hunters to be heretics; they believe that anyone claiming to have the powers attributed to a Witch Hunter is deluded at best and a witch himself at worst. At least, that is their official stance; in truth, the Jesuits see the Orders of the Witch Hunters as a threat to their own formidable power base, and are thus willing to take drastic measures to discredit them.

While the Jesuits are not necessarily more powerful than any of the other Catholic orders in Spain, they do have a great deal of influence over the judges of the Inquisition. Witch Hunters in Spain and its colonies therefore often find themselves subjected to intense scrutiny and questioning when Inquisitors are in the area, and generally prefer to leave the area until the court moves on. Thankfully, the arrival of an Inquisitor and his entourage in an area is not subtle, and most Witch Hunters in Spanish territory find it easy enough to avoid Inquisitorial attention if they are careful.

INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS

As mentioned above, France has been in an on-and-off state of war with Spain for centuries. In addition to the border between the two nations at the Pyrenees Mountains, Spanish territories in the Netherlands and southern Italy have all been targets of French attacks. While technically a member of the Grand Alliance, Spain has little to offer its allies beyond moral support and the defense of its own borders.

Spain is ruled by a branch of the same Habsburg family that rules the Holy Roman Empire, so relations with that part of Europe are generally good even when not united by their enmity of France. Dealings with Portugal are considerably more strained; the Portuguese rebellion took place less than fifty years ago, and is still a sore spot with many Spaniards. Furthermore, the enormous success of the Portuguese colony in Brazil only serves to remind the Spanish of their own stalled efforts at a New World empire. There are rumors that King Carlos will mount a campaign to reclaim Portugal as part of Spain, but this seems likely to be a low priority while France and the Aztecs are still active enemies.

outside his head, and occasionally I see brief glimpses of wild, animal fear in his eyes for no apparent reason. I pray that I am wrong...but I do not believe it.

Leaving my fears aside, Spain still has two great enemies, one near and one far. The nearest, and greatest, is France and its damnable King, Louis XIV, who has seized Spanish lands at every turn, both on the border shared by the two nations and in the Spanish Netherlands. Louis claims to be a good Catholic, but he will invade a Catholic neighbor as readily as the lands of a heretic. His France is a mighty nation indeed, but he cannot continue to defy all the rest of Europe without suffering the consequences. Across the ocean, the heathen Aztecs have been raiding peaceful Spanish settlements in the New World for over 150 years, ever since that fool Cortés provoked them with his arrogance.

Despite these enemies, the people of Spain are faithful and diligent followers of the teachings of the Roman Catholic Church. To be sure, there are still some few Jews, Protestants, and Muslims who profess Catholicism in public and practice their heretical religions in private, but the Inquisition continues to seek out and discipline these deceivers. The Inquisition also seeks out those who practice witchcraft or other heretical acts, and even those who tell ghost-stories and folk-tales sometimes come to the Inquisition's attention. The Inquisitors believe that telling such tales may eventually lead one to be curious about, and then attempt to practice, sorcery, so stories of this nature are no longer so prominent as they once were. It is still possible to find those who will tell you of the *hombre del saco*, the skeletal old man who wanders dark streets snatching up stray children and putting them in his bag, or *los tres mudos*, the three dark, silent figures that sometimes stalk a man, visible to no one but their prey, until he dies in madness...but these tales are not told lightly, or to strangers.

PORTUGAL

by H.S. of Lisboa

To the eye of the layman, Portugal is a blessed realm indeed in which to live; we enjoy prosperity, wealth, and independence under a strong and blessed King. The sugar plantations of Brasil generate vast sums of money for their owners, and our colonies and trading-posts in Africa, India, and even distant China are likewise profitable. The Royal Library in Lisboa is one of the largest and finest in Christendom, and our Universities, particularly at Coimbra, are renowned. The sea shares God's bounty with us; our fishermen feed much of the nation, and our sailors maintain the tradition of daring, long-distance voyages that marked Portugal's most prosperous era. Likewise, our bountiful fields produce fruits, grains, and fine olive oil; our vast forests produce plentiful timber and cork, and the wines of Oporto are avidly sought by men of quality throughout the world.

While many other cities may claim to have libraries, universities and landmarks of equal or greater importance or beauty, there is one thing that no other

city on Earth can lay claim to: the "*Collegia di Magia*" or the College of the Magi. No longer need magi sequester themselves like hermits to teach aspiring young magicians the Art. Here magi may study and learn in an open environment, one which may finally convince the Church that the barbaric Ordeal of Purity is no longer necessary to ensure their souls are free of the Adversary's taint.

There is, however, another side to life in Portugal, one which threatens the very soul of the nation and those who dwell therein. Along with all the profit which has been wrested from the distant plantations of Brasil, something darker has come back to our shores. Some thirty-five years ago, a Jesuit priest named Father António Vieira returned to Lisboa from Brasil and spoke eloquently to the King about the abuse and mistreatment of the Indians of that land by the Portuguese settlers. Moved by his words, King João IV declared that the Indians must be treated with respect and decency, rather than simply enslaved and brutalized. I have no desire to see the brutality that Vieira spoke of continue, yet his efforts led to the arrival of the cult of the *Santos Novos* in Portugal, and this cult is bringing our entire nation to the brink of damnation.

[Readers – at this point, H.S. goes into a lengthy discussion of the origin of the Santos Novos cult as he knows it. It is largely duplicative of the information presented later in our section on Brazil, and slightly less complete than that version. Since the information is more relevant to the manuscript on Brazil, I hope that H.S., and you, my readers, will excuse me for excising the information from this part of the text.]

You may well ask about the nature of the cult – what manner of devils they worship, and the particular nature of their heresy. Unfortunately – or, perhaps, fortunately – I do not know the details of their beliefs. They are subtle in their ways, and unwilling to reveal their true nature to those who have not earned their trust. The services performed openly in churches and cathedrals appear normal and holy, even in those areas where the *Novos* have firmly taken hold. In private homes and locked cellars, however, other foul rites take place, to which only the "faithful" are admitted. Rumors speak of the calling up of demons, bloody sacrifices, and even the consumption of human flesh, but nothing has yet been proven. Several Witch Hunters of my acquaintance have attempted to infiltrate these gatherings, and all have vanished or died mysteriously. With no proof, you may be inclined to say that I am chasing phantoms, or wrongfully accusing good Catholics, but my gut tells me that these heretics have turned their faces away from God, and I will find a way to prove it, though it tear my country apart. And in this pledge, I am not alone.

King Pedro II, of course, is gravely concerned over these developments, but many of the nobles of his court secretly worship the *Santos Novos*, and without the support of the *Cortes* – the court of nobles that advise the King – he is hard-pressed to pass any laws restricting or limiting the cult. His Majesty has quietly asked for assistance from the Vatican, and observers from Rome

and Madrid have come to observe any number of church services, but they have had no more success in discovering the true faces of the *Novos* than have the Witch Hunters. Even the Inquisition has not yet managed to achieve any

real insight into the cult, and thus it has not yet been declared heretical; I suspect that the Inquisition itself may have been corrupted from within by devotees of the *Novos*.

PORTUGAL — THE FACTS

Whatever religious heresy Portugal may be housing, the country is certainly prospering. Goa, the once-crucial Portuguese colony in India, is a shadow of its former self, but Brazil is an immensely profitable source of sugar, and miners are beginning to discover silver deposits there as well. Portuguese slave ships are more common than any others off Africa, and in addition to the huge numbers of slaves being taken to Brazil, Portugal supplies many slaves to the English colonies in the New World as well. Brazil is becoming increasingly central to Portugal's economy in all respects, and other colonies are being largely ignored in favor of developing Brazil still further. Indeed, the population of homeland Portugal has begun to shrink because so many of its inhabitants are moving to Brazil to make their fortunes.

Militarily, Portugal is not mighty, but is quite secure; any land approaches must come across the well-defended border with Spain, and approaches by sea must get past the country's small but competent navy. Despite H.S.' claims about the reputation of the University of Coimbra, Portugal is not very highly regarded by much of Europe; indeed, they are still considered to be a somewhat backward nation from a cultural and intellectual perspective.

For centuries, Portugal's kings have been advised (and, in many cases, controlled) by the Cortes, a council of noble legislative advisors. However, King Pedro (Peter) II is becoming increasingly concerned by the influence of the Santos Novos over the Portuguese nobility, and has gradually begun to exercise more and more personal power in court. The nobles of the Cortes have, predictably, complained loudly about this, but have not visibly taken any more direct action yet. However, the King is concerned about the possibility of supernatural attacks coming from the Novos, and he is now constantly accompanied by a Dominican monk named Gilberto Gonçalves, who seems to be acting as a sort of "spiritual bodyguard" to the King, as well as an advisor.

RELIGION

Since the revolution in 1640, no Pope has recognized Portugal as an independent nation, instead siding with Spain and considering Portugal to still be part of that country. Despite this, most of the people of Portugal consider themselves to be staunchly Catholic; the Portuguese people, while faithful followers of the Pope, accept that he has political reasons for not acknowledging Portuguese independence, and pray that he will be able to do so soon. While the Santos Novos cult dominates religion in Brazil, it still represents a small minority in Portugal. Unfortunately, that small minority includes

some of the wealthiest and most powerful families in the country, and the situation is even worse than H.S. makes it out to be; Portugal is in the midst of what can only be described as a religious Cold War. On one side are the followers of the Santos Novos, who present themselves as wholesome Catholics who are particularly concerned with the plight of the Indians in Brasil. On the other side are a diverse assortment of Jesuits, Dominicans, and Witch Hunters, all trying to unmask the true, corrupt nature of the Novos.

The Novos, many of whom are members of ancient noble families who have made fortunes in Brasil, have wealth and power on their side, not to mention the ability to call on the dark powers of the beings they serve. The investigators, on the other hand, are divided and disorganized. The Dominicans and Witch Hunters have formed an uneasy alliance in an effort to publicly prove the Novos' heresy, while the Jesuits are trying to eliminate the problem quietly, before it is openly linked back to the Jesuit missions where it began. To further complicate matters, the Jesuits have control of the Portuguese Inquisition, and have been known to use it as a weapon to keep the Dominicans and Witch Hunters from acting too openly; the Dominicans have the tacit support of the King, but he is unwilling to act publicly until he has definitive proof of the Novos' activities. As a result, the streets, mansions, and churches of Lisboa and the other great cities of Portugal are full of intrigue, deception, sorcery, and murder every night, all cloaked in secrecy. Until someone can produce incontrovertible proof of the cult's corruption, this situation will likely continue to worsen.

WITCH HUNTERS

As mentioned above, many Portuguese Witch Hunters are actively involved in the investigation of the Santos Novos, often in conjunction with Black Friars of the Dominican Order. As a result, the Jesuit-led Portuguese Inquisition is very hostile to known Witch Hunters within Portugal, and such individuals would be wise to keep a very low profile while in the country.

INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS

While technically a member of the Grand Alliance against France, Portugal contributes little more than money to the cause; the same isolation that makes Portugal so difficult to attack makes it difficult for Portuguese forces to get to more distant battle fronts. While Portuguese troops could be transported by ship, King Pedro has shown an unwillingness to depopulate the fortresses on the border with Spain, despite the two countries' common cause against France.

While the *Santos Novos* are the greatest threat to the Godly men and women of Portugal, they are not the only one. Despite the cities and farms that fill the country, there are still many wild areas, particularly in the northern mountains. Such isolated places are haunted by the so-called enchanted Moors, fickle spirits which take the form of beautiful maidens with long hair. Some can take the forms of snakes, or ensnare men with their beauty; others lure the gullible with promises of treasure. Whatever their methods, they have been the cause of many disappearances in the wilder lands of Portugal, and travelers are advised to keep to the roads rather than risk such an encounter.

A century ago, King Sebastião I disappeared in Africa while fighting the Moors, and with him disappeared our independence for sixty years. We have regained our freedom from Spain, but if we are not careful, we will be enslaved by a much darker master – the Adversary himself. Some believe that King Sebastião I will return on a foggy day in the hour of Portugal's greatest need to lead us once more. If this is true, I fear that that hour is near.

FRANCE by H.B. of Orléans

Of all the nations of Christendom, France is perhaps the most welcoming place for a Witch Hunter to reside – provided, of course, that you are willing to live and work under the terms specified by *Le Roi de Soleil*, Louis XIV. His Majesty is not one to let any source of power operate in his kingdom without being under his control, and Witch Hunters represent not only such a power source, but a way to keep other such sources – those serving the Adversary – at bay. And life in France, whether for a Witch Hunter, a tradesman, a noble, or a peasant, ultimately revolves around the desires of *Le Roi*.

For much of its history, France has not been greatly troubled by the minions of the Adversary. To be sure, the *loups-garous*, or wolf-men, caused many deaths among the peasantry as recently as the turn of the last century, and the history of heretical cults within France is long and well-known. However, for a nation so large and prosperous, France seemed to be relatively unsullied by evil; ghosts, demons, and such creatures rarely troubled our people, and the heresies that were generated within our borders were quickly extinguished. For the last several decades, however, as France has risen to new heights of power and prosperity, the taint of evil here has also grown. There does not appear to be any connection between these events, nor am I aware of any reason why they have all begun happening only recently. The increase in supernatural activity appears to have begun late in 1661, but I am aware of no mystical significance to this year. There are too many examples of the problem to list, but a few of the more notable ones are worth mentioning.

In the eastern countryside between Lyon and Dijon, the *loups-garous* have begun once more to prowl and slay, after some sixty years of quiet peace, and others have been reported on the western coast between

Anjou and Bordeaux. The standing stones near Vannes in Bretagne – said to be a Roman legion turned to stone by Merlin – have allegedly been performing military maneuvers on moonless nights, as though preparing for a battle. In Brest, on several occasions, sailors returning from New France have gone on murderous rampages through the port, chanting in foreign tongues as they killed anyone within reach until brought down by repeated volleys of musket-fire. Goods stored in the ware-houses of Marseilles and Lyon have been turning to ash overnight, and some sort of water-serpent has attacked several trading vessels in the Seine between Rouen and Paris. In short, it seems that all of the supernatural plagues which France has avoided over the centuries have caught up with her at once.

The most well-known example of the Adversary's activities, and the one which brought the full extent of the problem to *Le Roi's* attention, is doubtless the Affair of the Poisons, which took place in 1676-80. What began as an apparently simple murder case against the Marquise de Brinvilliers led to the discovery of a veritable nest of poisoners, alchemists, witches, and Satanists in the court of King Louis XIV, the very bosom of France. During the investigation, *Le Roi* re-established the *Chambre Ardente*, or Burning Court, to try and execute those who had so foully betrayed his trust, and some three dozen individuals were executed by that court. As the guilty parties scrambled to cover their tracks and accuse each other, the King himself was poisoned by one of his mistresses, surviving only through the quick reaction of his personal physician. The mistress in question, the Marquise de Montespan, somehow escaped capture, and is still considered the most wanted woman in France.

Since his near-death at the hands of these conspirators, *Le Roi* has understandably taken a pronounced personal interest in finding and persecuting servants of the Adversary throughout France. His chief of police, Gabriel de la Reynie, has been charged with ferreting out any traces of Satanist activity in Paris, and the *Chambre Ardente*, though officially disbanded seven years ago, is still quietly active in investigating and punishing those who transgress against God – and, more importantly, against *Le Roi* himself. The Affair of the Poisons is one of the main reasons that His Majesty chose to move his court from Paris to the new royal *chateau* at Versailles, some ten miles away. The old Louvre palace, some say, was too closely linked to the conspiracy that nearly cost the King's life; at Versailles, all things are under *Le Roi's* direct control, and there is little chance that conspirators will be able to catch him by surprise again.

Paris

More than half a million people live in this vast and splendid City, which is in many ways the capital city of Europe as well as of France. The city is divided in two by the Seine, which is of course a primary trade route to and from Paris, particularly to Rouen. Most of the important structures of Paris are north of the river – the conjoined Louvre and Tuileries palaces, though no longer the site of

FRANCE — THE FACTS

France is, without question, the most powerful nation in Europe in 1689 – not only politically and militarily, but socially and culturally as well. France has Europe's largest and best-trained army, a navy equal to the combined fleets of England and the Netherlands, and enough religious influence to stand up to the Pope. French is second only to Latin as the language of educated men and women throughout Europe, and all aspects of European art and fashion take their lead from the trends begun in Paris. French spies are present wherever important decisions are being made, and other nations likewise have numerous spies in Paris and other important French cities.

Similarly, Louis XIV is by far the most powerful man in Europe. Not only does he rule France, but he does so without the interference of any Parliament or other council which might oppose his decisions. Louis is, for all practical purposes, France incarnate; his power is absolute, and for his courtiers, invoking his displeasure is a certain route to poverty or worse. Thankfully for France, Louis has an extraordinary amount of political, economic, and military savvy, and is wise enough to listen to the advice of experts in various fields, though he never feels bound by it. His weakness, if he has one, is vanity; Louis has a tendency to focus on France and its military as tools for obtaining personal glory.

That glory may not last forever, though. The French treasury has been severely depleted due to a combination of military expenses and Louis' penchant for unbelievably lavish decorations, monumental buildings, and baroque parties. The French government is now deeply in debt, and it is unclear how long the Sun King can sustain his extraordinary expenditures. The fall of James II in England is a major blow to French power in Europe, and with the Grand Alliance gathering members and momentum, many believe that French power has reached its peak and is beginning to wane.

Travelers should note that, outside Paris, the majority of France's population neither speaks nor understands French. France is a collection of many smaller states which have been forged together over centuries, and most still retain their original languages. Langue d'oc, Breton, Flemish, Walloon, and a dozen other tongues are spoken in the towns and valleys of the countryside, and outsiders will need to find (or bring)

a local translator in order to communicate at anything more than a basic level.

RELIGION

France is now an exclusively Roman Catholic nation, at least on paper; however, this does not mean that the country is aligned with Rome. In fact, Louis' desire to control everything within France has led to significant conflict with the Pope. Over the past decade, Louis and the French clergy have made several declarations limiting the Pope's power within France and giving Louis more direct control over the Church within France. Not surprisingly, this has displeased the Pope greatly, and the escalating war of words at one point led to the French ambassador to Rome seizing his ambassadorial palace by force (and being excommunicated as a result). The conflict remains unresolved at present, and it is widely believed that Louis plans to declare his own Gallican Church, independent of the Pope, along the lines of the Church of England.

There is no active Inquisition in France at this time, and no one religious order has any particular prominence here, although the Jesuits are somewhat more visibly active than many of the other orders. The *Chambre Ardente*, which is held in a windowless chamber beneath the Louvre, serves a similar purpose to the Inquisition in other Catholic nations, though the *Chambre* focuses more on dangerous cults and supernatural entities than on "ordinary" heresy.

For most of the century, French Protestants (mostly Calvinists, who are referred to as Huguenots) enjoyed a surprising degree of religious freedom in predominantly Catholic France. However, in an effort to unify his country (and, some say, regain favor with the Pope), Louis revoked this freedom in 1685, making the practice of religions other than Roman Catholicism illegal. Protestant ministers have been banished from the realm, Protestant churches destroyed, and children of Protestant families forcibly baptized into the Catholic Church. Ironically, this abusive treatment has only served to further offend the Pope, who has given his tacit support to the Grand Alliance in its efforts to keep France contained. While technically forbidden from leaving France, vast numbers of Huguenots are doing just that, taking their religion and their renowned craftsmanship to nearby Protestant countries.

Royal intrigues, nevertheless dominate the area – or on it, such as the great cathedral of Notre Dame on the Île de la Cité. The University of Paris is located on the south bank of the Seine, but travelers moving farther south than that are entering the less reputable parts of Paris, and should tread carefully. The vast market-place of Les Halles is the heart of commerce in Paris, but wandering vendors of every conceivable good fill all the streets and squares from dawn until dusk. White stone buildings six and seven stories high line the main streets, providing a remarkable display for the newcomer.

Travelers should be aware that traveling to Paris without specific business may lead to being arrested as a Vagabond; the police of *Le Roi* are diligent and watchful, so it is not advisable to simply come to Paris for a visit. Witch Hunters in particular, are carefully watched if their nature becomes known, thanks to the increased watchfulness since the Affair of the Poisons. Indeed, a Witch Hunter whose presence is discovered within fifty miles of Paris will likely be "invited" to a personal interview with Monsieur de la Reynie, during which the reasons for their visit to the area will be discussed at length. Those who

WITCH HUNTERS

The Pope, and most Catholic nations, regard Witch Hunters as potentially heretical, and certainly suspicious, individuals. However, Louis XIV is not a man who is willing to let religious doctrine keep him from a potential source of power. Since the Satanists in his court were discovered in 1677, Louis is known to be actively recruiting those with divine gifts for “special missions” on behalf of France. Sometimes these missions are in keeping with Witch Hunters’ traditional roles of seeking out and destroying evil, but others are more openly political or military in nature. Some Catholic Witch Hunters from outside France have come to Paris to pledge themselves to Louis’ service, though he naturally suspects that many of these are spies, and has not yet entrusted them with any important or sensitive tasks. King Louis plans to sponsor a new Order of Catholic Witch Hunters, *La Croix du Roi* (the Cross of the King), and while it has not yet been formally created, other Orders are very concerned about this possibility. Most Witch Hunters think that an Order of Witch Hunters directly reporting to the King of France – or, indeed, any head of state – is likely to be used for political, rather than holy, ends.

can convince Reynie that they are investigating a genuine supernatural threat may receive offers of assistance (or even employment) from the authorities, or may be told in no uncertain terms to cease their activities and leave them up to the *Chambre Ardente*. Those who cannot come up with a valid explanation for their presence, on the other hand, may expect to be escorted from the area at best, and imprisoned at worst. *Le Roi* is always happy to support those who can assist him or France, but he has no patience for rogue individuals who may threaten the peace – or threaten the King himself. As with all things in France, the King will take whatever steps are necessary to impose control.

THE REPUBLIC OF THE UNITED PROVINCES

by J.K. of Amsterdam

Men and women come to the United Provinces for one of two reasons – to trade, or to think – because both of these things can be done better here than anywhere else in Europe. This may seem arrogant to you, Reader; if so, it is only because you have not yet been here to see the truth of my words for yourself. If you wish to trade in goods of any kind, no greater market for buyers and sellers can be found than in Amsterdam. Not only do goods themselves flood in and out of the city from all corners of the world in vast quantities, like the tides, but there are endless opportunities for persons of means to invest their money in businesses of all kinds. As for thinking, well, nowhere in Europe can a man or woman think or write more freely than in the Republic. There is no King in the Republic to say what can or cannot be written, no Pope to command regarding what may or may not be thought. The Market

Witch Hunters who are unwilling to explain themselves to the French police, or who will not cooperate with the authorities in the investigation of supernatural activity, are by definition considered threats to the realm, and are dealt with harshly. Thus, Witch Hunters who do not want to serve Louis XIV are advised to keep a low profile in and around Paris, if they must go there at all.

INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS

France has few friends at the moment, and does not appear to need any. King James II of England was a close ally (some said a puppet) of Louis XIV, but now that he has been deposed and fled to France, England has been added to the list of France’s enemies. That list already included the Netherlands, Sweden, Spain, Portugal, and numerous states within the Holy Roman Empire, in addition to the Pope. While France has no allies in Europe, they are believed to be providing covert support to the Aztec Empire in the New World, primarily to keep Aztec aggressions directed towards New Spain and away from New France.

is the great judger of men; if your words are wise, and written well, many will buy, and read, and discuss your books. If you are a fool, on the other hand, you will soon be a poor one!

Of course, if you are both a fool and a Witch Hunter, you will soon be a dead one, and nothing I write here will change that. Therefore, I will write under the assumption that you are *not* a fool, and that you are instead a worthy recipient of the knowledge I am about to bestow upon you.

In the Republic, regardless of whether you are a Witch Hunter or a weaver, money – or, more precisely, profit – must underlie much of your thinking. This is not because money is essential to the Witch Hunter’s trade, but rather because *everything* in the Republic revolves around money, and if your activities do not, you will immediately be perceived as a strange, and possibly dangerous, outsider. Thus, whatever worthy reason you have for traveling in the United Provinces, it is important to have a believable explanation for your presence involving trade, investing, or at least a way to earn a living. Vagabonds are even less welcome in the Republic than they are elsewhere.

As a rule, there is little need for Witch Hunters in the countryside of the Republic; those agents of the Adversary who operate in our lands tend to focus their attention in the cities, where they can easily manipulate men to the deadly sins of Greed and Envy. There are occasional problems with various water-spirits and faeries dwelling in the many rivers and canals that cross the flat, wet lands of the Republic, and travelers who offend these spirits are sometimes found drowned far away from the water. The keepers of the many wind-mills

THE UNITED PROVINCES – THE FACTS

The Republic of the United Provinces is one of the most unique and successful nations in Europe. Its central geographic position and its highly sophisticated banking system combine to make Amsterdam the financial center of Europe, although London may soon become a competitor for that title. Dutch sailors and cartographers are the world's best, its navy is Europe's mightiest, Rotterdam is Europe's largest and busiest port, and the Dutch East India Company (VOC) – the world's richest private company – dominates Europe's trade with Asia. The Dutch West India Company (WIC) is considerably less powerful than the VOC, but is vying with Portugal for control of the world's slave trade.

Most travel and trade within the United Provinces is conducted via the state's extensive network of canals and rivers, rather than by roads. The area is generally flat and marshy, though Dutch engineers have managed to reclaim a great deal of land via complex systems of dikes, locks, and windmill-driven pumps. These systems also serve as an emergency defensive system; in 1672, much of the Republic was flooded to keep French armies from reaching the economic heartland of the country. Though it took several years for the Dutch to recover from this act of desperation, it was seen as a better alternative than submitting to French conquest.

Women have far more rights in the Republic than they do in many other lands. They may own property, run businesses, travel freely, keep their own names and possessions when marrying, and otherwise be the equal of men in many respects. Even in the world of Witch Hunter, where women have a far more active role in society than in the historical seventeenth century, the women of the United Provinces have an unusual degree of social and economic freedom.

RELIGION

Unlike most of Europe, the United Provinces display an extraordinary amount of religious tolerance. While the population is predominantly Calvinist, people of all nations and creeds are welcome as long as they are willing to work and pay the Republic's substantial taxes.

There is a great deal of social mobility for anyone who is capable of consistently making a profit; finance, not religion, is the primary driver in Dutch culture. French Huguenots, Spanish and Portuguese Jews, disaffected Protestants from various German states, and a variety of other free-thinkers have made the United Provinces their home. Even Catholics are permitted to live and worship in the Republic, but they are widely disliked, since the Republic's long fight for independence from Catholic Spain is still a recent memory.

WITCH HUNTERS

In addition to the corrupt activities of the WIC, a number of Satanic or otherwise malign cults are believed to be operating behind the seemingly innocent fronts of lesser trading houses. Also, in an ironic reversal, several highly-placed individuals within the WIC have apparently been plagued by curses from enslaved African witch-doctors. Due to its relatively enlightened population, central location, and ready access to transportation, Amsterdam is a central meeting point for Witch Hunters just as much as for other travelers. Most of the European Orders have at least a small meeting house or headquarters in or near Amsterdam, and the rare meetings of the High Council often take place in nearby Den Haag.

INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS

Protestants throughout Europe consider William of Orange to be a champion of the faith; he is the political and military leader of the Grand Alliance, and he and his Republic are well-loved throughout Protestant Europe. Obviously, relations with England are now particularly close since William effectively rules both countries. France, predictably, considers the Republic its greatest enemy, since William has been leading opposition to French expansion for decades. Spain and Portugal, Europe's other prominent Catholic nations, are somewhat more tolerant of the Dutch due to their fight against France, under the "enemy of my enemy" theory. Even the Pope has given tacit approval to William's efforts, since the Holy Father sees France as an enemy of peace in Europe.

which are used to drain lakes for use as farmland must either make constant offerings to the spirits they are displacing, or keep their beds defended by a circle of iron shavings or salt. Otherwise, they are likely to find their houses flooded, burned, or blown away, as the spirits whose watery homes have been displaced seek to return the favor.

With these exceptions, most events of interest to Witch Hunters – indeed, most events of interest to *anyone* – happen in the cities of the Republic, rather than the countryside. And of all the cities that drive events here, none can compare to Amsterdam.

Amsterdam

In Amsterdam, one can find anything – this may seem boastful, but it is true. Grain from Germany

and Muscovy comes west across the Baltic bound for Italy, while wines from France and Portugal head back in the other direction. Spices, ebony, and sandalwood from the East Indies are brought here by the ships of the VOC, which also carry exotic cloths and porcelain from China. The vessels of the WIC, on the other hand, come here laden with sugar and tobacco from the New World, obtained by the highly profitable sale of African slaves to the English colonies. The Commodity Exchange, or Bourse, in Amsterdam is where merchants from all across Christendom come to buy and sell their wares, and the prices found there determine the cost of goods for hundreds of miles in every direction. Investors, insurers, and speculators can be found here for any expedition that might conceivably make a profit.

Too, any manner of Religion can be found in Amsterdam. While the folk of the country-side are mostly Protestants, people who have been driven out of their homelands due to religious intolerance are welcome here. If they can make money – or help other people make money – they can worship as they like; gold, rather than God, sways men's minds the most in Amsterdam. As a result, all manner of devils, sinners, heathens, and heretics may be found here as well, and it is this side of Amsterdam that will naturally interest Witch Hunters the most.

The two great poles around which Amsterdam's trade revolves are the East and West India Companies. The East India Company, or VOC, is extraordinarily wealthy and powerful, thanks to its vastly profitable monopoly on the spice trade from Asia. The West India Company, or WIC, derives most of its profits from the slave trade between Africa, the New World colonies, and the West Indies themselves. Despite the vast income thus generated, the WIC is rather like the VOC's poor cousin, particularly since it was driven out of Brazil by the Portuguese. As a result, it should not be entirely surprising that the WIC has turned to occult methods in an effort to gain ground on the VOC.

Directors, captains, and merchants of the WIC are known to enlist witches to ensure favorable winds, summon demons to predict the future of the market, and otherwise use any means at their disposal to achieve economic success. As well as competing with other merchants, captains of the WIC are competing with each other for the choicest contracts and trade routes, and thus each one is always willing to go a step farther into sin than his competition if it will give him a better chance to prevail. These activities are never quite public – the burghers of Amsterdam are open-minded, but not quite *that* open-minded! However, it is widely known that the WIC uses a wide variety of underhanded methods in the pursuit of profit, and most citizens of Amsterdam are willing to turn a blind eye to such behavior – particularly if they receive a few guilders in exchange for their silence. Even within the WIC, few men realize just how far this sorcerous dabbling has gone, but even if they did, it has become so ingrained in the culture of the WIC that it probably could not be stopped.

LANDS EAST

Time and space, and a lack of willing contributors, have sadly prevented me from being able to offer as much detail on the lands east of France as I have on the western portion of Christendom. Still, in the event that your travels do take you to such lands, I will offer what humble knowledge I may.

Immediately east of France, and covering much of central Europe, are the lands of the Holy Roman Empire, called also Germany. In theory, all of this land is under the rule of Emperor Leopold I; however, in truth, the Empire is a motley collection of several hundred Lordships, Principalities, Duchies, Countships, Margraviates, Free

Cities, and other States whose allegiance to the Emperor extends only as far as he is able to enforce it. There is a national Assembly made up of representatives from each of these divers Entities, but its decisions cover only the most important issues; each of the states makes its own Trade, conducts its own Wars, and generally manages its own Affairs. Some are Protestant and some are Catholic, and wars among the various states of the Empire are as common as those in which they join together to fight an external foe. Many of the states of the Empire are members of the Grand Alliance against France, and several are also participating in the Holy League fighting against the Ottoman Turks.

Witch Hunters are often welcome in the area around the Schwarzwald, or Black Forest, where many malevolent fairies and foul beasts are known to dwell. There has also lately been some demand for Witch Hunters in the land known as Transylvania, which has owed fealty to the Archduke of Austria since being liberated from the Ottoman Empire. The region has a long and bloody history of particularly cruel rulers, and is apparently plagued with a wide variety of monsters, demons, and ghosts as a result.

North of the Holy Roman Empire is the Empire of Sweden, a proudly Lutheran nation which, under the reign of King Karl XI, has finally begun to emerge from barbarism (and which has finally chosen to oppose Louis XIV, after spending many years as a French puppet-state). Indeed, the remarkable positive changes wrought in Sweden under King Karl's reign have led some to believe that he must be receiving some manner of supernatural aid, whether from God or from a darker power. There is no known evidence either way, but the matter is worth investigating. The Kingdom of Denmark-Norway lies next to Sweden, and often fights with its neighbor over the possession of some frozen borderland or other.

Farther east lie the lands of Poland, or more properly the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth, whose King Jan III Sobieski is the brilliant general responsible for relieving the Siege of Vienna and driving the Ottoman Turks back for the first time in many years. The Commonwealth is one of the few lands where Catholics and Protestants live together in relative peace, and even Jews are welcome there.

North and east of the Commonwealth are the large and backwards lands of Muscovy, which the residents call Rossiya. Crude and uncivilized, their people are nonetheless fierce warriors, and have put aside their enmity with Poland to help drive the Ottomans from Europe. Their Eastern Orthodox Church is no more than a splinter of Catholicism which worships a different Pope than the Roman Catholic Papists, and which is itself splintering into factions now. Witches and dangerous animals plague the countryside.

The heathen Turks of the Ottoman Empire still control much of eastern Europe, though the Holy League has finally begun to drive them back. Their navy and the pirates they support are a constant threat in the

eastern Mediterranean Sea, and their Janissary infantry combines with the barbaric cavalry of the Crimean Khanate to be a danger to all Christendom. Still, the Holy League fights with God on its side, and with luck, will reclaim Constantinople from its heathen occupiers in my lifetime. The Turkish Empire is, by all reports, as plagued by demons, witches, and monsters as any land in Christendom, and a Witch Hunter who can stand to travel among the Turks for any length of time will doubtless find many foes against which to test his mettle.

If we then proceed westward along the Mediterranean from the lands of the Ottomans, we next encounter the Italian peninsula. On its southern end, we find the Kingdom of Naples, which is under Spanish rule, as are the islands of Sicily and Sardinia. Central Italy is held by the forces of the Antichrist, known to Papists as the Pope. Northward, there is a jumble of smaller Papist states; the Republic of Venice and the Duchies of Mantua, Modena, Parma, Savoy, and Tuscany are more or less independent, while the Duchy of Milan and the Republic of Genoa are under Spanish control. Witch Hunters in Tuscany may find themselves tangled up in the affairs of the waning (but still powerful) Medici family, who are known to utilize any means, fair or foul, to achieve their ends. There are also reports that the Venetian soldiers who are fighting the Turks in Greece have uncovered some ancient magickal artifacts in the ruins of Athens, and are seeking “experts” – by which they mean witches or Satanists – to help use them in their failing war efforts. Farther north still are the lands of the Swiss Confederacy, who never fight in wars of their own, but happily send their well-trained soldiers to fight for anyone who can meet their price.

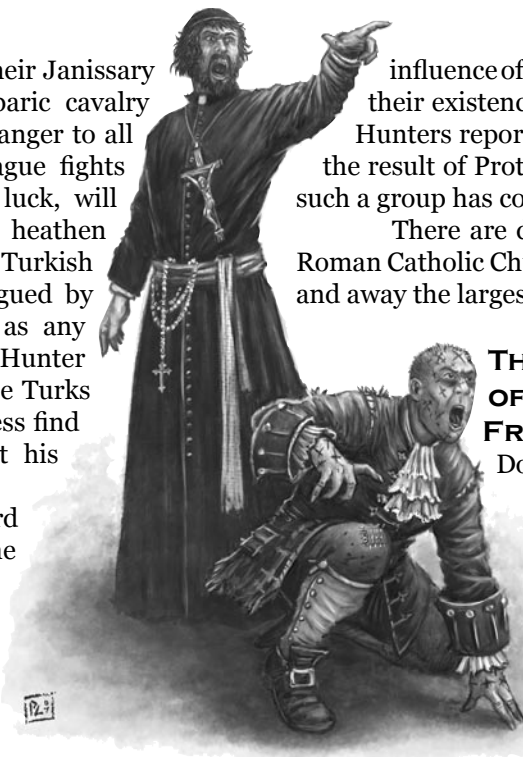
ROMAN CATHOLIC CHURCH

The largest single Christian denomination is the Roman Catholic Church. Centered on Rome, where the Pope leads the Church as the direct spiritual successor to the apostle Peter, Roman Catholicism dominates France and Spain and their colonies, though this common religion should not imply political unity. At present, the Pope, who wields a substantial amount of temporal power in addition to his religious leadership, is actively opposing King Louis XIV of France in his efforts to dominate Europe.

The Catholic Church officially denies the existence of Witch Hunters, and thus has no formal organizations of Witch Hunters within itself. Catholic Witch Hunters, therefore, find themselves in an awkward position. Most continue fighting evil as best they can without any formal recognition or support from the Church; others retreat into monastic life, trying to eliminate the “sinful”

influence of their supernatural abilities by denying their existence. Rumors of a secret Order of Witch Hunters reporting directly to the Pope are probably the result of Protestant propaganda, as no evidence of such a group has come to light.

There are dozens of monastic orders within the Roman Catholic Church, but the three listed below are far and away the largest and most influential.



THE DOMINICANS (THE ORDER OF PREACHERS; THE BLACK FRIARS)

Dominican monks, or Black Friars (so called due to their traditional black cloaks), are a numerous and growing order. To the public at large, they are renowned for their learning and theological skills, and are known for being heavily involved in the Spanish Inquisition. However, the methods they use to seek out agents of the Adversary, though cunning, can skirt the edge of heresy. The Black Friars, like most Catholic orders, are always on the watch for witches and other servants of evil. When they catch such sinners, however, the Dominicans often give them a choice. They can be burned at the stake like the heretics they are – facing an excruciating death followed by an eternity in Hell – or they can attempt to redeem themselves in the eyes of the Church, and thus in the eyes of God, by serving the Dominicans as a sort of human bloodhound. These poor souls, known as the Black Hounds, use their Infernal powers and knowledge of Satanic practices to literally “sniff out” hotbeds of evil activity. In theory, these efforts will be enough to redeem their souls; in practice, the Hounds often point their Dominican “handlers” at personal enemies, innocent civilians, or Witch Hunters.

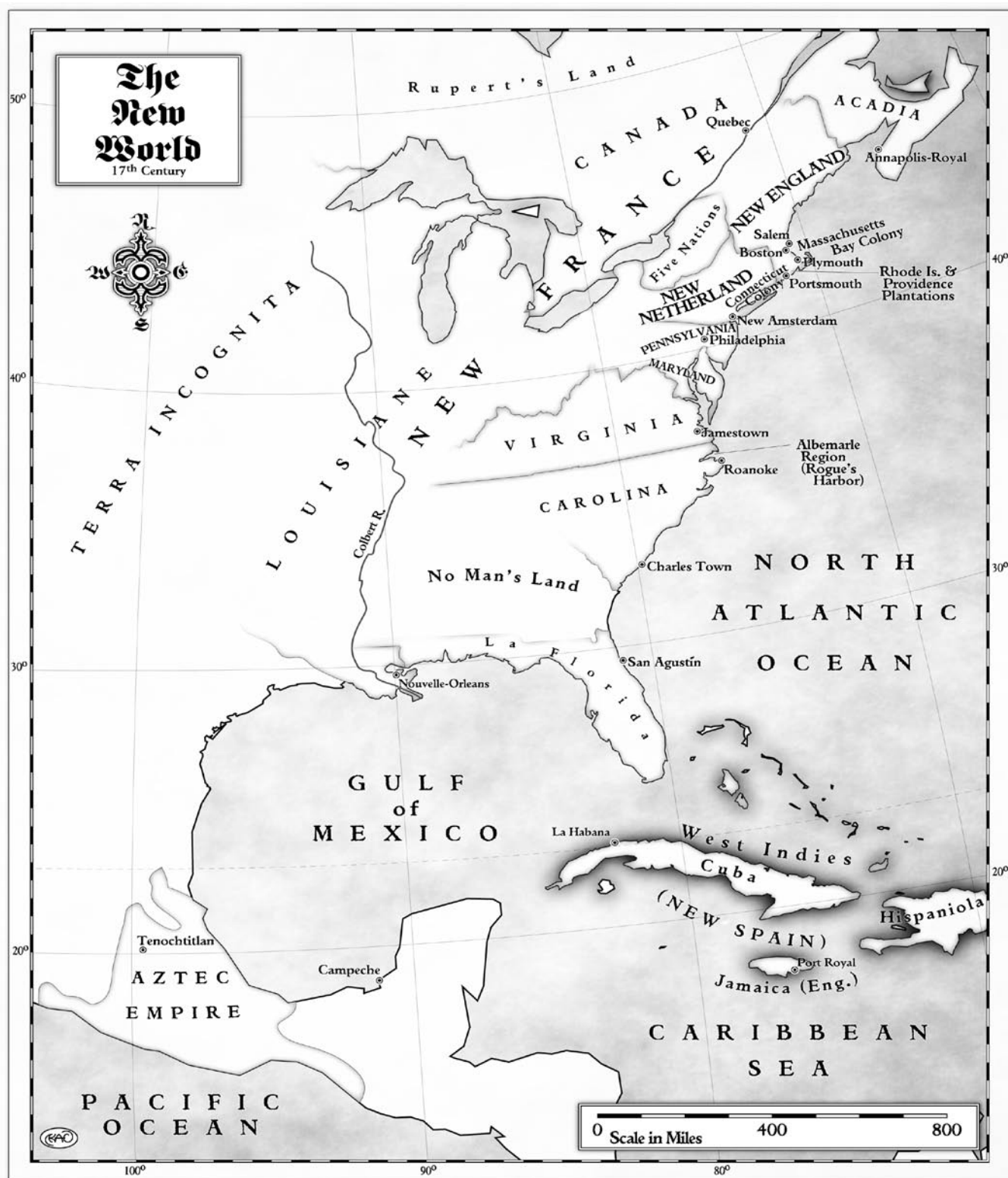
THE FRANCISCANS (THE ORDER OF FRIARS MINOR; THE GRAY FRIARS)

The Franciscan order, followers of St. Francis of Assisi, is devoted to poverty and missionary work, and is particularly active in Spain and its colonies. Franciscans do not own any property, either individually or collectively. Like the other Catholic orders, they officially have no truck with Witch Hunters. However, many Witch Hunters know that the Franciscans will often turn a blind eye to their presence, even going so far as to help a fugitive Witch Hunter hide from Dominican or Jesuit pursuers. The Franciscans, though faithful to the Church and the Pope, apparently feel that Witch Hunters are being unjustly persecuted by other factions of the Church, and are unwilling to assist the rest of the Church in their efforts to punish or kill those who are, in their own way, doing God’s work.

THE JESUITS (THE SOCIETY OF JESUS; SOLDIERS OF CHRIST)

The Jesuits are an order in direct service to the Pope. They are among the most widespread evangelists of the Catholic Church, and can be found in virtually every Catholic colony, as well as in many foreign nations, attempting to spread the Catholic faith. As their nickname (the Soldiers of Christ) implies, they are also rather militant in their outlook, and often take direct and violent action against

enemies of the Church – including, in many cases, Witch Hunters. They are renowned linguists, and spend a great deal of time and effort learning and documenting the languages of various Indian tribes and other foreign peoples; while this certainly helps in their professed efforts to convert these heathens to Catholicism, it is also extremely useful in their efforts to gather information about enemies of the Church wherever they may be found.



THE NEW WORLD

Having dispensed with our all too brief overview of Christendom, we must turn now to the New World, that vast land rich in both Opportunity and Danger for those souls brave or desperate enough to make their way thither. While the land is rich and fertile, producing bountiful crops and valuable animals, it is also crowded with dangerous beasts and heathen natives, not all of whom are peaceable. And if the lands of Christendom, dotted with countless churches and cathedrals, are plagued by servants of the Adversary, how much more so are the savage and unexplored lands of the New World? Far more so than in Christendom, here the traveller – and particularly the Witch Hunter – must always travel with care, preferably not alone, and well-armed.

Coin, it should be noted, is rare and precious throughout the New World, and other media of exchange are generally used in lieu of proper money. Barter, of course, is common every-where, but some standards have gradually begun to develop. In and near New Amsterdam, the wampum or seawam bead-money of the Five Nations is commonly used, and beaver pelts are standard “coins” in New France and New England. Farther south, tobacco is the most common medium of exchange in Virginia, Maryland, and the Carolinas, and in the West Indies as well. However, the Spanish have gradually accumulated enough captured Aztec gold and silver to open a Mint in San Juan, and these coins have gradually started to find their way into the mainland colonies of Spain, England, and even Portugal.

The first section below, regarding the lands of New England, I have penned myself, having no small degree of familiarity with the region.

NEW ENGLAND

The population of New England may have come from Old England, but the average colonial resident could hardly be more different than the average resident of London. England’s population is primarily comprised of Anglicans, while many regard as thinly disguised Papists, differing only in that they are subservient to a king rather than the Pope. On the other hand, the people of New England are predominantly members of the various Reformed churches, which less godly folk refer to as Puritan. As a result, the men and women of New England tend to be harder working, better educated, and generally more obedient to God’s Word than those in the nation which they left behind. Morality and clean living have brought great prosperity and peace to this land, and the inhabitants of England would do well to observe the benefits which it has brought us and emulate the behaviour which has brought those benefits about.

To discuss the specific and distinct colonies which comprise New England, let us travel north along the coast from New Netherland. The first land we reach is the **Connecticut Colony**, which claims perhaps seventy-five miles of coastline and the eastern half of Long Island. It is, by and large, a quiet farming colony, although the

Connecticut River valley has of late been plagued by a series of unsettling incidents. The valley is home to a number of horse-breeding farms, and a number of horses were drowned in the sudden floods occasioned by the spring thaw of 1688. Since that time, numerous travellers in the area have reported being stalked, or even ridden down, by water-logged horses with dull, staring eyes and the stench of stagnant water upon them. Worse yet, several such travellers have disappeared in the region, and residents of outlying farms have lately seen strange figures on horseback peering at them before vanishing silently into the morning mists. No attacks have yet been reported, but those who have encountered these phantom riders describe a clear sense of malice almost palpably radiating from them.

East of Connecticut we find the conjoined colonies of **Rhode Island and New Providence Plantations**, which are home to many curious folk. Founded by a Baptist minister who felt himself and his congregation persecuted in the Massachusetts Bay Colony, New Providence Plantations is a haven for those religious exiles for who even the rest of New England is too restrictive. The combined colony’s Charter grants religious freedom to all Christians of any denomination and to Jews as well. The colony’s three major towns (Newport, New Providence, and Rochester) are all ports, and all of them do a great deal of trade with the West Indies (and, no doubt, a good deal of illegal trade with New Netherland).

Portsmouth, located on the northern tip of Rhode Island itself, was at one time the fourth major port in the colony, but it has lately gone into a strange and somewhat disturbing decline. It has always been a town where particularly esoteric religious practices were accepted; many small churches dotted the town, some home to sects with only a few worshippers, and most residents tended to keep their religious beliefs to themselves. Strangers were generally regarded with suspicion, and while Portsmouth’s own merchants were relatively successful traders, outsiders found the town’s markets both unfriendly and unprofitable. Over the past few years, traders visiting Portsmouth have found the population to be smaller and more sullen with each trip, and outbound trade from the town has virtually stopped. Those few visitors who have managed to get any explanation out of the reticent people of Portsmouth report that the locals attribute their troubles to the depredations of wolves. This seems unlikely, however, since Rhode Island is one of the few parts of New England where wolves do not live. The true explanation for the town’s decline is still a mystery at the time of this writing.

Continuing our trip north- and eastward, we next come to the largest and most populous colony in New England, the **Massachusetts Bay Colony**, with nearly fifty thousand souls dwelling therein. The colony extends from the edge of Connecticut Colony and Rhode Island well north, including the former Provinces of New Hampshire and Maine, cold and sparsely-populated lands which mainly serve as battle-grounds between New

NEW ENGLAND — THE FACTS

Despite the best efforts of James II, the erstwhile King of England, to combine all of the English colonial lands between New Netherland and New France into a single Dominion, these colonies were, and remain, distinct entities. They do, however, have many things in common. They are all predominantly Puritan in religion, and their populations tend to be highly literate and relatively well-educated as a result; the Protestant sects tend to stress personal reading and contemplation of the Bible, and primary education is mandatory in almost all of the New England colonies. New Englanders also tend to be hard-working and serious-minded, and have a general disdain for what they see as England's excess of beggars, drunkards, swindlers, prostitutes and thieves.

The colonies are also unified by the heavy tax burden imposed by the Royal Customs Agents. In an effort to maximize England's income, the Crown has decreed that all trade to or from the colonies must pass through London before traveling to its destination, even if that destination is as close as New Amsterdam. Naturally, this means that smuggling is extremely common in New England.

The population of New England is almost exclusively white and Protestant; a small number of black slaves and servants (less than 1% of the population) can be found in the homes of the well-to-do, however.

Boston is the largest English-speaking city in the New World. Harvard College, the only college on the continent, is a scant few miles away in the town of Cambridge. Harvard was founded to ensure that New England's Reformed churches would have a steady supply of educated ministers, and graduates a dozen or so students per year. While Boston is a fairly religious town, D.G. is wrong to think that it enjoys some sort of divine protection. In fact, Boston's role as the religious center of New England makes it a primary target for servants of the Adversary, though the eyes of many watchful Puritans make it necessary for such enemies to use more subtle methods than they might otherwise. Two of the three great fires that have damaged Boston over the past decade have resulted directly from demonic activity, while the third was caused by an overzealous Witch Hunter's attempt to destroy a coven of witches operating in a house on Tremount Street, near the town's burying ground.

RELIGION

The New England colonies are predominantly populated by members of various Reformed or "Godly" faiths, Christian Protestant churches who have left England to practice their religions away from what they see as the corruption of the Anglican and Catholic faiths. Their opponents tend to collectively label these sects as "Puritans" — a name to which most of the Godly object — but the churches are more diverse than this blanket term implies, and each colony tends to attract certain

specific faiths as like-minded souls cluster together. All of them, however, tend to be rigorous, stern, and strict, with Puritan magistrates as likely to punish a villager for Sabbath-breaking as for theft.

Rhode Island and New Providence Plantations offers much more religious tolerance than most of the New England colonies. In addition to a wide variety of "fringe" Puritan churches, a number of Quakers have also settled in the area, and there is also a significant Jewish minority in the town of Newport. The reason for this expansive tolerance was due, in part, to the dark fate that befell the original colonial town of Providence when it was swallowed whole by a Hellpoint. The few residents that managed to survive were taken in by their sister colonies and given food and shelter. Later, those refugees that wished to try their luck again and reestablish the old colony were given material, generous loans and the manpower necessary to put New Providence back on the map. "Helped by all and helpful to all" is a motto the good people of New Providence have taken to heart.

At the other extreme, the Puritans of the Massachusetts Bay Colony are extremely unwelcoming to members of other faiths; a number of Quakers, in particular, have been hanged in Boston for repeatedly violating the local laws prohibiting them from preaching their beliefs. However, an Anglican church, the King's Chapel, has recently been built on the edge of Boston's main burying ground, since no one would sell any land to a non-Puritan church. The city Council has permitted this church to exist despite the town's strongly Puritan mindset, perhaps hoping that the godly beliefs of the local residents will be a good influence on the Anglicans, and potentially even helping purify the parent church back in England.

WITCH HUNTERS

Over the last century or so, New England has probably produced more Witch Hunters than any other region of comparable size. The Puritan virtues of hard work, personal responsibility, and a desire to obey God's wishes lend themselves almost perfectly to the peculiar mindset required of a Witch Hunter. As a result, Witch Hunters from a Protestant tradition are fairly readily accepted in New England, although they are not accorded any particular prestige because of their nature. Indeed, they are held to the same high moral standards that all New Englanders are expected to follow, and are just as likely to be scorned or punished for any perceived moral weaknesses as any other colonist.

Witch Hunters from non-Protestant backgrounds, on the other hand, are likely to be very carefully scrutinized while in New England. Anglicans and Roman Catholics, in particular, will find themselves regarded with distaste, if not open hostility.

INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS

The New England colonies are engaged in an ongoing low-level conflict with New France; the English settlers, particularly those on the northern and western edges of the colonies, are constantly at risk of attack from the French and their Algonquin allies. Despite King James' efforts to keep his subjects from attacking the French, the conflict continued throughout his reign; now that King William is on the English throne, efforts to wipe the hated French off the continent are expected to redouble.

There are still some Indian attacks not initiated by the French, though these have been rare since the end of King Phillip's War in 1676. "King Phillip" was the English nickname for Metacomet, leader of the Wampanoag Indians, who led his people in a series of devastating assaults against the people of New England, killing some six hundred colonists. Ultimately, the Wampanoag were defeated and effectively destroyed as a tribe, and no major Indian incursions have afflicted the colonists since. However, the people of New England have not forgotten the massacres, and they do not think highly of Indians in general. The main exception to this rule are the colonists of Connecticut, who have developed a strong alliance with the Mohegan tribe since the Mohegans helped defeat the Wampanoag in King Phillip's War.

England and New France. Farms are plentiful throughout the Colony, but most of the men of Massachusetts make their living from the sea. Cod-fishing is a common and prosperous trade in the waters off Massachusetts, and the sailors of Nan-Tucket Island have begun hunting whales with increasing success. Ship-building is also a prominent trade here, particularly in Boston, and Massachusetts merchants have developed a formidable reputation in the ports of the West Indies.

Boston, at the mouth of the Charles River, is the New World's wealthiest town, busiest harbour, and most productive ship-building centre, and its water-front is packed with wharves and warehouses. Fire presents a constant threat in Boston, and large portions of the city have burned three times in the past thirteen years. Despite ordinances requiring all new buildings to be made of brick or stone, Boston is still a predominantly wooden city. Thankfully, this seems to be the only major threat to Boston's peace and prosperity; the faith and labour of the residents seems to be more than enough to ward off both the wrath of God and the depredations of the Adversary. Some fifteen miles to the north is the port of Salem, a smaller but no less prosperous port. Several Witch Hunters of my acquaintance have reported being drawn to Salem as though there were some enemy to fight there, but none have been able to uncover any signs of the Adversary at work in the peaceful town. Still, I believe that there is likely to be some great evil in Salem ere long, and would recommend that Witch Hunters in New England keep a close eye on the area.

The last of the New England colonies, located some thirty-five miles south of Boston, is the small **Plymouth Colony**, now completely surrounded by the lands of the Massachusetts Bay Colony. Settled in 1620, it is the oldest colony in New England, and now contains some seven thousand residents. For the last dozen years or so, the towns of Plymouth have been plagued by disease, fire, storm, strange deaths, and misfortunes of all kinds. Several witnesses report seeing what appear to be the spirits of Indians near the scenes of these disasters, and one of the spirits reportedly spoke about vengeance for the desecration of his grave. The colony's Governor, Charles Hinckley, has let it be known that any Witch Hunter capable of placating or driving off these vengeful ghosts will be richly rewarded.

In the interests of completeness, I will also venture outside New England to mention **Rupert's Land**, which is the territory claimed by the Hudson's Bay Company around that far northern Bay. It is a cold and miserable land, consisting mainly of a few trading posts at the mouths of rivers which feed the Bay, where peaceful Indians exchange their furs for metal tools and alcohol. The French claim exclusive right over these lands and the furs gained there from, but the HBC will not yield, and the fights between the competing fur companies are even fiercer than those between New England and New France.

NEW NETHERLAND by E.B. of New Amsterdam

The first colonists the Dutch West India Company brought to New Netherland, some sixty years ago, were not Dutch, but rather Walloons from the Spanish Netherlands. This began a tradition which has continued on to this day; while in theory we live in a colony of the United Provinces, the land is so crowded with Englishmen, Frenchmen, Swedes, Scots, Finns, Germans, and others that it sometimes seems difficult to find a genuine Dutchman in "our" land. The current Governor, Jeremias Schuyler, seems content with this state of affairs, so long as all of these divers residents pay their taxes.

Travellers should be aware that women in New Netherland have considerably more freedom and latitude than is true in Christendom, even considering the great improvement in women's rights since the days of the Black Death. Women in the colony may own property and manage businesses in their own rights, and can bring court proceedings on their own behalf. Many Dutchwomen also prepare contracts before marrying, such that their belongings remain their own rather than being given to their husband.

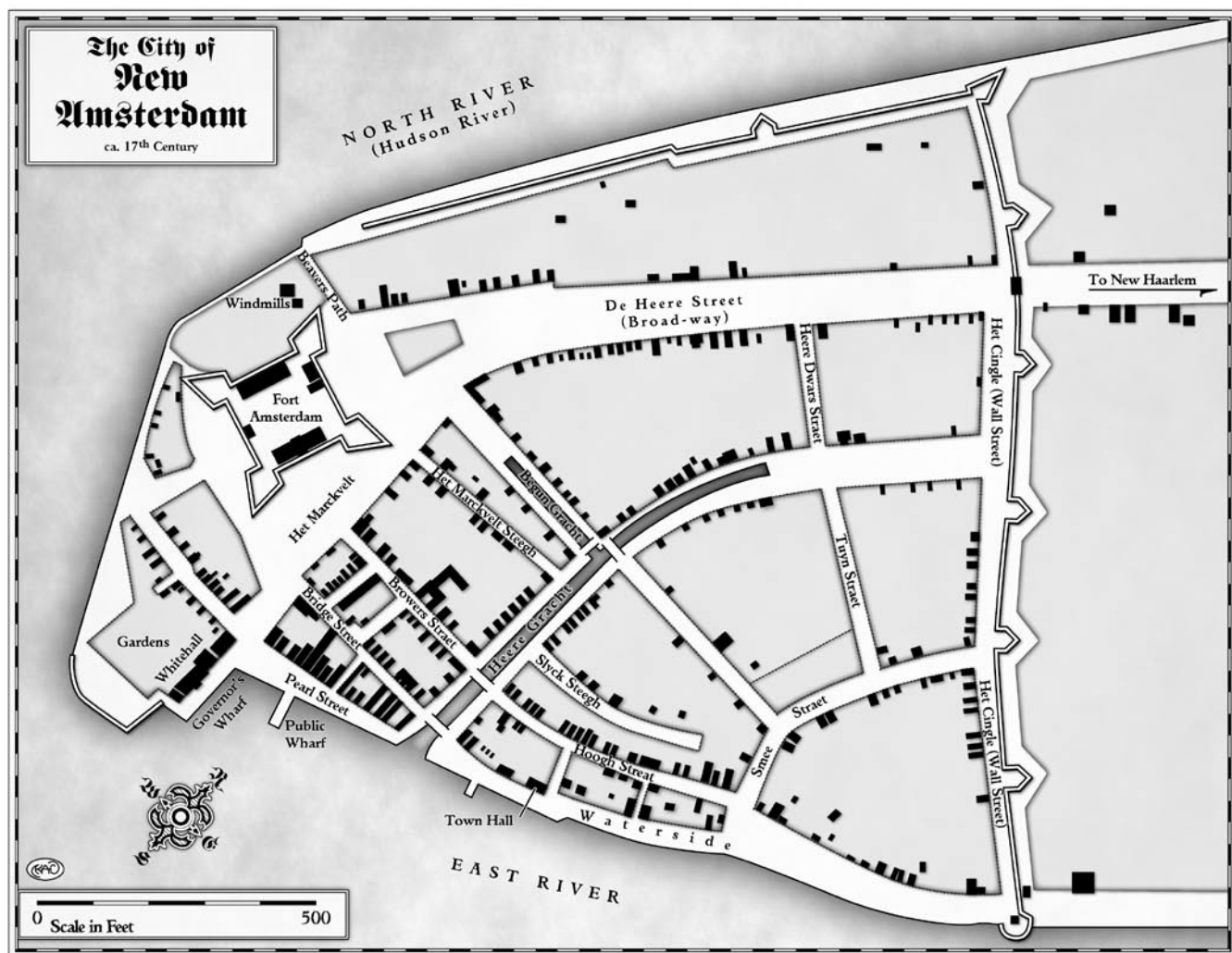
The colony was built to take advantage of the fur trade along the North River, but these rough trappers and traders soon needed a proper town to support them. The WIC was anxious to attract settlers to make the colony self-sufficient, and chartered many settlements, both Dutch and English, along the river and on Long Island. (The western half of Long Island, nearer New Amsterdam,

is controlled by the Dutch, while the eastern half is part of the English colony of Connecticut.) These settlements were granted to *patroons*, who have the right to own and rule their granted lands in exchange for recruiting further settlers. In order to gather enough settlers, the patroons often had to entice folk from many lands, leading to the hodge-podge of people and languages we find in New Netherland today.

The farmers living on these lands today raise the grains, vegetables, and dairy cattle that provide much of the local sustenance. Many of the farmers in these villages have had to flee behind the walls of New Amsterdam for safety more than once, as many of the local Indians proved violently hostile, despite the colonists' legitimate claim to their lands. Gradually, these natives were pushed back, and now most of the settlements along the North River are relatively safe from Indian attack, though there are occasional skirmishes with the French or the Algonquin who serve them. The absence of hostile Indians does not make these settlements safe, however; while the lands nearest the river are generally cultivated and relatively civilized, things lurk in the deeper woods which few of them have seen and survived. Livestock, and even children, occasionally disappear from outlying farms, and these disappearances are usually blamed on Indians or perhaps

wolves. I and several other Witch Hunters investigated one of these disappearances, however, and concluded that no human or ordinary animal was responsible.

We followed the tracks of the victim and the bizarre, hoof-like prints of her captors for an entire day, deep into the woods of western New Netherland and then still further, into the no-man's-land bordering New France. When the sun set, we were many miles from the nearest settlement and had no idea how far we still had to travel to find our prey. We set watches and made camp for the night, intending to get an early start in the morning. The midnight watch was taken by John Willett, an experienced Witch Hunter with the best night vision I have ever known a man to possess. I am a light sleeper, but did not wake until the dawn, when I immediately realized that John had not awakened me at the end of his watch as we had agreed. He was, in fact, nowhere to be seen around the camp. My companions and I made a quick search of the area, and found no sign of him until we returned to camp, at which point we found John's severed head resting on the ground in the exact spot where I had been sleeping mere minutes before. It had not been there when I awoke. Faced with a swift and silent killer who could move unseen through a camp of armed and watchful men, we felt we had no choice but to return to civilization. I have



not been back to the area since, though I still see John's reproachful gaze in my dreams.

To return to our original topic, there are also several other settlements around the Delaware Bay to the south, centred on the various forts built to protect Dutch shipping in the area; these are not nearly so prosperous as those nearer New Amsterdam. The fur trade, once enormously profitable, has largely been taken over by the French to the northwest, and New Amsterdam, like the city from which it draws its name, now exists primarily as a centre for trade, rather than a producer of any one good.

NEW AMSTERDAM

New Amsterdam was originally founded by the Dutch West India Company to take advantage of a splendid natural harbour, to reap the bounties of the fur trade, and to house a fortress controlling the entrance to the wide and easily navigable North River – or perhaps I should say the Hudson River, to appease my English readers. After all, there are now nearly as many Englishmen, and Frenchmen, and Jews, and Negroes, and what-have-you dwelling in New Amsterdam as there are Dutchmen, so that it hardly seems fit to call this a Dutch colony at all – but I am rambling, and thus doing a disservice to my readers. Forgive me, Reader, and let me begin again.

As I said, New Netherland was founded by the WIC to protect the mouth of the North and East Rivers, and to gather and ship the furs being harvested throughout New Netherland. Fort Amsterdam, at the southern tip of Manhattan Island, is the core around which the city grew, though it has spent most of its life in an egregious state of disrepair. Neither the Fort, nor the Wall marking the northern bound of New Amsterdam, provided much resistance to the English when they seized the area in 1664, nor to the Dutch when we reclaimed it in 1673. Still, the fort contains the Governor's house and the Dutch Reformed Church and is still the political centre of the city. Let there be no mistake; the WIC is the true power in New Amsterdam, and anyone who arouses the Company's ire will find their stay in the city most unpleasant. New Amsterdam, and indeed all of New Netherland, represents a mechanism for funnelling profits to the West India Company; if you forget all else that I tell you about the city, remember this.

The various districts of the city have each developed their own character, and to make this guide somewhat more useful for potential travellers, I will here describe each of them in turn. In general, it can be said that the city, while not lacking in population, shows little of the sophistication one is accustomed to in the cities of Christendom. The streets are of bare earth, though some lack-lustre attempts have been made to cobble some of the more important ones, and cattle wander freely through the streets. Few buildings are more than three stories tall, and the streets are not lamp-lit save for the green-paned lanterns carried by the Rattle Watch at night.

The Rattle Watch – named for the loud wooden

rattles they carry to alert citizens of crime or fire – patrols the streets of New Amsterdam in groups of six, from nine o'clock at night until the morning drum-beat sounds from the fortress at four o'clock. Every hour through the night, they sound their rattles and call out the hour, so that any wakeful citizens should know that all is well within the Wall. At least, that is the official explanation for their presence; the truth is somewhat darker. While the Rattle Watch does keep watch for burglars, smugglers, and fire-raisers, they also seek out any signs of disobedience to the WIC. While the Rattle Watch generally does no more than peer through burghers' windows, they are authorized to enter any building in the colony without the owner's permission, and often abuse this privilege. This has led to them being dubbed the "Prowlers" – though never where they can hear it – and they are generally resented by much of the populace. This resentment is subdued, however, since, as stated earlier, those who arouse the ire of the WIC generally regret it.

Witch Hunters, in particular, should be aware that the Rattle Watch seeks out any signs of supernatural activity as well. They should not, however, be regarded as allies in the fight against the Adversary; while the Rattle Watch does not permit supernatural dangers to threaten the population of New Amsterdam, they do seem curiously reluctant to see such creatures destroyed. Instead, they often seek to capture or imprison the various demons, Satanists, or beasts which they encounter, bringing them back to Fort Amsterdam for purposes as yet unknown. Witch Hunters or other citizens who interfere with this process often find their homes ransacked by the Rattle Watch at a minimum, and sometimes disappear entirely.

It should be noted that the city's diversity, to which I have already alluded, makes communication somewhat more difficult than it might otherwise be. Nearly two dozen languages, European and Indian alike, are regularly spoken within New Amsterdam, and not all the residents speak Dutch, English, or French. One who is fluent in several languages may earn a comfortable living as a translator, keeping business transactions and contracts clear to all parties.

The southern end of the city is home to Fort Amsterdam, as mentioned earlier, and the WIC's two wind-powered sawmills are on the west side of the fort, along the North River. Pearl Street, the southernmost street in the town, is a busy commercial street, home to the WIC weighing-house, packing-house, numerous warehouses, and various taverns and other shops. These Pearl Street shops are among the only places in the New World where fine finished goods from Europe can be obtained. The White-Hall, a mansion built by former governor Stuyvesant, is also a dominant part of the skyline here; the home, and its expansive gardens, are now owned by a wealthy but reclusive Englishman named John Howell, about whom little is known but much is rumoured. 'Tis said that Howell is himself a witch of no mean skill, though he has remained curiously unmolested by the Rattle Watch.

NEW NETHERLAND – THE FACTS

As E.B. states, it is essential to realize that the Dutch West India Company (WIC) completely dominates and controls all aspects of life in New Amsterdam, and New Netherland in general. The colony does not belong to the Dutch Republic, but rather to the privately owned Company; the Company-appointed official commonly referred to as the Governor is officially the Director-General, and the colony is focused on profit above all else. Most of the trade in and out of the colony consists of WIC goods being transported on WIC ships, and any other trade is closely monitored and heavily taxed by Company agents. The Rattle Watch is effectively the Company's private police force. Members of the Watch are relentless, and often brutal, in performing their duties and the staccato echoes of their rattles – believed to be a coded form of communication among Watchmen – are becoming a feared sound in the darkened streets of New Amsterdam.

While the colony of New Netherland officially covers a large swath of area – all of modern New York State, plus Connecticut, New Jersey, Delaware, and parts of Maryland and Massachusetts – the majority of that area is unoccupied by Europeans. The Dutch settlements are primarily clustered on western Long Island and along the North (Hudson) River, from New Amsterdam itself up to Fort Orange and Schenectady. There are also a few scattered forts and trading posts near the mouth of the Delaware River, and various small clusters of Scotch, Swedish and Finnish settlers in what is now New Jersey. Outside this area, the region labeled on maps as New Netherland effectively remains in the hands of various Indian tribes, at least until the Dutch take steps to displace them further. Until the colony begins to grow somewhat faster than it has to date, that does not seem likely to take place very soon. There are currently perhaps twenty thousand people living in New Netherland, about four thousand of whom dwell in New Amsterdam.

New Amsterdam is a prominent trading center for North America, the West Indies, and Europe. In addition to its excellent harbor, New Amsterdam also has the benefit of lying between the two major English colonial clusters, New England to the north and Maryland, Virginia, and Carolina to the south. Despite pressure from the English crown to keep their trade

goods in English hands, many merchant sailors from Boston are more than happy to stop in New Amsterdam to buy or sell their goods rather than making the long journey to London. More than a few pirates prey upon shipping in the area, no matter whose flag it bears; however, both Dutch and English colonies desire to keep this practice suppressed, and few pirates remain active in these waters for long. Most are either captured or sunk by Dutch or English navy patrols, and the remainder generally leave for easier pickings in the West Indies after a few close calls.

Land travel between the northern and southern English colonies is less common, since so much of the area is still wild. The trip from Boston to New Amsterdam is relatively safe thanks to the Boston Post Road, a holdover from the English occupation which has been kept up by the Dutch because it facilitates trade. While rarely patrolled, the road is kept clear of debris and generally has few problems with bandits (unless you count the Dutch tax collectors, who delight in gathering tariffs from English travelers at border points). South of New Amsterdam, the journey is considerably more dangerous; highwaymen, Indians, and wild animals pose a very real threat to those few travelers who go this way on land. There has been talk of extending the Post Road south to the mouth of the Delaware, but this has so far been seen as a significant expense which offers little potential return.

RELIGION

Like the Netherlands themselves, New Netherland is far more tolerant of differing cultures and religions than most New World colonies. Catholics, Anglicans, Huguenots, Puritans, Jews, and many other groups coexist peacefully throughout the colony; while friction between those of differing beliefs is inevitable, it rarely escalates to the point of violence or other crime. Indeed, the Anglicans and Catholics attend the same church, since the Governors and Mayors have so far been unwilling to permit an exclusively Catholic church to be built in New Amsterdam. Naturally, this has led to some spirited discussions regarding how the church should be managed, to say the least. Most members of the population are Protestants of one sort or another, with Dutch Calvinists forming the majority, though not by much.

The region just north of White-Hall is home to many of the town's merchants; Bridge Street and Waterside, in particular, are home to the wealthiest residents of New Amsterdam, with the Dutch more prevalent on Bridge Street and the British on Waterside (which they call Dock Street). The Commodities Exchange and the fish-market can also be found in this area, along the East River. This district has lately been the site of a curious series of deaths; two sea-captains and a young doctor have been found dead in their homes, blue and cold as though they had frozen to death, even though the

nights during which they died were relatively warm for the season. Troubled citizens have asked the Governor for assistance, but no-one can clearly state what they expect him to do.

Heading north from Fort Amsterdam along the western side of the island is the wide avenue of De Heere Straet; the English, during their occupation, called it Broad-way, which name has unfortunately persisted. On and around that street, by whatever name you wish to call it, dwell many of New Amsterdam's common craftsmen. Carpenters, shoe-makers, brick-makers, and

WITCH HUNTERS

Like many other travelers, Witch Hunters find New Amsterdam to be a convenient central base of operations. The city itself provides excellent opportunities to obtain supplies and gather news from many lands, and the constant influx of sailing vessels makes travel to any New World settlement easy – at least, as easy as long-distance travel gets in the seventeenth century. The ethnic and religious diversity of New Amsterdam also makes it relatively easy for Witch Hunters to go about their business without attracting too much attention, provided they don't do anything which too obviously indicates their nature or intent.

The Rattle Watch is believed to contain at least one Witch Hunter among its ranks, using the authority of the Watch to help investigate potential servants of the Adversary. Per instructions from the WIC, however, the Rattle Watch goes to great lengths to capture such foes alive, taking them back to Fort Amsterdam to be imprisoned. Most of the local population knows nothing of this, and there would likely be a great uproar were they to learn of it. No one outside the highest ranks of the WIC knows exactly what fate awaits these captives, though many Witch Hunters are naturally extremely curious about the matter.

Beyond New Amsterdam, the rest of New Netherland is much like the other New World colonies. Small settlements of people try to eke out a living on the wild edges of an unknown continent, ever fearful of attacks by Indians, foreigners, wild animals, or worse things that lurk in the darkness beneath the trees. In such places, Witch Hunters are often treated with suspicion, but are also more than welcome when they are able to keep evil at bay.

INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS

Skirmishes with New France are common, particularly in the no-man's-land near Lac du Saint-Sacrement. These rarely involve any formal military operations; usually, they consist of small-scale fights between groups of Dutch and French fur trappers. Occasionally, the local Indian tribes are involved as well, with the Five Nations generally siding with the Dutch and English in opposition to the Algonquin and Wendat, who usually support the French. Now that William of Orange rules England as well as the Netherlands, many local residents believe that there will be a significant joint effort by New Englanders and New Netherlanders to drive the French colonists farther north.

Apart from a disastrous conflict with the Mohawks and Algonquin in the 1640s, the settlers of New Netherland have generally maintained good relations with the various Indian tribes living in the area, particularly the Five Nations. Unlike the nearby French and English colonists, the Dutch have made no concerted effort to convert the Indians to Christianity, relying instead on mutually beneficial trade agreements. Increasingly, however, the colonists have been exerting an unfair advantage in these trades by mass-producing seawam, the beaded belts used as currency by the Indians of the Five Nations – and by the colonists of New Netherland as well. The Company produces seawam in far greater amounts than the Indians can, and uses it to pay employees' wages, purchase goods, and fulfill bounties. This is leading to increasing inflation in the colony, which is far more harmful to individual traders and Indians than to the WIC, which controls the majority of the supply.

Among the trade goods the Five Nations have obtained in these trades are muskets and gunpowder, which they have used to great effect against the Algonquin, the Wendat, and – much to the delight of Dutch colonists – the French.

not a few ship's-masters live here, and it is also home to the town's Lutheran church. Just south of the North Wall, the orchard and gardens of the WIC occupy a goodly portion of the west side of the street. The street continues to and through the Wall – the main gate into the town is located here – and wends its way to the northern end of Manhattan, and is the main route by which travellers reach Greenwich, New Haarlem, and the other villages on the island, as well as many of the *patroons'* large plantations along the East River.

The north-centre of the city is where the poorest residents live. The so-called Heere Gracht, or Gentlemen's Canal, extends from the East River into this region, but only the most generous of souls could call this shallow ditch a Canal, or those around it Gentlemen. When the tides are high, flat boats can be used to bring goods from the east-side piers into this neighbourhood for sale; the rest of the time, it serves no use except as a place for waste disposal and, subsequently, the source of a foul stench.

Several bridges over the canal allow for cattle, wagons, and pedestrians to cross without dampening or befouling themselves. The businesses here tend to be taverns and breweries. A community of Jews, mostly Spanish and Portuguese by birth, has settled in this area; they have lately been agitating for the right to build their own temple, but for now have been practicing their religion in their homes. The WIC's Negro slaves are also housed here, in a common house just north of the canal.

The eastern side of New Amsterdam, along the East River, is home to the docks and shipyards that represent the city's life-blood. The five-story State-House, or Town Hall, lies along the river and commands a good view of the piers. Ship's-captains, merchants, and a number of excellent tailors reside in this neighbourhood. There are also a number of tea-houses here, many situated upon natural hot springs, which naturally facilitate the preparation of tea. The WIC and the Rattle Watch rarely visit the teahouses, making them among the few places

in New Amsterdam where citizens may discuss politics without fear of official eavesdropping, so long as they do so with quiet and discretion.

The North Wall contains a number of fortifications, collectively known as the Palisades. There have been few Indian troubles recently, however, so these are now somewhat lightly guarded and poorly maintained. The street immediately behind the wall, predictably called Wall Street, is a quiet street of small homes with large gardens. It is somewhat more prosperous and respectable than its surrounding streets, perhaps because those guards patrolling the wall have also been charged with keeping an eye out for criminal behaviour in the adjoining street.

North of the Wall, the crowded streets give way to hills, farms, and pasture-land, along with several stretches of unusable, swampy land. The new cemetery lies just outside the wall along Broad-way, with the town pump opposite it, and farther north are the bread-mill, the WIC's large farm, and the public cow-pasture. The road eventually leads past Webber's Tavern, the last outpost of New Amsterdam on the way to Greenwich and New Haarlem. Eventually, it becomes part of the Boston Post-Road, and leads all the way to that New England city.

Near the tavern lies the Collect Pond, and around this are a number of farmsteads granted to manumitted Negroes. (Manumission being not well known in much of the world, I should take a moment to explain it here. Very briefly, it is a means by which a slave, having paid a specified sum to his master, becomes almost entirely free; that is, he is able to travel freely within the colony, own land, and work for the benefit of himself rather than that of his master. While many Dutch colonies throughout the world make use of slavery, the practise of manumission is peculiar to New Amsterdam, for reasons which are unclear to me.)

Along the east side of the island, the road called Smith's Valley leads past the blacksmith for whom the street is named, as well as several slaughter-houses, numerous farms, and warehouses, and eventually leads to the ferry-dock which facilitates travel to and from Long Island (landing, on that island, at the town of Breuckelen). In addition to many farming villages, Long Island is also home to Newmarket, a track for that peculiarly English pastime of horse-racing. The track was built during the English occupation of New Netherland, presumably as a way to entertain English officers. Those officers have long gone, but the race-track, and the deplorable gambling which it inspires, remain.

Now that you have at least some geographical understanding of the city, a more political overview would seem to be in order. The current Governor, Jeremias Schuyler, is the tenth since the founding of the colony, and is no more beloved by the colonists than any of the previous nine. A devout Calvinist, he would like nothing better than to close down the city's ale-houses, cast out the Jews and Catholics, and restore what he calls "order and propriety" to his colony. However, he knows that the

ensuing riots would cost him his position, if not his life, and so he must content himself with taxing that behaviour which he finds most distasteful. He is particularly an enemy of Roman Catholics; his son was killed by French fire during the Battle of Schooneveld in 1672, and he has taken whatever petty revenge he can manage against Catholics ever since. Huguenots, on the other hand, he considers quite welcome, as they too have lost much to the French Catholics, and are generally sober and productive citizens besides.

Stephanus Van Cortlandt is the Mayor of New Amsterdam, and while he was appointed to that post by Governor Schuyler, he is altogether more level-headed and open-minded than his superior. He has done a great deal to mitigate the Governor's more extreme positions regarding Catholics, ale-houses, and the like, and is generally well-liked among the people of the city. He has, however, recently begun to display somewhat erratic behaviour, occasionally speaking to colonists in the Mohawk tongue, apparently without realizing it. Recently, whilst returning from a visit to an acquaintance in the village of Bergen, he evaded his escort and was missing for several days, reappearing at the gates of New Amsterdam dirty and travel-worn, and with no apparent memory of what had befallen him. Since this incident, he has generally kept to himself in his manor-house, but the whisperings of personal friends suggest that he is still not entirely himself.

PENNSYLVANIA by T.L. of Philadelphia

Pennsylvania, my home, is the newest English colony, less than a decade old, but already numbering over 10,000 inhabitants. The colony was founded by William Penn in an effort to provide the Children of Light, commonly referred to as Quakers, with a safe place to worship in the face of continuous persecution in both England and New England. The majority of the colony's inhabitants are Children of Light, though various German Protestants, French Huguenots, and other diverse residents have arrived to take advantage of the colony's liberal religious policies and its excellent soil. Many Indians displaced by other colonies have also come to reside in the area.

Indeed, Pennsylvania seems to welcome almost everyone, with the exception of those who are intended to rule the place. Mr. Penn himself has been in England for a number of years, and his appointed lieutenant governors have been remarkably unsuccessful in their efforts to control the populace. Penn has gone so far as to name a Puritan ex-soldier, one John Blackwell, as his latest lieutenant governor, but Blackwell has to date been unable to get any ordinances enacted because the colony's ruling Council simply refuses to approve, or even acknowledge, any of his proclamations.

The capital of **Philadelphia** is a well-planned settlement situated upon an excellent natural harbour, where the Schuylkill River flows into the broad Delaware. In addition to the traditional homes, some residents

PENNSYLVANIA — THE FACTS

Pennsylvania has more in common with New England than with the colonies farther south, having been founded as an exercise in religious freedom rather than a financially productive colony. Despite William Penn's careful planning and benign intentions, however, Pennsylvania has become increasingly independent of his wishes, meaning that Penn is often unable to collect the taxes due him. The appointment of Blackwell as lieutenant governor was a desperate attempt to impose order on the populace, but the people of Pennsylvania have responded to Blackwell by simply ignoring him. He ordered the colony's ruling Council to convene upon his arrival in Philadelphia, but no one showed up. Thomas Lloyd, the president of the Council, possesses the Great Seal of the colony, but refuses to seal any of Blackwell's proclamations with it, thus rendering them moot. The colony is, for all practical purposes, without a government at this time, and seems to be functioning quite well that way (at least as far as the colonists are concerned).

RELIGION

Pennsylvania was founded, and is dominated, by Quakers; they are a rather curious religious organization and not a church in the traditional sense. While members refer to themselves variously as Children of Light, Friends of the Truth, or Saints, they are colloquially known to outsiders as Quakers because they are said to "tremble at the word of God."

Quakers believe that the spirit of God is present in all men and women equally, and that there is no need for a priest or minister to lead anyone to God. To this end, Quaker religious services involve believers simply meeting together, and speaking or acting as the spirit of God moves them. They also believe that all humans are equal in God's eyes; Quakers do not address anyone as "Sir," and do not remove their hats for any human being. Their dress and manners are plain and humble, their speech direct and truthful, and they do not swear oaths in court or anywhere else; they are also strict pacifists. Most Quakers in 1689 follow their spiritual "leadings" even when they seem to contradict the Bible, which has led to a great deal of persecution in England

and elsewhere. This led directly to the formation of the colony of Pennsylvania as a haven for Quakers, and Pennsylvania is the primary place where members of this faith can be found.

WITCH HUNTERS

Quaker Witch Hunters generally try very hard to blend in with the rest of the Quaker population; they do not feel that their gifts make them any more special than their brothers and sisters. To them, Insight is just another form of "leading," a way in which the spirit God shows them the direction in which they need to go. Like other Quakers, Quaker Witch Hunters tend to be strict pacifists; they usually refuse to use violence, even against obviously non-human monsters, though they generally do not consider banishing or warding evil creatures to be against their religion. They are, however, extremely effective researchers, investigators, and healers.

Other Witch Hunters, like any members of another religion, are generally made welcome in Pennsylvania until the residents have reason to dislike or distrust them. While pacifists themselves, the Quakers acknowledge that there are men (and creatures) of violence in the world, and are perfectly willing to let themselves be defended from violence by those who do not share the same moral scruples as the Quakers themselves.

INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS

Pennsylvanians are on generally good terms with the local Indian tribes (mostly Haudenosaunee of one type or another). Penn and his followers tend to be highly respectful of the Indians and acknowledge them as the rightful owners of their lands, which is a marked contrast to the behavior of most European colonists. Indeed, many Indians who have been displaced by the growth of other European colonies have come to settle in the lands around Pennsylvania due to Penn's tolerant attitude. This works out well for the pacifistic Quakers, because the Indians serve as a buffer against French and their Algonquin allies. The French rarely come close enough to the settled portions of Pennsylvania to be considered a danger, but the threat is always there, so the presence of friendly (and armed) Indians is a welcome one.

occupy a series of caves which have been dug into the banks of the Delaware River. These were originally dug to serve as temporary shelters for those colonists who were building their homes. Since that time, however, some of the caves have been used as ale-houses, brothels, and meeting-places for disreputable men and women of all kinds, including minions of the Adversary. Two years ago, several of the northernmost caves were evacuated and sealed off by members of the Philadelphia militia. The official explanation was that the caves were in danger of flooding; however, nearby residents had seen no signs of flooding, and have since reported occasionally hearing strange cries or noises coming from the areas where the

caves were sealed. I have sought to investigate these occurrences myself, but have as yet not found a way to enter the sealed-off areas.

THE FIVE NATIONS OF THE HAUDENOSAUNEE

by T.L. of Philadelphia

The Haudenosaunee Indians, who rule the forests between Pennsylvania, New Netherland, and New France, are not one tribe but five, bound together by long-standing oaths and a history of mutual support. Their loyalty to one another could be an inspiring lesson to the nations

of Christendom, where treaties are often broken before the ink with which they were written has fully dried. Thankfully, the English treaties with the Five Nations have not yet been broken, for these Indians are essential to the defence of New England and Pennsylvania from the French, the Wendat, and the Algonquin. If we are wise, we will treat the Haudenosaunee with the same respect and honesty which they have given us.

The tribes collectively are referred to as the League of Peace and Power, or sometimes as the Five Nations; Haudenosaunee is what they call themselves, which means something like “people building a long-house.” Indeed, they consider themselves to be many families dwelling together in such a house; members of the eastern-most tribe, the Mohawk, are called the “guardians of the eastern door,” for example. Some folk, particularly the French, call the tribes as a group “Iroquois,” but this is a name given then by the Wendat tribe, an ancient enemy of theirs, and the Haudenosaunee consider the term very insulting.

From east to west, the five tribes are as follows:

The **Mohawk**, who call themselves Kanienkehaka, have long been allies of both the English and the Dutch. They are fierce fighters, and are considered the guardians of the eastern door of the Five Nations’ metaphorical long-house.

The **Oneida**, skilled craftsmen and hunters. This is the tribe from which the founders of the League of Peace and Power, the Great Peacemaker and his follower Hiawatha, are said to have come.

The **Onondaga**, in whose lands the councils of the Five Nations usually meet. As they are the most central of the Haudenosaunee nations, they are considered to be the “keepers of the fire” in the long-house. They have a reputation as potent wizards.

The **Cayuga**, who are skilled river-travellers and swamp-hunters. They are the least numerous of the tribes, but in their own lands, they are formidable and fearless.

And finally there are the **Seneca**, the guardians of the long-house’s western door. They are far and away the most numerous of the Nations, though perhaps the least seen in English lands. Their lands and homes are owned by their women rather than their men, though the men-folk still lead in councils and war.

While they do not war among themselves, the Haudenosaunee often to take part in a vigorous and brutal game apparently intended to train them for war as well as serving a spiritual purpose. It is known by many names – for each of the Five Nations has a different language, though they are all similar – but the Mohawk call it *tewaarathon*, which means “the little brother of war.” The players, of which there may be hundreds in a single game, carry a long stick in each hand, using these sticks to carry a small deerskin

ball. The goal is to strike the ball against a rock or tree which serves as a goal, but the sticks are just as often used to beat opposing players. The game, which often lasts for several days, often results in serious injuries or deaths.

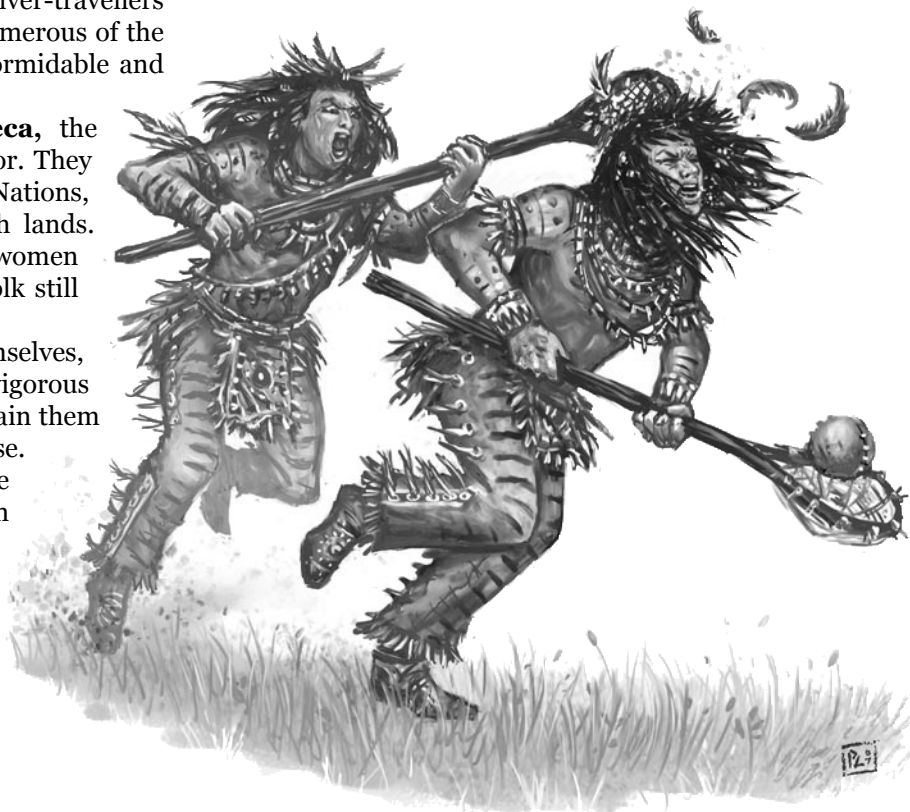
Most of these Indians usually wear their hair long, but when going to war, they cut off all but a narrow strip going back along the centre of their heads. Should you encounter a Haudenosaunee with his hair shaved in such a fashion, know that he is a warrior bound to or from a battle, and pray that you are not his enemy.

THE SOUTHERLY ENGLISH COLONIES

by R.C. of Lancaster County, Virginia

The English colonies located south of New Netherland are far larger than those of New England, but are also more sparsely populated. This is largely due to the pre-eminence of tobacco farming in the region, a practise which requires great swathes of farmland in order to be in any way profitable. Indeed, for some decades there has been more tobacco produced than the market will bear, leaving prices extremely low and many of the smaller farmers barely able to eke out a living. The farmers of Carolina are industriously seeking other crops with which to replace tobacco, while those of Maryland and Virginia persist in their production of what the Puritans call the “evil weed.”

The northernmost of the three great tobacco-colonies is **Maryland**. Since its founding, Maryland was the closest thing to a traditional English lordship one could find in the New World; ‘twas owned wholly by the Baron Baltimore, most recently one Charles Calvert. The Baron was a Roman Catholic, though, and as most of his tenant farmers were reformed Anglicans, he was even less popular than you might expect such a lord to be. Thus, when word arrived that William of Orange had



THE HAUDENOSAUNEE — THE FACTS

Despite the European tendency to write them off as primitive savages, the Five Nations represent a sophisticated and very successful political alliance. Numbering roughly 12,000 individuals, the unified Haudenosaunee tribes are a potent military and political force, and have allied with the English against the French and their Algonquin allies (though they have occasionally raided English settlements as well). These tribes collectively control the region west of the Appalachian Mountains and east of the Mississippi River, from the Great Lakes as far south as Carolina.

RELIGION

The tribes of the Haudenosaunee practice the same animist faith that they have followed for generations; the efforts of New England Puritans are converting some of them to Christianity, but the differences between these religions are not as great as they may at first seem. The Haudenosaunee believe in the almighty and unknowable Hawenneyu, the Great Spirit and Creator from whom all other spirits are derived, and his enemy Hanegoategeh, the Evil-Minded One. Both of these deities control a host of subservient spirits, and men can choose to follow either the path of good or evil during their lives, which will determine the fate of their immortal soul after death. There is even a belief that the Great Peacemaker, the legendary prophet who was instrumental in the founding of the League of Peace and Power, was born of a virgin. The parallels to Christianity

are clear, and Puritan missionaries have not been slow to take advantage of this.

WITCH HUNTERS

The Ghost People shaman of the Haudenosaunee are widely recognized as some of the most deadly and efficient Witch Hunters of that Order, although they have a curious way of invoking their abilities. When acting in the role of shaman, they wear wooden masks carved from living trees, which represent the spirits of the forest and are believed to frighten away evil spirits. While wearing these masks, the shamans are potent and fearless defenders of their people, seeming to perceive the Invisible World through the eyes of the spirits they are portraying. Wearing the masks seems to exhaust them, however, and they cannot do so for long; without their masks, they are still knowledgeable, but lack much of their physical and magical prowess.

INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS

The Five Nations have been consistently at war with the French settlers north of Lake Ontario, and after a few conflicts with early English settlers, they have settled into a firm alliance with the English against the French (and against the Algonquin and Wendat tribes who assist the French). The Seneca and Mohawk did the lion's share of this fighting initially, but the other tribes of the Five Nations have been providing constant support since the outbreak of hostilities.

landed in England to depose King James, a local militia group seized the governor's residence and took power. King William, no friend to Papists, has since stripped Calvert of the colony's lands and appointed John Cooke, leader of the rebel militia, as Governor of Maryland. Calvert, who was in England at the time, has not been seen since. Many have accused him of consorting with the Devil, though this may just be the vengeful bitterness of ill-treated Anglicans against their Papist lord. It must be said, though, that his manor house, now the governor's mansion, contains three locked doors which no one has yet proven able to open, whether by cleverness or force.

South of Maryland is the **Virginia** colony, the oldest, largest, and most populous English colony in the New World. Like Maryland, Virginia is a land of large and widely dispersed tobacco plantations, worked by Negro slaves. Despite its size and historical success, Virginia is a troubled land. There is a growing division between the older, richer farmers, who possess enough of the best land to continue making a profit, and the newer, poorer ones, who must struggle to make ends meet. Further, the increasing numbers of slaves needed to work the plantations represent a growing threat of rebellion, one which – in the owners' eyes – can only be controlled by means of Draconian laws curtailing the slaves' activities. Naturally, such harsh treatment only makes the slaves more likely to rebel. As if these troubles were not enough,

the Indians in the western frontier of the colony are growing more hostile, as immigrants continue to take land from them by force.

To further add to the conflict, a band of Gypsies recently arrived in the colony from Europe, and are already widely suspected of various crimes including theft, kidnapping, inciting revolt among the slaves, and anything else which the colonists can conveniently blame on outsiders. Only one man has directly accused the gypsies of anything to date, and he fled back to England shortly afterwards, apparently having been struck dumb by an unexplained malady. Tension between the Gypsies and the other colonists has only grown since this incident, and it is widely believed that violence may erupt soon unless the Gypsies move on, which they to date show no inclination to do.

The southernmost English colony is the Province of **Carolina**, which is in effect two distinct colonies rather than one, each with its own governor. The northern portion of Carolina, around Albemarle Sound, was settled by Virginians before the Province of Carolina was chartered, and abruptly became part of Carolina when the latter colony was created. The inhabitants did not take kindly to having their allegiance changed without their permission, and have consistently resisted Carolinian authority from that day forward. The area is called Rogue's Harbor with good reason, for it has a violently rebellious reputation,

THE SOUTHERN COLONIES – THE FACTS

The colonies of Maryland, Virginia, and Carolina are all focused around tobacco farming, an industry which requires large amounts of land and a great deal of manual labor. Thus, African slaves are essential to these colonies' economies. The farther south, one goes, the more numerous the slaves become; in Maryland, they represent perhaps a tenth of the population and work alongside white indentured servants, while in Carolina, nearly a quarter of the men and women living in the colony are African slaves. Ironically, the slaves are considered least threatening where they are the most numerous; slaves in Carolina often work without direct white supervision, and some are entrusted with guns to hunt and/or defend against Spanish attacks. In Virginia, on the other hand, slaves are forbidden to gather in groups larger than four except on their home plantations, may not travel off their plantations without appropriate papers, and are harshly punished with the lash for transgressions minor and major.

The economy of northern Carolina is currently centered on tobacco farming, but Carolina farms generally cannot compete with the more established and efficient tobacco farms in Virginia. Settlements around the Cape Fear River also produce large quantities of tar for shipbuilding purposes, and the whole Carolina area exports lumber and cattle to the West Indies. Farther south, various crops are being tested as possible replacements for the increasingly unprofitable tobacco; rice appears to be particularly promising.

RELIGION

Maryland is a predominantly Anglican region, despite its history of Roman Catholic leadership. Like most New World Anglicans, the worshippers of Maryland tend to be "low church" rather than "high church," meaning that they tend towards simpler and less ornate dress and ritual rather than the almost Catholic ostentation of the Anglican Church in England. Virginians generally tend to be low-church Anglicans as well. The Carolina colony tends to be mixed, with a slight preponderance of Baptists in the north and Anglicans in the south, though neither area is particularly religious.

WITCH HUNTERS

The southern English colonies are among the best "hunting grounds" for those Witch Hunters who are

comfortable operating in the wilderness. Tobacco farms tend to be large and spread out, and those on the western borders of these colonies are particularly isolated and vulnerable. There are often miles between one farmhouse and the next, and while most frontier farmers can handle the occasional marauding Indian or rabid bobcat, they are profoundly ill-equipped to deal with any demonic or supernatural threats. Unfortunately, this isolation means that a farm family may fall victim to an attack without his neighbors being aware of it; as a result, even when a Witch Hunter's expertise is needed, he may be greeted with scorn or suspicion by an endangered family who does not realize anything is wrong.

INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS

Most of Maryland's conflicts have taken the form of bitter land disputes with Pennsylvania, which have tied both William Penn and Baron Baltimore up in the English courts for years. Many Virginians also believe that the Albemarle region of Carolina rightfully belongs to Virginia, but the English courts have ruled otherwise. Maryland's settlers have to date managed to avoid conflict with the local Indian tribes, who are mostly of Algonquin and Haudenosaunee stock.

Virginia, on the other hand, has a sad history of Indian conflicts. The deerskin trade with the Indians would be a profitable income source for the colony and the Crown, but Virginia is simply growing too quickly, and the colonists feel obligated to take Indian lands, usually by force. The southern Algonquin are not as strongly allied with the French as their northern kin, but they often feel that they have little choice but to fight with the Virginians. For their part, the colonists remember a series of bloody Indian massacres from a few decades past, and peace between the Virginians and the Indians is not likely to come soon.

The Carolinas have few Indian problems, but do face the prospect of constant border skirmishes with New Spain. The terrain between Carolina and Florida tends to be marshy and difficult, making formal military activity difficult, but conflict between outlying settlers is common. New Spain's historically antagonistic relationship with the Indians provides an advantage for Carolina in this conflict; the small Timucua tribe, which has been decimated by Spanish soldiers and disease, provides skilled and willing scouts for the southern Carolina communities.

in addition to being a haven for tobacco-smugglers. Local pirates based in the treacherous channels of the Outer Banks are a major hazard to shipping, and some pirates from the West Indies come north during the summer as well, endangering merchants as far north as New England.

The most recent governor of Albemarle, one Seth Sothel, spent nearly four years as the captive of Barbary pirates before being ransomed and belatedly reaching his post in 1683. Upon his arrival, he began a cruel and

dictatorial reign over "his" colony; he has confiscated private property on a whim, jailed respectable merchants as pirates, and let pirates go free for suitable bribes. There are rumors, too, of darker passions in which Sothel has indulged, and many a Witch Hunter has sought to learn the truth of these to no avail. Mere weeks ago as I write a group of Albemarle men, who had had enough of this villainy, surprised Sothel in the fields of his plantation, seeking to arrest him and bring him to justice. They failed – several later claimed that the governor had "turned to

smoke in our very hands” before reappearing from his house, with musket-bearing guards – and were swiftly hung. Naturally, more men than ever are now seeking Sothel’s head, but their hatred is well-tempered with fear, and no one else has dared act openly against him yet.

Witch Hunters travelling in the Albemarle area should also be aware of Roanoke Island, where one of England’s first colonies in the New World vanished utterly nearly a century ago. Over a hundred men, women, and children disappeared between 1587 and 1590, leaving behind only the word “CROATOAN” and several strange symbols carved into the wooden posts of their crude fort. Virtually all attempts to investigate the site have been delayed or otherwise hampered by storms, floods, wild animals, and other hazards, and no one has made any significant headway in the search since 1621, when an English Witch Hunter named William Strachey made an extensive survey of the area. Letters Strachey wrote to his Order (the Soldiers of Christ Triumphant) indicated that he thought the colonists were “not dead, but forever lost,” and that the storm which wrecked his ship on Bermuda Island was deliberately sent to delay him and keep him from finding certain clues in a timely fashion. Strachey’s letters also suggest that he was keeping a detailed journal of his findings; however, after writing in August 1621 that he had made a breakthrough in his investigation, he was never heard from again.

The southern portion of Carolina is centered on the capital of Charles Town, which is predominantly peopled by immigrants from Barbados who seek a chance to prosper in a new and less crowded land. The wealthiest of these Barbadians, called the Goose Creek Men, effectively control the colony’s assembly and council, and are generally able to ignore the Governor’s dictates with relative impunity. The current governor, James Colleton, has gone so far as to raise a militia and declare martial law, under the pretext of threats from Spanish and Indian enemies, but this situation cannot persist for long.

NEW FRANCE

By J.R. of Québec

The vast reaches of New France represent a boundless source of opportunity for the people of France, but to date, relatively few have come to take advantage of these opportunities. This is largely because the colony is perceived as cold, wild, and dangerous – perceptions which are not without merit – and because France herself is so prosperous, there seems little reason to leave for the hostile frontier. The Huguenots, of course, are more than happy to leave France, where they are unwelcome, but since they are not permitted to settle in New France either, most have fled for other nations’ colonies instead. As a result, those who do settle in New France are usually disaffected loners, desperately poor individuals, criminals, or others who see an uncertain future in the wilderness as preferable to whatever awaits them in France. There are also, of course, many Jesuits and other Catholic missionaries, though these tend to have better

luck converting the Indians than reforming the colonists.

In an effort to help boost the population, and perhaps to help civilize the populace, *le Roi* has also sent nearly a thousand women, mostly orphans of common birth, to New France. They are called “the King’s Daughters,” and most have married and settled down to raise families. Indeed, these women have played a large role in making the towns of Québec and Ville-Marie as civilized as they are. Some, however, have remained single, and many of these have settled in a group of communal homes in the village of Rigaud, some fifteen miles from Ville-Marie. Women of all origins and stations seem welcome at these homes, and many choose to remain after visiting. Men, however, are given a distinctly frosty reception in the village; men born in Rigaud are tolerated, but male visitors are discouraged at best and run out of town at worst. No one is entirely sure what these women do in their isolated settlement, but rumors include alchemy, witchcraft, and far more scandalous things. They do not seem to be harming anyone, however, and so they have largely been left alone. Still, a female Witch Hunter who could learn the truth behind the rumors would be most welcome.

New France consists of four colonies. The largest, most important, and most profitable of these is **Canada**, which consists of the land along the St. Lawrence river and around the five great inland lakes which represent such a boon to trade in the area. Québec, the capital, sits at the mouth of the St. Lawrence, and is a busy port where finished goods from Europe are constantly being exchanged for furs from the interior of New France. Some of the European goods stay in the settled lands, but the majority of them are carried out into the deep wilderness by the *coureurs de bois*, or “forest runners,” rough and Godless men who spend more time with the Indians than with Frenchmen. The *coureurs* trade these goods to the Indians for more furs, which they then bring back to the various trading posts along New France’s rivers, whence they will eventually return to Québec. Some *coureurs*, called *voyageurs*, are licensed by the government to buy and sell furs, but there are far more who simply travel on their own, risking discovery and imprisonment to live their rough and dangerous lives independently.

As might be expected, the *coureurs* are very familiar with the dangers of the wilderness, both natural and super-natural, and can be very useful resources for Witch Hunters in the area. They are also generally on good terms with the Indians with whom they trade, often dwelling with them for extended periods, even marrying their women. The paths they have blazed through the deep woods are often the only means a traveler has for finding his way, and while the *coureurs* do not take kindly to anyone who might represent the competition, they are valuable allies if one can cultivate their friendship. Of course, they are also known to stumble upon foul things in the deep woods, and sometimes the *coureurs* who return from a trip into the wilderness are not the men who set out, but rather other beings dwelling in the shells of their bodies.

NEW FRANCE – THE FACTS

Compared to the English and Dutch colonies on the eastern coast of the New World, New France is incredibly huge, but also quite sparsely populated. Apart from the capital of Québec and the town of Ville-Marie on Montréal Island, the only settlements consist of small trading posts, fortified encampments, and Jesuit missions, most of which are quite isolated. New France is driven by the fur trade, primarily beaver furs, which are in high demand in Europe. Indians throughout North America, primarily Wendats and Algonquins, do most of the actual trapping, skinning, and fur preparation; the colonists' roles consist of traveling into the wilderness, trading various civilized goods (most often tools, clothing, muskets, and whiskey) for the furs, and returning them to Québec or Ville-Marie for sale and shipment back to France.

The Wendat Indians, a confederation of four tribes which the French collectively call the Hurons, are a farming people with a long history of conflict against the Haudenosaunee. They have suffered great losses since the introduction of firearms to their battle, and most of the Wendat have now left their ancestral homes and resettled in the vicinity of Québec.

The Matika Indians are a relatively unknown group which has begun assisting the French in their battles against the English and Dutch in past few years. Originating in the lands around Hudson Bay, they are a particularly savage and bloodthirsty group, unsettling even other Indians with their reputation for brutality and cannibalism. They have raided several English trading posts on the shores of Hudson Bay, leaving wrecked buildings and horribly mutilated corpses in their wake, and have recently started appearing more frequently on the border between New France and New England.

RELIGION

In Québec and Ville-Marie, New France echoes the purely Roman Catholic nature of France itself; indeed, non-Catholics are forbidden to settle in New France. Convents in both towns run asylums, hospitals, and schools for the children of the local nobility, and church attendance is high. The rest of the colony, however, is largely populated by rugged, tough, hard-drinking frontiersmen. While these men (and, occasionally, women) would probably describe themselves as Catholics if asked, they rarely, if ever, attend church services and spend little to no time contemplating their spiritual well-being.

The exceptions to this rule are the far-ranging Jesuit missionaries, who travel to many of the same isolated regions as the coureurs, albeit for far different

reasons. They learn many of the languages of the Indians they travel among, and their value as linguists and explorers is considerable. However, their primary purposes are to convert the Indians to Christianity and to find any sign of the Adversary's activities in the New World. The Jesuits see Witch Hunters as a threat to their power, and are anxious to discredit them while improving their own reputation. Every time they are able to resolve a supernatural problem before Witch Hunters do – or, even better, if they can solve a problem that Witch Hunters were unable to resolve themselves – the Jesuits provide more support for their contention that Witch Hunters are unnecessary at best, and a heretical threat at worst.

WITCH HUNTERS

Given the heavy Jesuit presence, Witch Hunters are considered disreputable at best and dangerous at worst in most of New France. In the towns, particularly, they are likely to be shunned if their nature becomes known. In the wilderness populated by the coureurs, however, matters are somewhat different. The Jesuits have certainly done their best to predispose the frontier folks against Witch Hunters, but when a werewolf or hostile spirit raises its head in the deep wilderness, a woodsman will gladly accept help from whatever source can provide it.

INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS

New France is in a constant low-level state of war with New England, although both sides tend to prosecute the war via their Indian allies (the Algonquin and Wendat aiding the French, and the Haudenosaunee helping the English) rather than directly. Most of the warfare occurs along the northern reaches of Massachusetts and Pennsylvania, although there is an increasing amount of conflict along the northern border of New France as well, where the agents of the Hudson's Bay Company and those of France's Compagnie du Nord are constantly battling over the northern fur trade. Pierre Le Moyne d'Iberville, captain of Le Soleil d'Afrique, is a particularly successful privateer who has captured many ships and plundered several forts belonging to the Hudson's Bay Company.

Farther south, French ships often skirmish with Spanish ones in the Caribbean, although the French do not have enough of a naval presence in the West Indies to pose a serious threat to Spain's dominance in the area. French traders have also begun to make trading runs to the Aztec empire, trading French guns, powder, and manufactured goods for Aztec gold and silver...and, some say, Aztec magic as well.

The colony of **Acadia**, east of Canada and south of the St. Lawrence, consists of a single small town, Annapolis-Royal, and scattered outlying farms. Acadia offers neither profit nor promise, and has been largely forgotten by France, but the colony seems to persist out of sheer stubbornness. Acadia has been conquered

by England and recaptured by France several times – not because it produces anything worth fighting over, but rather because neither nation wants the other to possess anything which can be taken away or destroyed. The Acadians have developed excellent relations with the Mi'kmaq and other local Indian tribes, often

intermarrying with the natives, and this exposure to native beliefs has led to a unique local religion which combines Christian symbolism with Mi'kmaq spiritual beliefs. Those few travelers who have been to Acadia in recent years, mostly fur trappers seeking supplies or merchant sailors looking for a new market, report that the Acadians seem unanimously dedicated to their new religion, and urge visitors to join their church services with an almost fanatical intensity. Those who accept this offer often choose to remain in Annapolis-Royal, sometimes not even returning to their ship to bid former comrades farewell. Others return, but seem rather dazed by the experience; they have generally been able to offer little description of what they experienced in the Acadian church, but have generally been absolutely unwilling to return to Acadia, no matter what inducements were offered. The exact tenets of this religion are maddeningly unclear, and several Jesuit missionaries have recently gone to Annapolis-Royal to search for signs of heresy. None have yet returned with a report, suggesting that they are taking the necessary time to investigate fully before drawing any conclusions.

The island of **Terre-Neuve** is claimed as the third colony of New France, though it is sparsely settled and heavily contested by the English, who call it New-Found-Land. While there are a few permanent settlements on the island, it is mostly used by migratory fishermen who sail there to take advantage of the rich waters off the coast. The east coast is predominantly home to English and Irish fishermen, while the French control the rest of the island. The northern tip of the island has generally been avoided since an incident several years ago, when several fishing boats of both French and English origin were found drifting, their crews variously missing or horribly butchered. Ships passing the area at night have reported seeing fires on the shore, and one Irish sailor swears that he saw "a boat-full of Norsemen" pursuing his vessel through the area shortly before dawn, but no evidence of activity, human or otherwise, has been seen during the day.

The fourth and newest colony in New France is **Louisiane**, the valley of the Colbert River, which the Algonquins call *Missi Sepi* or "Great River." The majority of the valley is very sparsely populated, with occasional trading posts and fortresses being the only sign of civilization. However, Sieur Robert de La Salle has recently founded the town of Nouvelle-Orleans where the Colbert empties into the Gulf of Mexico, and it seems likely to evolve into a significant trading center despite the swampy terrain. At present, the town produces very little and is dependent on external trade for its subsistence. In addition to conducting this trade, the sailors of Nouvelle-Orleans are renowned pirates, and represent a consistent thorn in the sides of Spanish sailors. Recently Philippe Charles, Duc d'Valois, the nephew of King Louis XIV, has built an impressive new manor outside the town, and lives there year-round. He has imported a large number of African slaves to work at his manor, particularly

seeking those who were shamans or witch-doctors in Africa, and has them working on some mysterious project in the swamps to the west of Nouvelle-Orleans. Sailors approaching the bayou at night have reported unusual lights in the trees and strange chanting in barbarous African tongues, but Monsieur le Duc does not seem to be unduly concerned.

NEW SPAIN

By D.V. of Campeche

The people of Spain were the first to reach the New World, and thus one would expect New Spain to be the largest and most prosperous colonial empire of all, possessing all the most excellent harbors and most fertile lands. Sadly, this is not the case, for the explorers who first came to the New World followed dreams of gold rather than settling for prosperous lands, and have bequeathed to us only blood and war.

One hundred and seventy years ago, the explorer Hernán Cortés and a few hundred soldiers landed on the coast of what we now know as the Aztec Empire. Cortés was following rumors of a fabulously wealthy kingdom, where gold was as common as wood, and he soon found that the rumors were true. With native allies who desired to rebel against the hellish cruelties of the Aztecs, Cortés and his troops soon found their way to the capital city of Tenochtitlan. He was ambushed during a festival and slaughtered almost to a man. This disastrous battle has become known in Spain as the *Noche Triste*, the "night of sorrow," and indeed it was the precursor to the decades of sorrow that continue to this very day.

The messages Cortés had sent before his demise spoke glowingly of the gold, silver, and jewels found everywhere in the Aztec lands, and this inflamed the greed of Spain's leaders. Thus the great islands of the West Indies, which could have been prosperous colonies in their own right, became mere staging-areas for invasion after invasion, each a more costly failure than the last. For over a century and a half, the conquest of the Aztecs has been a shining prize, forever out of reach, the pursuit of which has consumed soldiers' lives at a hellish rate, while England and France and Portugal contentedly harvest Nature's bounty in their peaceful colonies. We seem to always capture just enough gold to whet our leaders' appetites for more, and so the blood continues to spill. But this bitter tale tells you little of what New Spain is, only what it is not; kindly allow me to correct that.

The four largest islands in the West Indies – Cuba, Hispaniola, Puerto Rico, and Trinidad – form the core of New Spain, and house most of its people. While the Aztecs are far away, the constant influx of wounded soldiers from the front, and fresh ones from Spain, makes it impossible to forget the war except on the more isolated plantations. On Puerto Rico, the capital of San Juan houses the Royal Mint, so this is where the gold and silver captured from the Aztecs is taken. Naturally, this treasure is what the privateers of many nations and the pirates of none seek to take for themselves, so the warships of the Spanish navy are thickest in this region. Indeed, Puerto Rico has been

NEW SPAIN – THE FACTS

While it is a single entity in the eyes of Spain, New Spain is a collection of far-flung settlements tenuously connected by the efforts of the Spanish navy and the merchant ships it escorts. In addition to the islands of the West Indies that are the heart of the colony, several settlements dot the coast of Florida, and a few others on the edge of modern-day Mexico have managed to stay out of Aztec hands. The islands of New Spain have developed into major producers of sugar and tobacco, and are moderately prosperous. The real wealth of New Spain, however, comes from captured Aztec gold and silver, which is brought to San Juan and minted into coins.

Their experience with the Aztecs has predisposed the Spanish to mistrust any other Indian tribes, and their usual practice when entering a new area has been to violently “pacify” the natives, converting them to Christianity if possible, and enslaving them otherwise (or in addition to converting them). The Franciscan friars who are responsible for these conversions tend to speak up for the Indians whenever possible, and are generally supportive of (and supported by) the Indians themselves. They are, as a rule, quite true to their vows of poverty and chastity, making them far more palatable than the greedy, rape-prone soldiers of New Spain. However, the myriad Indians enslaved on the tobacco and sugar plantations of the Spanish West Indies are unlikely to consider any Spaniard their friend. African slaves are also common in New Spain.

In addition to the islands, both the four already mentioned and the myriad smaller ones throughout the West Indies, New Spain also includes some territory on the New World mainland. The northernmost settlement is Fort San Mateo, at the site of present-day Jacksonville, Florida; this serves as headquarters for the soldiers who battle the English soldiers based in Carolina over the no-man’s-land between the colonies. Some fifty miles south of Fort San Mateo is the town of San Agustín which, since a disastrous attack by English pirates some twenty years ago, has become the center of Spanish pirate-hunting. Viceroy Melchor Portocarrero y Lasso de la Vega is the official leader of New Spain. He is an experienced cavalry officer with a silver arm (replacing one lost in battle in the Netherlands), and dedicates most of his time to military leadership, leaving economic matters to others. In fact, he spends far more time in Campeche, overseeing campaigns against the Aztecs, than he does in San Juan, and his subordinate, Cerda Sandoval Silva, does most of the actual governing at present.

RELIGION

Like Spain itself, New Spain is almost exclusively Roman Catholic. If anything, Spaniards in the New World are even more devout than those in Europe, since Aztec armies and the heathen gods they serve endanger the colonists on a daily basis. The Inquisition is very active here, and the Inquisitorial judges in New Spain – mostly

Jesuits – are more cynical, more watchful, more heavily guarded, and considerably less forgiving than those in Spain. Any foothold by Aztec spies or saboteurs in the settlements of New Spain will exact a hideous cost in blood and souls, and the Inquisition will go to any lengths to keep this from happening.

Beyond the core lands of New Spain, large numbers of Jesuit missions dot the mainland in what are now the states of Florida, Georgia, and Alabama. These are isolated, fortified encampments which rely on well-guarded caravans for supplies, and the local Indians are as likely to besiege the missions as they are to come for church services.

WITCH HUNTERS

Civilians in New Spain tend to accept the Jesuit presentation of Witch Hunters as ungodly, heretical threats to the status quo. While they are unlikely to take any direct action against a Witch Hunter, they will probably report the presence of such an individual to the nearest priest so that “appropriate measures” can be taken. The military forces take a somewhat more pragmatic view; anyone who can provide an edge against the Aztecs is a valuable ally, and the soldiers of New Spain tend to accept help first and worry about Church doctrine later.

INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS

New Spain is a colony under siege, and is more or less defined by war at this point. Primarily, this means war with the Aztec empire, a constant and vicious struggle with no sign of a winner. The Spanish have superior ships and weaponry, although the Aztecs are beginning to receive enough muskets and gunpowder from the French to equalize the ground war. The Aztecs’ main advantages are their familiarity with the terrain, enabling them to effectively utilize guerilla warfare tactics, and their fearsome and hellish magicks. Having had no luck pushing the Aztec borders back, the Spanish forces have lately focused their efforts raids to seize gold and silver from Aztec settlements and tribute caravans, rather than trying to take and hold ground. If King Carlos II gets the crusade he desires, however, a major offensive seems inevitable.

In addition to the Aztec problem, the soldiers and sailors of New Spain must constantly watch for English incursions from the north, an increasing French presence at the mouth of the Mississippi, and naval raiders from England, France, Portugal, and the Netherlands in the West Indies. The Spaniards do have one ally in the area, in the form of the once-mighty Mayan tribes that have been subjugated by the Aztecs for centuries. While they have nursed a hatred of the Aztecs for generations, the Maya are well aware of the punishments that await them if they are caught assisting the Spanish. Therefore, they are able to offer only subtle and surreptitious help, a sort of undercover force which can provide useful intelligence and, rarely, direct aid to the enemies of the Aztecs.

invaded, even captured, on several occasions, but the Spanish always reclaim it in greater force than before.

The western end of Puerto Rico is largely unpopulated, save by escaped slaves and other desperate souls. This is partly because it is difficult and unwelcoming terrain, but is also in large part due to the vengeful ghosts that dwell there. A Spanish soldier named Diego Salcedo was drowned here by the Taino Indians in 1511, because they wanted to see if he – and, by extension, all Spaniards – were truly immortal, as they believed. Of course, Salcedo was as mortal as any man, and died, and the emboldened Taino rose in revolt. Countless of them were slain, and their ghosts range across the lands where once they lived. They are dangerous to any European whom they encounter, but it is said that Salcedo's ghost walks the land as well, and has been known to protect those who are endangered by the Taino, living or dead.

Beyond the islands, New Spain consists largely of fortified settlements intended to defend against, or make war upon, the Aztecs, the English, the French, or – in some cases – all three. On the sandy, scrubby peninsula of *La Florida*, the town of San Agustín is an important military base from which Spanish ships patrol the seas for pirates, and army patrols seek out shipwrecked sailors, escaped slaves, or pirate bases, both on foot and along the coastal waterways in native canoes. Many of these patrols have reported strange lights in the brush, which at first appear to be camp-fires, but which wink out abruptly only to reappear suddenly in another location. After some time, these “witch-fires” generally disappear entirely, though this usually happens only once the patrols have blundered into a sinkhole or other dangerous location. Some believe that these are the actions of clever and treacherous pirates or natives, but most of the soldiers believe that they are evil spirits, or the ghosts of the dead, luring the patrols to their death.

Finally, there are several settlements on the edges of Aztec territory, all heavily fortified and frequently besieged. Campeche, built on the ruins of a Mayan city, is the most important of these; its position, close to Cuba and in close proximity to the lands of the co-operative Mayan tribes, makes it a fine staging-place for strikes against the Aztecs. The Spanish army has held Campeche against Aztec invasions for nearly a century, and no serious Aztec attempts to recapture it have come for the last several decades. However, in the past year or two, many bizarre animal attacks have begun afflicting the residents of the city, soldiers and civilians alike. Packs of faguars and such cats – which do not normally hunt in packs – have attacked farmers in their fields, and massive swarms of bats have descended on army patrols in the early twilight, injuring them severely by the sheer weight of their numbers, and inflicting vile diseases on those wounded by them. The Jesuits have proclaimed that these attacks are further evidence of the vile witchcraft practiced by the Aztecs, but I have seen the bodies of Aztec warriors killed by similar attacks, and believe that whatever has caused this strange animal behavior, it is no friendlier to the Aztecs than to us.

THE AZTEC EMPIRE

By D.V. of Campeche

When Hernán Cortés first encountered the Aztecs, he assumed that they were bloodthirsty savages, primitive and crude and ready to be conquered and converted. While his perceptions of their bloodthirsty nature were certainly correct, he and the people of Spain have learned, to our sorrow, that they are neither savage nor primitive. Indeed, they have proven to be cunning, resourceful, strategically savvy, and both willing and able to adapt European technology for their own needs. Indeed, they are the most dangerous foe yet encountered in the New World, and represent a danger not only to New Spain, but to all the world if they are not checked.

Most of the Aztecs we encounter are, perforce, warriors, and thus they are the Aztecs about which we know the most. The common warriors are generally archers, slingers, or spear-throwers, though of late we have begun to see more and more of the Aztecs wielding muskets. At first, we assumed that these had been captured from Spanish victims, but many of the muskets we have recaptured are wholly without a maker's-mark, and not Spanish in design. Either the Aztecs have learned to make muskets and gun-powder themselves, or another European power is supplying them. I do not know which of these possibilities is more frightening. In addition to the traditional lead balls, Aztec warriors have begun firing musket-balls made of obsidian; while these are somehow made sturdy enough to survive the firing process, they splinter into tiny, sharp fragments when they strike their target, causing severe, bleeding wounds which are extremely difficult to treat. Indeed, they are so effective that some Spanish soldiers have attempted to create their own, but have so far proven unable to shape the glassy rock to a usable roundness without shattering it entirely.

While the ranged troops form the majority of the Aztec armies, the real danger comes from their infantry. Clad in anything from loincloths to animal skins to complex feathered suits, the Aztec warriors wield spears and obsidian-bladed swords which, though seeming crude, are almost impossibly sharp; the largest of these can decapitate a horse in one blow. Too, their shields and armor often seems to deflect both swords and musket-balls, though we have yet to determine quite how. They shout and scream most wildly as they charge into battle, and seem to fight on long after they have received what should be mortal wounds.

The weakness of the Aztec armies seems to lie with the priests that accompany each army, and the pagan idols that they carry. These march at the head of every Aztec army, and hold the center of the battle lines. If the priests can be overrun – a dangerous task, since they are the most well-guarded part of each army – the rest of the Aztecs seem to falter; their weapons do not seem as damaging, and their warriors seem to die much more easily, once the blasphemous idols are no longer surveying the battlefield.

Tactically, the Aztecs are cunning and ruthless, using their superior knowledge of the terrain to set up cunning ambushes and traps. Too, their numbers seem endless; their armies are enormous, and there does not seem to be any end to the reinforcements they can produce. Aztec warriors seem to be more concerned with capturing our soldiers than with killing them, which is another asset for New Spain, since captured soldiers



can be rescued more easily than dead ones can be replaced. Those who are captured apparently sacrificed to the Aztecs' bloody gods in hellish rituals, and those Aztecs we capture apparently expect that the same will be done to them. Naturally, we do no such thing; we attempt to convert them to Christianity, and when they inevitably refuse, they are burned at the stake as befits unrepentant heretics. Occasionally, a captured Spanish soldier is encountered fighting alongside the Aztecs, as incomprehensible as that may seem; when recaptured, they seem to have no memory of their former lives, unable even to understand Spanish, and must usually, regrettably, be put to death.

Beyond the warriors, we know little of the Aztecs' ways. Their empire consists of many other tribes, conquered and enslaved, who send tribute to their great island city of Tenochtitlan. They have no horses, nor cattle, nor any other beasts of burden, and so their farms are worked only by farmers and slaves. They have a written language which consists of many individual pictures, but seems to be little-used; captured Aztec messengers appear to have memorized their messages rather than carrying them in written form. They use large canoes for trade, travel, and even battle, but have no seagoing ships. This, at least, provides us with an advantage, in that they do not threaten the island heart of New Spain. But if their advances in technology continue – or if their unseen allies provide them with ships and the knowledge to sail them – then not only New Spain, but all of Europe may be in danger from these implacable, sorcerous foes.

BRASIL

By R.B. of Salvador da Bahia

Brasil, with its sugar and its brasilwood and, now, its silver and gold, sends great wealth to Portugal. However, it has lately sent a much more dangerous product home – the Godless cult of the *Santos Novos*, which has seized the souls of many colonists and now endangers those in Portugal as well.

In its early years, Brasil was a prosperous, growing colony, in which African and Indian slaves produced wood and sugar in enormous quantities. Unfortunately, some plantation owners treated their slaves horrendously. Some say that the lesser races have no souls, and thus that such abuse is no sin; whether or not this is true, this maltreatment has led to a surge of Earthly damnations. A Jesuit priest, Father Antônio Vieira, had appealed to the King regarding the mistreatment of the slaves, and was encouraged to convert the slaves, particularly the Indians, to Christianity. Vieira and his followers opened a vast series of missions and churches dedicated to just this program. In an effort to make Christianity understandable to the Indians, the Jesuits began to equate their various heathen gods to the Saints of the Catholic Church, thus easing the transition from their pagan faith to the true Church.

But when one mixes water with wine, one is also mixing wine with water; and in just such a fashion, the

THE AZTECS – THE FACTS

Facts about the Aztec Empire are, unfortunately, in short supply; few Europeans have visited their lands and survived to tell the tale. What is known is that the Aztecs do not appear to be vulnerable to the European diseases that have decimated many other Indian populations, and they have managed to adapt European weapons and tactics into their traditional methods of warfare. They are, by far, the most formidable enemy the Europeans have encountered in the New World.

The Aztec population includes a small class of hereditary nobility, a large middle class of farmers, warriors, artisans, and traders, and a group of slaves at the bottom. Aztecs may become slaves to pay debts, by being captured in war, or as a criminal punishment. These slaves have a great deal of freedom compared to African slaves in European colonies; they can own possessions and purchase their own freedom, and the children of slaves are considered free. The Aztecs are ruled by the Huey Tlatoani, a title which is usually translated into English as “Emperor,” in conjunction with a council of elders and priests. The current Tlatoani, named Acolmiztli, is an intelligent and cunning man, though he leaves the strategy of warfare to his better-qualified generals.

The capital of Tenochtitlan is far and away the largest city in the New World, with over 250,000 inhabitants. The city is built on a series of islands in the middle of Lake Texcoco, and is interlaced with many canals which serve to transport people and goods throughout the city. The city is organized along a strict, symmetrical grid, and is extremely clean by European standards. The city is divided into districts, each of which is home to members of a particular trade. Each of these neighborhoods is a fairly insular community; marriage is expected to take place only within the community, and neighborhood loyalty is extremely strong.

RELIGION

While details of the Aztec religion are poorly understood by outsiders, the Aztecs are known to have many gods, and to sacrifice human beings to at least some of them in order to keep the sun from going out. The Spanish, who are in the best position to learn about the details of the Aztec religion, have instead dedicated themselves to wiping it out. The presence of multiple gods and human sacrifice are more than enough to mark it as a blasphemous abomination in Spanish eyes, and thus they feel no need to learn any more.

WITCH HUNTERS

There are at least two small cults within Aztec society that are believed to consist of individuals with similar abilities to Witch Hunters, though no one has yet been able to prove their nature. The Quetzal Warriors are, as the name suggests, a military order that seems focused on finding and defeating supernatural foes – including, for example, Spanish Witch Hunters. Like all Aztec warrior societies, the Quetzals are exclusively male. Women with supernatural talents seem to be gathered in the Jade Skirt Society, and focus on the arts of prophecy and magical healing. Naturally, most European Witch Hunters consider the Aztecs to be direct servants of the Adversary and would not consider these Aztecs to be Witch Hunters at all, but the similarities are striking.

INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS

Acolmiztli is aware that there are enough Europeans to eventually conquer his people if they unite, so he has been making substantial efforts to win (or, more accurately, buy) the support of the English, French, and other enemies of the Spanish. If the Pope declares a Crusade against the Aztec, as King Carlos II of Spain has requested, the relationship between the Aztecs and the other European nations will be sorely tested. At present, the French have proven more than willing to trade French muskets for Aztec gold; other nations have been more reluctant to ally with such bloodthirsty heathens.

Indian gods began making their way into the Church, and good Christians who should have known better began giving thanks and praise to these heathen gods, calling them the *Santos Novos*, or “New Saints.” And in these isolated lands, those gods – or rather, devils that have long posed as gods to mislead the Indians – have power, and those who worship them gain power as well, at the cost of their unwitting souls.

The rituals of the *Santos Novos*, upon first glance, may seem to be exactly what they claim – that is to say, a wholesome Catholic Mass with a few superficial alterations, made solely to better suit the flock in question, the indigenous Indians of Brasil. Before I knew what the *Santos* had truly become, I myself attended one of these so-called Masses at the request of my friend Manoel, who had attended one of their minor services and was made decidedly uncomfortable by it. The service was held in a small church in Salvador da Bahia, the capital of the colony. I arrived only just as the service was starting and

sought out Manoel, but did not see him. Having had some minor conflicts with the Jesuits in the past, I sat at the back of the church, near the doors – and may God be praised that I did so!

The introductory rites seemed ordinary enough, but the Scripture readings seemed wrong to me. The lector, a middle-aged Indian, spoke heavily accented Latin, and I could not make out precisely his words; but the readings, which all dwelled on the topic of vengeance, seemed not to match my recollections of the Word of God. The sermon, a rambling affair, was not in Latin, but in one of the Indian tongues, of which I knew but little, and what I could decypher of it also seemed focused on the topics of revenge and wrath. At this, I began to grow nervous, though the congregation as a whole seemed far more rapt than even a gifted orator would deserve.

Then came the Liturgy of the Eucharist, which was greeted with a fevered enthusiasm which only worsened my concern. And then, as the “priest” brought

BRAZIL — THE FACTS

Geographically the largest colony in the New World, Brazil is essential to the economy of Portugal. Indeed, Portuguese citizens are immigrating to Brazil in vast numbers, and the colonial governors wield substantial political power in the Portuguese court. The Brazilian economy is based on sugar farming; brazilwood, which originally gave the colony its name, is also a valuable export (the lumber is in high demand as the source of a potent red dye), and silver mines in the south central portion of the colony are beginning to show promising results.

The jungles that cover much of Brazil are home to countless tribes of primitive Indians, speaking a myriad of different languages. Even Jesuit missionaries, who are renowned linguists, have a hard time mastering many of these tongues. In the early years of the colony, the Portuguese attempted to use various Indians as slaves on the sugar plantations. However, the recent rise of the Santos Novos has made it impractical to enslave the Indians, and African slaves work the majority of the sugarcane fields and brazilwood plantations. Most of the slaves taken in Africa, in fact, are bound for Brazil rather than the North American colonies.

Over the past century, escaped slaves (called Maroons) have formed a number of settlements (known as quilombos) along the frontiers of explored Brazil, some quite large and well-fortified. The inhabitants of the quilombos often raid colonial villages, and many border settlements have taken to paying tribute to the escapees to avoid future trouble. Many of the Maroons are experts in the strange, dance-like martial art known as capoeira, and the ex-slaves have amassed a sizable quantity of traditional weaponry as well. After repeated unsuccessful attempts to wipe out the quilombos by force, the Brazilian governors have begun negotiating peace with the former slaves, agreeing to declare all the escapees free if they submitted to Portuguese authority. Most of the quilombos were willing to agree to this arrangement, but a substantial minority resisted, and the conflict is ongoing. The leader of the resisting Maroons, a man called Zumbi, is a renowned strategist and a formidable fighter in his own right, and has become a significant thorn in the side of Portuguese authorities.

forth that which should have been the blood and the body of Christ our Savior, and the congregation surged forward to receive it, only then did I lose my nerve and flee that church, never to return. They saw my face as I fled, and they knew that I knew them, and sought to capture me; but I evaded their grasp and fled Salvador do Bahia, and have not returned since. At least, though the memory yet haunts my dreams, I knew what had become of Manoel.

Father Vieira, a good Christian despite the unfortunate results of his actions, was naturally horrified by this when I told him of it, and planned to immediately begin a campaign to reform the missions and cast out the *Santos Novos*. Unfortunately, before his efforts could

RELIGION

The original Portuguese settlers of Brazil were strongly Catholic, but the rise of the Santos Novos has made almost all the churches of Brazil into strongholds of this pagan-Christian hybrid. Far from the eyes of Rome and the Inquisition, the cult has little need to hide its excesses, and newcomers to the colony will quickly discover the heavy use of native hallucinogenic drugs, bloodletting rituals, and the summoning of spirits, wrapped in a thin veneer of Catholicism. The darker rituals, which include human sacrifice and the open summoning of demons, are still shrouded in some degree of secrecy, and open to only the most committed cultists. However, as the cult gains in power, it is only a matter of time before even these foul rites can be held openly without fear of reprisal.

WITCH HUNTERS

Between the Jesuit influence in the original Catholic churches, and the suspicious nature of the Santos Novos cultists, Witch Hunters are not generally very popular in Brazil. There is, however, a significant underground network of individuals who hate and fear the followers of the Santos Novos, and can offer shelter and assistance to those Witch Hunters that do make their way to Brazil. Among these underground elements are many of the quilombos; this is partly because many of the ex-slaves will always oppose the colonial government on general principles, but also largely because many of the Maroons have witnessed the horrific underbelly of the Santos Novos firsthand.

INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS

Apart from occasional skirmishes with Spanish and French privateers in the West Indies, and intermittent raids by Aztec warriors along the northern border, Brazil is largely at peace as far as external relations go. Internal conflicts with the quilombos, and with the Indian tribes found in the jungles west of the colony, have historically been more of a threat; now that the Indians have become important members of the colony rather than its enemies or prey, only the quilombos represent a danger to the colony, and all of Brazil's military might is now likely to be focused on bringing the Maroons down.

amount to much, he was killed by a wild jaguar. At least, that is the story, though I wonder how a jaguar could reach him in his second-floor room in a locked rectory in the middle of the largest city in Brasil. After his large and well-attended funeral, the cult of the *Santos Novos* began growing ever faster, and has become well-entrenched not only in Brasil, but here in Portugal as well, primarily among the nobility.

Today, the *Novos* effectively control Brasil. Those who have not yet succumbed to the cult's clutches are ostracized at best, and caused to vanish mysteriously at worst. The *bandeirantes*, frontier explorers who have mapped out much of the colony while moving into the

interior to capture Indian slaves, have had their roles reversed; the vengeful Indians, empowered by the rise of the *Novos*, have driven them into the jungles, where they are hunted as vigorously as ever they hunted slaves themselves. There are still faithful Catholics who oppose the *Novos*, particularly in the south of the colony, but I do not know how long we will be able to hold out.

ELSEWHERE IN THE NEW WORLD

The West Indies are not wholly controlled by Spain, though it often seems that way; the English sugar colonies of Jamaica and Barbados, the French sugar colonies of Guadeloupe and Martinique, and the Dutch slave-port of Curaçao are all important centres of trade and commerce. Tortuga, a small island off Hispaniola, is a haven for pirates of all nationalities, and every nation has privateers raiding its' rivals towns and ships under letters of marque. The English are particularly gifted in this regard – if “gifted” is the right word – with renowned captains ranging from the young Captain William Kidd, of the ship *Blessed William*, to Sir Henry Morgan, the aging lieutenant governor of Jamaica, who has been heard to mutter about taking to the high seas “one last time” since his recovery from a near-fatal illness in the summer of 1688.

As far as the mainland goes, little is known of the New World west of Louisiane; there is another great mountain range traversing the continent from north to south somewhere beyond the Colbert River, but no more than that is known for certain except to the myriad Indian tribes that dwell in the vast reaches of emptiness where few colonists go. The forests are dark and deep, the rivers swift and cold, and however brave and stout the explorers are who travel ever farther into that deep wilderness, there are never as many who return as who set out. The same is likewise true of the lands south and west of Brasil; there are tales of a great empire of gold called *Inka*, but until the Aztecs give way or the *Santos Novos* explore far enough to reach it, we will have no more than tales.

THE REST OF THE WORLD

Beyond Christendom and the New World lie a seemingly endless conglomeration of lesser realms, barbarous petty kingdoms and exotic despotisms, known to most only as unpronounceable names on obscure maps. There is little reason to think that a Witch Hunter will need to travel so far, since there are good Christian lands in grave need of assistance, but in the interest of completeness, here is a succinct guide to the remainder of the known world.

The nearest, and paradoxically the least-known, of the lesser continents is **Africa**, a savage and primitive land of impassable jungles and hostile tribes. The northern part is a vast swathe of desert, where the Muslims of Morocco and the Barbary Coast are a constant threat to Christendom. Farther south, we know only the outlines of the continent, and that only due to the coastal trading-posts where European goods are traded with Negro merchants, in exchange for other Negroes, slaves captured in the dark and unknown interior of Africa.

There is one Christian kingdom among the Negroes, that of Ethiopia, along the shores of the Red Sea. The Emperor of Ethiopia, Iyasu, is said to be a direct descendant of Solomon and the Queen of Sheba.

Asia is somewhat better known than Africa, largely thanks to Dutch traders who bring back exotic goods and spices from its shores. The nearest lands of Asia are Muslim, predominantly Persia, a nation in decline, and the Mughal Empire of India, which seems potent, but cannot hope to match the superior weaponry and intelligence of the British East India Company and its soldiers. Farther north, Muscovy is trying to arrange a peace with the kingdom of China, a large and comparatively prosperous country whose people are relatively well-educated by heathen standards. Jesuit missionaries have been attempting to convert the people of China to the Papist church for some years, with thankfully limited success. Chinese silks, cotton, and porcelain are most desirable in Christendom, and bring great wealth to those who manage to make the journey there and back. The island kingdom of Japan, which lets only a few Dutch traders into one small part of one city, is likewise a source of valuable goods.

But the greatest sources of wealth in Asia are the spices of the East Indies, where the Dutch East India Company (or VOC) holds absolute sway. Pepper, cloves, mace, nutmeg, cinnamon, sandalwood, and ebony are all to be found here – and often only here – and the VOC's control over it makes each of their trade-ships as valuable as though it had been packed from stem to stern with gold. The vast distances, vicious storms, and frequent pirate attacks make the trade journey to these islands among the most dangerous in the world, but the rich profits to be reaped are sufficient to ensure that there are no shortage of volunteers.

THE INVISIBLE WORLD

Heaven and Hell. The Otherworld. Paradise. Summerland. Asgard. The Happy Hunting Grounds. Gehenna. The Elysian Fields. Whatever the culture is and whichever name it gives to the empyrean realms, the hereafter is often visualized as a distant place well beyond the material plane. By and large, mortals can live their entire lives convinced that this belief is true. They are mistaken. The Invisible World directly overlaps our own, as close as the front door to the house and sometimes, woefully closer. Whether humankind comes before the supernatural with beseeching prayers or to command it with rebukes and strong abjurations, dealing with the Invisible World is unpredictable and dangerous. Those who choose to deal with such forces nearly always seek the aid of spiritual betters, but even holy men and magicians of high caliber can literally be spirited away, no matter their knowledge or protections. The Invisible World and its inhabitants are incalculable and whimsical, or so it appears to constrained mortal perceptions.

MYTH AND HISTORY

Legends and tales abound of mortals traveling into the Invisible World, either blundering through the veil unwittingly or consciously striding forth on adventures in fey realms or epic quests within the Underworld. Because the knowledge of these past events is murky and oft distorted, it is not known how much accuracy they contain insofar as the common view of the cosmos and the world, nor of practical knowledge. It is therefore common for the Orders of Solomon to lend some manner of credence to all of these fanciful myths, for no matter how fantastical the tale, it may yet hold some grain of truth which might eventually shed illumination on the Great Struggle and the larger scope of human history.

The one myth often revered as a literal truth and the exemplary pinnacle of the Witch Hunter's cause is the history of the great Hebrew king, Shelomo Jedidiah, known to Arabs as Suleiman ben Daud and to Europeans as the mighty and inestimable King Solomon, from which the Orders take their very name and origin. Solomon was wise beyond measure and known for many astounding feats in his lifetime, the best known being the construction of the miraculous First Temple to house the Ark of the Covenant. Many Witch Hunters revere him as the greatest magician to have ever lived, so sublime in understanding and command that the very powers of Heaven and Hell revealed every mystery to him and every earthly creature danced at his pleasure. His legendary grimoire, the Key of Solomon, is also held as the greatest magical tome in the world, from which stems each of the Great Traditions and their lore, if only as lesser or debased forms of its pure and universal wisdom. This period is seen as a legendary golden age when the grandest arcane feats and mythic creatures were manifest upon the world.

FOUNDATION

The Crusaders Inviolat, heirs to the Templars, the keepers of many secrets and forgotten lore, tell of a time before now when the road that the Witch Hunters travel was first laid out before them.

It is said that in his wisdom, Solomon knew that humanity was not ready to endure the pains to master themselves and true magic, let alone to battle the forces of Hell on earth. With this in mind, Solomon set about the Three Sacred Tasks. The first was the writing of the Key of Solomon to record the unearthly wisdom granted unto him. The next was to travel the breadth of his many domains to seek out men who were both pious and brave so he might instruct them in the Great Art, thereafter founding them into the Order of Solomon upon the steps of the Temple, a sacred cabal to protect humanity from the perils and servitors of the Adversary. The third and final task was the greatest accomplishment, the making of the Great Seal to hold back the swelling tide of the Invisible World. This last achievement was truly a sublime work and a lesson for manifold generations to come, for Solomon knew that while the Great Seal was a nigh invulnerable barrier, it would not last forever. It would allow mankind a swaddling first step: just enough magic into the world so they might master its secrets, and

letting slip enough of the denizens of the Invisible World so that men must battle them and thus prepare themselves for greater challenges ahead, all while serving as a hefty reminder to never forget their sacred duty - preparing the Children of Men for the colossal conflict that would one day unavoidably come upon the world.

While Solomon lived, his sacred order banished and bound most of the unclean forces in his realm, bringing about an undreamt of age of prosperity and stability for humankind. Even after his death, the Order of Solomon persisted for generations, adopting new members where they could and gaining strength and formal structure to pass their legacy through the centuries. But this was not to last. The Great Struggle continued unabated, and as the Golden Age of Solomon faded into history and enemies of the order grew powerful in the royal courts of men, the secret war went underground and shortly disappeared from common history.

Many members of the Crusaders Inviolat hotly debate whether the Order of Solomon was destroyed, broke into lesser factions across the world, or simply disappeared along with the great store of knowledge they housed. The legends of this tragedy are as numerous as the opinions about them. Whatever the case, in time nearly all of Solomon's great works were eradicated from history by the Adversary, starting with the fall of his sacred order some three centuries later and culminating via a failed *damnatio memoriae* by the mad and possessed Emperor Caligula during his despotic seven year reign. Thereafter, no reasonable record remains within the Orders of Solomon, a trait that would remain in whole or in part until the Great Accord.

GEOGRAPHY OF THE INVISIBLE

The Orders of Solomon use the Invisible World as an overall metaphor to describe all things which common men do not or are not meant to see, everything that comprises the hidden and the supernatural. Then there are the deeper confines of the actual Invisible World, the ethereal and unimaginable realms wherein dwell spirits, demons and divinities. To distinguish between meanings, these two layers of the Invisible World are referred to as inner and outer, and collectively as the Two Kingdoms.

THE OUTER KINGDOM

The Outer Kingdom refers to the sublunary layer of the Invisible World directly overlapping the material world, usually experienced by humanity as places of hallowed power, the rites of a witch or sorcerer, or as supernatural creatures and other phenomena. The shifting presence of the Outer Kingdom is in fact what invests magic into the material plane, why humanity is able to draw down power from the Invisible World through the rites of the Great Traditions.

Manifestations of the Outer Kingdom can take many forms. Certain artifacts and ritual items are invested with the duality of the physical and the Outer Kingdom, being rooted in the material yet drawing upon the Invisible World to accomplish miraculous or horrible effects. Most magical creatures also share this dual nature,

fleshly beings with one foot upon the earth and the other in the spiritual. Sometimes manifestations of the Outer Kingdom can render a supernal physicality onto material places, such as a castle haunted with terrible apparitions or a bedeviled glen where men are known to disappear and return many years later, if at all. These places can be man made; perhaps a long established cathedral, druidic grove or similar constructions where men have toiled to touch the divine by bridging the boundary between the Invisible World and their own. Such manifestations can be ephemeral and inconstant or they can thrum with vital power. Some can develop into doorways and fairy paths, becoming the locus of great magical power or supernatural activity which draws similar forces to it. The strongest manifestations of the Outer Kingdom are often hallowed as great ritual centers, while others must be warded to bar otherworldly inhabitants from spilling out. Other materializations take place as mysterious isles, airborne castles or even cover the length and breadth of the land on pagan holy days where the veil between worlds is thin and supernal creatures stalk about to do mischief.

THE INNER KINGDOM

Where the fringes of the Invisible World are spectral projections onto reality, the Inner Kingdom is an unmistakable realm that can be entered and traveled, yet like its sublunary counterpart it is no less abstract and vague in material terms. Space and time can be distorted or shift unpredictably for non-natives, as mutable and permeable as the mortal myths which record its unimaginable confines. And as the Inner Kingdom comprises the legendary afterworlds of every myth, it cannot be thought of as exclusive to any one race of beings or set of divinities, for it holds them all in an endless subjective infinity of phantasmal space. It is the Otherworld where the primitive shaman takes his mystic spirit journey for visions of truth and power, just as much as the Shining Realms where the hermetic magus astrally projects to converse with his Holy Guardian Angel.

HELL POINTS

These dread portals are just as they sound, direct doorways to Hell. Some are formed unwittingly upon ground where great misdeeds have been done, while others are wrought consciously by the minions of the Adversary. In either case the effect is the same: a charnel cleft torn through the very fabric of material space which leads to the radiant pits of hell. Like material manifestations of the Outer Kingdom, Hell Points draw malign forces and beings magnetically, and demons may enter the world through them with relative ease. Thankfully such portals are rare occurrences, and because of the diligent quest of the Orders of Solomon, most Hell Points are noticed and sealed or destroyed before ever their cancerous influence is allowed to spread very far.

THE COMMON VIEW

No matter how primitive the culture is, at most times the notion of the Invisible World is an intangible contrivance

in light of the constant reality governing human lives. Beliefs and superstitions are lent acceptance to meet with human need and cultural propriety: faith and daily practical labors spring from this belief, but such tales are by and large uncommon in the everyday mind. They are understood in limited or even vague terms and often given little credence by conventional folk within the substantial world, particularly in more advanced cultures. And yet, humanity has ever been obsessed with the ineffable qualities of a spiritual realm, inwardly convinced that something lies behind the material, if only to give account for Creation and mortal struggles. There are also those who acknowledge the supernatural for gain or jaded thrills: not content to pursue the spiritual for solace and cosmic explanations, they are drawn to accounts and imaginings of the hallowed, the unexplainable and the eerie, even the monstrous. Sometimes even these tiny motions are heard - and answered.

ROLE OF THE WITCH HUNTER

When the uninitiated are exposed to the Invisible World, the normally dismissive rationalist quickly turns into an unhinged and fearful wretch. Should this otherworldly manifestation become a harmful menace, then the effect is greatly magnified. His reason often abandons him, and he degenerates into a superstitious and debased idiot who infects others with this madness while seeking explanation from anyone who shows a learned perspective. The resultant mob immediately gravitates toward traditional authorities to explain these strange happenings and to protect them from the supernal threat. Most native leaders and priests are often woefully unprepared for such a burden, so they in turn seek others to answer the needs of the people. Enter the Witch Hunter.

Common folk have superstitions and faith everywhere, and on occasion such superstitions will protect them. They might even rarely rise to answer threats from the spiritual realm. But unlike them, the Witch Hunter keeps the supernatural foremost in his mind, accepting it as a perceptible and immediate reality, the very essence of what drives him. Whether he is called shaman, priest, sorcerer, soldier or scholar, the off color townie or the worldly traveler, it makes no difference. The Witch Hunter is the most knowledgeable, dedicated and often, the most experienced person to intervene on mortal behalf and if needs be, to combat the malignant forces of the Invisible World. It should also be noted that this very trait can easily place the Witch Hunter in more danger than a supernatural foe, as he is often an untraditional figure who is suddenly thrust into a position of great authority, and his righteous acts can nevertheless be interpreted (or depicted) as usurpation by established leaders. The Orders of Solomon have divine glory on their side, but they must tread lightly and often humbly accept that their role of guardianship is one not often lauded (or even seen) within the public courts and the greater scope of history. Woe be upon humankind should these vigilant Warriors of Almighty God ever abandon their task.

CHAPTER EIGHT: GRIMOIRES AND RELICS

Not every rite, incantation, or hex known is immediately available to Magi, Animists, the Faithful, or their unsavory counterparts. In fact, the most commonly known rites are thought to be miniscule in comparison with those known or suspected to exist.

So where does one find these little gems? They can be teased out of ancient tomes, moldering scrolls, or coveted grimoires hidden away by their owners. Grimoires and other archaic texts can be of enormous help to Witch Hunters or a seductive instrument of ultimate damnation. The reason for this is that rites found in texts can be enacted by anyone, not just those practiced in the mystical arts. But the caster best beware, for though certain rites can be powerful or at times necessary to stop an evil taking place, some may come with a price; usually the damning of a soul a little bit at a time.

Also in this section is a small selection of relics which may be of assistance to Witch Hunters in their quest. While not exhaustive, they can be used as a guideline for Grand Masters to create their own holy or unholy relics for their campaigns.

ENACTING A RITE FROM A WRITTEN TEXT

As stated above, anyone may enact a rite or ritual directly from a grimoire or other text. There are certain rules that govern the practice.

First a text must be read and understood. This is not usually a problem if the book is written in one's own language, but can be tricky when it is written in a foreign or dead language. Under the description of Speak Language is a section on Deciphering Dialects. Follow the directions there to see if you are able to read the rite in question.

Once the rite has been read, you may begin to enact it. While requirements to enact it are waived, any material and preparation time requirements must still be followed. Luckily for those without any mystical training, the text is able to provide a modicum of expertise in the form of dice available in place of the normal Sorcerous Tradition skill used. The value is listed in the text. Should the character enacting the rite already have the skill Sorcerous Tradition, then she may use her own or the one listed in the text, whichever is greater.

Lastly, each rite in the grimoires lists the type of tradition that it belongs to. Use the Ability associated with that tradition to make your Sorcerous Tradition check. If you are already a practitioner of the tradition the rite belongs to, then the Difficulty to cast it is one less. If there is a "penalty" such as Damnation, it is applied as soon as the caster completes the rite.

LEARNING RITES FROM TEXTS

Learning a rite from a text is not as easy as simply copying it from the book it is written in to your personal grimoire. All rites must be purchased as talents like any other with SPs. Once you have spent the SPs, you know this rite from memory and no longer need the text it was written in.

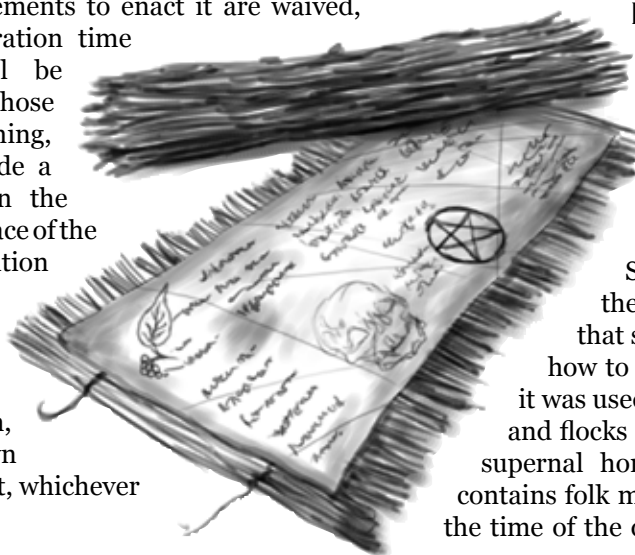
GRIMOIRES

THE WICKER BOOK

This book is a series of large, browned-hide scrolls stitched to a backing of unfinished willow twigs fastened closed with string. These scrolls are written in archaic English with a smattering of words and phrases in Middle English, Latin, and Gaelic. Some pages bear crude illustrations of plants, spirits, arcane symbols, paraphernalia, and rites. It looks nothing like a manuscript when furled, and it is easily mistaken for a common bundle of tinder about a yard in length. No one knows who made the Wicker Book, although one legend has it that the lore survived in ancient folk traditions amongst debauched villains bearing primitive masks who worshipped a pagan forest spirit. Whatever its source, it is certain that the Wicker Book contains many strange spells, plant lore, and varied names of power, pagan Gods, elemental spirits, and fey creatures of the British Isles as well as the means to bargain with these entities.

KNOWN VERSIONS

The accounts of the Wicker Book's origins are as numerous as the spells it contains. It was reputedly found in a cave within the Dane Hills, and some of these tales connect the book's origin with the dreaded Black Annis. Some claim that the Annis fashioned the work herself, while others conclude that she instructed a covey of vile witches how to make this tome. Yet others declare it was used by good witches to protect families and flocks from the terrible creature and other supernal horrors of the wilds; that the book contains folk magic and Celtic lore preserved since the time of the druids and savage Picts of old. The



tome or its rites do not enter a documented account until 985 in the writings of Saint Abbo, who recorded a gathering of woodsmen and their families some 80 years previous practicing debased rites in a small forest near the town of Haegelisdun, and these customs bear striking resemblance to those in the Wicker Book. The tome itself is not documented until 1510 at the witch trial of one Rebecca Marsten, a widow of unusually licentious character accused of murdering her husband with the aid of a demonic spirit. Witnesses at the trial claimed this spirit manifested as predators and more unnatural beasts, plaguing the county and bestowing upon its mistress all manner of uncanny enchantments, and that she summoned the beast with the aid of others “who hid their iniquitous faces, each in colored mask.” Others stated that on the full moon the witch traveled great distances by riding the demon as a terrible black stallion, a mammoth hound, or a leathery-winged beast, and it was said that she convened with other witches in distant and forlorn parts of the British Isles, a common theme even in much older stories, asserting mutual communion between witch-folk, even at great distances and over the sea. These claims and the book’s contents were described by Widow Marsten under trial by ordeal, yet the manuscript itself was never recovered.

In truth, when Rebecca’s judges burned her at the stake and divided her chattel, the Wicker Book’s appearance protected it, and it was stacked unwittingly among the kindling. The text bore potent enchantments to resist fire, tearing, and the elements, lying concealed beneath sooty remains until it was spotted by a passing tinker, who dug the book from the ashes in the hopes of selling it. But a year later, tales of the Wicker Book and “the demonic spirit which guards it” spread to other parts of England, yet the book’s whereabouts are still currently unknown. There are no known copies of the Wicker Book, yet since the whereabouts of the original have been unknown for some time, no Witch Hunter discounts its survival or the passage of its lore to other sources. There is an account by the Brotherhood of the Broken Spear which supports this possibility, telling of a diabolical Spanish priest captured near London, who used spells similar to those described in the account of Widow Marsten’s trial. A Galician tome was found amongst his blasphemous belongings, and while the text contained many unwholesome devices and charms, it did not fit the description of the fabled Wicker Book.

RITES

The hexes and enchantments of the Wicker Book draw upon the elements and invocations to ancient divinities and fey creatures to empower the witch and her spells. If the witch should form a coven and give praise to these heathen Gods, then their unified power increases dramatically.

The Wicker Book has a Sorcerous Tradition score of 4 for the purposes of enacting rites.

BASIC RITES

Evil Eye

Tradition: Witchcraft

Difficulty: Varies

Time: 1 round/1 round

Duration: 1 day/success

Strain: 1/2/2/3

Description: One of the most infamous hexes across the world, the Evil Eye has been known amongst common folk since ancient times. The witch covers one eye and then concentrates her gaze on the person who has displeased her, immediately afflicting them with sickness, feelings of misfortune, looming dread, or instilling some unnatural passion. The witch can choose from one of five functions listed below with the appropriate difficulty.

Misfortune (Difficulty 2): An air of bad luck and gloomy thoughts plague the victim. For the duration of the hex, the target loses a success roll. In addition, any 1s rolled cancel out successes. Alternatively, this hex can be cast upon an object. The use of this object has the same effect above or may cause serious injury through accidents or mishaps.

Passion (Difficulty 3): This hex draws out some vice or passion, such as anger, lust, vanity, or gluttony with appropriate results. If this passion is particular to the victim, they must expend 2 hero points to resist temptations put forth by the GM.

Sickness (Difficulty 4): The victim is subject to a dehydrating illness that debilitates them physically, halving their movement, and reducing all physical abilities by one. They remain shaken and thirsty for the rite’s duration and any checks versus hexes or effects that affect the victim’s health are lowered by an additional die, including healing.

Death Hex (Difficulty 4): The victim is consumed by such feelings of fearful and delusional despair that they remove themselves into a secluded locale for protection. Odd occurrences and sudden disturbances will launch the victim into frenzied hysterics, and they suffer -1 die to all Reason and Resolve checks while in this state. Unless they are aided by prayer or warding magic, the victim will remain convinced that they will die until their self-fulfilling prophecy becomes true, suffering a heart attack and dropping dead. Witches sometimes orchestrate actual mysterious, frightening, or life-threatening encounters to increase the victim’s paranoia and the chance that this hex will succeed.

Peering Stone

Tradition: Animism, Witchcraft

Difficulty: 2

Time: 10 minutes/1 round

Duration: 10 minutes

Strain: 0

Description: A Peering Stone is made by enchanting a holed stone found by chance, usually in a river bed or some other water source. This bauble is then enchanted at twilight at some liminal place such as a lake shore or

inside a door mantle. Thereafter a witch may use it to spot magical auras as well as fairies, ghosts, and other invisible beings. The Peering Stone by no means offers any protection from being seen by invisible creatures, who usually flee if they detect themselves being looked upon but may take an unhealthy interest in the witch spying upon them.

Sacred Mare's Meal

Tradition: Animism, Witchcraft

Difficulty: 2

Time: 20 minutes/1 round

Duration: 30 minutes plus five minutes for each additional success

Strain: 1

Description: This rite allows a witch to charm a crushed concoction of acorns, herbs, and sweet grain to feed a horse or some other beast of burden. The animal will be cured of any malady it suffers, anything from exhaustion or game leg to fever, and if the beast has been afflicted by some witchcraft, it gains another resistance check and three bonus dice to do so. Furthermore, a witch may paint a horse with the symbols of Epona and empower the beast to ride with unearthly speed and constitution, giving the creature three additional dice to its Toughness and doubling its base speed. The charmed mount can traverse unsure ground, swamps, rivers, lakes, and even chasms without faltering, so long as the rider never directs it to slow or stop. Legends claim that the most powerful witches can create a meal strong enough for their horses to fly or gallop over large lakes and even the ocean.

Whistling Stone

Tradition: Animism, Witchcraft

Difficulty: 2

Time: 15 minutes/1 round

Duration: 10 minutes

Strain: 1

Description: This formula uses a holed stone carved so that it makes a simple note when blown through. The stone is scribed with symbols by an iron nail, and sometimes one or more of these are depended from the stone in the form of an amulet. When the witch casts the rite, the whistling sound made by the stone is very unpleasant and loud to fey creatures and incorporeal entities of all sorts, acting as a compulsive charm which forces them to come out of hiding, cover their ears, and even cry out unless they successfully make a D4 Resolve (Courage) check. Weaker beings can be overcome by the sound and will flee, can be knocked prone, or do drastic things to allay it if this is not possible, while stronger entities might attempt to attack whoever makes the terrible pealing sound afflicting them. A witch need not fear so long as they continue blowing the whistling stone or bear other magical protections, and a bargain might be struck through this compulsion.

Veil of Beasts

Tradition: Animism, Witchcraft

Difficulty: 2

Time: 10 minutes/1 minute

Duration: 1 hour

Strain: 1

Description: This simple but effective charm disguises voices and the disturbance of even large gatherings by transforming them into the normal sounds and susurrations of nature: the movement and calls of birds and beasts, wind through a field or groaning tree bowers, the babbling of a brook or fish capering in lapping waves. This spell is most effective in natural surroundings, although it can be used in a town or at an observed distance. Should this gathering grow overloud, such as through an argument or melee ensuing, or an outside observer approaches too closely, the enchantment ceases to work.

GREATER RITES

Imp Bottle

Tradition: Animism, Witchcraft

Difficulty: 3

Time: 2 hours/1 round

Duration: See below

Strain: 2

Description: An Imp Bottle is made by marking or etching a colored bottle with tiny binding symbols that turns it into an enchanted vessel of sparkling glass. The Imp Bottle is then set on a windowsill or suspended from a tree branch or overhang where fey spirits and demons are known to haunt. The bottle looks beautiful and mesmerizing to these creatures, and they will try to get closer to touch or even steal it. However, as soon as they make contact they will be sucked inside (regardless of their dimensions) and beheld bound unless they can make a D3 Concentrate (Will) check. Any additional successes beyond the required number may be used to increase the difficulty of the Will check.

The spell is often used to bind a fairy or weak demon to stop its depredations, to compel the creature into some task or for information, or to lure it into servitude as the witch's familiar. If a caster wishes to contain the creature for long durations, she will usually set the vessel inside a binding circle and can give her captive treats to soothe it and compel it to stay.

An Imp Bottle is difficult to shatter except with great blows, but it can be exorcised to dispel its powers and release the creature bound inside. The magic bottle can also be used to deflect the evil eye by holding it up directly or warding a portal it is suspended from, which will add 3 dice to the bearer's defense against the attack. However, such an attack shatters the bottle, and if it contains a spirit, the creature escapes and likely seeks retribution on the witch who tricked it. An Imp Bottle can also be used in conjunction with Charm Interaction checks against lesser fairies, moving their initial disposition to you up by two (from Indifference to Friendly, for example), but they will become anything from disgruntled to angry if the charm check is unsuccessful.

Poison Fang**Tradition:** Witchcraft**Difficulty:** 3**Time:** 5 minutes/1 round**Duration:** Special**Strain:** 2**Damnation:** 1/3

Description: This enchantment is cast on a wand or other sharp ritual weapon, including spears, a sharpened staff, or fetish weapons. The charmed weapon has an unseemly greenish sheen and now carries a bite of noxious venom not easily cured, and it is considered magically envenomed until it strikes at least once. Once a blow is struck, the victim's skin will grow ashen, followed by aching joints, weakness, chills, and violent fever, causing +4 hits. After the initial round when the target was struck, he must make a D4 Endurance (Toughness) check each round thereafter, up to a number of rounds equal to 2 + any additional successes beyond the ones necessary. If successful, the target takes no additional damage. If the victim fails the check, then he takes an additional +4 hits.

The poisonous spell soon allows the victim to scry better into the spirit world, yet this is no boon. They will soon be afflicted with terrible visions. Even if they do not die from the feverish poison, for the next twelve hours the victim is seriously impaired, and their suffering makes them more prone to be noticed by any incorporeal entity nearby, which will attempt to attack and possess such a debilitated target. Witch Hunter accounts report that some covens and cults bind their supplicants splayed out and hanging to use this spell in an initiation rite called the Kiss of the Spider. Those who survive this painful ordeal often return with prophecies and an intimate connection to powerful spiritual beings from deep within the Invisible World.

Spriggan Dance**Tradition:** Witchcraft**Difficulty:** 3**Time:** 1 minute/1 round**Duration:** 15 minutes**Strain:** 3**Damnation:** 1/5

Description: This ancient Pictish ritual takes the form of a strange athletic jig invoking a wave of earth power which surges through and transforms the witch's body into a craggy, muscled giant or shrill hag with a horribly distorted appearance. This change gives the witch greater strength and resilience along with hard-nailed fists to claw and rend opponents, and they are still quite capable of casting other spells. The witch gains 4 dice plus any additional successes to split between Strength and Toughness. The price of this great size is a ravenous hunger, and unless they are in combat, the adept will consume any food they come across for the duration. This hunger becomes peculiar and monstrous over time; those so transformed often lust after sweets, alcoholic beverages, young livestock, blood, corpses, and even children, and must use all of their will to control these urges. If the

witch continues to feed their monstrous appetite they can double the duration of the spell. It is rumored that those who spend too much time in this form have their minds irrevocably warped, and some evil covens claim there is a cannibalistic rite that allows a witch to gain this power permanently and activate it at will.

Wheel of Brigantia**Tradition:** Animism, Witchcraft**Difficulty:** 3**Time:** 2 minutes/1 round**Duration:** 15 minutes**Strain:** 3

Description: Using a wand or stave, the witch draws a Brigantia's Cross (also known as Brigid's or Saint Brigit's Cross) and encapsulates it in a circle while invoking her to bless this ancient symbol, causing the symbol to burst into a writhing hedge of searing flames. This protective hoop of fire can be animated and travel slowly with the witch. The flames have a DM of +6 if they are disturbed or crossed, including any attacks upon the witch which cannot fully reach across the flaming barrier. Provided the base difficulty of the ritual is achieved, the caster may add any additional successes to the DM. In the case of the mobile effect, should he or she be pressed to move any faster than a slow walk, the Wheel of Brigantia disintegrates. The witch may control the circle's size to accommodate up to seven allies, and all inside add 5 to Defense against flames and fire attacks. Furthermore, anything flammable touched by the burning wheel may catch fire.

VILLAINOUS RITES**Unseelie Haunting****Tradition:** Witchcraft**Difficulty:** 4 or higher**Time:** 15 minutes/3 rounds**Duration:** Special (see below)**Strain:** 4**Damnation:** 1/3

Description: This ritual hex is accomplished by using an imp bottle baited with sweets or some other article. These are placed inside the location the witch desires the trapped creature to haunt. Alternatively, the witch can also inscribe the name of a person inside the bottle and leave it in some glen or ruin fey creatures are known to haunt. When the unseelie spirit appears, they will inspect the bottle and be bound fast and cannot leave until they fulfill the requests of the witch, who will release the pact-bound creature to do its work. Usually the witch will set a proscribed time or reasonable conditions, and the creature is sure to comply to release itself from the binding, and those creatures that do not can be compelled back to the witch until they release themselves unless they somehow dispel the enchantment. Truly malicious witches will attempt to trick the spirit with vague conditions, or else make some outrageous or nearly impossible demand, which infuriates the dark fairy and ensures its target

will be especially well-tormented. While this method is sure to grant the witch a most potent haunting on their enemy, most are wise enough not to do such a thing, for if the creature should break free of the rite (such as by an exorcism), it will immediately seek out the witch for retribution. That a witch was too stubborn or died before they released their captive has made some of the most diabolical hauntings ever known, the spirit growing ever angrier and insane over the years. When the witch casts the spell, the GM must determine whether the conditions are basic enough to keep the base difficulty or if they are higher, but so long as the witch succeeds, the unseele creature is bound until they meet the conditions.

Breath of Crom Slough

Tradition: Witchcraft

Difficulty: 4

Time: 1 hour/2 rounds

Duration: 10 minutes

Strain: 4

Damnation: 2/6

Description: This maleficent curse manifests as a sickly creeping mist from delves and depressions in the ground, said to be the very fuming respirations of an ancient subterranean death God. It can be directed toward crops, herds, or worse, a singular individual, causing its targets to sicken and wither as if afflicted with a deadly contagion which affects the vitality of all living things. If the target is an individual, that person is stricken and loses 3 plus any additional successes achieved points of Toughness. A successful D4 Toughness check reduces the loss by one point plus a point for each additional success achieved above those needed. Should the target's Toughness score reach zero, the unfortunate dies a withering, painful death.

If the witch uses the True Name of one or more victims in conjunction with this hex, the effect is far more dangerous as the target cannot make a Toughness check to reduce the ability loss, and those so named are sure to die unless protected by potent wards or sacred ground. This spell can be fought with certain herbs, protective circles, talismans, and of course, the prayers of the righteous.

Additional Benefits

Rite of the Wise

If the Wicker Book is studied at length, it can teach a disciplined student the ways of the Witchcraft Tradition. In time such a witch can initiate others and even found a coven to perform more powerful rituals.

Lore of the Old Gods

If used as a reference for magical creatures and spiritual lore regarding fairies and native myths and symbolism of the British Isles, this tome lends 4 bonus dice to any Myth and Lore check.

Healing Magic of Flora

The Wicker Book details numerous plants, trees, and herbs for apotropaic charms and medicinal uses, and renders +2 bonus dice to any Herbalism check used to identify plants and Heal checks when these plants are used.

VON GRIMMEL'S DIARY

This book is revered amongst the Orders of Solomon, as it contains the lurid recordings of the famous German Witch Hunter Herman Von Grimmel, a zealous Catholic nobleman who spared no expense or effort to hunt down the most wicked witch covens and unholy abominations to purge them from the face of the earth. So unswerving was this Witch Hunter that even the sacred orders and Witch Hunters of his day were wary or downright intimidated in approaching him, and it is well known that Von Grimmel cleansed those peers he felt had strayed to the ways of the Adversary. While his Catholic peers urged him to join the struggle against the rebellious Protestant Reformation,



Von Grimmel rebuked this plight as a hollow political and denominational pandering in light of more obvious diabolical threats to Holy Mother Church.

Von Grimmel knew that the unholy agents he stalked used cunning deceptions to cover their detestable works, and he worked hard to discover clues and traces which revealed these agencies. He was by nature an unflappable and fastidious man

driven to understand the methods of his foes, so he recorded every nuance and arcane correspondence he encountered in a referential guide to detect witchcraft and the unnatural stain of the Invisible World around him. As a result, the written legacy he left behind contains a painstaking record of information on witchcraft, cults, supernatural beings, magical paraphernalia, and ploys used by witches and sorcerers, along with numerous prayers, seals, banishments, and other means to combat such powers. Von Grimmel's diary is famed among the sacred orders, and Witch Hunters should count themselves lucky to have such an arsenal of lore at their disposal. However despite Von Grimmel's good intentions, his fierce reputation amongst the witches of many lands also spread the knowledge of what his diary contained. So detailed are

its confines that these sorcerers greatly covet the book for the treasure trove of occult lore within, and they will go to great lengths to retrieve it.

KNOWN VERSIONS

Next to an old family bible, Von Grimmel's most prized worldly possession was his diary. On his deathbed he summoned a devout Bavarian soldier named Matias Fuchs, a fellow Catholic who had served as a collaborator and brother in arms for nearly three decades. Matias took an oath that he would at cost of his own life deliver the diary safely to the appointed curators of the Vatican library. He accomplished this task, but not before copying the text in an archaic version of the Bayerisch dialect to veil its confines and continue its legacy. After using the tome's lore and his own seasoned experience abroad for some years, Matias in turn also became famed for works opposing the perils of the Evil One. Matias was also much more lenient and approachable than his stoic predecessor, ever a friend to "the faithful and diligent fellows of the Holy Cross," yet he never officially joined any Catholic body or the Orders of Solomon. During a pilgrimage to Santiago de Compostela, Matias was recognized by a Portuguese nobleman, who insisted that he accompany him as a guest in Tomar, Portugal, and that he meet the diligent members of the Order of Christ, long known as a successor to the Portuguese Templars. There Matias took rest and received succor from the lords of that town, who in time introduced him to a seneschal of the Crusaders Inviolates. This nameless warrior convinced Matias to accompany him to the Convento de Cristo and make a Latin copy of Von Grimmel's Diary for safekeeping and use amongst their order. After this, Matias retired as a monk and passed from common knowledge, but his copy of the diary surfaced suddenly in 1604 at Saint Martin's Church in Landshut, kept by the priests as a revered work for some years, and a plate outside the church can still be viewed which bears his name.

Upon learning of this book, numerous Witch Hunters and their agents attempted to peruse its invaluable confines, but only the most trusted and devout petitioners were ever allowed to see it, and then only under close scrutiny, as several imposters and burglars had tried to access or purloin the text for their own dubious purposes. In those years the book and the fame of its authors drew numerous visitants, but it was decided that the diary was too much at risk and thereafter it mysteriously disappeared. Some Witch Hunters believed a priest took the diary to Munich, while others say it remains hidden within the church (strangely, behind or within the grand organ) but no Witch Hunter or the Orders have ever confirmed these claims. Versions of the Latin copy have been seen as far away as Saint Augustine in the New World, but most were sent to select chapter houses of the Crusaders Inviolates and affiliates of the Order of Christ. This tome is a revered work, but also one coveted by the despicable agents of the Adversary, so faithful men have labored hard to conceal the whereabouts of any version.

rites

Von Grimmel's Diary contains some thirty years' record of spells and unnatural creatures, but most are descriptive accounts not written in the straightforward manner of other occult tomes. However, learned sorcerers and occultists can unravel this arcane lore provided they have time to study the diary. Conversely, the wards and prayers used to combat supernal forces are more direct, penned intentionally to aid the faithful in continuing the righteous quest of the Witch Hunter.

Von Grimmel's Diary has a Sorcerous Tradition score of 4 for the purposes of enacting rites.

BASIC RITES

Banish Passion

Tradition: Prayer

Difficulty: 2

True Faith: 1

Time: 1 round/2 rounds

Duration: Instantaneous

Strain: 2

Description: When this rebuke is invoked, the faithful gently speaks to and lays their hands upon a person afflicted with fear, rage, madness, lust, drunkenness, or some other base emotion or state, which brings the afflicted into a temporary state of peaceful calm. This forces the victim to make a D3 Will or True Faith check immediately. Successfully making the check banishes this condition and returns the person to his "normal" state.

Use of this rite in conjunction with a religious article or holy water has been known to dispel certain charms and hexes such as nightmares, baneful runes, or the seduction of a succubus. The target is immediately allowed to make an additional check to resist, but the difficulty is one lower. See original hex or rite for the difficulty. This rite is only able to counteract effects dealing with emotion. It cannot help those who are possessed or controlled.

Domini Canis

Tradition: Prayer

Difficulty: 2

True Faith: 2

Time: 1 round/1 round

Duration: 15 minutes plus five minutes for each additional success

Strain: 1

Description: This prayer imbues the faithful with the power to detect the unnatural emanations of the Invisible World. Once invoked, this sixth sense detects magical forces, a demonic presence in a room, or steers a Witch Hunter toward the path or sequestered hiding place of an unnatural horror. Anyone blessed with this ability merely gets a vague sense of direction and where to go to get closer, but it does not allow them to actually see invisible entities or know the immediate whereabouts of an unholy foe. This sense cannot be used to distinguish between two possessed men in a crowd as it only conveys a vague sensation.

GREATER RITES

Compel Spirit

Tradition: Prayer

Difficulty: 3

True Faith: 2

Time: none/1 round +1 round per additional success above those needed

Duration: 1 round

Strain: 2

Description: This holy command uses spoken prayers and a strongly-presented holy article such as a cross or bible to compel an incorporeal spirit or demon to perform one action they would otherwise not wish to do unless they resist. Minor spirits (those listed as Minions) can be banished for a time with the use of this prayer unless they succeed in a D4 resolve (Will) check and witches and sorcerers who know of it often give their familiars amulets for protection against such rebukes.

More powerful spirits and devils bear more resistance to the compulsion (D3 Resolve (Will) check), but they can nevertheless still be affected by its holy charm. These beings must resist or stop attacking, moving, or drop an item or person they are carrying or suffer wracking pains and damage. However, those who issue the command must do so carefully, as evil creatures will twist or pervert the command and will not do something which would cause it direct or lasting harm. A flying devil can be made to land, but not fall plummeting to the earth, and if it is commanded to release a girl it is carrying, it will simply drop her.

If the spirit's True Name is used, it is much easier to compel and must obey so long as the command does not result in its harm or destruction (and it receives another chance to break free). More powerful beings can continue to resist (once a round) even if they failed their initial Resolve check, and should the Witch Hunter falter in faith or go unconscious, the compelled entity breaks free of the command and can do what it wills.

Holy Seal

Tradition: Prayer

Difficulty: 3 + special (see below)

True Faith: 1

Time: 1 round +1 round per additional success above those needed

Duration: 24 hours

Strain: 1

Description: This minor seal of Solomon is invoked by a testament to the Lord while the Witch Hunter lays their hands upon an ally or concentrates on a servant of the Adversary, so long as the target can be seen and hears the invocation (although without touching, the difficulty is one higher). The Holy Seal appears on the forehead and is normally invisible, but those who can peer into the Invisible World can see it clearly. It can be used as a prayer or a rebuke, depending on whom the faithful casts it upon and for what purpose. If the seal bearer should break the conditions of the seal type, such as starting a

conflict while wearing a seal of peace, the effects of the seal immediately end.

Seal of Peace: An air of peace and tranquility surrounds the bearer and affects anyone they meet. Evil persons and creatures who encounter such a person feel this compulsion, and those who resist it (D3 Resolve (Will)) can still attack but at -2 dice penalty. Defending oneself does not break this seal so long as the bearer does not instigate the conflict, and any diplomatic checks aimed at tranquil resolution receive an additional +2 bonus dice.

Seal of Devotion: The bearer swears an oath to adhere to a person or take some simple burden which will aid others, such as carrying out a basic last request, guarding a lost child to a village, and so forth. For doing so, the bearer receives +2 bonus die to any task directly relating to this goal.

Seal of Penitence: This seal may be cast on the wicked and the foul causing them great pain and anguish. After enacting the rite, the target makes an immediate D3 Damnation check. If successful, their evil overwhelms the seal's power. If the target fails the check it is branded with a holy seal upon its brow that burns agonizingly. It immediately takes 4 hits of damage. In addition, should it wish to do anything beyond moving, screaming, or other simple tasks, it must succeed at a D3 Concentrate (Will) check first.

Seal of Scorn: The person or creature has committed despicable acts and so bears a mark of scorn that all Witch Hunters can see immediately. The bearer receives a -1 die penalty to resisting all rites enacted by all Witch Hunters without a Damnation score.

Sacred Seal of the Powers

Tradition: Prayer/Hermetic

Difficulty: 5

True Faith: 3

Time: 30 minutes/ 3 rounds

Duration: 24 hours

Strain: 4

Description: This powerful seal makes use of a cross-shaped sigil surrounded by the angelic symbols of the Choir of Powers. It is inscribed in white on a portal, floor, or object while invoking their holy names and the sacred duty they bear: worldly intervention on behalf of the righteous. The ward may be used as a circle of protection for up to seven individuals to stand within and be used to bar malignant spirits, demons, and certain unnatural creatures from crossing a threshold, opening a window, or it may be drawn upon an object to protect it from evil hands.

When drawn and empowered by the prayer, the circle may defend against vile creatures and their powers with a Damnation score of 10. Successes in excess of those needed may be used to increase the duration of the seal. See Inscribing the Circle side bar on page 128 for further details and options.

HEROIC RITES

Seal of the Angelic Presence

Tradition: Prayer

Difficulty: 4

True Faith: 5

Time: 15 minutes/1 round

Duration: 20 minutes

Strain: 3

Description: This powerful seal was taken from the writings of Phillip of Vacluse, a devout Cistercian ascetic plagued by powerful visions of prophecy spoken by luminous angels. Von Grimmel studied and meditated on Phillip's writings often until he received his own visitation detailing how to draw a seal to call down the direct presence of an angel from the Choir of Virtues to draw out what is best and good in the invoker. When the seal is drawn on a holy article or as a ward upon the ground, a glorious presence manifests as a radiant luminescence settling about the person who invokes it, so awesome to look upon that even trusted companions will be awed and feel a slight twinge of fear. Only powerful evil spirits and creatures can resist this holy illumination, and lesser creatures, willful mobs, and unrighteous folk will usually cower or flee in stark terror.

This powerful seal has a variety of effects once enacted. First, while under the effect of this seal, the priest has an additional dice pool equal to his True Faith score. These bonus die can be used for any check or task, including defense that the priest may wish. Once used, these bonus die are gone unless the prayer is enacted again.

Secondly, any and all minor (Basic) blights like the evil eye, charm, or hex are dispelled and fail to function against the priest. Furthermore, anyone in a ten-foot radius of this rite who is charmed or possessed may immediately make another resistance attempt.

Lastly, those wicked of heart or those who wish to do the invoker harm must first succeed in a D4 Resolve (Courage) check before being able to do so. An additional check to overcome the awe and fear of this rite is allowed each round.

Additional Benefits

Lore of the Church

Von Grimmel's Diary contains numerous rites and philosophical letters directly regarding the catechism and practices of the Christian faith and the Catholic Church. Those who study these rites in conjunction with a bible can become an initiate of the Prayer Rite by expending the appropriate SPs cost. Thereafter, they may access abilities of this path and even perform simple masses and other ceremonies with a True Faith check. This by no means makes them

an officially ordained priest of any denomination, nor does it give them official authority from any established church.

Lore of the Devout Hunter

Von Grimmel's Diary is filled with a lifetime of this Witch Hunter's encounters with the Invisible World, so it can be used to lend +4 bonus dice to Myth and Lore or Occult checks to research supernatural creatures and holy invocations.

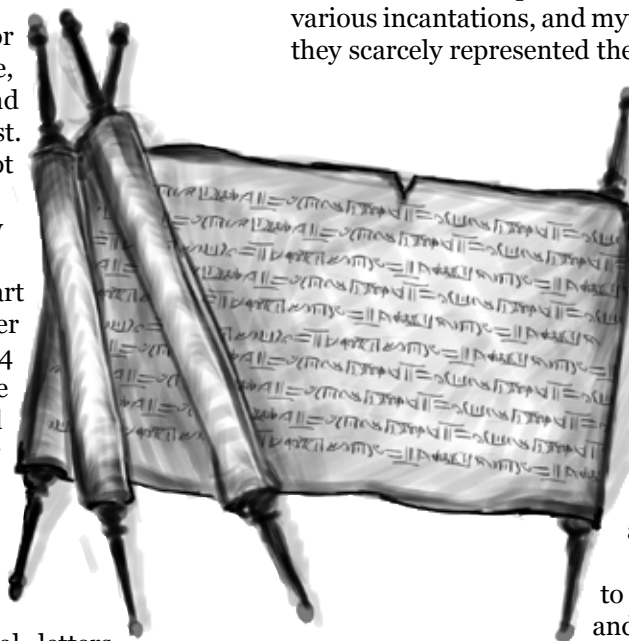
THE (LOST) BOOK OF ISIS

This is not so much a singular tome as it is a varied tradition that has plagued the righteous and Witch Hunters alike for centuries uncounted. It was passed on since the reign of the Egyptian pharaohs to Ptolemaic Alexandria and onward into Greece through devotees of Serapis, who transported it to venerable Eleusis. Even in ancient times, the Teachings of Isis were known from Numidia to the Beqaa Valley by varied names, another proof of its haunting presence since antiquity. The Eleusinian mysteries shared many parallels with these old teachings, and this tome survived in Europe well into the late Roman era via far-flung Isis temples and other feminine cult centers. Strabo, Ptolemy, and Seneca all mention Isis' cult in writings about the temple complex and popular Osiris passion plays on the islands of Philae (where one of his dismembered parts was reputed to be buried). Arcadius of Hippo proclaimed that the Teachings of Isis were once a goodly devotion, but over the generations the rites were misinterpreted or used for inequitable works, various incantations, and myths added to the corpus until they scarcely represented the beliefs of life and universal harmony they once did.

Arcadius cites it is a prime example that no demonic adversary is required for corruption, but that the follies of men of any race turn purity and sacred knowledge to the path of evil. Whatever the truth, this tradition has diverged numerous times to spawn several arcane tomes, and it has ever been the locus for dark sorcerers and abnormalities of nature.

The original work seems to have been an untainted and complete myth of Isis

(Jeset) and Osiris (Ausare) in ritual form, and much of the story dealt with the battle against the evils and jealousies of Set (Sutekh) and keeping oneself aligned with cosmic truth and order (Maat). Even in the modern versions of this tradition, there is an initiation taught only to the wisest initiates called the Teaching of Maat Kheru. This lore revealed the method for speaking magical incantations in the land of the dead when one died; this



is believed to be similar to (if not synonymous with) the sacred Language of the Birds in Greek myth. Those who learned this secret knowledge used it to commune with the Gods to become one with cosmic accord and prepare the soul for the afterlife, and eventually a body of magical prayers, astrology, and additive myths was formed within the innermost priesthods of nearly all branches of the tradition. Unfortunately, this magical language could also be used for grand sorceries and to bind the forces of the Invisible World to mortal bidding. The Book of Isis, therefore, also contains the descriptions and spells of other secretive cults, the best examples being the Therapeutae of Lake Mareotis and that of Anpu, known better as Anubis of Cynopolis. In later Greek and Roman versions of these books, Anubis is often equated with Cerberus or Hermes, and medieval alchemists and authors, especially those influenced by the writings of Lucius Apuleius, made this being into an alchemical composite named Hermanubis. Regardless of its possible righteous beginnings, most derivative versions of the Teachings of Isis are now of dubious character and proof that old evils die hard, disguised in new and hidden forms through esoteric cults and sorcerers.

KNOWN VERSIONS

Because of its great age and meanderings across numerous cultures, there is no telling how many versions of the Book of Isis exist, but it is certain that most are mere fragments of the original, itself distinguished by being called the Lost Book of Isis. Several sorcerers and cabals have tried to reconstruct the original from known fragments and legends, but as far as is commonly known, none have succeeded. There is, however, two versions which resemble a nearly complete text, but even these exist as mere rumor as far as the Orders of Solomon are concerned.

According to legend, the first copy of the Book of Isis was recorded on the crude walls of a nameless temple hidden in the reeds of Lake Mareotis. This shrine gained notoriety when a priestess named Amaneshret performed a miraculous cure for the daughter of a prominent official in Rhakotis, who rewarded her with gold, herds, and land for a larger temple along with official protection under the law. Despite her fortune, Amaneshret accepted only a humble cellar beneath a greater temple and insisted that her cult likewise share this plain character. Many accounts exist of the cures and great spells of the ascetic priestess, and Amaneshret is said to have dispelled three hauntings, averted a number of natural disasters, and even warded off a large pirate attack on Rhakotis. It is uncertain which of the written accounts are apocryphal, as Amaneshret was later deified and the tales embellished or blended with others. During her life she gained a number of monkish followers, and it is likely that the canon and Teachings of the Maat Kheru were written down and codified at this point. Amaneshret's temple priests performed officiating rites for the city and flourished for several generations, growing in fame and gaining visitors from as far away as inner Phoenicia, but they were overshadowed by the

prestigious Great Temple of Philae and willingly kept this humble status. These stories continue in varied accounts assembled from multiple sources, including the spread of Isis worship throughout the Mediterranean via the more influential Great Temple at Philae, which paid homage to numerous divinities but was originally dedicated to this Goddess. The last historical account of Amaneshret's temple mysteriously alludes to some sudden tragedy or betrayal, and modern magi suspect the event was too shameful or horrible to record, or that the Isis cult fell from political favor.

In reality the Egyptian priests fled with their Greek allies to Attica in fear of persecution from the invading Persian army under Artaxerxes III, since they were known to have greatly aided past rebellions against his predecessors. The entire priesthood quickly sealed what they could not smuggle out of Rhakotis, and in time the temple was forgotten. Nearly two hundred years later, Alexander the Great charged his architect Dinocrates to renovate Rhakotis and renamed it Alexandria, but the actual work was to come later while the conqueror went east on campaign. Construction continued under the infamous governor Cleomenes; during this time the old temple grounds were unearthed. Only the foundation of the larger temple remained, but the cellar vault that housed the Isis cult was revealed nearly intact, its walls adorned with vivid murals of esoteric Egyptian rites and manuscripts. Cleomenes learned of the myths of Amaneshret through Egyptian commoners and ordered the temple to be studied and eventually restored for his own selfish designs, namely controlling the populace through the priesthood. Yet because of his poor reputation and patronage it gained no prestige or worshippers until Cleomenes' execution in the reign of his successor, Ptolemy I Soter. The daily activity of new worshippers caused an alcove wall to collapse and reveal an antechamber with mummified priests sitting erect around a priestess bearing a throne-shaped crown, a turquoise scepter, and several papyrus scrolls in a cured leather case. The wisest priests studied these texts, which were similar to the old fertility festivals held at Djedu (known to the Greeks as Busiris) and as they grew to understand how powerful and potentially dangerous this knowledge was, they took pains to hide this lore from Ptolemy's obsessive quest to fill the Library of Alexandria "with every book in the world." The inner priesthood grudgingly conceded that the temple murals and inscriptions would be copied and placed in the great library, but this text was destroyed many years later when that fabled hoard of books perished in flame.

The Isis priesthood also served as physicians and scholars attached to the Mouseion; Hermetic magi claim that the resurrected temple laid beneath the newly founded Serapeion, itself a known library of the divine sciences and well linked with their tradition. They decided that their tradition was to be kept a closely guarded secret, but debated whether the Book of Isis was to be hidden away behind protective wards and guardians, or

burned so the knowledge could be catechized and thus safeguarded by the inner priesthood. Before they came to a decision, one of their trusted acolytes overheard this debate in part, and misunderstanding their goal and fretting at such a loss, stole into the innermost chamber housing the sacred texts for many nights to copy them and then flee into the wilderness. He became known as Ankhenawi, an indomitable sorcerer chief feared greatly across North Africa and the Middle East, and Arab stories tell that he became corrupt from living too long with such divine power at his command. Ankhenawi had several apprentices, but only one survived his wrath and arduous trials, a Bedouin orphan he called Nuri, who soothed his tempestuous heart with her chaste faith and incorruptibility. Nuri was given a final test by being allowed to view his volatile spellbook, the Shoit Kemluzige, better known to Europeans as the dread Book of the Black Locust. This tome contained the Teachings of Isis but also the grim arcana Ankhenawi gained from a lifetime of scouring myths and writings in the black places of the world. Yet instead of growing drunk with power-lust and adding to the book's blasphemous contents, Nuri perceived Ankhenawi's test and used what she gained to hearken back to the original teachings of the cult. She transcribed the rituals into a thickly-paged papyrus book and named the text Awi-Aka, or Glory of the Reeds. Both of these versions have been mentioned in various North African accounts for centuries, and during the Second Crusade, French Templars sacked an old scriptorium beneath a Hanafi school near Tyre and discovered a giant scroll containing a fragment of the Teachings of Isis along with older syncretic myths and astrological workings from Chaldea and other parts of ancient Babylon. This scroll must have at some point been transported back to France, as a Latin copy reappeared three years later in the city of Angers, given as an exotic gift to the court of Geoffrey Plantagenet. Upon his death the magical text could not be found, thought to have been taken with a number of other magical tomes and objects by Geoffrey's Court Magus, Berichiyah ben Sophar, also known as Boneventus or Berichias the Jew, who fled to unknown parts ahead of numerous enemies from which his deceased patron had kept at bay.

In Greece, the priests who took shelter in Attica from the Persians found fertile soil in the Eleusinian mysteries. When the temple of Amaneshret again flourished under Ptolemy I, these foreign rituals gained prominence, and the resurrection myth of Isis and Osiris was similar enough to their own divine stories, except that they changed the Gods to known divinities. In time this syncretic reinterpretation formed its own rite, filled out with native metaphysical principles, and eventually transcribed by the inner priesthood into a tome called Persephone's Mirror. This book was popular with alchemists and gnostics of the Roman era, but it survived more as a referential treatise for these spiritual philosophers than a cult, although the mystery rite did continue in that form in numerous places. However,

anything even resembling the licentious cults of Isis was often deemed immoral in proper Roman society, and by the time of Emperor Justinian all branches of this tradition went completely underground from common persecutions of pagan rites and magicians. The tradition survived in private libraries and occult circles within the fringe provinces, but no longer with the public ceremonial bombast of its heyday.

Persephone's Mirror reappeared throughout the Middle Ages as a recovered Greek masterpiece and a blessed work among magicians who recognized its veiled themes. By now this version was transcribed into Latin and circulated amongst noble cabals in Italy and France, and a lone copy was revealed as far east as Ankara by Hungarian Witch Hunters disguised as mercenaries in the employ of the Ottoman Turks. Most copies were crude handwritten examples that did not survive the passing years, but a few were protected and often handed down for several generations as heirlooms of secret knowledge. These more complete (and more rare) copies of Persephone's Mirror were disguised as mere fanciful Greek myth, their rites and spells decoded with invisible script or symbol keys hidden within margins and plates, or with separate legend pages kept to access the real arcana within. Lesser copies often fell to the typical depredations of time, but a few survived well into the fifteenth century and beyond, some notable vulgate copies safeguarded in Parisian libraries along with a Ladino translation in Castile and a badly-damaged Italian version seized during the arrest of a Benandanti "abbess" and her accomplices near Udine in 1488. Most copies fashioned in this era were penned or printed in the Greek style, and only one book containing the Egyptian rite has been reported since 1570, but given the long-lived and diverse profusion of the Teachings of Isis and its descendants, there is no telling where this arcane lore might again crop up, and in what form.

RITES

No known version of the Book of Isis or its derivative texts contains all of these spells - many contain quite a few others - and they are as varied as the cultures through which this tradition has spread. The most complete tomes bear the Teachings of Maat Kheru, funerary rituals, sacred geometry, astrology, divinations, and dubious necromantic charms and summons for the beings of the Underworld. The more common versions are drawn from Persephone's Mirror and are thus more Greek in theme and ritual trappings while others are filled out with medieval alchemy and Hermetic mysticism, but all known versions continue the transformative theme of life after death and communion with the Invisible World. To what end varies with the author.

The various copies of the Book of Isis have a Sorcerous Tradition score of 3 for the purposes of enacting rites.

BASIC RITES

Shining Chest

Tradition: Animism/Hermetic

Devotion: Egyptian/Greek

Difficulty: 2

Time: 10 minutes/1 round

Duration: n/a

Strain: 1

Description: This conjuration uses an invocation written with a grease pencil or some other cosmetic upon a mirror or other reflective surface, which is then bonded to the magician by the addition of a magical name or some personal symbol. The mirror is blessed and its surface transforms into an undulating mercurial fluid, and the magician may place valuable objects and even small creatures such as familiars within the shimmering ethereal compartment behind it. Once the magician wills it, the surface becomes solid and is wiped clean. The mirror again becomes normal, and nothing inside the shining chest suffers from adverse effects within the room or age, even if the mirror should be destroyed. Thereafter, this mirror or another may be used in a similar fashion via the same formula to open the magical compartment holding the magician's belongings, regardless of time or distance from the original mirror. It is rumored that those who have mastered this charm can even use still water and wands to draw the formula and access their precious items. If a mirror is shattered or exorcised before the magician wipes it clean, then anything inside is lost in the Invisible World.

Veil of Divine Beauty

Tradition: Animism/Hermetic

Devotion: Egyptian/Greek

Difficulty: 2

Time: 1 minute/1 round

Duration: 1 hour

Strain: 1

Description: It is said that this spell was once called the Robes of Isis, being a blessing for her priests and priestesses to always appear radiant and beautiful. Over the centuries this charm has been fashioned into grander form, and it can now grant an entirely different appearance bearing whatever features and garb the magician desires, so long as it is charismatic and pleasing to look upon. Any charm or compulsion cast in accompaniment to this glamour receives +2 bonus dice, as do normal skills of persuasion and seduction. Certain wards and divinations will immediately dispel or see through this illusory charm, and powerful creatures or astute persons known to have the second sight might glimpse that something is not quite right. Otherwise it is a convincing illusion even to the touch, and it bears no other restrictions.

Ward of Anubis

Tradition: Animism/Hermetic

Devotion: Egyptian/Greek

Difficulty: 1

Time: 1 minute/1 round

Duration: Until triggered

Strain: 1

Description: This invocation derives from a prayer originally cast upon sacred places and objects as well as prominent tombs. It is a passive hex inscribed on a wall, object, or scroll near the area or item it protects. Should any unwanted person or entity disturb the ward, the magician is immediately made aware that it has been disturbed, and by whom if they know the person or entity responsible. The ward remains in effect until triggered, and thereafter it must be consecrated again. The Ward of Anubis is sometimes used to rouse a sleeping or engrossed magician who suspects some treacherous visitation.

GREATER RITES

Eye of the Avenger

Tradition: Animism/Hermetic

Devotion: Egyptian/Greek

Difficulty: 4

Time: 1 hour/1 round

Duration: 1 minute

Strain: 3

Description: When this spell is invoked the magician must draw a winged Eye of Horus upon a mirror or other reflective surface and then focus on a specific enemy who has done some wrong or injustice to him or his allies, imploring Horus to justly reveal his enemy and remove any veil of darkness, distance, or any deception. The magician manifests a psychic bond with his target, and he will gain visions and empathic sensations from the enchanted mirror that reveal their weaknesses and personal secrets, sometimes even their direct location. While a personal object belonging to the target is not required, it greatly aids the divination and gives +2 bonus dice. If the target's given name is used and written on the mirror, then the amount of information and detail increases dramatically; and if a True Name is used, there is virtually nothing the magician cannot find out about them. Illusions will not work against this spell, but consecrated ground, warding circles, certain amulets, and spiritual guardians such as totems protect against this rite.

Seal of Forgetfulness

Tradition: Animism/Hermetic

Devotion: Egyptian/Greek

Difficulty: 4

Time: 1 minute/1 round

Duration: 1 day + 1 extra day per success above the required.

Strain: 2

Description: This potent glyph makes the memory of a person or object hazy and hard to recall, and sometimes the warded target is forgotten altogether, and anyone trying to recall this memory must concentrate hard and make a successful D4 Concentrate (Will) check. If the person was the target and they are before a person who knew them, then the Difficulty of the check is lowered by 1 to a D3 Concentrate (Will) check.

The magician must first draw the seal on a piece of parchment and designate the person or object it is warding, and then cast the rite to imbue the enchantment. Persons can be specified by their given names, or some piece of information about them can be warded, such as their name, profession, or some action they committed. Warded objects can be anything from a locket or secret door to a full wagon. If the item is larger than this or the memory holds some personal importance or relevance to those trying to recall it (reducing the difficulty of the check by 1), then the best a magician can hope for is that the warded object will be recollected, albeit somewhat hazily and with an unsure location.

Symbol of Khephri

Tradition: Animism/Hermetic

Devotion: Egyptian/Greek

Difficulty: 3

Time: 1 hour/1 round

Duration: 1 day

Strain: 2

Description: When this radiant-winged scarab glyph is invoked into being, it sheds a globe of shining golden radiance. Its steady illumination is equivalent to a strong lantern which dispels all Basic Rite illusions within its confines and causes great distress or blindness to any creature of darkness near it. The symbol is called into being by a series of complex hand gestures over the heart and must be inscribed upon a wall or door mantle and blessed by Ra to ward against malign creatures which activate it with their unclean presence.

Talisman of Hermanubis

Tradition: Animism/Hermetic

Devotion: Egyptian/Greek

Difficulty: 4

Time: 1 day/1 round

Duration: 1 hour

Strain: 2

Description: This hermetic charm is fashioned from a polished electrum plate inscribed with a complex ward and a lapis lazuli scarab bearing a mirror coated in quicksilver. When worn over the throat, the talisman gives the magician's voice powers of charismatic command over mortals so long as they can hear and understand him, and any spiritual rebukes and compulsions are magnified in their effect. When making an Interaction check, the target is considered one step up from where it would naturally begin; Indifference instead of Dislike, Responsive instead of Indifference. In addition, the wearer receives a +4 bonus dice when making a Command or Intimidation check.

The talisman ceases working at the end of one hour and must be empowered to work again.

Veil of Abaddon

Tradition: Animism/Hermetic

Devotion: Egyptian/Greek

Difficulty: 4

Time: 1 hour/1 round

Duration: 24 hours

Strain: 2

Damnation: 1/3

Description: This malign ward is cast on a doorway, window, or other portal such as a hatch, tent flap, or chest, and is often used to protect some precious item or to stall pursuers. The sorcerer must use the charred bone fragments and ash from the cremated remains of a violent criminal, sorcerer, or some evil supernatural creature while invoking an infernal prayer. The sorcerer may designate a key or condition to pass through the portal without harm, and any trespasser who does not meet these conditions will suffer a most terrifying illusion, as if they are peering beyond the portal into the very depths of Hell.

Witnesses to this diabolical spectacle must make a D5 True Faith check or flee in stark terror for the duration of the spell, suffering a penalty of -2 dice on all Reason and Perception checks. Those who succeed will see the illusion for what it is and can walk through it without harm. Additionally, those who have witnessed a Hell Point firsthand gain an extra die to resist, but should they fail they will suffer its effects and convince themselves that this portal is just such a hellish entry.

VILLAINOUS RITES

Bennu Sacrament

Tradition: Animism/ Diabolism/Hermetic

Devotion: Egyptian/Greek

Difficulty: 6

Time: 1 year/6 hours

Duration: n/a

Strain: 5

Damnation: 5

Description: No spell in this tradition makes Witch Hunters blanch more than the unnatural Bennu Sacrament, otherwise known as the Ritual of the Hidden Heart. It is so complex that the sorcerer committing to it must spend great wealth to prepare it and use a stalwart apprentice or else some bound spirit as his accomplice. Should the ritual be disturbed or fail, the subject dies immediately.

First, a ritual chamber must be prepared and consecrated with numerous symbols of life and protection between grand supplications to Osiris as Lord of the Dead and Ra as the divine protector of his living heart. A white marble or alabaster table is placed at the center of the chamber, in full view of a window on the eastern wall framed or carved with Djed symbols, through which the sorcerer must speak his honorable petition to the Gods. The sorcerer then adorns himself with holy amulets and bears a sacred scepter and a golden ankh, while his apprentice lights incense of lotus and amber while he chants a hypnotic magical prayer. This droning invocation places the sorcerer in a state of suspended animation, whereupon his accomplice performs a complex surgery to remove his master's beating heart and place it inside a purified canopic jar filled with a magical elixir. The ritual

must take place at night, culminating when the apprentice blesses the jar with the first rays of dawn.

If successful, the heart begins to beat and the sorcerer arises from the table with a vigorous vitality. He may place the canopic jar in some well-guarded and hidden location, and slowly recollects visions from his travels within the Underworld. The sorcerer is now immune to poisons, fatigue, blood loss, and most diseases, and he gains a high resistance to mundane weapons and other physical traumas. The sorcerer is considered to have Armor 3 and Regeneration 3. Should he be consumed by flames or chopped into bits, given time, he will reincorporate his body. For the beneficiary of this unholy rite, a final death can only come from one source.

Furthermore, he gains greater concentration when researching and casting ritual spells and is possessed with boundless courage, so any spells or wards that cause fear are far ineffective. He is also highly resistant to necromantic rites affecting his health, gaining +4 bonus dice to resist any such effects.

Lastly, provided the sorcerer's heart remains undisturbed, the passing years have little effect on his mind and physical form. Should the heart be taken from the jar or harmed in any way, the sorcerer dies immediately.

Pestilent Swarm

Tradition: Animism/Hermetic/Witchcraft

Devotion: Egyptian/Greek

Difficulty: 4

Time: 1 hour/1 hour

Duration: Special

Strain: 3

Damnation: 4/10

Description: This dreadful curse is thought to have originated in a foreign cult of Resheph or Nergal. It calls upon dark powers to consecrate a large hex symbol inscribed with a jagged fetish or wand made of human bone around a large animal carcass or human corpse. The diabolical symbol soon summons rapacious, buzzing swarms of overlarge stinging insects, locusts, and flies to plague the area, infesting crops, homes, food, and water stores and choking the very air with their presence. Any unprotected consumables and water supplies will be tainted so long as the persistent swarms are not dispelled, driven off, or exorcised. Once the rite is cast, destroying or blessing the hex symbol has no effect, although a successful exorcism on the spot it is located is said to disperse the swarms. For the Exorcism-opposed roll, use the casters Resolve (Will) to resolve the check. The pestilence will not end until there is nothing left but a wasteland.

Animals and small children must resist with a D3 Endurance(Toughness) check or else be weakened with fever and a volatile epidemic that affects every moving thing will set in within one or two days. If the hex is drawn at high noon near corpses or on a recent battle site,

then the swarm becomes doubly strong, increasing the difficulty to resist by 2 and the plague will set in within mere hours. Wards like the Circle of Binding and prayers will temporarily protect individuals, homes, or supplies from this magical blight, and whoever carries the bone fetish which cast the hex is immune, as are any they bless with it.

Shroud of Kemosiri

Tradition: Animism/Hermetic/Necromancy

Devotion: Egyptian/Greek

Difficulty: 6

Time: 1 day/3 hours

Duration:

Strain: 5

Damnation: 2

Description: This most potent necromancy is used by making a pot of resinous black unguent that smells of sweet flowers and herbs. The unguent is then spread across the skin of a gravely injured or recently deceased person with "the Blood of Isis;" that is, a blessed ornate applicator. The magician waves a white feather over the afflicted while imploring Osiris and Sesh to suspend the record of the victim's death and judgment until they atone and are ready to stand in good stead before the Gods. So powerful is this invocation that it can cure poison and blood loss, mend broken or severed limbs, and even bring the recently deceased back to life. This rite works best at dawn and on consecrated ground, but the ritual must be completed accurately and not be interrupted by any circumstance or else it will not work.

There are also stories of dread consequences concerning malicious entities that possess a wounded person or body to masquerade as the living, first to sample common fleshly delights that grow more deviant until the creature goes insane and causes great havoc. To ensure the resurrected is not one of these unholy beings, this spell sometimes contains a trying rite afterward: intimate questionings while bearing holy symbols or binding the deceased with magic circles, phylacteries, and bandages inscribed with prayers. Sometimes this spell is known as the Essence of the Phoenix.

Ushabti

Tradition: Animism/Hermetic

Devotion: Egyptian/Greek

Difficulty: 5

Time: 1 month/2 rounds

Duration: 1 year

Strain: 5

Description: This enchantment requires the magician to make a stone statuette fashioned in the likeness of a person and then inscribe it with a name. He then enacts the rite for Khnum, and Heket will breathe life into it on behalf of its maker. At the magician's command, the ushabti acts as the focus for an invisible force that serves him as a laborer which can be directed with simple commands. The ushabti cannot be struck or harmed by

any mundane object or weapon, but blessed or magical weapons will strike and dispel it, as will an exorcism, and compulsions will cause it to cease to work temporarily.

The magician may also imbue the ushabti with certain skills they know during the creation process, although the magical servant's knowledge is limited and the task cannot be too complex, usually nothing more than crafting a pot, rowing a boat, or stacking articles such as bricks or firewood. The ushabti's strength is limited (its Strength Ability begins at 2) but additional successes beyond those required can be used to make it stronger; 1 additional strength will increase its Strength by 1.

It can do things such as hold a door fast and snatch up or throw objects. It is but a simple worker that otherwise will not attack with weapons or fight as a combatant. The magician must be in relatively close proximity to the ushabti for it to work, and an exorcism or shattering the statue dispels it immediately. Failing to cast this spell correctly manifests an ushabti filled with rage that will smash objects and haunt the magician until it is banished or exorcised. It is rumored that the greatest magi have fashioned ushabti capable of performing more complex tasks such as playing chess and performing mighty feats of strength.

ADDITIONAL BENEFITS

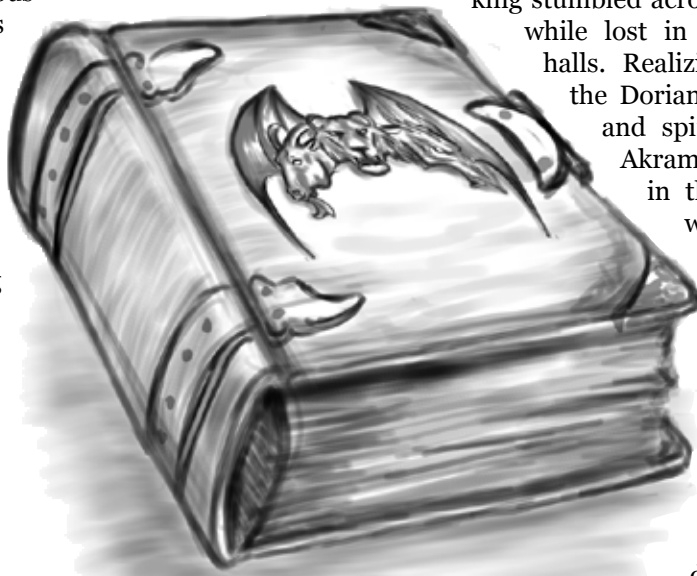
The Teachings of Maat Kheru

The rendition of this ancient initiation within the Book of Isis and its myriad versions teaches the Hermetic Tradition to the disciplined student (at the usual SP cost), with the exception of the Shoit Kemluzige, which teaches the Diabolist Tradition.

Furthermore, using the magical syllabary within it renders a +1 bonus die for spells that deal with necromancy, and +2 bonus dice for skill checks that concern conversing with spirits and demons. Most copies of Persephone's Mirror contain this rite, but it is called the Language of the Birds.

Funerary Rites

The Book of Isis contains numerous descriptive underworld myths and accounts of complex burial preparations such as the tools and purification rites for embalming and mummification, which can be studied or used as a reference for a +1 bonus die on any skill check concerning this subject (such as anatomy, historical names, or legends of ghouls). In the case of the Shoit Kemluzige, this bonus increases to +2 bonus dice.



THE CHIMERACON

The most complete and reliable accounts of this Greek grimoire and its origins comes from the lone surviving copy of the Fourth Book of the Bibliotheca and a few scant traces of Dodecanese myths recorded by the Knights Hospitallers on Rhodes. It contains much illuminating lore on the arts of medicine and alchemy and but a handful of spells, but these enchantments are such that they render mutable the very forms and forces of nature, so it is revered and lusted after by magi and alchemists as the truest written key to the Ars Magnus. That this tome is linked with the Hermetic Orders and Paracelsus has caused it to spread across Europe and the Middle East in multiple languages, and numerous fragments exist in other grimoires and tomes. Most full copies are embellished and jealously guarded, and many have been destroyed from their association with later diabolical copies. The texts which have been documented are easily recognized by a strangely depicted Chimera embossed on the cover or as a frontispiece.

KNOWN VERSIONS

The story of the Chimeracon begins with an ancient artifact discovered by the Minoans on Crete, described in the Bibliotheca as a large, glittering chunk of obsidian with large, uneven facets and a magical being living inside it. Occasionally this slumbering creature would stir or could be called to life until the stone glowed brightly from within. The stone showed images of strange places and things yet to happen, so it was brought to Knossos by order of the priest-king Yidini to be consulted as a sacred oracle. Indeed the artifact must have been alien in appearance, for even the authors of these myths speculate on its origins, stating that the stone was possibly the fallen egg of some heavenly beast, or perhaps a trapped elemental undulating inside its glassy prison since the world's creation. The Minoans became famed and wealthy for their prophetic predictions, but always they kept the stone a well guarded secret, until Dorian guests of the king stumbled across an oracular ceremony

while lost in the labyrinthine palace halls. Realizing what they had found, the Dorians stole the sacred stone and spirited it away to Mount Akramytis above Kameiros in the city-state of Rhodes, where it came to be known

as the Chimera Stone. The Bibliotheca dates the Chimera Stone as being moved quickly from Kameiros during a great earthquake, which is recorded elsewhere as having taken place in 226 BC. Some of this account is damaged, but the legends

in the Hospitaller record suggest that the sacred stone may have acted as a protection for the city against such a calamity, and that Kameiros suffered this disaster when it was stolen from the temple. Other legends associate the stone with certain heavenly alignments and misfortune for those who misused its unearthly powers. Even after the second destruction of Kameiros in 142 BC, local legends abounded of shapeshifting witches and monsters inhabiting the ruins and nearby hills. Even in modern times those who dare enter these areas can still find stelai and hydriae depicting the creatures birthed by the Chimera Stone and magicians using magical powers for all manner of miracles and transforming curses.

The Hospitaller account goes on to say that the Chimera Stone was spirited to the island's interior for safekeeping in a remote mountain shrine within the Valley of the Butterflies. Legends still exist on Rhodes of coastal villagers who over the centuries went into the mountains to appeal to the elusive shapeshifting priests of the valley for wisdom and protection against Persian and Muslim invaders, and wives' tales remain to date that warn children not too stray too far into the pine-covered heights, lest they be taken or transformed into animals and lost forever. There is even a very old tale throughout the Dodecanese Islands of Saint Paul battling a terrifying chimeric monster on a ship near Lindos and rebuking it back into the deep. But after this period the Hospitaller tract and local legends go silent, but knowledge surrounding the Chimera Stone was apparently recorded at some point, as a crude set of slim pinewood panels were found by Arab invaders in 654 AD, complete with a depiction of the incised purple-black stone from which it was birthed.

The Crusaders Inviolat, an order directly descended from the Templars, claim to know stories of their predecessors' long-time rivalry with the Hospitallers, and how these heretics imparted their own secret wisdom to impress the furtive mountain priests. Nearly a century later, three Hospitaller initiates of the Rhodian cult transported the Chimera Stone, (possibly after seizing it) to the fort at Archangelos and later west by ship. Some accounts speculate on mainland Italy or Spain, while others claim it was hidden for years there to be deciphered, and then taken to Malta just before the Ottoman Turks drove them from Rhodes. Some Templar accounts claim that the Hospitallers split the stone into parts, while others go so far as to say that the glassy stone was carved into a profane idol placed at the heart of diabolical rites. It is likely the Hospitallers did have this artifact in their possession, and a conspiratorial Cluny Library document of the period reports an unusual interest and searches for the Chimera Stone by Cistercian monks, as well its attempted theft by French Templars sometime in the 1320's. But as a result of the biased murky tone of the Templar accounts and lack of any other, the Chimera Stone's whereabouts remain a mystery. The books which derive from this artifact, however, are another matter entirely.

The oldest copy is the Kitab Bemen Al-ghul or Book of Algol, thought to have been written in the late 600's by an anonymous author in an unknown locale. The primitive wooden book found in 654 AD is said to be the source of the voluminous occult tome, so called from its associations with the hybrid creatures of Greek myth and the Gorgon's Eye in the constellation Perseus, itself one of the Behenian Stars in astrology that bespeaks of misfortune, and which the Arabs know as "the demon star." The first copies were simple Arabic translations, but they did include plates of the Chimera Stone and its inscriptions, followed by a wealth of alchemical correspondences, spells, astrological, and medical datum borne from experiments and precise calculations. Over time the book was formalized and became outlawed as a great heresy throughout Islamic lands, but the philosophy it contained thrived amongst the medieval alchemists and physicians of Arabia and other countries for generations. As fate would have it, a copy of the book would return to Greece via an Armenian spice merchant acting as a spy for an ambitious nobleman in the court of Basil I. The Bemen Al-ghul was translated into contemporary Greek and remained a notable if obscure grimoire for the Magi of the Byzantine Emperors. More often than not, this book was kept secret from most Christian rulers, but as its secrets were revealed, it later served as the centerpiece for a growing collection of captured tomes and artifacts gathered throughout the provinces and guarded within a special hidden room of the imperial treasury. In the reign of Basil II these magi had power in the capital and served him well, although they were seen as unseemly and many political rivals and clerics denounced them as diabolists and heretics. A few historical accounts suggest that the court magi secretly formed a cult at the heart of the Great Companions to secure their own interests, including the redoubtable Rhus, known for keeping their pledges and wielding terrible double-headed axes. The magi insisted that they served the Holy Cross and proved themselves through loyal Rhus initiates, who came to greater prominence when Basil married his sister Anna to Vladimir of Kiev to honor an old treaty drawn up through ministrations of these court magicians under Romanos II: Vladimir sent six thousand Rhus to serve Constantinople and converted his country to Christianity. These guardsmen served well in tandem with their secret brethren, elevated to serve as Basil's personal bodyguard. Through them, the Byzantine Magi stayed their course, eliminating rivals while founding a formalized and more respectable order under the protection of the Varangian Guard for nearly three centuries. In this period the Book of Algol was combined with the order's Neo-Platonic philosophies and set down in a tome called the Chimeracon. Emperors came and went, but the brotherhood remained, ever vigilant against their enemies and the forces of darkness.

By the reign of Michael IV, the Byzantine Magi were singularly powerful but in bitter disarray as an order. When they finally split into multiple factions, most of the

hidden tomes were copied to disseminate their knowledge and keep the peace between camps. Some of the Byzantine Magi died or fled in mysterious circumstances – some say they were eliminated by the machinations of a devil disguised as or possessing one among their order - and in 1453 when Constantinople fell to the Ottoman Turks, the remaining copies of the Chimeracon were scattered with their owners across the courts of Europe. The famous reputation of the Byzantine order had gained court magi in other lands more respectability, so they were welcomed by foreign brothers who influenced their noble masters to grant them sanctuary (certainly they are held in high regard and often revered as near-saints by the Order of the Sunwise Circle). These expatriate magi stayed loosely allied, but the surfacing of a diabolical version of the Chimeracon sundered the trust they once shared and gained in other lands, a text called the Book of Glorious Transformations. At first glance, this vulgate grimoire seemed a proper Christian tract of theurgical hermetic rites and charismatic stories of spiritual transformation, but those who practiced them soon learned that the higher mysteries were fraught with dangers and sometimes unspeakable transmogrifications on a terrifying scale. What magi were left of the original cabal sought out the source of this tract, but many were never heard from again, and those that remained were discredited for disseminating diabolical rites, sometimes hunted openly by the church and authorities for treasonous acts and heresy. But two of these magi were protected by the Order of the Crusaders Inviolable, whose reports and encounters from that time supports the theory of an unknown demonic infiltrator who not only directly caused the dissolution of the Byzantine cabal, but also the penning of the Book of Glorious Transformations to discredit the Chimeracon and destroy their reputations utterly across Europe – along with that of their new allies.

These tomes laid in obscurity for many years until a copy of the Book of Algol was discovered in the Middle East by Theophrastus von Hohenheim, famed later as the physician and alchemist Paracelsus. He recognized the work immediately through the teachings of the Benedictine Johannes Trithemius, and despite his dismissal of most things magical, Paracelsus was influenced by the medical applications of alchemy within the tome, citing it as an influence in conversations and letters for several years after. But a year after his death, a new edition of the Chimeracon resurfaced containing his Alphabet of the Magi along with a bevy of new alchemical rites and medical lore, a book which helped to usher in the wave of Paracelsianism that swept across the hermetic circles of Europe. It is rumored that the Hungarian alchemist Melchior Cibinensis was influenced by this version of the Chimeracon and that some of his early theories and experiments are drawn from its arcana. Most of the copies are nowadays owned by reputable magicians, the Orders of Solomon, or universities, but due to the lasting stigma of the Book of Glorious Transformations, the Chimeracon is often destroyed by fanatics or else kept very well-

hidden. Of the accounted-for tomes that survive today, the Paracelsian tome remains the most prevalent.

The Chimeracon has a Sorcerous Tradition score of 5 for the purposes of enacting rites. Lesser version may have a lower rating.

GM Note: The Chimeracon makes mention of the Alchemy Tradition. This tradition was removed from the Core Book due to space considerations. The Alchemy Tradition will be made available in future Witch Hunter products and its mention here is for completeness sake.

BASIC RITES

Labrys Ward

Tradition: Diabolism/Hermetic

Difficulty: Varies

Time: 1 hour/1 round

Duration: 24 hours or Special

Strain: 1

Description: Some magi know this as a simple symbol representing a double-headed axe, and weapon fetishes have been found to support this. However, ancient initiates recognized this powerful transformational symbol for what it was, the wings of a butterfly, and its association with the cult center at Knossos and the legend of the hybrid Minotaur also hint at its deeper meaning. The Labrys Ward is ascribed with all manner of wondrous effects depending on the application chosen by the magus upon casting.

Fortify Objects (Difficulty 2): The ward is placed upon an object such as a door or weapon as a talisman to increase its durability, which adds three to the difficulty for attempts to break it. This applies to offensive spells which might change, animate, or otherwise magically alter the object.

Transformational Focus (Difficulty 3): The ward becomes a focal symbol that aids the magus with any illusory or transformational spell, such as bringing rain, casting a shapeshifting curse, or performing an alchemical transmutation. This focus decreases the spell's difficulty or increases the potency of the spell by two. It may not be used on enchanted items or fetishes which are already created to aid such effects, but it can be inscribed and cast to aid in the creation of items that bear transformational and illusory enchantments.

Restoration (Difficulty 4): The power of the ward is called upon to mend and repair broken objects, even if they are shattered beyond recognition. The only limitation is that the magician must have every part of the broken object directly before him when he casts the ward, which is inscribed upon the largest or best-functioning piece remaining. This only works on mundane objects: it can repair objects that were once magical, but they will not retain their charm once reconstituted.

Spiritual Focus (Difficulty 5): The ward is inscribed upon the forehead or breast and used to access the subconscious and the soul for spiritual travel and conversing with the beings of the Invisible World. It can be used to conjure prophetic dreams, to aid in speech with

the dead, or to summon a beneficial spirit for questions or as a guide while traveling beyond the material realm. Information gained in dreams is sometimes vague but nevertheless useful to a skilled interpreter, and a magus who converses with spirits should still protect themselves.

GREATER RITES

Philter of Paracelsus

Tradition: Alchemy/Hermetic

Difficulty: 5

Time: 1 hour/1 round

Duration: Special

Strain: 1

Description: The Philter of Paracelsus is a powerful mineral potion that brings the body into harmonious balance, accelerating the healing process in wounds, and alleviating the symptoms poisons, parasites, and virulent diseases by transmuting them into harmless form within the body until they are expelled. It will heal one entire health track rank fully and give the imbiber another chance to resist diseases as well as remove any detrimental effects they have already done to the body.

If a healthy person imbibes this magical potion, they will have limitless endurance for any physical activity and an additional three points per Health track rank for one day, and gain +2 bonus dice to resist any physical disease or poison. Furthermore, those who suffer the effects of lycanthropy can be cured if an alchemist or physician properly mixes this potion with belladonna and holy water and succeeds in a D6 Sorcerous Tradition check. If garlic is used in the same fashion, those bitten by vampires improve the chances to save their mortal souls so long as the philter is imbibed on the night of the attack.

Shape Flesh

Tradition: Alchemy/Diabolism/ Hermetic/ Necromancy

Difficulty: 3

Time: 1 hour/2 rounds

Duration: n/a

Strain: 2

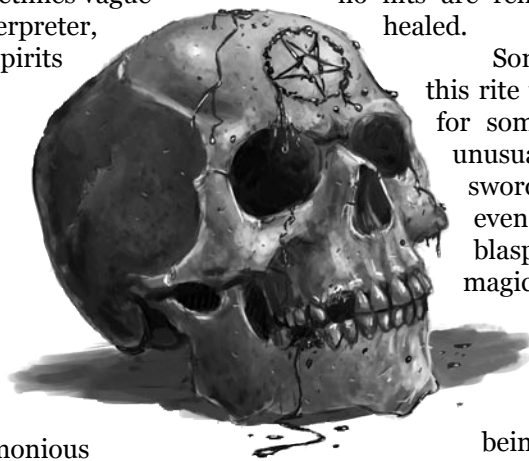
Damnation: 2/6 if used for other than healing

Description: This necromantic rite was made to assist physicians in repairing the damage from grievous wounds and other complex surgeries. It can be used to heal outright or adds +3 bonus dice to a Heal check, per the caster's choice.

However, it can also be used as an attack that permanently damages a target's flesh, making it look like old cracked leather of an unhealthy pale. This causes 1 die of damage + 1 hit for every success above the required amount.

Optionally, the magician can choose to heal a specific injury, such as a broken or dismembered limb. Such healing alterations will function normally but also appear gruesome and distorted unless the magician also

has some knowledge of the medical arts. To perform such a task, the magician makes a D4 Heal check. If successful, no hits are removed, but the specific injury is healed.



Some use this bizarre application of this rite to mold and enhance a body part for some specific function, such as an unusually strong or multi-jointed limb, a sword permanently fused into an arm, or even an overlarge biting maw, and some blasphemous anecdotes suggest that a magician with enough proficiency can even graft and create new limbs or organs on their subjects. Furthermore, if a magician uses this spell while creating a being made of flesh and bone such as

a zombie or homunculus, then the creature is particularly resilient and gains either extra strength or fortitude per the caster's choice. Dreadful tales abound of minions and creatures crafted by necromancers and diabolists using this spell, and the alterations they can be given are limited only by the expertise and horrible imagination of their creator.

Warping

Tradition: Diabolism/Hermetic

Difficulty: 3

Time: 1 round/1 round

Duration: instant

Strain: 3

Description: This potent magical alteration allows the magus to concentrate on an object or material creature to distort or break its form through a projection of visualized will. Material objects up to the size of a chest or door can be affected, and the spell will distort or rend the thinnest or weakest point of an object first, such as locks and buckles, a rapier blade, or the cracks in a wall. Larger objects can be affected, but the greater the size and hardness of the target, the greater the difficulty of the spell (add +1 to +3 to the Difficulty of the rite).

Casting this spell on living creatures is a horrifying spectacle as skin tears and bones begin to pop and crack. The target must make an opposed Toughness check. Should the target lose, he takes damage equal to the number of successes he failed by. Most honorable and goodly Magi will use a Warping spell in combat only to attack the weapons or armor of opponents, but this is unfortunately not always so, and the aftereffects of those who suffered through a Warping on their bodies are grim indeed.

HEROIC RITES

Chimeric Form

Tradition: Alchemy/Diabolism/Hermetic

Difficulty: 7

Time: 1 round/1 round

Duration: 10 minutes

Strain: 4

Damnation: 2/6

Description: This dubious transformation allows the sorcerer to alter their physical form, whole or in part, into any creature or person they have witnessed, so long as the form does not exceed the size of a horse. The new form renders any abilities of creatures so long as they are not supernatural, and the magician retains his intelligence and memories, but cannot cast spells unless he has hands and a mouth to do so.

A sorcerer could mimic another person completely in bodily form, change themselves into a sparrow and fly away, or turn into a fish and breathe underwater, or transform their arm into an octopus tentacle for greater reach and grappling strength. Each change requires a round to concentrate to effect the transformation of a new part, and its size is not limited to the natural creature it imitates. Mutable forms and ever-changing hybrids are entirely possible, so the magician could conceivably mimic mythical creatures such as a hippogriff or a minotaur within the size limitations of the spell. However, the more bizarre the form or further from human shape the sorcerer takes on, the greater the chance it has to warp his mind. After taking on a form other than human, the sorcerer must succeed at a Concentration (Personality) check to maintain a grasp on his own mind and psyche. Should he fail, he immediately is afflicted by a minor phobia or psychosomatic malady. See page 117 for a list of such mental disorders.

Create Homunculus

Tradition: Alchemy/Diabolism, Hermetic, Witchcraft

Difficulty: 5

Time: 1 month/Special

Duration: n/a

Strain: 2

Damnation: 2/6

Description: To fashion a homunculus, the sorcerer must harvest a large mandrake root by moonlight, then wash it and place it in swaddling within a bowl or box lined with a nest of twigs and ritual inscriptions. It is then kept warm and fed with milk, royal jelly, and the magician's blood for seven days until it develops into a miniature likeness which protects and serves its master. During this process the sorcerer must never stray too far from his growing creation and speak the vile oaths to bind the creature to his will, or else it will soon become rebellious and run off or perhaps even turn on him.

For every attribute the creature has, the sorcerer must spend one wound in blood to permanently imbue it with strength, intelligence, and vitality upon its creation. Whether the blood comes from the sorcerer or others is immaterial. Fully-formed homunculi are hideous, foot-high versions of their masters and limited in their strength and speech. They are, however, imbued with an unnatural cunning intellect and have an almost empathic link with their masters, so they make excellent lab servants and messengers.

If a homunculus is ever killed, its creator suffers three hits plus any additional wounds exceeding the amount to kill the unwholesome beast. It has been reported that some homunculi have been altered further and bear wings, hidden pouches, prehensile tails, or poisonous bites and stingers, and a number are protected further by wards and talismans. This option is only available to Villains at this time.

Additional Benefits

Alphabet of the Magi

The later versions of the Chimeracon contain the Alphabet of the Magi, which can be used to learn the Hermetic tradition at the usual SP cost. In the Book of Glorious Transformations, this sacred alphabet has been twisted and inverted, and it can be used to learn the Diabolism tradition. Furthermore, if these angelic syllabaries are used by a Hermetic Magus or a Diabolist, it adds +2 bonus dice to any research concerning the invocations and seals of angels or demons.

Alchemist's Treatise

The Chimeracon also contains a short but precise alchemical text drawn from Arabic and European alchemical philosophies illustrated by plates and esoteric diagrams. The tract details the elements of nature and their correspondences to the human body as well as those of the Invisible World. Using this work in conjunction with the alchemy skill grants +2 dice or an automatic success, per the alchemist's choice.

Medicina Supplementum

One portion of the Chimeracon is a large portfolio detailing elaborate medicinal information compiled from Arabic and Western sources, some of which are quite obscure or unique, with numerous detailed accounts of its application. Much of the tract is in purely written form, but the last portion contains copious alchemical notations for mineral substances and compositions and fifteen anatomical diagrams and descriptions of surgical equipment and clinical techniques. The whole requires a great deal of study by a learned physician, but once the reader has familiarized themselves, they can use it as a reference and gain +3 bonus dice to any Heal skill check or surgical operation. This tract is also included in the Book of Glorious Transformations, but the details are slightly more perverse, and a section on necromantic operations and created beings has been added.

RELICS

Relics are considered holy by some and magical by others. All seem to have some sort of unearthly or miraculous power that it exudes or conveys upon its bearer. Below are a few examples of different relics that may be found in a Witch Hunter game. They are divided into categories called levels, per the description in the Crusaders Inviolable entry. While many more relics and artifacts exist, it is beyond the scope of this book to have an exhaustive list. Instead the GM should use these as guides in crafting his own items.

EXAMPLES OF LEVEL 1 RELICS

The Seal of Solomon (lesser)

Usually inscribed upon a small disc that fits in the palm of the hand, the Seal of Solomon can be used in conjunction to enacting a Hermetic rite, adding +2 bonus die to the magician's roll. The Seal is also a symbol of power, which may give pause to those supernatural creatures with a Damnation score of 3 or lower. These beings must make a D2 Resolve (Will) to take any kind of hostile action against the bearer.

Smoke of Awareness

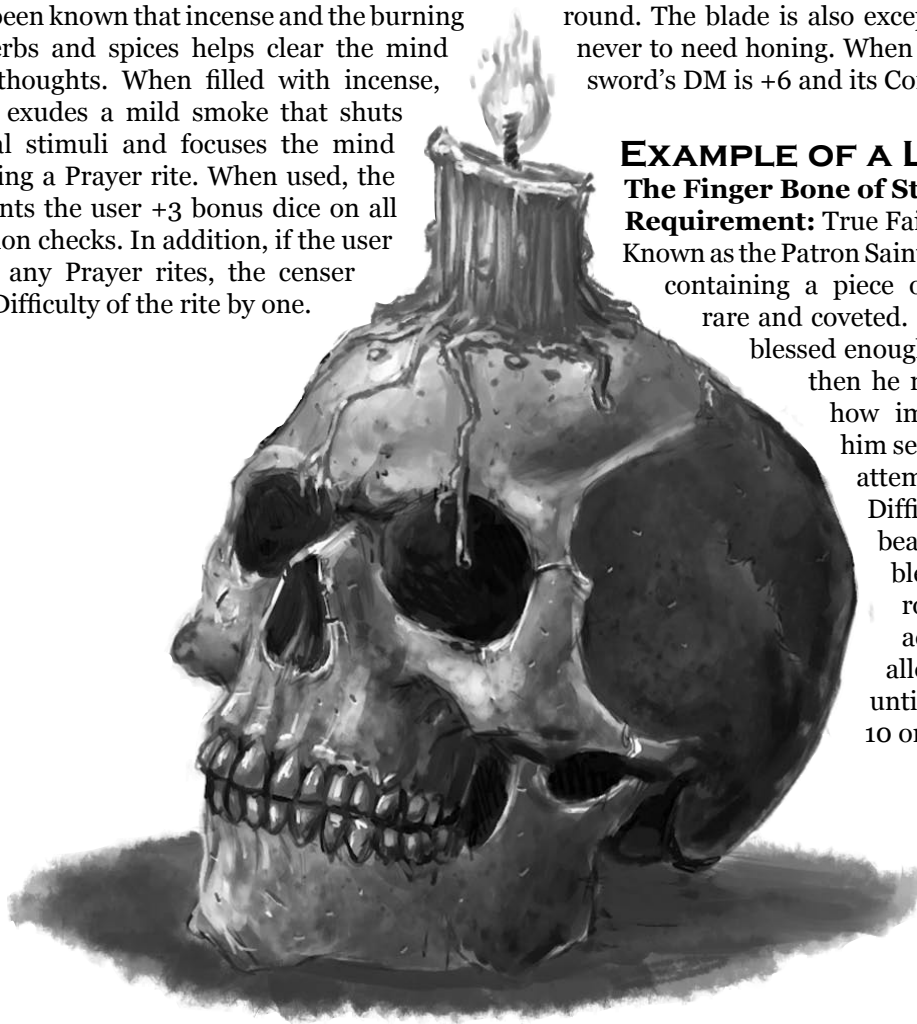
Only cultivated from the finest quality tobacco leaves during a full autumn moon, Witch Hunters from the Ghost People order use it to detect uninvited guests. When burned, the smoke from the leaves has the ability to cause anything invisible or entities from the spiritual plane to appear as hazy outlines and shadows. Ghost People Shamans usually use long pipes to burn the leaves and blow the smoke out in ever widening circles to detect anything from the Invisible World that may be lurking about.

EXAMPLE OF A LEVEL 2 RELIC

The Censer of Peaceful Meditation

Requirement: True Faith 2

It has long been known that incense and the burning of other herbs and spices helps clear the mind and focus thoughts. When filled with incense, this censer exudes a mild smoke that shuts out external stimuli and focuses the mind on completing a Prayer rite. When used, the incense grants the user +3 bonus dice on all Concentration checks. In addition, if the user is enacting any Prayer rites, the censer lowers the Difficulty of the rite by one.



EXAMPLE OF A LEVEL 3 RELIC

The Rosary of St. Alena

Requirement: True Faith 3

St. Alena was born near Brussels, Belgium to a pagan family in the mid-600's CE. She became a Christian in secret and was martyred while performing a sacred rite. She was known for her piety and kindness, often crafting wooden rosaries for other secret Christians in her area. These rosary beads are said to have the power to create Holy Water when immersed in up to a gallon of normal water. This Holy Water is considered to have a potency of 7. (See Holy Water rules on page 116).

EXAMPLE OF A LEVEL 4 RELIC

Requirement: True Faith 4, Hand-to-Hand 4

The Sword of St. Louis IX

King of France at the age of twenty-five, King Louis IX led two Crusades, the sixth and the seventh during the latter part of the 13th Century. When he died on the onset of the Seventh Crusade, his magnificent blade was taken by another Crusader who acquitted himself with both honor and distinction. Before passing the blade onto his grandson, he told him how the sword seemed to leap to his defense with almost superhuman skill and speed.

The Sword of St. Louis IX grants the bearer a +4 bonus points that may be added to his Defense pool each round. The blade is also exceptionally sharp and seems never to need honing. When used in battle, the bastard sword's DM is +6 and its Complexity is a 2.

EXAMPLE OF A LEVEL 5 RELIC

The Finger Bone of St. Jude

Requirement: True Faith 6

Known as the Patron Saint of Lost Causes, reliquaries containing a piece of St. Jude's remains are rare and coveted. Should a Witch Hunter be blessed enough to hold such a holy relic, then he must take heart no matter how impossible the task before him seems. Once per scene, when attempting any task where the Difficulty is 8 or higher, the bearer can invoke St. Jude blessings, making all 1s rolled count as successes. In addition, 1s also act as 10s, allowing the player to re-roll until something other than a 10 or 1 appears.

CHAPTER NINE: ADVICE TO THE GRAND MASTER

Tabletop roleplaying games are often described as exercises in collaborative storytelling. The idea is that all of the participants work together to weave a tale of high adventure and low cunning, with each person's individual contributions having equal value. The game is a success for the players if all the participants come away from the game with a feeling of satisfaction and enjoyment. The game is a success for the player characters (the Witch Hunters) if they save the day, defeat the bad guy, rescue the village, destroy the monsters, or simply live to fight another day, depending on the scenario and the challenges it contains. *Witch Hunter* follows this basic model. However, in order for this concept of investigation to work, it's necessary for one of the players to take on a unique and critically important role: that of the Grand Master (GM).

Although all players have an equal stake in the success or failure of the game as a whole, the Grand Master is uniquely positioned to help determine how things turn out. In some sense she is the facilitator and the person who is charged specifically with helping everyone else have a great experience. Being a good GM is a difficult task, but happily, it is a task that is well within the reach of anyone who has the level of imagination and sense of wonder necessary to enjoy tabletop roleplaying games in the first place. In this chapter, we'll briefly explore what it means to be a *Witch Hunter* Grand Master and offer some tips and suggestions for how to fill the role effectively. This is by no means a be-all and end-all depiction of how to be a good GM, nor do we pretend to have invented the concepts herein. The role of a Grand Master is one that is central to a great many (but not all) tabletop roleplaying games. We encourage you to explore other games' techniques for effective GMing, as many of those will be entirely applicable to *Witch Hunter*, too. We even offer a bibliography and a list of suggested readings as a web enhancement to this chapter.

Witch Hunter is, at its core, a game of investigation and discovery. This requires giving the heroes nefarious plots to unravel, strange places to visit, minions of evil to strive against, secrets to learn, and mysteries to illuminate. In this chapter we will discuss the basic structure of a *Witch Hunter* adventure. In order to keep the terminology consistent, we will use the term mission to describe a *Witch Hunter* adventure. A mission starts when the player characters are somehow brought to the area where something is

happening. The mission ends when the player characters have figured out what they need to do and done it (or failed and seen the terrible consequences, as the case may be). Your main job as the GM is to make sure that the players have a fair opportunity to figure out what their Hunters are supposed to be doing – and then facilitate their journey. Playing as the Grand Master requires a unique blend of coach (gently nudging the other players in the right direction), actor (portraying the various NPCs), screenwriter (frantically revising the script when the players decide to solve a problem in a way you hadn't anticipated), adversary (rolling dice for the "bad guys" and playing them to the best of your ability as a challenge for the heroes) and cheerleader (celebrating the players' successes along with them when the story has a happy ending).



ROLE OF THE GRAND MASTER

The GM is a player, but her participation does not take the same form as all the other players. She is a player in the sense that her enjoyment of the game is just as important as everyone else's, and that she is contributing to the collaborative storytelling effort, but she is not a player in the sense that she does not control the actions of one of the Witch Hunters. Instead, she is responsible for making sure that the game as a whole is successful.

One important part of her role is to act as a "judge" whenever rules questions arise during play, and on matters of the game mechanics, the GM's word is law. Perhaps the most common example of the GM's role is to set target numbers. Target numbers are a fundamental concept in the game rules, and they need to be set objectively and fairly in order for the game system to function. Whenever the other players' Witch Hunters wish to take certain actions that require rolling dice, the GM is responsible for deciding how difficult the task is and setting the target number. (Sometimes a target number will be specified by the rules or by a scenario, but even in those cases, the GM is responsible for assessing whether or not the "official" target number is actually the right value in the context of the situation at hand. She should always feel free to change whatever needs to be changed in order to make the game more fun for everyone.) Because the GM is "neutral" in the sense that she does not control a Witch Hunter, she is entrusted with the responsibility of adjudicating the outcomes of actions taken by the player characters. The GM is also usually responsible for rolling the dice any time there is a need to determine the success or failure of actions taken by non-player characters (NPCs). Although she does not have to be the most rules-knowledgeable player at the table, and indeed she is encouraged to solicit thoughts and suggestions from the other players in the event that she isn't certain about how a particular rule should be applied, the GM does need to have a good enough understanding of the rules that she is comfortable controlling the action for everyone else.

Even more important than her role as a rules facilitator, however, is the GM's special responsibility to act as the keeper of the game's secrets. She is the mistress of mysteries. Witch Hunter is primarily a game of investigation and discovery at its core, and that means there need to be things for the players to investigate and discover. The GM is the only player who begins the game with full knowledge of the story and all the secret information that the Witch Hunters must learn if they are to succeed. She knows who the bad guys are, she knows their plans and objectives, she knows what resources are at their disposal and how they want to use those resources, and she knows how the Witch Hunters will get involved in the story. (She doesn't need to know exactly how the Witch Hunters will solve the problem and save the day – that's for the rest of the players to decide – but she is responsible for helping them stay on "the right track" if it seems as though they are at risk of wandering aimlessly without finding out anything about

the mysteries at hand.) In a nutshell, the GM serves as the interface between the rest of the players and the game world. She is responsible for portraying all of the non-player characters (NPCs), ranging from simple townsfolk to master villains to the Witch Hunters' own guiding organizations and fellowships. When combat occurs between the Witch Hunters and the various agents of the Adversary, it's the GM who decides what actions the monsters will take, how they will allocate their dice pools, when they will use their special abilities, spells, and other powers, and so forth. Basically, whenever an entity needs to be portrayed and that entity isn't one of the player character Witch Hunters, the task falls to the GM.

Grand Mastering is a black art. A good GM is somewhat like Supreme Court Justice Potter Stewart's definition of pornography – we can't really tell you exactly what it is, but we know it when we see it. Perhaps the single most important piece of advice we can give you is to remember that although you are playing the opposition, you are not actually opposed to the other players. Witch Hunter is a collaborative storytelling game. Everyone has a vested interest in the story moving forward. That does not mean that you have to rig things so that the player characters always succeed – on the contrary, if there is no chance to fail, then success has no meaning. However, it's easy to slip too far in the other direction and view yourself as being on the other side of the fence altogether. Witch Hunter is not a zero-sum game; you do not win when the other players lose, and vice versa. Everyone wins or loses together, and the winning or losing is defined by how compelling a story you told as a group and how much fun everyone had. Fun does not mean always having everything go your way; in the course of a typical game session, most if not all of the player characters will fail at certain tasks and some of them might be seriously injured or even killed. The entire mission might be a failure if the investigators do not succeed in learning what they need to do and then doing it. But the game can still be a success, even if the mission is a total disaster, as long as what happens is interesting from a story perspective, as long as everyone agrees that the game was fair and that what happened was plausible within the context of the rules and the plot, and as long as everyone has fun. Your job is unique in that you have to throw up obstacles and roadblocks and even try to kill the other players' characters with your minions of evil, but as long as you do everything fairly and in the service of the story as a whole, everyone will have fun and the game will be a success.

PREPARATION FOR PLAY

All the players of Witch Hunter have certain things that they need to do before a game session. For most of the players, pre-game tasks are limited to making sure their Witch Hunters are created and advanced in accordance with the game rules and that they bring their dice and any other supplies they'll need during the game. But the GM has a much greater task ahead of her. She doesn't have a Witch Hunter of her own to worry about – rather,

she has to decide on and learn the details of everyone (and everything) else in the game world that the heroes might be expected to come into contact with during the mission. This means that she needs to read the adventure (preferably several times) and ensure that she is familiar with all the details. She doesn't have to memorize it, since she can refer to it during the game, but one of the worst things a GM can do is allow the game to grind to a screeching halt while she spends five minutes flipping through her notes trying to find that one critical reference that she needs. Creating the illusion of omniscience is an important skill that all good GMs eventually master. Her preparation should include reviewing the relevant rules for any spells, powers, or special abilities that the monsters and other adversaries might use in combat scenes. Again, you don't want the game to come to a halt while the GM frantically pages through the rulebook during the heroes' final showdown with the monster lord or master manipulator.

There's no "perfect" way to prepare mission notes. Some GMs like to make notes in the margin of the adventure text. Others underline important passages or use a highlighter. Others make their own set of notes on separate sheets of paper. Regardless of which method you choose, it's important that your notes be organized in such a fashion that you can quickly cross-reference them with the text of the adventure. While the heroes are in a particular scene, you should have your notes for that scene close at hand. Scene notes will depend on the type of scene. For a primarily roleplaying encounter, you might jot down some personality quirks or accents that you want to use with individual NPCs. If the heroes have ever encountered any of these NPCs in the past or if there are other reasons why the NPCs might react in a very specific way (positive or negative) to individual player characters, be sure to make a note of that as well. It lends the game a tremendous sense of continuity and verisimilitude if the world seems to have "memory" and past actions lead to present consequences (whether good or bad).

Perhaps the most common convention of tabletop roleplaying games is the concept of the adventure (or mission in the case of *Witch Hunter*). You have a group of diverse player characters who need to come together in order to accomplish some task. In the course of accomplishing that task they will grow in experience and power. Sometimes they will suffer setbacks, but in the end they are always moving forward towards the ultimate goal. When the adventure is over, the heroes have some time to rest, recover, and reflect; and then it's off to the next mission. Sometimes missions lead into one another or are connected by plot threads and characters that span great lengths. Hints that were dropped in a game six months ago might only become clear now when the investigators meet a particular NPC who can interpret that information for them. A horrible creature that has been stalking the PCs for several game sessions finally bursts through the window and attacks. An evil sorcerer whose lieutenants and minions the Hunters have been laboriously defeating

for the last several adventures finally slips up, giving them the chance to confront him in person.

But how do you create these missions in the first place?

CORE THEMES

When thinking about missions, always keep the core themes of *Witch Hunter* in mind. The game is described as "swashbuckling colonial horror." Those three words each have very important meanings, and as much as possible you should draw on elements suggested by all three.

Swashbuckling. *Witch Hunter* is a game that features exciting cinematic scenes where the heroes face off against impossible odds and powerful foes but still prevail. Use a mix of mob scenes (in which the Hunters stare down large numbers of weaker foes) and "boss fights" (in which the Hunters face a small number of powerful adversaries) to provide variety. In most action-adventure movies and stories, the protagonists mow down legions of minions and face overwhelming odds before they finally reach the showdown with the evil mastermind for a one-on-one duel.

Swashbuckling scenes are also important in the sense that they take place in cinematic locations and offer opportunities for the combatants to use their environment as a tactical resource. Dropping a chandelier on a group of foes, swinging from rope to rope while battling on small platforms, weaving and swaying on the deck of a burning ship, balancing precariously on the top of an out-of-control carriage, trading blows on horseback, breaking walls and furniture...all of these elements and more can transform a mundane die-rolling exercise into a memorable encounter. These scenes are also more memorable if they take place in interesting locations – at the edge of a cliff, atop a crumbling wall, in a cave filled with bones, and so forth.

The GM's descriptions of combat are also critical to a swashbuckling feel. Flourishes and over-the-top displays should not be limited to the Grand Master, though! Players should feel free to describe their heroes' actions in grandiose and elaborate detail. The sword fighting in the movie *The Princess Bride* is not technically very impressive – it basically consists of several actors clanging their swords back and forth, over and over. But the constant witty repartee, the exciting visual elements and exotic locations where the fights occur, and the constant movement and changes of direction all make those fight scenes some of the most memorable in movie history.

In general, the rule of thumb for swashbuckling adventures is that "if it looks cool, you can do it." When you are planning a fight scene or a chase scene, try to provide lots of "action zones" where there are elements of the world that can be used for acrobatic stunts and clever maneuvers. Paths that require leaping, ducking, and climbing to get past obstacles. Ropes for swinging. Boxes, crates, and barrels that can be leapt upon or

pushed over. Don't let a great swashbuckling move fail because of poor dice rolling, especially against minions. If everyone around the table gasps and cheers when one player announces that her character is going to do something so spectacularly awesome that it can't help but make the entire scene a success, do everything you can to facilitate that. Errol Flynn never rolled a botch – at least, not on camera. Of course, what goes for taking down the flunkies doesn't apply to major NPCs and important monsters. Climactic scenes should never be reduced to a narration competition. Villainous characters should have just as much power to nimbly escape (in their own swashbuckling way) as the heroes do. This is exactly what the dice are for.

Colonial. The game shouldn't be a dry recitation of historical facts and figures, but part of the fun of the setting is the fact that it is very different from our modern world but not so different as to be unrecognizable. Read up on the 1680s (in addition to the historical chapters, we have a bibliography and filmography available as a web enhancement for this book) and see how you can introduce a few historical elements into each game session. Getting into the mindset of the time period is accomplished through vivid descriptions of places, clothing, everyday objects and activities, and more. You don't want to spend a hundred hours studying exactly what sorts of dyes were available during the period (or maybe you do), but knowing how people dressed and how they spoke should go a long way towards creating the sense that you are in some small way reenacting the colonial time period. There is some basic information elsewhere in this book, of course, but doing some additional research on the locations and people of the time period will pay huge dividends for you when you are playing the game.

Avoiding obvious anachronisms is also helpful for staying in character. Don't obsess over minute details (we've certainly altered the real history of Earth a great deal in the story that underlies the Witch Hunter setting, so it's quite plausible that other changes in technology and history make perfect sense), but do try to avoid introducing things that won't be possible for another hundred years.

There is a particular satisfaction to be had in setting up missions where the players (not the player characters) understand the historical significance of their actions. Witch Hunter is set in a time period where we have just enough history to make things interesting but not so much as to make things impossible to tinker with. You don't need to limit yourself to the "current" decade of the 1680s, either. Many evil plots that are only now coming to fruition could easily have been hatched at any point during the 17th century. For example, "real" history tells us that Cardinal Richelieu of France died of tuberculosis in 1642. But what if that was not true? There was a significant amount of resentment between Pope Urban VIII (who would not name Richelieu as

a papal legate) and the Cardinal. What if Richelieu, a powerful and prideful man who suffered from a great many ailments as he neared the end of his life, turned away from the Church and towards the Adversary? What if he found a way to prolong his life unnaturally? Now you have a possible mastermind to face off against the heroes over a series of adventures, perhaps beginning in colonial America with the death of Huguenot refugees in the New Netherlands (many Protestants fled France following the Edict of Fontainebleau in 1685, but the first Huguenot settlement in the New World was actually established in 1564 near the site of what is today the city of Jacksonville, Florida). As the PCs investigate what seem like a series of random murders, the link connecting all the deaths is discovered to be that they were all Huguenot refugees from France, and when the murderer is discovered, he has a clue which eventually leads the PCs to discover that Cardinal Richelieu is not dead as everyone believed for the last 40 years, but rather has become a terrible liche in the service of the Adversary. Although Alexandre Dumas did not publish *Les Trois Mousquetaires* (*The Three Musketeers*) until 1840, your players will very likely all know who Cardinal Richelieu is, and that makes him a poignant foe.

Horror. This element is in some ways the most important and also the most difficult. Horror takes a variety of forms. There's visceral horror – sudden screams, dark shapes crashing through the window, pools of blood and claws dripping with shredded entrails. There's psychological horror – fear of the unknown, despair at the seeming hopelessness of the struggle against the Adversary, madness and phobias. The horror in Witch Hunter is a combination of these. It's not just the pure madness of alien and unknowable beings, it's also the evil deeds perpetrated by their mortal followers. Not knowing when the next child will vanish from her bed, then the rush of fear and adrenaline when the things that go bump in the night suddenly tap you on the shoulder and smile with an impossibly huge mouth full of incredibly sharp teeth...

Horror is overt, with monsters and ghosts and daemons crashing through the walls and leaving bloody reminders of their handiwork smeared on the walls, but it's also subtle, with unexpected jolts of terror when you think you're safe or the constant sense of dread that something bad could happen at any moment. Horror is seeing your neighbor digging in the back yard and *knowing* that he's burying the shredded body of his murdered wife, but not having any way to prove it, and the frustration you feel when nobody will believe you. Creating horror is tricky, but the payoff is unlike anything else (which probably explains why there are so many scary movies being made these days).

You can create an environment that is conducive to horror in a variety of ways. For example, try playing with the lights dimmed. When there are shadows dancing on the walls in the gaming area, the shadows you describe dancing on the walls in the dark cave will seem that



much more real to the players. Music can be another key element of setting the mood for horror gaming. We have plenty of suggestions on the Witch Hunter website, but one group whose work is so good that it deserves to be immortalized in print is that of Midnight Syndicate. Their “gaming soundtracks” are perfect for Witch Hunter. Keep the music low and in the background, though – you don’t want it to interfere with people being able to hear one another, nor do you want it to become a distraction.

Humor is a difficult topic when considering horror games. There is always a tendency at the gaming table to make jokes and laugh at inappropriate times. This can be OK if you are slaying orcs in the dungeon, but it can totally wreck the mood of a horror game. Your group needs to come to an agreement beforehand about how much humor is appropriate and then enforce that rule. With that said, humor is also an important release mechanism and a defense against fear, so people making nervous jokes are doing exactly what their counterparts might do in the game when faced with mind-shattering terrors.

SOURCES OF INSPIRATION

Coming up with good adventures is more an art than a science. However, the rules of good fiction writing apply just as much in the tabletop roleplaying form as they do in a printed book. The mechanism for telling the story is a little bit different, but the story itself still needs to have all the classical elements of fiction.

Every mission tells a story of some sort. Like a good work of fiction, it has an introduction, rising action,

one or more climaxes, falling action, and a conclusion. Some or all of these phases might be larger or smaller depending on the particular adventure, and sometimes they’re taken out of order or even omitted entirely, but by and large, the basic structure that we’ll describe in this chapter should serve you well when designing missions of your own. As you gain more experience with the form, you’ll soon reach a point where you want to start experimenting with different designs of your own, so please don’t interpret anything we say in this chapter as “the one right way” to design a mission or as being set in stone. We want to offer you examples that are drawn from good practices that have been proven to work, but that doesn’t mean that our suggestions are all-encompassing or that there’s no other way to do things.

One good way to think about individual adventures is as episodes of a television series in which the player characters are the stars. If Witch Hunter were a series of books, a television series, or a movie, it would be a cross between action-adventure, psychological horror, a slasher film, and a police procedural (*CSI: Jamestown?*). All of these genres have something to offer a Witch Hunter mission.

In an action-adventure the heroes discover some horrible plot that is about to wreak havoc on a grand scale. A bomb is going to destroy the city, an important person has been kidnapped, or a natural disaster places many innocent lives at risk. In the course of solving this problem it will be necessary to traverse difficult landscapes, solve mental challenges (do I cut the red wire or the blue wire?), and defeat legions of mercenaries. You can model scenes in Witch Hunter quite liberally on elements of this genre simply by making the necessary adaptations for the time period and setting. The “bomb” becomes a potent magical ritual that will unleash evil spirits, open a portal to Hell, or simply wipe out a colony. The important person can be any of the many historical figures available during the time period. The natural disaster can again be the result of a ritual, or it can be a side effect of some terrible monster that has just escaped from its ancient prison and now must be hunted down and either recaptured or destroyed before it can complete its original fell purpose.

Psychological horror involves the terror of the unknown. There is always something moving just at the edge of your vision, a shape in the corner of your eye, but when you turn around, nothing is there. Moments later you hear a terrible scream and another victim is discovered. Psychological horror movies and television shows are good sources of inspiration for things you can do as the GM to ratchet up the tension at the gaming table. Structure your scenes so that the players never quite understand the whole picture until it’s (nearly) too late. That moment of dread when the pieces of the puzzle click together and you suddenly realize what it all means is immensely satisfying. Psychological horror also involves people who seem utterly normal but who do things that are absolutely at odds with the established norms of society. Cannibalism is a classic example, but

serial killers and mass murderers in general have the ability to ignore the fact that their victims are fellow human beings and regard them dispassionately as only so many pieces of meat. This mindset is terrifying all by itself, and confrontations with these villains (or their handiwork) should be especially chilling because of the alien precision with which the dark deeds are carried out. This type of scene can also involve some very intense roleplaying. The villains in these pieces are not necessarily raving lunatics or gigantic monsters. They are ordinary-seeming people who are extremely intelligent, calm, and seemingly rational. They have perfectly good reasons for wanting to sacrifice 50 innocent lives in order to summon up the ancient spirit of the ocean for a nice conversation. These types of missions will often involve unraveling intricate plots and following the threads back to their source – the mastermind. Masterminds need henchmen to do their bidding and carry out their nefarious schemes, of course, so you’ve got the seeds of plenty of good fight and interrogation scenes already.

Slasher flicks are visceral horror. Blood and guts spray in all directions as the beast’s sharp claws rend through flesh and bone. You can draw ideas for creatures from these sources; with a bit of adaptation nearly any monster that has ever appeared in a comic book, television show, movie, or novel can make its appearance in Witch Hunter. Real-world myths and legends are perhaps the best source, because one of the fundamental premises of the game is that everything anybody ever believed might very possibly be true. Every human culture everywhere in the world has developed its own set of boogeymen and superstitions that you can mine for your Witch Hunter missions. What often makes these monsters interesting is that they can only be stopped in certain very specific ways. They are only vulnerable to blessed weapons, silver, or holy water, or a certain ritual must be performed before they can be harmed, or they can only be killed in the light of the full moon or while standing beneath the boughs of an oak tree. Setting up the final combat is just as much about manipulating the creature into a place where it can be killed as it is about actually doing the deed. These types of missions often have at least one “rampage” scene where the creature crashes through a group of innocents, killing indiscriminately, while people flee in all directions. (Sometimes stopping this rampage from happening is the whole point of the mission; other times, it’s the starting point of the mission.) Even better is if the creature is one that can “spawn” or replicate itself in some fashion, because now the immature young ones become excellent minions for a fight scene on the way to the final confrontation.

As a framework for Witch Hunter missions, the police procedural is probably the best starting point. The investigators all have a reason to be there; they are typically members of law enforcement. (The Witch Hunter analogue is that the Hunters are all people who have come into contact with the Invisible World and so joined the fraternity of those who oppose the Adversary.)

Someone has been killed or something mysterious has happened (or both) and it’s up to the investigators to figure out whodunit and why. This involves searching for clues, talking to witnesses, researching past cases that have similar elements to the current case, tracking down leads, and ultimately trying to capture or kill the bad guy. On a typical police-procedural show the detectives solve one or more cases in every episode, but some of the criminals transcend individual shows and come back as recurring villains. For some of these masterminds, it can take a whole year or even several years before the entire plot arc is resolved. Sometimes hints of a mastermind appear in an episode (such as a body killed with a specific signature unique to that villain) even if the evildoer himself does not.

However, no matter what else might be going on to establish the long-term “big picture” of the series, one thing is certain: in each and every episode the detectives will solve crimes where the investigation starts and finishes within that same episode. This is necessary to give a sense of closure and accomplishment to the viewers, and the same thing is true of your Witch Hunter players. No matter how many seeds you might plant to be resolved in later adventures, you should almost always give the players something concrete that they can accomplish during the current adventure. That is true even if the adventure is too long to finish in a single real-world game session; if you only have three hours a week to play, make sure that in each three-hour period, you provide an opportunity for the player characters to do something that tangibly moves them forward towards a goal of some sort. Defeating a group of minions, discovering a piece of ancient lore, learning the location of the vampire’s coffin or the werewolf’s cave – it doesn’t matter as long as the game session includes something that will leave the players feeling satisfied. We play these games to have fun, after all.

With that said, you can get away with delaying satisfaction from one game session to the next; “cliff-hangers” are a common way for television writers to bring the audience back for next week’s episode. Getting to the point where you kick in the big bad guy’s door right at the end of the game session, with the promise of a huge fight to start the next session, can be just as satisfying because everyone has something exciting to look forward to. Likewise, ending a session with a moment of pure terror – but not revealing the cause or source – can be a powerful tool for keeping the players on edge while they wait for the next game session. They will speculate endlessly and that speculation draws them deeper into the game world.

Having a venue to discuss the game in the real world can also help keep everyone involved. It also gives the players a place to share speculation and theories, which you as the GM can mine for great ideas. Their wild-eyed conspiracy theories might be wrong for the current mission, but that doesn’t mean something similar can’t happen in the future after you’ve had the chance to set

things up! Many Witch Hunter groups make use of e-mail lists and websites (such as a campaign wiki) in which the players write up their heroes' thoughts and experiences. Having one of the players assigned as the scribe also ensures that there will be a record of what happened during each session, which is extremely useful if there are long breaks between sessions or if one of the players can't make a particular session.

ELEMENTS OF A MISSION

You can (and hopefully will) purchase all sorts of published Witch Hunter adventures. For example, the GM screen comes with a complete adventure that is ready to run and would serve as an excellent introduction for a new campaign. Looking at published adventures is a great way to get a sense for the way good missions are designed and presented. However, the reality is that there will probably never be enough published adventures to meet your needs as a GM. If your group is playing once a week, you'll probably need a new mission at least once a month, if not more often, and that means you will end up writing your own. What follows are some examples of the different types of scenes that often appear in Witch Hunter adventures, thoughts on plots and mission design in general, and a complete sample mission presented as a "template" rather than fully detailed so that you can customize it for your own nefarious purposes.

THE OBJECTIVE

Every mission exists for a reason. If there was nothing bad going on in the world then there would be no need for Witch Hunters. The players might not discover their true objective until the mission is halfway over, but you as a designer will need to start with the objective before deciding anything else. The objective of a mission is in some sense the most important piece of the puzzle, for it is here that we decide why the mission exists in the first place. There needs to be something for the heroes to do or else there is no story to be told. What exactly the heroes need to do will vary widely. They might need to defeat an evil monster or destroy a powerful servant of the Adversary, liberate a town from criminals, rescue a kidnapped scholar from a cult, discover an ancient tome of forgotten lore, enact a powerful ritual to seal a gate to the realms of the Infernal, receive a vision from an angel or fey spirit, recruit a new member into their fellowship or church, recover a powerful relic that was lost hundreds of years before, or any of an infinite number of other possibilities.

The key to a good objective is that by achieving it, the heroes will somehow make the world a better place or further the cause of defeating the Adversary. Witch Hunters are warriors and protectors who fight on the side of the righteous. Even though their actions might have unintended consequences, they might temporarily succumb to vices and sin in the course of completing their mission, or the way they choose to deal with problems might cause harm to innocents, the original objective

of the mission should always assume that the heroes are exactly that – heroes. They are the protagonists, the good guys, the agents of God. A mission should never require or expect the heroes to bring about specifically evil outcomes. Of course, things in the world are rarely black and white, and moral relativity is a perfectly valid question for the players to grapple with. Is it worth killing ten people to save one person? Should innocent lives be sacrificed in order to prevent a much greater sacrifice in the future? These kinds of dilemmas can have a place in Witch Hunter, but if the mission does not provide a way for the players to feel good at the end, then you probably need to rethink the objective. The players should not end a mission feeling "dirty" or like they have been forced to do evil things in order to "win" in the context of the mission. That doesn't mean that the heroes always have to be successful or that bad things can never happen to or because of them – on the contrary, Witch Hunter is set in a world where the forces of evil vastly outnumber the forces of good, and the heroes will no doubt have a great many setbacks along the way to their ultimate success. But they should always feel like there is a line between right and wrong, and that they are standing somewhere on the "right" side of that line.

A good objective should be able to be explained in one or two sentences. A useful way to frame or summarize the objective is to specify what would happen if the player characters did not come along and save the day. Here are a few examples:

If the werewolves aren't tracked and destroyed, they will eventually kill or corrupt all of the citizens of the town, and the rapid growth of the pack will mean that surrounding towns will also be at risk.

If the gate to Hell isn't closed, daemons will continue to pour through at an increasing rate, eventually forming a host large enough to destroy the entire colony.

If the Tome of Shadows isn't recovered, the Jesuits won't have the information that they need to banish the spirit currently possessing the abbot, and the monastery will fall into chaos and despair.

If the evil sorcerer isn't stopped before his slaves excavate the Baleful Stone of Uhxbractit, he will gain the services of a powerful devil lord, which will allow him to launch even worse schemes in the future.

If evidence of her innocence isn't presented to the Town Council within the next two days, the innocent seamstress will be burned at the stake at dawn on the third day.

Of course, nothing says that a mission can only have one objective. There can be multiple objectives, but they should be connected in some fashion. For example, in the Town Council example, perhaps one of the Councilors is also a powerful servant of the Adversary and it was he who accused the seamstress of being a witch in the first place. In the course of proving her innocence, the heroes might also uncover evidence of the Councilor's perfidy, and have the opportunity to confront him and either redeem him from evil or destroy him. The point is that in

most missions, something bad is going to happen (or has already happened). Preventing that negative outcome or fixing it is why the heroes get involved.

Along with specifying the objective, you should provide sufficient background to allow the Grand Master to understand how the current situation came about and what events have already transpired that are relevant to the situation. Corresponding to the previous examples, a mission might include background elements such as these:

When did the werewolf pack start terrorizing the town? Who was the first werewolf and how did he or she get corrupted? Where do they lair? How many townsfolk have they already killed? How often do they hunt? What evidence has been left behind at the sites of previous attacks? What have the townsfolk tried to do to protect themselves?

How was the gate to Hell opened, and by whom? Where is it located? What daemons have already come through, where are they hiding, and what are they doing? What has to be done in order to close the gate?

When and how did the evil spirit come to possess the Abbot? Do the monks know that he is possessed, or do they simply think that he is being unnecessarily harsh and cruel lately? Was the Tome of Shadows involved in the original possession, or does it simply contain the spell necessary to banish the spirit? Do the monks know about the Tome? Did they ever possess it? If so, how was it lost or stolen? Where is it now and who has it?

Where is the Baleful Stone buried and how did the sorcerer discover its location? What servitors is he using for the excavation? Does the devil lord Uhxbractit have any ability to influence the material world from his prison inside the stone? How long has the digging been going on, and how much longer will it be before the stone is uncovered?

Why has the seamstress been accused of witchcraft and what evidence was presented against her? Who among the villagers is on her side and who would be just as happy to see her burn? What specific acts of witchcraft have occurred, and who was affected? What cases of witchcraft have been tried in this town in the past and what was the outcome? Is the seamstress, in fact, possessed of any sort of supernatural abilities?

The combination of a strong objective and a good background story surrounding that objective will give you all the material that you should need to construct a compelling mission for the heroes. Once you've established what's going on, why, and what will happen if nothing is done, you're at least halfway there. Now you just need to decide which scenes the actual mission will comprise and how those scenes will be connected to one another. The first scene is, by definition, when the player characters arrive.

THE INTRODUCTION

The introduction sets the stage for the events to come. There are two critical elements that almost always need to be present: drawing the heroes together and giving them a reason to embark on the mission. The former task can be very easy to accomplish (if the heroes know one another, have adventured together before, or all take their orders from the same church or other organization) or it can be very difficult (if the heroes are coming from different parts of the world, serve a variety of masters, or have never met one another). The latter task – giving the heroes a reason to go on the mission – is often referred to as the “hook,” an analogy to fishing, in which some kind of tempting bait is used to capture the fish's attention.

Deciding where and how to introduce the heroes to one another is important because it establishes the tone for the game session. In general it's best to avoid dwelling on travel issues. When the game starts, assume that the Hunters have already come from wherever they were to wherever you want them to be. They might have gotten some individual background information in the form of instructions or visions, and you can spend a few minutes with each player explaining that information. (You can also make use of player handouts for background, both to save time and to add a bit of mystery because the players don't necessarily know exactly what has been told to the other players).

There are a variety of ways to bring the player characters to the same place at the same time. The simplest is if they are all instructed to be there, if they all have some sort of spiritual or supernatural experience indicating clearly that they need to be there, or if they are all given obvious information about a meeting (such as a newspaper ad or recruitment poster). A more complicated method is to have one hero (who is generally given at least some background information that isn't given to the other players) act as the primary organizer of the mission party and charged with finding suitable individuals to fill out the team. Naturally, the only suitable individuals are the other player characters. Yet another possibility is to begin the adventure *in media res* – by starting with an active scene rather than a passive one. This could be a bar fight or other loud argument, an actual attack or threat of some sort (rampaging monsters jump through the windows, pirates blast the ship with their cannon, terrified children come running into the town square screaming), a supernatural incident (manifestation of a ghost, horrifying event such as a tree whose leaves start weeping blood), or any other “can't be ignored” sort of incident that no Witch Hunter worthy of the name could possibly disregard.

Regardless of how they come together and what they might have to deal with initially, one very important purpose of the introductory scene is to give the players a chance to introduce their characters. Even if they have traveled together before, it's good to have each player give a brief description of his or her Witch Hunter. This helps cement each character's identity for the other players and

establish a framework for the players to roleplay with each other.

Once you have everyone assembled, you need to steer them towards the objective. This can be direct or indirect. The direct method is to have an NPC of some sort explain the bad situation and ask the heroes to solve it. The indirect method is to give the heroes a clue or mystery that, when investigated, ultimately leads them to discover the bad situation (which, being heroes, they will naturally want to rectify).

SCENES

The heroes now have some idea what they need to do (or at least they have something interesting to investigate). Now you have to get them from point A to point Z by means of a series of intermediate scenes. These scenes are the bulk of the adventure. Considering your background and obstacle, you should be able to come up with a number of good candidates for scenes. Not all scenes need to be of the same length or complexity. However, each scene should have a purpose. Think of scenes as presenting obstacles for the heroes to overcome. Some obstacles are mental, some are physical, some are social, and some are combinations of two or three. But in each scene the heroes should have the chance (which need not be guaranteed) that they will exit the scene being closer to accomplishing their mission than they were when they entered the scene.

There are two main ways you can lay out a series of scenes. A “linear” mission tends to have scenes that flow directly into one another. The first scene leads the players to the second scene, which leads to the third scene, and so forth until the climactic encounter where the heroes actually confront the main adversary, perform the ritual, recover the relic, or do whatever it is they were supposed to do. Then there is a final concluding scene to wrap up the game and explain how the heroes’ actions have changed the world for the better (or not). Sometimes these types of adventures are derided by players and GMs alike, with terms such as “railroad” that imply the outcome of the adventure is fixed and the player characters are just along for the ride. This is only true if the GM does a poor job of presenting the adventure. The player should always feel like they are making the decisions that drive the story forward. Even if there is only one plausible course of action and it is patently obvious, let the players be the ones who identify it, rule out the alternatives, and make their choice about how to proceed. Giving them that sense of control will go a long way towards preventing them from feeling like you channeled them down a particular path. And if for some reason they manage to take things in a direction that you totally hadn’t foreseen, that’s OK too. Roll with the punches and look for opportunities to bring them back around to the scenes you’ve already got planned. You might have to ad-lib a few NPCs and improvise a few changes of location, but your plot should be fairly transportable so that you can make it work even if a few of the details have to be modified on the way.

A “non-linear” mission instead has a series of scenes that can be traversed in more or less any order. Non-linear designs work especially well when the overall outcome can be broken down into a series of independent objectives that can be accomplished in any order, and when information from one scene is not necessarily needed in other scenes. In a non-linear mission the players have a lot of freedom to decide what they want to do next and the GM is responsible for making sure that they eventually get through all the scenes they need to get through and reach the final objective when they’re ready. Most non-linear missions do have one or more “choke points” that have to be passed through in order to advance the story. The heroes might be able to recover the five fragments of the ancient sword in any order they see fit, but at some point they’ll have all five, whereupon they need to visit the village blacksmith in order to have him reforge the sword so they can slay the demon lord whose only weakness is the sacred blade.

Regardless of whether your mission is linear or non-linear (or, more likely, a combination of the two), you’ll probably want to break it up into discrete vignettes in order to make it easier to organize. Some of the common elements of a scene are as follows:

Location. Where does the scene take place, and why? Some scenes can occur anywhere, but most are fixed at a particular point in space (and sometimes in time). The priest who knows about the demon lord’s vulnerability is found at the church, so the heroes have to go to the church to speak with him. Sometimes the whole point of an investigation scene is to learn about a particular location so that they can go there in a subsequent scene. (The heroes have to find out that the priest knows about the demon lord’s weakness before they have a reason to want to talk to him.)

An important element that is tied to each scene’s location is travel. You want scenes to be in locations that are far enough apart that it makes sense for them to be separate scenes, but keep in mind that traveling around during the late 1600s is not a terribly easy proposition. You generally don’t want to set your scenes in areas that will require days of travel unless you plan on making that travel a scene unto itself. For example, the heroes could learn about the site of an ancient crypt that might contain some carvings they need to translate, and the crypt is a day’s ride away in the foothills. Along the way, agents of the PCs’ adversary ambush them, providing an opportunity for a combat scene, or they have to navigate a rock slide or other natural hazard, providing an opportunity for an action scene. Most of the time, you don’t want to drag the heroes around from town to town during a single mission, unless the towns are very close together, because the cumulative travel time can strain verisimilitude. If the PCs have to spend six months running around gathering information before they can confront the evil magi, it’s hard to believe that the evil magi won’t have already completed their plan during that time, or at least moved on to some other base of operations. One assumes that

the bad guys are not just sitting around twiddling their thumbs waiting to be stopped – they have their own timelines and agendas, and the mission design needs to respect and reflect that if it is to be plausible.

Environment. What is interesting about this location? What objects or conditions exist that the heroes will interact with? In the case of obstacles, the environment plays a very important role (and there might be specific tasks that need to be completed, such as climbing over a gate, or digging through a pile of rubble, or searching a library for the one important book). In cases where the obstacles need to be overcome by challenging the player characters, you should provide guidance on how difficult the tasks are, which skills or abilities are relevant, and suggestions for any needed target numbers. You might need to improvise or change some of these details as needed, but you should still provide the basic information in order to save time and keep from having to invent things on the fly.

The environment is important in a combat scene because it might contain active elements that can be used to make the combat more cinematic and exciting. Furniture for the heroes and their foes to climb on, tip over, and throw; ropes and chandeliers for them to swing on and chop down; pits for them to fall into, streams for them to splash through, and all sorts of other interesting “action zones” can be used to add an extra tactical dimension to combat scenes. A sword fight in a grassy field is somewhat interesting, but that same sword fight atop a crumbling parapet at the edge of a 100-foot drop or on the roof of a carriage as it races through the forest is even more interesting.

Characters. Who, if anyone, will the heroes interact with in this scene? Sometimes this means NPCs with whom the player characters are expected to roleplay. The NPCs could have valuable information, important items, or simply provide some local color. They might represent obstacles unto themselves (such as a scholar who doesn’t want to tell the heroes what he knows because he is terrified of the reprisal he might face). The NPCs might be actively hostile (in which case the scene is most likely a combat scene). Regardless, you need to provide enough information about the characters in this scene so that you will be able to portray them appropriately.

The characters are often the most memorable part of a Witch Hunter mission. You should strive to make them interesting but not overly complex. (There is only so much time in the spotlight, after all, and you don’t want to take away from the players.) A good NPC has a single quirk or trait that is instantly recognizable and will serve to mark that character in the players’ minds forever. This could be an accent or a way of speaking, a facial tic, hairstyle, scar, limp, missing limb, or other visual characteristic, a specific action or gesture that the NPC always performs (such as throwing up the horns to ward off the evil eye, or constantly rearranging the pile of colored pebbles on her table), a personality trait that obviously influences everything the NPC says and does, or

even the NPC’s profession or situation, if it is sufficiently memorable (especially if it is contrary to societal norms for the area, such as a female politician or a male “wise woman” and herbalist).

Knowledge. This is not necessarily an obvious element of a scene (although it can be, such as if the scene takes place in a library). Rather, every scene should have some bit of knowledge that it imparts to the Witch Hunters that will help them reach their ultimate goals. (Sometimes you want to drop bits of knowledge that won’t be relevant until future adventures, if you are running this mission as part of a long-range plan, but for the most part, knowledge gained during a scene should have some sort of application to the situation at hand.)

This knowledge might be explicit (discovering a book that contains the secret to exploiting a monster’s weakness or casting a specific spell that will be needed later in the adventure) or it might be implicit (a character’s journal which talks about his past actions, from which it is possible to surmise what his next move will be). The knowledge might be obvious (the journal is in the desk drawer) or it might be somewhat hidden (the right book can only be found by searching through the whole library) or there might be a trick to it (the card catalog uses a coding scheme that can be puzzled out, allowing the heroes to find exactly the right book, or the journal is encoded somehow and must be decoded before it can be read).

Not all information is in written form, although written information has the advantage that you can prepare it beforehand as a player handout. Player handouts are good because they let you keep the game moving. While some players are reading the handout, others are taking actions in the game world, so everybody has something to do. Presenting information to the players in writing can be a good idea even when they are getting the information from you verbally in character; that way there’s no confusion later about whether the wise woman said that it was tincture of belladonna or mistletoe that was needed to piece the serpent’s scaly hide. Handouts also have the advantage of saving you from having to read long stretches of text out loud. Most people absorb information much better by reading it than they do by hearing it, and it takes a surprisingly long time to read even a relatively short passage of text aloud. (This is why books on tape last for 40 hours even if the source material is only a few hundred pages.)

Player handouts also give you the opportunity to get creative with the presentation. Maps can be printed on yellow paper or folded and crinkled to give the appearance of age. Journal pages can be printed in a variety of fonts that mimic handwriting or the clumsy block press printing technology of the day. Spells and rituals can be adorned with mystic symbols and indecipherable glyphs. You can even add artwork (there is a great deal of public domain art that is applicable to the Witch Hunter world), draw from actual period texts (a surprising amount of these works have been made available online), present

the same information in multiple languages (using online resources to do translations – the translation doesn’t need to be perfect), and add any number of other elements (such as bloody fingerprints or hand-written notes in the margin that give the impression the PCs are not the first people who have read this). Of course, you don’t want to have to spend hundreds of hours putting handouts together, but even a small investment of time in this area can bring you great rewards. It doesn’t take a lot to maintain the suspension of disbelief that is necessary to keep the players immersed in the game world.

Obstacles. Ultimately, a Witch Hunter mission is all about overcoming a series of obstacles in order to achieve a particular goal. Everything boils down to a challenge of some sort. Challenges could take the form of literal, physical impedances that need to be overcome (climbing a cliff, swinging across a series of ropes, balancing on a narrow beam, dodging a trap). They could come in the form of NPCs or traps that actively oppose and even try to kill the heroes (minions and flunkies, lesser monsters, rooms that are filled with scything blades or poisonous gas). They could be social obstacles (people who need to be talked into parting with the information they have, locations or parties that are not accessible to all of the heroes and require disguises, bribes, threats, or subterfuge, political considerations that prevent the heroes from directly confronting specific individuals or going to specific locations, captured minions who need to be intimidated, bluffed, or charmed into giving up a useful clue). They can be hidden (requiring the Hunters to search a library, dig up a buried object, discover a secret door, follow a map or cryptic directions, track or trail someone – or something). They can be obvious (worn around the villain’s neck, held by the local constabulary as evidence, stored in the village elder’s memory if someone thinks to ask) or they can be concealed (encoded, locked away, invisible).

Ultimately, putting it all together should result in a mission that challenges each of the Witch Hunters individually and also challenges them collectively. The best-case scenario for you as a designer is when you know exactly which player characters will be going through the mission, what their strengths and weaknesses are, and what sort of game their players enjoy. (Some players prefer more action and less chatter, some like puzzles and riddles while others hate them, some would just as happily roleplay for 4 hours and never pick up the dice while others will start pelting you with d10s when they get bored – and they get bored every 5 minutes.)

Even if you don’t know exactly which player characters will be involved in your mission, though, you have a pretty good chance of including something that will appeal to everyone if you include most of the following elements:

- At least one and possibly two fight scenes with expendable adversaries (minions);
- Some kind of social situation that calls for good roleplaying and cannot be solved by force (or at least

results in a less-than-ideal outcome if force is used);

- A logical challenge or intellectual puzzle that requires figuring something out, doing some kind of research, putting the pieces together, or making a mental leap;
- A supernatural element that requires someone to cast a spell, accept the touch of an otherworldly being, deal with a magic item, break (or accept) a curse, or otherwise interact directly with the Invisible World;
- A task that requires teamwork in order for the mission to succeed (this is often physical, in which the strong/dexterous team members have to assist the weak/clumsy ones, but it can also be social or intellectual);
- A temptation or opportunity to take a short-cut by giving in to Vices or doing something that is obviously immoral or forbidden; this can turn into a full-blown moral dilemma that will pit the players against one another as they debate the proper course of action and whether the end justifies the means;
- And, of course, the big finale!

SAMPLE MISSION: THE BEAST

This sample mission is an example of a linear story in which each scene leads directly into the next. A horrible Beast of some kind has been unleashed on the local population and the Witch Hunters are called on to deal with the threat. In this mission the heroes literally stand between the innocents and the Invisible World. If they fail in their duty as shepherds, then members of their flock will die.

The Beast itself should be a powerful creature – strong enough that no Witch Hunter can defeat it one-on-one. Only by fighting it together can they hope to match their combined firepower against its brute strength. The Beast has a weakness, but the heroes won’t know what that weakness is right away. The Beast might have servants (if it is intelligent or has magical powers of compulsion) or, even better, it might have a way to reproduce itself or create Spawn. These Spawn are lesser versions of the Beast, immature, weak enough that individual Witch Hunters can defeat them. The Spawn might give a clue to the true nature of the Beast, or they might just be hungry. Killing the Beast should generally also result in the destruction of any surviving Spawn (although having a scene where the heroes have to clean out the nest or breeding chamber after they think they’ve already won by defeating the Beast can also be interesting).

Two classic examples of Beasts that might fit this mission are werewolves and vampires. However, the number of options is really limitless. An important part of the adventure is doing research to learn how to combat the Beast, so if you use a familiar monster, you want to make certain that there is a twist or subtle variation between your Beast and the “classic” creature of the same type. The adventure works best if the players (not the player characters, the actual players) do not know the true nature of the Beast (it can be fun if they think they know, but they are wrong). Obviously the player characters do not know the true nature of the Beast since that is the whole point. (With that said, it can be interesting to throw a

Beast at the Hunters that seems like a creature they have fought before, but is different in some crucial way. This will almost certainly result in their trying whatever tools or techniques worked the last time, only to be surprised and dismayed when the silver bullets bounce off or the ritual fails. Just be sure if you do this that the failure of the “old way” does not automatically result in the mission failing, because that isn’t fair to the players.)

There are two good ways to introduce this mission. One way is to have the Hunters learn about the Beast ahead of time – they come across its tracks while walking through the forest, they are given a vision of it slaughtering people in a recognizable location such as a specific town, or they come across evidence of its handiwork (such as a mangled carcass of some powerful animal like a grizzly bear). In any case they realize that they need to follow it or get ahead of it so that they can stop it from killing people. This can be a mission unto itself as the heroes have to find a way to track the Beast or otherwise predict its movements and then put themselves in the right place at the right time for the confrontation.

The other way (and the way we’ll choose) is to begin the adventure *in media res* – with an action scene. The heroes are walking down the city streets, enjoying a sunny day on the town green, relaxing in a tavern (perhaps indulging their Vices), or just arriving at the edge of town when suddenly the Beast (or its Spawn) attacks. Screams come from the location of the attack and terrified civilians begin running in all directions. The rampaging Beast is knocking down buildings, grabbing up people and eating them, laying waste on all sides with its claws, and just generally wreaking havoc. The Witch Hunters come from all directions (they need not all be in the same part of town when the adventure begins, especially if they don’t know one another already – as Witch Hunters, they will all be drawn to this supernatural incursion regardless).

A fight scene naturally ensues. There are a lot of things that the heroes need to worry about during this scene and there are more things to worry about than any individual character can deal with on his or her own. There are injured villagers who need medical attention or they’ll die, there are live villagers being chased by the Beast (such as a group of children who were playing right in its path and now need to be pulled away), some of the villagers might be trying to fight back with torches and pitchforks (putting their own lives at risk), there are other environmental effects that could be going on (such as a fire that now puts the whole village at risk), and of course there is the Beast itself. In this first encounter the heroes will not know what they need to do in order to actually defeat the Beast, but they should be able to drive it off in some fashion. (If you are using Spawn, then the heroes should probably be able to destroy the Spawn. If you are using the Beast itself, then the heroes should either be able to drive it off or lure it away. Since they can’t kill it in this scene, it’s probably not fair to have the Beast wipe out the entire village, unless you want this to be a mission of bitter vengeance.)

After the fight, the heroes should have the opportunity to search for clues and talk to witnesses. They should also meet one another formally if they are not previously acquainted. Since Witch Hunters automatically recognize one another as such, and since obviously they were the only ones who were able to fight back against the Beast, introductions ought to follow quite naturally. (First they might have to team up to deal with any lingering effects of the attack, such as the aforementioned fire; perhaps they need to organize the panicked villagers into a bucket brigade.) This can involve examining the bodies of the Spawn, asking around if anyone has ever seen a creature like that before, comparing notes on what sorts of attacks seemed to work, or even following the Beast’s tracks to try and learn the location of its lair. Since the Beast was driven off or the Spawn were destroyed, the villagers are obviously quite grateful to the player characters and will want to help them in any way possible. The most important question, of course, is will there be another attack?

The second phase of the mission is basically a research phase. The Hunters need to learn as much as they possibly can about the Beast and how to kill it. They might also learn about when the next attack is likely to occur. This research can take a wide variety of forms, partially depending on where you’ve decided the adventure takes place. If it is rural or remote, then there’s probably not going to be a big library of mystic tomes available, but the villagers might know of a local “wise woman” who has experience with such things. (Depending on the political climate, visiting the wise woman and gaining the benefit of her knowledge without exposing her to the local authorities could be a challenge.) The Hunters might have a scholar among them whose chapbook contains some hints about this sort of Beast and what means might be used to combat it. If the adventure takes place in a city or near a large church then there should be a library or archives that can be used as a reference. Perhaps there are spirits or fey creatures in the area that can be consulted, bargained with, or otherwise compelled to tell what they know. Getting the information that they need can become a mission unto itself, with complicated layers of clues and trails to follow. Regardless of how the research unfolds, the PCs should exit this scene (or series of scenes) with the knowledge of what they need to do in order to defeat the Beast (and remember that “defeat” can mean many things – imprison, banish, kill, or even cure). In order to prevail during the final battle, the Hunters will know that they must use teamwork and smart tactics. The Beast is still quite capable of killing any individual Hunter, so they either need to figure out away to protect themselves so that it can’t kill them easily, a way to lessen the Beast’s strength so that it can be fought, or a way to hurt it in such a fashion that it will die quickly.

During the research phase, the Hunters may have to go to a variety of places and talk to a lot of different people (and not everyone they need to talk with will necessarily be human – perhaps they must speak with the dead, commune with spirits, or bargain with sprites). It’s good to mix things up a bit by interrupting the research

phase with a second combat scene or physical challenge of some sort. Perhaps someone doesn't want the heroes to defeat the Beast (maybe the sorcerer who summoned it in the first place, or maybe the Beast is actually an alchemist who's been transformed by an experiment gone awry and his sister or assistant shows up to beg the heroes to stop trying to kill him, or perhaps it's just another wave of Spawn or another appearance by the Beast itself.) In any case this second scene should feel markedly different than the first scene did; the PCs now have a bit more knowledge than they did before, so perhaps they are more efficacious in combat, or at least the scene only involves a direct threat to the Hunters rather than to the innocents who were at risk earlier. On the other hand, if your Beast is one that lends itself to "stalking in the night" then perhaps the research phase consists of a sequence of investigations of grisly scenes where the Beast has done its work and then departed. At least one of these should spring a surprise on the heroes (such as a dead body rising up, transforming into a Spawn, and attacking, or an ambush, or a grieving family member who doesn't believe that the PCs want to help and won't let them have access to the body, or a politician who believes that the Hunters are themselves the source of the problem and tries to turn the rest of the villagers against them).

Once the research phase of the investigation is over, the Hunters must now put their plan into action. The means for defeating the Beast can be physical (weapons made of a specific material or blessed in some fashion), magical (spells that need to be cast to strip away protections, or a ritual of binding), environmental (a specific time of day or location where the Beast is weakest), or all of the above. There are now two tasks that need to be performed: the Hunters need to gather the materials they'll need (silver for the bullets, holy water for the flasks, material components for the spell) and they need to find the Beast's lair or lure it into the final confrontation. Perhaps the magical component involves tracking or calling the Beast, or perhaps the heroes have learned that its attacks follow a particular timing (the full moon, every night at midnight, whenever a child is born, or whatever makes the most sense) and therefore they can position themselves to be in the right place at the right time. If the Beast has a lair, then part of the research phase should have included finding out where the lair is located so that the final confrontation can take place there. (Lairs can be as simple as a large cave or as complicated as a haunted mansion atop a cliff. Indeed, fighting through a lair can represent a whole mission unto itself. But in this type of mission, since the Beast is typically feral or savage, it most likely just has a crude lair, probably filled with Spawn.)

Once the location and timing of the final confrontation have been established (either by the heroes learning the Beast's timetable, or by their taking matters into their own hands and choosing when and how to engage the monster) it is time for the climactic final battle. This can either be just the Beast against the player characters, or it can be a gloriously complicated scene with Spawn scampering in all directions while the PCs frantically try

to complete their ritual or get off that one clean shot with the blessed silver bullet that was washed in holy water and anointed with mandrake root. The area should be at least somewhat complicated with lots of action zones that allow for interesting tactical possibilities for both the Beast and the Hunters. The heroes can be on the offensive (assaulting the lair, luring the Beast to a location where it will be weak) or the Beast can be on the offensive (hordes of Spawn and the Beast itself assailing the Hunters as they try to protect their scholar who is casting the ritual of banishment). Either way, this scene should have the feeling of a true climactic confrontation. Sometimes the Beast can escape to be used in later adventures, but in general, the most satisfying way to end these kinds of missions is with the Hunters triumphant. The Beast is killed, imprisoned, banished, or restored to its former state as a normal person, and the villagers are saved. At least, for now...

Some possible twists on this template include involve the Beast not actually being the bad guy. Perhaps it is itself a pawn in someone's larger scheme and is being compelled to do evil things. In this variation, you get the benefit of still having a satisfying final battle against the real evildoer, and the players are thrown by the twist of their enemy not being who they actually thought it was. This works very well if you choose a type of Beast that would normally be thought of as "good" (or at least, not evil). A unicorn running around impaling woodsmen would certainly be out of the ordinary, but if that unicorn is under the effects of a magical spell, it becomes a whole different kind of adversary. The Beast (or its controller) could be a Witch Hunter who has fallen from grace and joined the side of the Adversary – perhaps a former player character or an NPC who the heroes have met. Perhaps it is a natural creature or powerful spirit of some sort that is angry about the encroachment of civilization upon its previously-untouched wilderness. Appeasing or negotiating with the Beast can be a valid way to solve the problem, if it's a type of creature that might be amenable to such. (Of course, if what it wants is the destruction of an entire colony before it will be appeased, well, that's going to make for an interesting conversation between the player characters and the Governor.)

This type of mission can be a satisfying stand-alone episode, or it can serve as the basis for an entire series. Perhaps the Beast only attacks once a year (or perhaps it has not attacked yet at all, only its Spawn, and the heroes are given a vision that the Beast itself will destroy a major city on a specific date in the future and they need to stop it before that occurs). If the Beast has a spiritual or dreamlike aspect, then the Hunters can battle it in their sleep while pursuing the means of its true defeat in the waking world. Perhaps the ritual they need to conduct requires several powerful components, each of which requires a separate mission to recover. (These could be pieces of a legendary weapon or other relic that has the power to kill or bind the Beast, or they could be sections of a powerful spell that was contained in a tome that was torn apart and sold in pieces by a charlatan who didn't know what he had, or a mixture of the two.)

CHAPTER TEN: CREATURES AND ADVERSARIES

Throughout your Witch Hunter campaign, it is expected that the assembled cadre will encounter a variety of personalities – some helpful, some villainous. By and large, these minor character roles are played by the Grand Master. Any character that is not played by one of the players is called a Non-Player Character, or NPC. If the cadre visits a local church on the trail of an unspeakable evil, the part of the pastor will probably be played by the Grand Master. The same goes for any villains or threats that the cadre encounters.

THE SUPPORTING CAST

Before creating an NPC, the Grand Master should think about what type of supporting role is needed. Will the NPC be a minion, lieutenant, hero, or villain?

A Witch Hunter campaign refers to four different types of adversaries: the minion, the lieutenant, the villain and lastly the mastermind. The role of the mastermind is a unique one and will not be dealt with here due to space considerations. Should you wish to create one for your campaign, think of the mastermind as a character rivaling a Professor Moriarty, Fu Manchu, or a certain Emperor in a galaxy far, far away. These are opponents with vast power, resources and a highly sophisticated organization that should take a group of Witch Hunters years to unravel and destroy.

MINIONS (MINDLESS AND OTHERWISE)

You spend hours and hours designing opponents for your players with a care to rival Michelangelo's attention while painting the Sistine Chapel. You've made sure that the members of the Cult of the Flayed Apostate each have a name, a back story, individualized skills, combat abilities and equipment. These are adherents worthy of kneeling before the bleeding effigy of the Apostate and stand beside the High Priest and his trio of acolytes against the Witch Hunters.

Your players will marvel at the depth of detail and life that you infused into each and every one of their opponents.

<Insert sound of needle scratching across a record>

What were you thinking? Your players may be roleplayers worthy of an Oscar each and every session, but when it comes to combat, they have only one objective: kill and/or stop the big, bad guy before he kills and/or stops them. When they open the bronzed double doors leading to the inner chamber where the high priest is leading his minions in a doubtless bloody ritual that will mean death and destruction for all, your players are not going to stop and ask why this young mother of four is participating in such a vile rite. The players aren't even going to stop to wipe their blades in their head long rush to confront the villain.

So if they're not going to be more than a speed bump for the players, why spend more time designing an opponent than the players are going to take to fight it? The answer is you shouldn't, but you still need to have some sort of framework for these minor antagonists.

THE MINION RULE

The primary reason for the existence of minions is to make the players feel good. Nothing gets a group more pumped up than mowing through a dozen robed cultists as a warm up before taking on the main villain. Another reason for their existence is as speed bumps. They can slow down the players, rough them up a little bit, and even get them to expend some resources before going on to the main course. Used correctly, minions can heighten the sense of drama as the Witch Hunters have to wade through a horde of walking dead in time to make sure that the Hell Point bubbling into existence gets sealed ASAP.

To make a minion, first choose their overall Threat Level. This is a number between 1-4. Any number higher would really constitute a more competent adversary and should be made a lieutenant.

The threat level for the minion indicates how many dice he rolls for all cases. So, if a threat level 2 minion needed to make a Balance check, he rolls 2 dice. If he attacks, he rolls 2 dice, and so on.

Obviously a threat level 2 minion is not too dangerous by himself. But that's the beauty of minions... they're cheap and they come in 5 packs. Rolling for five individual minions can be quite tedious, so to speed play, a group of up to five minions may attack the same opponent at once. To do so, start with the base dice given by the threat level and then add one die per additional minion.

To finish off your minion, just choose their weapon. Don't worry about the weapon's complexity (minions are rolling few dice as is), just note the Damage Modifier and you're done.

Example: Five threat level 2 minions attack Gideon. When making their attack, they would roll 6 die (2 for the initial minion + 4 the others in the pack)

HEALTH TRACK FOR MINIONS

Minions don't have a Health Track like players and Villains do. Instead, a minion can take a number of hits equal to their threat level. If in a group, each multiple of that threat level taken in damage knocks out a minion.

When a minion takes enough damage to take it out of combat, it is not necessarily dead. The Witch Hunter making the attack must decide if they are unconscious or dead. Merciful characters may decide to merely knock his opponents out, while more ruthless Witch Hunters may have an 'attack to kill' policy.

Minions also don't have a Defense pool, but if the

situation merits it, you can give your minions some sort of armor and subtract that value from damage taken. Note however, that this will greatly increase the deadliness of your minions and should be done with great care.

Example: A group of five threat level 2 minions are attacked by a Witch Hunter. The Witch Hunter's attack results in 5 successes. Since each minion can take 2 hits, the Witch Hunter knocks out two of the five minions. The extra point is not enough to take out another minion and is thus discounted. The extra point is not held over for the next round.

ADVANCED MINIONS

Some times minions merit a few more details to round them out. Noting these extra factors shouldn't take more than a few lines and minutes of time.

Let's say that the minions the Witch Hunters are facing are pirates notorious for attacking others at range with thrown daggers. Our minion write up may look something like this:

Pirate Crew of the Whistling Wench (20)

Threat Level: 2

Skills: Throw: 1, Balance 2

Weapons DM: Dagger: +2, Cutlass: +3

So this would describe the crew of the pirate ship, *The Whistling Wench*, twenty strong (4 groups of 5), armed with daggers and cutlasses. When making a Balance check or a thrown attack, they roll 4 dice and 3 dice respectively. It also takes 2 hits each to knock them out.

OTHER TYPES OF MINIONS

Minions need not be just people; they can also describe animals and even lower threat supernatural creatures. A pack of wolves can be quickly written up as well as a cadre of fire-breathing imps. Remember, minions need not come in huge numbers; but if you are designing an encounter with just one creature, let's say a grizzly bear or a large crocodile, then it may be better to just stat those out.

Below are examples of different minions for quick reference. These are average minions and can obviously be scaled up or down as needed.

Remember that if a minion designed to be a major or even a significant challenge to the players, then it should probably not be treated as a minion, and instead be written up as a lieutenant.

CARDINAL'S GUARDS

Holy men of high position are under constant threat by those who would steal their rings, fat purses or worse yet, their golden crucifix. To prevent this, highly trained bodyguards travel with these archons of the Church, assuring their destination is reached.

Cardinal's Guards (5 – 10)

Threat Level 4

Skills: Hand-to-Hand 2, Resolve 1

Weapon's DM: Sword: +3

CULTIST

A cultist is an individual that serves and advances the interests of the Adversary or some other foul god—often just the Adversary in another guise. Cultists live double lives, putting on a public face of being honest, hard-working citizens, but secretly gather to participate in horrific ceremonies that celebrate their dark master. The following statistics represent the most common cultists.

Cultists (5 – 100)

Threat Level 2

Skills: Hand-to-Hand 1

Weapon's DM: Dagger: +2

FRENCH MUSKETEERS

Selected from the very best that France has to offer, these highly trained and effective men and women serve at the Sun King's whim. Normally called upon to defend the Crown's interest, 'green' musketeers can be found pursuing other more nominal endeavors. Higher ranking members of this order would certainly not be considered minions by any stretch of the imagination.

Musketeers (5 – 20)

Threat Level 3

Skills: Hand-to-Hand 2, Firearms 2

Weapon's DM: Musket +5, Rapier +2

MERCENARIES

Mercenaries may be allies one day, and hated foes the next. They follow gold, wherever they can get it for the least amount of effort. As a result, they may act as guards, escorts, or even as soldiers for the servants of the Adversary.

Mercenaries (10 – 20)

Threat Level 3

Skills: Hand-to-Hand 1, Firearms 1

Weapon's DM: Musket +5, Sword +3

Armor: 1

PIRATES

Freebooters, buccaneers, corsairs, and worse haunt the Atlantic, preying on merchant, slave, and military ship alike. Their merciless nature and cruel disposition make pirates terrifying opponents at sea or in the taverns that huddle on the shores.

Pirates (10 – 30)

Threat Level 2

Skills: Hand-to-Hand 2, Balance 2

Weapon's DM: Dagger: +2, Cutlass: +3

SAVAGES

Savages are a catch-all for the uncivilized droves or bestial men that butcher any who invade their lands. These are not necessarily the indigenous people of the New World or the tribal peoples in Africa, but rather these savages are the horrific cannibals, the bloodthirsty villains who make blood sacrifices to their mad gods.

Savages (10 – 200)
Threat Level 1
Skills: Hand-to-Hand 1, Stealth 3
Weapon's DM: Spear +3, Club +2

SPANISH CONQUISTADORS

Known throughout Europe for their bravery and resolve as well as for their ruthlessness and avarice, Conquistadores brook no insolence and give no quarter. Usually found many hundreds of miles away from allies and surrounded on all sides by the worst the New World has to offer, one can hardly blame them for honing these traits.

Spanish Conquistadores (10 – 20)
Threat Level 3
Skills: Hand-to-Hand 2, Resolve 1
Weapon's DM: Pistol +5, Sword +3
Armor: 2

THIEVES

Thieves infest both the New and the Old World, clogging the cities and lurking in the wilderness, ambushing caravans, travelers, and anyone else they wish. Thieves are occasionally used as minions, being naturally talented spies, special agents, and even as guards.

Thieves (5)
Threat Level 1
Skills: Hand-to-Hand 1, Stealth 3, Thrown 1
Weapon's DM: Dagger +2, Club +2

ANIMALS

Animals do not, generally, seek to waylay and harm player characters. Should an animal attack, it is because it is starving, protecting it's young, or was trained to do so. In most cases, statistics for animals are unnecessary. Those included here are broad generalizations, intended to give simple statistics to run encounters featuring such creatures. Animal write-ups use a variation of the minion stat bloc. These stat blocs add *talents* necessary to simulate the animal's attack, such as a bite or poison. Most of these talents are located in the Villainous Talents section, while others, like Night Vision is located in the Talent section. Certain animals, usually solitary ones, may have a threat level in excess of 4.

If the creature has a fly or swim speed, it may move through the air or water with the same ease as a human walking or running on the ground. There is no cautious rate for flying.

BEAR

Bears are quite common throughout the world and come in a variety of breeds and sizes. This entry reflects a typical grizzly bear.

Bear (1)
Threat Level 5
Skills: Hand-to-Hand 3
Movement: C 10/W 20/R 88
Talents: Claws, Fangs

Weapon's DM: Claws and Fangs +4
Armor 3

BIRDS OF PREY

Birds of prey describe all eagles, falcons, and raptors. They can be trained as hunting animals and can be quite dangerous when provoked.

Bird of Prey (1 - 5)
Threat Level 2
Skills: Hand-to-Hand 3
Movement: Flight 350/600
Talents: Claws, Small Body, Night Vision
Weapon's DM: Claws +2

CROCODILE

Crocodiles are dangerous predators that infest warm marshes, swamps, and some slow-moving rivers.

Crocodile (1)
Threat Level 4
Skills: Hand-to-Hand 3
Movement: C 4/W 10/R 17; Swim C5/W11/R 18
Talents: Fangs, Tail
Weapon's DM: Fangs +4, Tail +2
Armor 2

DOG

This entry describes dogs of average size, encompassing most hounds, collies, and other medium-sized breeds.

Dog (1-5)
Threat Level 1
Skills: Hand-to-Hand 1
Movement: C 6/W 12/R 60
Talents: Fangs, Night Vision
Weapon's DM: Fangs +2

DRAY AND RIDING ANIMALS

Dray and riding animals are work animals. They include ponies, donkeys, mules, and most breeds of riding horse. They are not bred for combat, and will flee if exposed to what they perceive as danger.

Dray and Riding Animal (1)
Threat Level 1
Skills: Hand-to-Hand 1
Movement: C 6/W 18/R 30
Weapon's DM: Kick +4

GREAT CAT

Great cats describe lions, pumas, tigers, and any other great cats.

Great Cat (1)
Threat Level 2
Skills: Hand-to-Hand 2, Stealth 2
Movement: C 10/W 50/R 150
Talents: Claws, Fangs, Night Vision
Weapon's DM: Claws and Fangs +4

LARGE DOGS AND WOLVES

This entry includes all large breeds of dogs, such as mastiffs, but also it includes wolves and similar creatures.

Large Dogs and Wolves (1 - 10)

Threat Level 2

Skills: Hand-to-Hand 2, Stealth 2

Movement: C 6/W 12/R 60

Talents: Fangs, Night Vision

Weapon's DM: Fangs +3

SHARK

This entry describes an average shark. Great whites, hammerheads, and other dangerous predators have greater statistics.

Shark (1)

Threat Level 4

Skills: Hand-to-Hand 3

Movement: Swim C 10/W 30/R 50

Talents: Fangs

Weapon's DM: Fangs +6

SNAKE

This category describes poisonous snakes, such as vipers, cobras, and rattlers.

Snake (1)

Threat Level 3

Skills: Hand-to-Hand 3, Stealth 3

Movement: C 1/W 2/R 5

Talents: Fangs, Poison

Weapon's DM: Fangs +0

WARHORSE

These steeds have been specifically trained for warfare. They are not spooked by fire, smoke, or loud noises and are reliable companions in battle.

Warhorse (1)

Threat Level 3

Skills: Hand-to-Hand 3, Stealth 3

Movement: C 6/W 18/R 30

Talents: Night Vision

Weapon's DM: Hooves +5

LIEUTENANTS....

Lieutenants are characters on par with the Witch Hunters in the cadre. They usually abide by the same rules as Witch Hunters during character creation, albeit they may have a number of powers and abilities not available to a Witch Hunter. *Heroes* are also characters on par with the Witch Hunters in your campaign. *Heroes* are simply like-minded NPCs who are along for the ride. They are just as capable as the Player Characters and may provide plot hooks for more adventure.

Lieutenants that figure prominently in the story or who act as a lesser villain to the heroes until such time as the true villain reveals himself, should be created using the rules listed under Villain. However, if the lieutenant only figures in at the end of an adventure as extra muscle

for the Villain, then a quicker method of creating this foe may be in order. If appropriate, use the Quick Character Generation rule found below.

QUICK CHARACTER GENERATION

Sometimes, it might be inconvenient to create a full-fledged character for a Witch Hunter game. For example, if a Grand Master wishes to create a bandit for the party to fight in the middle of the woods, the GM is not worried about how many ranks of Charm skill his threat has. He just wants something that the cadre can fight. *Whenever a GM creates a Quick Character that character should not be a Villain.* Simply put, a Villain needs to be a character that has been fleshed out and whose motives have been explored.

Quick Characters don't bother with a long list of abilities or skills. They merely buy up 4 types of dice pools: Initiative pool, Melee pool, Ranged pool, and Extras pool. These 4 dice pools represent the NPC's ability to defend, fight, and everything else. Each point in one of these dice pools costs 15 points. As a rule of thumb, all of the Quick Character's pools need to be 5 or above, even if the threat in question would not use that pool. For instance, if a creature will never use ranged attacks, its Ranged pool still needs to be bought up to 5. The reason this is important is because otherwise a creature with 10 dice in its Initiative pool and Melee pool would not really cost a lot of points but still be quite powerful.

The dice in the Initiative pool are used to determine when the character goes in combat. The dice in the Melee pool are used in place of all melee combat skills. The dice in the Ranged pool are used in place of all ranged attack skills. Finally, the Extras pools represents how many dice are rolled to cover all other areas that might come up like jumping, swimming, or noticing.

Example: A pirate with Melee pool 6 would use a dice pool of 6 to represent their Hand-to-Hand or Grapple skill. A sniper with Ranged pool 7 would use 7 to represent their Firearms, Archery, or Thrown skills. A raiding Indian warrior with Extras pool 8 would roll 8 dice for Acrobatics, Jumping, Riding, Stealth...anything outside of combat that might come up.

After the dice pools are determined, the GM can figure out his Quick Character's Toughness and Defense pool. *A Quick Character's Toughness is always 1/2 of the Quick Character's Melee pool. Likewise, a Quick Character's Defense is always 1/2 of the Quick Character's Initiative pool.* So a Quick Character with a Melee pool of 6 would be considered to have Toughness 3. A Quick Character with a Initiative pool of 6 would also have a Defense pool of 3. Remember to always round up. This Toughness score is used to determine the character's Health Track.

Quick Characters are assigned Talents as normal. After their Talents, then the GM should buy up the Quick Character's Faith and Damnation scores as normal as well. Again, this becomes particularly important when creating monsters.

QUICK CHARACTER WALKTHROUGH

Let's say that the Grand Master wants to quickly create a pirate for his Witch Hunter cadre to fight. He quickly jots down his villain's dice pools:

Defense/Initiative pool: 6

Melee pool: 8

Ranged pool: 7

Extras pool: 6

He totals up the cost of these dice pools. Each point costs 15 SPs, meaning that the character has cost so far a total of 405 SPs.

Now, the GM figures out his pirate's Toughness score. It's one-half of the character's Melee pool, giving him a Toughness of 4. Then, he figures out his pirate's Defense, which is one-half of his character's Initiative pool, making it a 3.

Basic Talents	Sword School – Verdadera Destreza -Blade and Mind are One -My Blade is My Armor
Greater Talents	Sword School – Verdadera Destreza -Biting Blade Fast Draw Feint Riposte
Heroic Talents	Ricochet shot

The basic Talents cost 15 points altogether. The Greater Talents cost 50 points total. The one Heroic Talent cost 20 points. Therefore, this character has spent 85 points on Talents. A total of 490 points have been spent on this character so far.

Finally, the GM rounds out this particular opponent with 5 Damnation points for 50 total SPs. Now, this character is worth a total of 540 points. Here's how the final pirate looks:

Initiative pool: 6	6d
Melee pool: 8	Cutlass: 6d (DM +3)
Ranged pool: 7	Pistol: 7d (DM +5)
Extras pool: 6	6d
Defense pool:	3d
Basic Talents:	Sword School – Verdadera Destreza -Blade and Mind are One -My Blade is My Armor
Greater Talents:	Sword School – Verdadera Destreza -Biting Blade Fast Draw Feint Riposte

Heroic Talents: Ricochet shot

Faith: 0

Damnation: 5

Hero Points: 0

Health Track: (Toughness 3) 6/4/4/3/2

Looking at the pirate's equipment, the GM outfits his villain with a cutlass. The cutlass's weapon complexity is -2, so his Melee pool goes down by 2 to 6.

...AND VILLAINS

Villains, however, are an entire different being. A Villain is one of the Adversary's special children who dares to lurk upon God's Creation. Villains are powerful, and only a capable, well-trained, and well-researched cadre of Witch Hunters has a hope of taking one down. This is one of the reasons why Witch Hunters operate in bands rather than by themselves – a single Witch Hunter has no hope of defeating a Villain on their own.

What's different about a Villain? Villains have access to abilities and powers that typical Player Characters don't have. From a game-play perspective, Villains get a bit of a boost because they have been constructed with the idea that these single characters will go up against an entire cadre of Witch Hunters. Without these features, no Villain would be able to stand up to any Witch Hunter cadre – even a beginning one. What this means for the players is that it would be very unwise for a single Witch Hunter to go it alone against any single villain. It means that to win the day, a group effort must be made. Here are some of their capabilities :

Villains have access to more powers and Talents that other characters don't.

For example, Threat Talents like Restless or Villainous Caveat may only be taken by Master Villains.

Even when defeated and killed, some Villains can return.

Villains have a special status with the Adversary. If they are killed upon the earth, then their essence is drawn down into the Abyss, where it is tortured continuously to pay for its failure in the eyes of the Evil One. This unimaginable ordeal always lasts an indefinite period of time. It may last weeks, months, or even years. One never knows. After the creature's cosmic torment, it is sent back up into the world to wreak havoc again.

When a Villain returns, it comes back into the world in a different body with a different name. Any preexisting ties the villain had to its old life are usually lost. Thus if the villain was once a major crime lord in the city of Charles' Town, then it may appear in the city of Paris, far away from its old ties. Alternatively, it may return in Charles' Town again, but in the body of a little boy, preventing it from exploiting its own criminal connections. In any case, the Villain still remembers its

old life. And it will definitely remember the people who sent it back to Hell in the first place.

The fact that Villains can return into the world means that Witch Hunters must be stalwart of mind and body when they face one. But most of all, a Witch Hunter cadre must be firm of faith before dispatching a Villain, for that is the only way they can prevent a Villain from returning into the world.

Once a Villain is defeated (presumably killed), the Witch Hunters must immediately act to permanently vanquish the foe, before its essence reaches Hell. This can only be done by enacting the Judgment of Solomon talent which destroys souls completely. Those wishing to assist in this act may do so only if they too have the Judgment of Solomon talent. The Difficulty is always the creature's Damnation score. One Witch Hunter acts as the lead invoker, making the True Faith check for the whole cadre. However, the rest of the eligible cadre can assist that Witch Hunter by using the working together rules found on page 103.

Example: *Olivia and her cadre of Witch Hunters put an end to a powerful Wendigo with a Damnation score of 5. She invokes the Seal of Judgment and is assisted by her four Witch Hunter allies. According to the 'working together' rules, all four of them each get to add half of their True Faith in dice to her roll. This totals to +6 dice. Olivia has a True Faith of 5, so she would roll 10 dice as you can't roll more than 10 dice for any action. She rolls a 10, 10, 8, 7, 6, 5, 4, 4, 2, and a 1. Rerolling the 10s, she gets an 8 and a 2; five success total. This is just enough to rip the Wendigo's soul apart and consign it to oblivion.*

Villains add to their Defense dice pool.

Most characters get a Defense pool equal to average of their Agility and Toughness. Villains, however, have more Defense dice to roll. Their Defense pool rises depending upon the number of opponents they face during a scene. Their Defense pool is equal to their Agility and Toughness + N. N represents the number of Witch Hunters in the cadre. The reason Villains get this boost is because it is expect that they will fight more than one character at a time.

Villains are the only beings that gain these benefits. Lieutenants and Minions do not gain these capabilities.

Creating Your Supporting Cast

When creating an NPC, threat or villain, the mechanic is the same. All beings within the World of Witch Hunter are created with the same abilities and skills. They improve them the same way any Witch Hunter would – through Survival Points.

Of course, characters, creatures and threats all start with a different amount of survival points. Beginning Witch Hunter characters are considered to start with 250 Survival Points. These Survival Points are actually built into initial character creation. For instance, a starting Witch Hunter buys up their attribute scores with 100

Survival Points. When a background is selected, you get 6 Background Skill points (30 SP) and 10 Elective Skill points (100 SP) to start out with. Finally, beginning Witch Hunters start out with 20 SP points to spend on Talents.

So creating an NPC is easy. All characters start with 2's in all ability scores. Then, you can buy up their Attribute scores using the chart below. For example, if an NPC or villain has a stat of 4, then it costs 30 SPs to buy up that attribute to that level. Keep in mind that *you can get points back* if your character has an Attribute score of 1. So a character with a 5 in Strength but a 1 in Education would need a net total of 50 to create.

Table 10–1: Building Characters

Ability Value	Survival Points
1	-10
2	0
3	10
4	30
5	60
6	100
7	150
8	210
9	280

Next, you buy up your character's other traits. These include Ability Scores, Skills, Talents, Faith, and Damnation. The chart below gives details on these costs.

Table 10–2: Building Characters

Character Feature	Survival Points	Restrictions
Background Skill	5/point	Cannot exceed governing Ability
Elective Skill	10/point	Cannot exceed governing Ability
Basic Quality	5 each	—
Greater Quality	10 each	—
Heroic Quality	20 each	—
Faith	10/point	Cannot exceed 10 – Damnation
Damnation	10/point	
Melee pool*	15/point	
Ranged pool*	15/point	
Defense/Initiative pool*	15/point	
Extras pool*	15/point	

*These traits can only be purchased by Quick Characters

For instance, it would cost 25 SPs to have character with Stealth 5 as a background skill. When you create any NPC or villain, you will need to pick 6 skills that are that character's background skills. These skills will always be cheaper for that character to buy up. So, for example, an evil cultist might have the Occult skill as a background skill and the Stealth skill as an elective. Which skills are background skills and which are elective is entirely up to the GM. However, *it is highly recommended that no character be able to choose more than 1 combat skill as a background skill.*

You'll notice that NPCs can actually buy up True Faith and Damnation with Survival Points. Only NPCs and threats can do this. Player characters in Witch Hunter may never buy these scores up with Survival Points.

How many Survival Points should an NPC have? The chart below gauges the strength of an NPC or threat relative to the experience and survival of the party. So a starting Witch Hunter party (with starting SPs of 0) could face an easy threat if they faced an enemy with 500 SP. However, an 800 SP opponent would be fairly tough. A starting group of Witch Hunters shouldn't fight anything beyond this power level.

The same goes for NPCs. An ally with 500 SP would be one that wouldn't be too far above a starting Witch Hunter cadre in power level. However, an ally who had 800 SP would be one that should outshine a starting cadre of Witch Hunters.

Generally speaking, fighting **Easy Threats** should be engaging, a situation where one to three of the Witch Hunters might get hurt, but have no other problems. **Average Threats** should be challenging, a situation where two or more Witch Hunters get hurt, and one might get seriously hurt. **Hard Threats** should be dangerous, a situation where the PCs need to have carefully planned their encounter and have done extensive research on their opponent if they wish to survive.

10-3: NPC and Threat Benchmarks

—NPC's SP—

PCs SP	Easy	Average	Hard
0	500	600	800
100	600	700	900
200	700	800	1,000
300	800	900	1,100
400	900	1,000	1,200
500	1,000	1,100	1,300

NPC GENERATION WALKTHROUGH

Let's say the Grand Master wants to create an NPC. He first starts with a concept. He decides on making a highwayman, someone who might be either ally to his Witch Hunter cadre or a villain. He jots down a few ideas and gets this idea for a tough and tumble rogue who likes

drink and carouse, but also has an aristocratic air. To make this bandit a bit more three dimensional, the GM decides that his highwayman will be someone who is not above outright murder. So the criminal's debonair smile also hides the grin of a wolf. Finally, the GM decides that that highwayman will actually not be that well-educated. The rogue may put on sophisticated airs but really is a country rube at heart. The aristocrat persona is all an act, which plays into the cold-hearted murderer aspect of the character even more.

ABILITY SCORES

Creation first starts with ability scores. The GM simply jots down the ability scores that he thinks his NPC should have. There are no minimums or maximums in this process. He simply jots down the Ability scores that he thinks his NPC should have. He assigns him these values:

Strength 3	Education 1	Courage 3
Agility 4	Reason 2	Intuition 2
Toughness 4	Willpower 3	Personality 5

The GM figures that his highwayman is a reasonably strong, from a background of being in fights (Strength 3). However, he decides that this character will really shine in speed and roughness. This highwayman is a lithe fighter who can take a few beatings (Agility 4, Toughness 4).

Remember that the GM decided that his highwayman would not be someone well-educated (Education 1). But he figures that this character has at least average reasoning power (Reason 2). Finally, the GM decides that this highwayman, having led a hard life, is hard to get to back down (Willpower 3).

Next, the GM decides on his character's Spiritual abilities. He figures that a life of crime has made his character reasonably hard to spook (Courage 3). However, the highwayman will only have average powers of observation (Intuition 2), to play into the idea of character who can *act* suave and cool, but can't really back it up. Finally, the GM wants to make sure that this character can trick others into believing that he's far more capable than he is, and gives the NPC a charismatic aura (Personality 5).

Now that the Grand Master has dreamed up his character and wrote down some stats, he simply looks at **Table 10-1** to see how much all of these ability scores would cost.

Strength 3 = 10 SP	Education 1 = -10 SP	Courage 3 = 10 SP
Agility 4 = 30 SP	Reason 2 = 0 SP	Intuition 2 = 0 SP
Toughness 4 = 30 SP	Willpower 3 = 10 SP	Personality 5 = 60 SP

Totaling all of the ability costs up, the GM gets 140 points. That's the "cost" of this character so far.

SKILLS

The GM now picks the skills that he thinks his highwayman ought to have. Then, he assigns each skill the value he thinks it deserves. Just like usual, the skill levels can never exceed their governing ability. So his Firearms skill, for example, can't be about his Agility 4. He comes up with this list of skills:

Firearms 3, Hand-to-Hand 3, Charm 4, Deceive 4, Empathy 2, Intimidate 2, Jump 2, Ride 3, Stealth 4, Notice 2, Reflexes 4, Resolve 2

The GM gives his character a decent array of fighting skills, but nothing spectacular. Most of the emphasis in terms of skills goes toward deceiving others, with some ability to jump, ride, and sneak thrown in there. His Defense should be high with his Reflexes skill.

Now, the GM picks which 6 of these skills will be Background skills. He chooses his six and marks them. His list looks like this now:

Background Skills: Hand-to-Hand 3, Charm 4, Deceive 4, Ride 3, Stealth 4, Reflexes 4
Elective Skills: Firearms 3, Empathy 2, Intimidate 2, Jump 2, Notice 2, Resolve 2

The Background skills chosen cost only 5 points to raise instead of 10. Looking at his list, Firearms 3 will cost 30 points, because it is an Elective skill and Hand-to-Hand 3 will cost 15 points, because it is a background skill. Totaling up the cost, Rob finds that all of these skills cost 240 points total. So far, this character costs 380 points to create.

TALENTS

The GM now picks up a number of Talents. He wants his NPC to be decent at fighting, so he picks up a good number of them:

Basic Talents	Greater Talents	Heroic Talents
Attack Focus	Attack Specialist	Brutal Charge
Novice Swordsman School	Danger Sense	
-Novice Talent	Sweep	
-Novice Talent		

After he has selected the Talents that he wants, he totals up their cost. Looking at **Table 10-2**, he can see that Basic Talents cost 5, Greater Talents cost 10, and Heroic Talents cost 20. Totaling up the Talents he selected, their value comes to 70 SP total.

So far, this character costs 450 SPs to create.

TRUE FAITH AND DAMNATION

Now the GM buys up his character's Damnation score to 3 and Faith score to 2. Each point of Faith or Damnation cost 10 SPs each, because he is using the standard character creation system. These things would cost more in the Quick Character Generation process.

This leaves the highwayman costing exactly 500 points, making the highwayman a perfect NPC to interact with a starting party. If he becomes the party's nemesis, then he will provide them with a light challenge. The GM thinks this is appropriate, because he doesn't think that this highwayman should be a major threat, but more of a rival to the Witch Hunter cadre.

For the finishing touch, the highwayman gets a name. The GM decides to name his NPC Deidre Collins, making his roguish rival for his Witch Hunters a woman. Women highwaymen were not unknown at the time period, and the World of Witch Hunter is more open to equal gender roles as well.

So, our final highwayman character looks like this:

Initiative	Melee	Ranged
8d	Sword: 5d (DM +4)	Pistol: 6d (DM +5)
Defense		
4d+2		
Basic Talents	Greater Talents	Heroic Talents
Attack Focus - Sword	Attack Specialist - Sword	Brutal Charge
Novice Swordsman School	Danger Sense	
-Novice Talent	Sweep	
-Novice Talent		
Faith: 2	Damnation: 3	Hero Points: 0
Health Track: 8/6/6/4/2		
Strength 3	Education 1	Courage 3
Agility 4	Reason 2	Intuition 2
Toughness 4	Willpower 3	Personality 5

Background Skills: Hand-to-Hand 3(6), Charm 4(9), Deceive 4(9), Ride 3(6), Stealth 4(7), Reflexes 4(7)

Elective Skills: Firearms 3(6), Empathy 2(4), Intimidate 2(7), Jump 2(5), Notice 2(4), Resolve 2(5)

When looking over his Highwayman, the GM has to make a few adjustments.

First, his character's Defense score is equal to the average of her Agility and Toughness. That's easy, since both of those scores are a 4. This highwaywoman has a Defense of 4. He then outfits his highwayman with a bit of armor with a Buff coat, so her Defense is listed as 4d+2, showing that she can roll 4 dice for her Defense, plus 2 successes. However, this lowers her Agility by 1, lowering some of her skills accordingly.

Also, a sword has a weapon complexity of -2, so the highwayman's Hand-to-Hand with a sword is 4 dice when attacking. However, her Attack Focus Talent offsets this problem a bit, giving her 5 dice to attack with. Also, the DM of the sword is raised by his Attack Specialist Talent as well.

Deidre Collins, the roguish terror of the roads about New Amsterdam is complete. With such a detailed write-up, the GM can easily react to anything that may come up during play.

WITCH HUNTER THREATS

The smell of burning hair and bone had caused many who had gathered here to depart. By late morning, it was only Tristan, Reynolds, and I who remained in the town square. And by midday, we had to cover our faces with cloth, so terrible was the acrid stench.

So it was a surprise, to say the least, when a young man of 14 years came to witness the fire. He gazed into flames and watched as they lapped at the curling bones, and danced inside the blacked skull – all of which sat in a pile atop the wood we had gathered.

"How did you know she was a vampire?" asked the young man quietly.

Tristan sighed, nodding at the fire. "When we dug up the body, there were claw marks on the inside of the coffin. A sure sign."

"Of course," nodded the young man. "And you three are the only Witch Hunters in many miles. A lucky thing that you came to our village."

"It was not luck," said Reynolds. "It was good thinking. We dug her up during this morning, of course." Reynolds put a broad hand upon the young man's shoulders. His great jaw broke into a wide smile.

"Morning," said the young man, looking up into Reynold's grinning face. "So she could not turn to mist and float away."

"Of c..." but Reynolds never finished this final statement. Instead, his voice died off in gurgle. His eyes went wide, and he thrashed against his assailant once before sinking to the ground. As his body rolled over, we all stood in amazement at the fist-sized hole that was left in his chest.

The young man kicked at the body of Reynolds... twice his size had the man been, and yet now he was kicked into the fire like a straw doll. This same young man, so thin and pale before us, threw down the organ in his hand and sniffed. A look of disgust filled his face as he glanced at his gory palm, revolted by the blood upon it. "I'm going to kill you all now," he said

distractedly, wiping his hand off on his pants. "Believe me, I wish there was another way."

"What are you?" said Tristan absently, his hand drifting down towards his pistol.

The young man who we thought was fourteen years old looked straight at us, and smiled, showing his teeth. They gleamed in the noon-time sun. "What do you think I am?"

HERE BE DRAGONS

In the World of Witch Hunter, the agents of the Adversary are ever present. Be they mystical vampires, cannibalistic wendigo, alien baykoks, or sinister revenants...these nemeses of the Invisible World come in all shapes and sizes.

It is important to understand what each menace in the World of Witch Hunter represents. Every evil in the world is an affront to God. They represent blight upon the very surface of Creation. Their powers and abilities fly in the face of the law of nature. They defy reality with their very existence. So corrupt are these agents of horror, so vile that God has cursed each one with a number of weaknesses to balance the scales of the natural order. No monster in this setting is part of the natural world. Instead, the creatures of the Adversary usurp the natural order of things, ruining nature's ecologies by merely existing.

This makes the monsters in Witch Hunter very different from the creatures of other fantasy settings.



In most game worlds, monsters are creatures who are denizens of the world in some way. In *Witch Hunter*, creatures and beings are perversions.

Generally speaking, the creatures of the World of *Witch Hunter* fall into one of eight categories.

MORTALS

Perhaps the most underestimated threats that *Witch Hunters* face are the dangers of simple mortal opponents. No matter how much evil the Adversary has done, he cannot compare to the millennia of warfare, genocide, and abuse that mankind has inflicted upon itself. The Devil may tempt the flesh, damnation only comes at Man's own choosing.

Some mortals, like Witches, turn to sources outside of God to gain power. Others, like the crazed, go mad, corrupting their souls and gain powers granted to them directly by the Adversary. Still others, like the common criminal, are evil without having had any influence at all. These are perhaps some of the most insidious of threats, because nothing has tempted them into darkness. They traveled down the path of sin all on their own.

GHOSTS

In 1689, the Holy Church maintains that ghosts are spirit wrought from Hell. Those at the pulpit proclaim that a soul goes immediately to Heaven or Hell when it dies. Yet, most common folk still cling to the old ways, believing that ghosts are indeed the souls of the dead, come back to finish a task or because of a strong desire to stay on earth. In the World of *Witch Hunter*, ghosts are the manifested souls of the dead. There are devils who do take on the form of ghosts in order to trick the incautious, however, leading to this belief in the Church.

Ghosts are some of the most common form of supernatural creature. They can be, in turn, weak or potent in their strange powers. They range from a simple cold spot in a room, to conscious entity that can possess an entire house. Some are solitary, like the dreaded Grey Pilgrim. Yet others form in groups. Many are the tales of phantom riders who sweep down from the mountains to claim additional souls to add to their ranks.

UNDEAD

The undead represent some of the most egregious affronts to God. These shambling vessels are the bodies of once-living beings risen from the dead before the Day of Reckoning. When an undead rises from its grave, most of its soul is destroyed, leaving only a portion of its vital force. For example, ghul-revenants only retain that singular part of the soul that remembers hunger. Vampires only remember that part of themselves that remembers temptation, pleasure, and debasement. The Holy Church has determined that because part of the soul lingers in the undead, that soul itself is split in two. One half of it dwells upon the earth, while the other languishes in spiritual torture. Truly, this is one of the worst fates that

can happen to a person, and it should be each and every *Witch Hunter's* duty to snuff out these abominations.

BEASTS

This category of creature represents strange animals who live outside the natural order that God set down with the Divine Laws. These beings are not simply "monsters." They are corrupted animals that fought their way up from Hell itself. Perhaps the most mighty of these examples are the great wyrms.

Beasts range wildly in type, size, and shape. The most distinguishing about them, however, is that they are hideous to behold. Most have a chimerical appearance – meaning that their shape bears the traits of many animals. Some have totally alien bodies, appearing to be the stuff of nightmares.

ACCURSED

The accursed are beings that bear some kind of affliction that has bent their form into something more diabolical. Most of the accursed are deserving people, who drew the corruption upon them when they sinned against God. People have been transformed by the Almighty for a variety of reasons, from turning to cannibalism to simply lacking faith in Him.

The cursed can appear to be both human or hideous, their appearance varies greatly. However, all bear one thing in common – an existence of torture and bitterness, due to their lost humanity.

SPIRITS

Spirits are the broadest category of being in the World of *Witch Hunter*. A spirit is defined as a creature who spends most of its existence in the Invisible World. As creatures above the pale of the world, they have extraordinary powers. They might be able to change shape, turn invisible, or disguise themselves as humans.

Some spirits, like the Sidhe, are born like any other creature. Other spirits simply fade into existence, their bodies emerge from the spirit-stuff that comprises the Invisible World. Because spirits are outside of the realm of God, most Christians see them as a force of evil. Those who worship spirits, like the Native Americans, see spirits as a necessary part of nature.

DIABOLICALS

Diabolicals cover the broad category of both daemons and devils. Both of these types of beings are fallen angels. When God first created angels, he gave them a choice of whether or not to follow him. Daemons are angels who decided not to follow God and were cast apart from Him. They are independent beings who may or may not be evil, depending on their nature. Whatever the case, daemons tend to be quite powerful in their own right, having been around since before the creation of the world. Daemons can appear the physical world at their own whim.

Devils, on the other hand, are indisputably evil. Devils are angels that turned against God and sided with

the Adversary, Man was first wrought from the miry clay. All devils have the universal weakness of having to manifest through a possessed host. This is the price they continue to pay for their disloyalty to God. They can no longer dwell in His world, and can only do so through the shell of another.

AWAKENED

The awakened are creatures that were once inanimate objects but now have been given a life of sorts. Golems, for example, are creatures that were given life through a complex enchantment. However, harvest gods are straw effigies that have sprung to life thanks to the constant worship of a cult or society. Some awakened are driven by a trapped spirit or soul which inhabits an object. Others are made mobile through raw mystic energy.

CREATING A THREAT

Creating any nemesis in Witch Hunter is easy. First you create character stats as normal. Done? Good. Now, all you do is to give that character a Damnation score. Finally, choose one power and one price. *That's it.*

In Witch Hunter, creating any threat should be easy. If you want to create a revenant, all you have to do is to create a character as normal, and then give him his fundamental power (Regeneration) and a fundamental Price (Vulnerability – Fire).

Some creatures require more up front during creation. For example, a vampire has a defining power (Immortality), along with some starting Talents (Fangs, Undead). All of a threat's starting powers and Talents are factored into the starting cost of the creature.

Creatures in Witch Hunter can have more than one power. For every additional power that you choose for a monster, that creature will pick up additional prices as well. There will always be a selection of prices for you to choose from.

HOW POWERS WORK

Every creature comes with a fundamental power. It is this one power that defines the creature. It makes that creature what it is. For example, all vampires have Immortality 2, starting out. The number after the power name is called the *power factor*.

Each power that spawns from the Adversary has a factor. A power's factor determines how potent it is. For example, a werewolf might have Regeneration 4 and Fury 2, along with this fundamental power of Monstrous Form 2. The higher the power factor, the more fearsome it is. In this case, the werewolf's most dangerous power would be its Regeneration.

When the Grand Master determines a creature's Damnation score, he may assign that number of points to different powers. So a creature with Damnation of 7 could assign 3 points to the Suggestive power and 4 points to the Weather Control power.

A creature's fundamental power may be added to as well. So a vampire with a Damnation score of 5 might

put two points in to Immortality, giving her Immortality 4 (she started with 2 as all vampires do), and put her other 3 points into Suggestive.

Whenever a power is used against a Witch Hunter, the power's factor determines the difficulty to resist the power. For example, if a vampire were to turn its Suggestive 3 power upon an unwitting victim, the victim would have to roll 3 successes to resist its demonic charms.

Targets of a creature's power *always roll an ability score plus their Faith score*. For example, to resist a vampire's Suggestive ability, an honest pilgrim would have to roll her Willpower plus her Faith score in dice. This means that Faith is extremely important, since it's one of the key factors in resisting the powers of the supernatural. It also means that resistance is up to the player character. The GM rolls nothing.

FOR EVERY POWER, A PRICE

A creature's powers are not part of God's design. They are beyond the laws and rules that He has set down for the universe. As such, whenever a being possesses supernatural powers, God balances their sin with a price.

God's Price, as it is called, is a specific weakness. Prices are meant to counter the supernatural ability of the creature in question, so as to help restore the balance of the laws of nature and the natural cycle.

Each price is not necessarily as potent as the power. For example, a creature that can fly might have the price of not being able to cross over holy ground. Some might say that the power of flight is far more powerful than the limitation of not being able to navigate over blessed soil. Such are the designs of God.

A creature's price is a way for Witch Hunters to gain some kind of edge upon an opponent. For example, those fighting a flying creature might be able to take refuge in a graveyard where the soil is blessed. From that safe refuge, they might be even able to fire weapons at the flying creature who cannot enter the graveyard for any reason.

Because each price is different, it will always behoove a Witch Hunter to research their opponents. However, every price will somehow align with the power in question. For example, a creature that has enhanced movement capabilities, such as flight, will always have a price that limits their movement in some way...such as *not* being able to move over holy ground.

READING THE ENTRIES

Background: The background entries tell the basic origins behind the featured creature. If the creature is undead, for example, the background section should explain how the creature is spawned in the first place.

Strains: No creature in Witch Hunter is ever exactly the same. The strains section describes various breeds, types, or castes of the nemeses in question.

Organizations: This section is to give game masters ideas on how to incorporate some of these threats into their campaign. The organization section details various groups of each individual threat. For example, the details of a band of undead pirates might be revealed in this section.

Suggested Locales: This section always details places where the threat can be found.

Initial Build: This item lists the basic point cost for creating the creature. This cost includes the cost of powers, prices, and required Talents. Of course, this cost does not include the point cost of abilities, skills, qualities, and the like. The basic point cost must added to the point cost of the character build to determine its threat level.

Fundamental Powers and Price: This describes the basic power and weakness that all creatures have.

Additional Powers and Prices: Here, additional powers and abilities may be chosen. The list of powers and prices operates like a matching menu. Should you choose a power from the Corpus Powers List, then you must also chose a price from the Corpus Price List. You do not need to choose the price that is listed beside the power.

Some entries have *less* prices than there are powers. In this case, a monster cannot have more powers that there are available prices. For example, wendigo have 5 Corpus Powers and only 3 Corpus Prices. This means that wendigo may only have up to 3 different Corpus Powers.

When a price entry reads with a multiplier (such as Damage x2), that means that the creature may take that price more than one time, up to the number the multiplier indicates. Thus, a creature with Vulnerability x3 could have up to 3 different Vulnerability prices.

A quick breakdown of the various powers a creature might have are as follows:

Corpus – Corpus powers are powers that have to do with the body. Things like shapechanging, growing larger or smaller, or having boiling blood are all examples of Corpus powers.

Movement – Movement powers affect movement of the creature. Examples of Movement powers include flight, jumping, swimming, or crawling on walls.

Offensive – Offensive powers are supernatural attacks that necessarily cause harm. Firing blasts of flame, or causing someone to turn into a zombie is an example of an Offensive power.

Mystical – Mystical powers are a broad catch-all category of powers that are utilitarian in nature. The ability to hypnotize someone or being able to turn lead into water are examples of mystical powers.

Fear Rating: This lists the creature's fear rating. A threat's fear rating is a supernatural aura which unnerves mortals who encounter it. The creature's fear factor is always $1/3^{\text{rd}}$ of its Damnation score. As always, the fear rating is rounded up. When a creature is first encountered, characters must roll their Resolve (Courage) with a Difficulty of the creature's Fear Rating. Success means that the character does not suffer from the creature's terrifying aura. Those who fail may choose to automatically succeed their Resolve (Courage) check by choosing to gain 1 point of Damnation.

See page 116 for more details.

No matter what, a mortal threat does *not* gain a fear rating. Mortals who gain a fear rating are no longer human, but accursed.

Initiative, Melee, Ranged, Defense: These values represent the dice pools for the threat in question. A creature with Initiative 8d would roll 8 dice for their initiative check at the beginning of the round. Sometimes, these values will be represented with some extra numbers added. For example: Defense 3d+2. The numbers added on the end represent automatic successes due to armor, talents, powers, or other factors. So, in the above case, the creature would roll 3 dice for its defense and then add two free successes after that roll.

In the case of Villains, they will always have their Defense listed with a N in the beginning of it. "N" represents the number of players at the table. This means that Villains get to add a number of dice to their Defense equal to the number of players. For example, a Villain with Defense N+3d who is facing four Player Characters gets to roll 7 dice for Defense in that round (the number of players + 3). A Villain might even have some free successes due to armor or some other capability. In this case, the number will be listed like this: N+3d+2. In this example, the Villain gets to roll 3 dice + the number of players at the table. At the end of his roll, in this case, he would add +2 successes to whatever else he rolled.

Damnation: The Damnation score of threat helps determine what sorts of powers it may have. Any threat in Witch Hunter, whether it be mortal or monster, does not accumulate Damnation points as a Player Character. Damnation is important when determining if a Villain is permanently vanquished from the world.

Generally speaking, *lieutenants* have a Damnation score of anywhere from 1 to 9. Villains usually have Damnation scores of anywhere from 10 to 20. No creature can have a Damnation score of higher than 20.

Remember that in order to permanently vanquish a villain, Witch Hunters must make a combined Faith check with the Difficulty of the check being the creature's Damnation score.

Feature Villains: Feature villains are NPC antagonists who have been created for your use in a campaign. Feature villains always have detailed backgrounds, notes on roleplaying, and battle tactics. Not every creature entry will have a feature villain.

Please keep in mind that feature villains are meant to represent the worst of the worst in terms of power, strength, and havoc. These characters should be masterminds who are met at the end of a long series of story arcs. They should not show up on the Player Character's doorstep if the Witch Hunters are just getting started on their journeys.

BAYKOK (SPIRIT)

Background: The baykok are sung about in the famous Song of Hiawatha. These terrifying creatures are a legion of spirits that dwell primarily in the northern regions of colonies and North America. They have lived in the northern lands of the Grave New World since before man. Their name is spoken only in whispers amongst the Native American tribes that know of their existence. All give a wide berth to their hunting grounds.

A baykok appears to be an emaciated, skeletal humanoid who walks or runs in the air as deftly as a mortal might walk upon a road. They are famous for using invisible arrows as their weapons of choice. A baykok's skin is slightly translucent, allowing one to garishly see their veins and arteries. Most striking about a baykok, however, is their faces. These beings possess deer skulls for heads, some with antlers, others without.

Baykok primarily hunt for powerful warriors. They feed off of the courage, rage, and acumen of those who can fight with skill. As Europeans delved further and further into the Grave New World, the baykok are taking an increasing interest in the new "flavors" that have come ashore to their lands.

STRAINS:

Hunters – Hunter baykoks are the ones most encountered. This breed of spirit-creature is primarily responsible for gathering the spirits of powerful warriors for the rest of the baykok tribe to feast upon. After they have been alerted by approacher baykoks, the hunters close in around their target, seeking to isolate their prey before ripping their target's body and soul apart. Hunters are typical of baykok appearance, appearing skeletal, emaciated, with deer skulls for heads.

Watchers – The watcher baykoks are the leaders of this society of spirits. Watchers can be identified by their shamanistic garb and jewelry, often made from the bones of humans and animals. Watchers preside over baykok society. They are the elders in the baykok tribes, leveling decisions for the tribes, and contacting higher powers when the time comes for guidance. Watchers tend to be more powerful than their baykok counterparts, having a number of spell-like powers.

Approachers – These baykok spirits are the scouts for their tribes, wandering far out in the forests and wilds, looking for powerful warriors. It is said that approachers use their stealth to hide just out of reach of the light of fires, and listen carefully to tales told around the flames. They listen for warriors who brag upon themselves too much when speaking of their own deeds. Proudful warriors are the baykok's food of choice. Approacher baykoks disturbingly appear to be emaciated children, with prominent veins and arteries. Instead of having deer skulls for heads, they have giant bird skulls where their face should be.

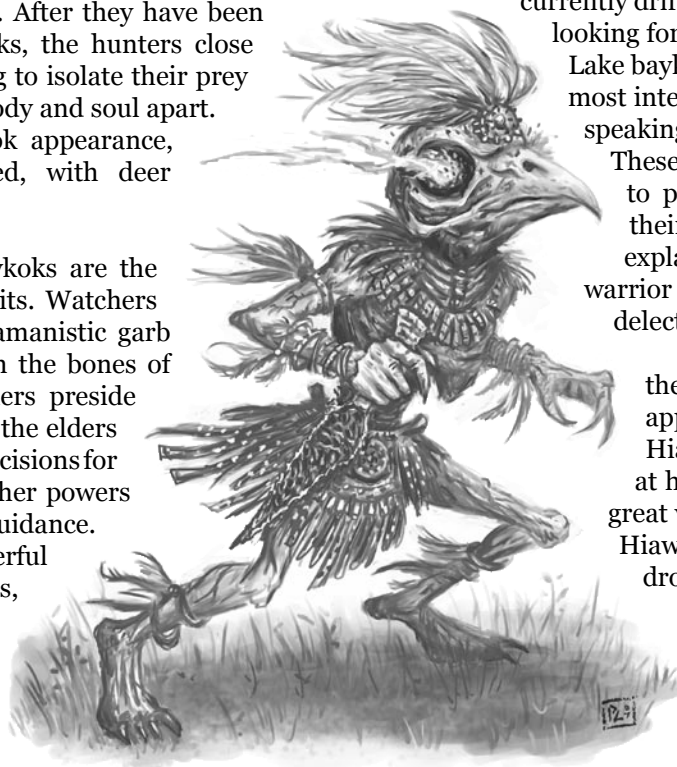
ORGANIZATIONS:

The Black Sky Tribe: The Black Sky Tribe curiously dwells over the hills of Virginia and in the swamps of Louisiana. No one is sure how these spirits can be in such different locations at the same time. Some say that within these two areas, there is a spirit-portal that allows the baykok to travel from one place to another. Others say that space and distance mean different things in the spirit world, and therefore it is quite possible for a large group of spirits to do this.

The Black Sky Tribe is a powerful band of baykok spirits that always come with the brewing of violent weather. Hurricanes, tornadoes, blizzards, hail, and other violent storms are cause for these malevolent spirits to appear. Whenever destructive weather is about to strike, the Black Sky baykoks will often appear to a few small villages or communities. There, they will strike up a bargain with anyone who will listen – if the community will turn over one of their best warriors to the Black Sky, then the Black Sky will spare the village from the terrible storm.

The Lonely Lake Tribe: The Lonely Lake Tribe occupies the land to the north of the New Netherlands, but are currently drifting down into that territory, looking for fresh new meat. The Lonely Lake baykoks are perhaps some of the most interactive of the baykoks, often speaking to people quite openly. These curious spirits often will talk to potential victims throughout their lives, taunting them by explaining that victory as a warrior makes one more and more delectable as a potential meal.

According to legend, the Lonely Lake tribe would appear on a regular basis to Hiawatha, continually jeering at him each time he struck up a great victory. In the end, however, Hiawatha defeated the spirits and drove them away.



ADDITIONAL POWERS & PRICES

Corpus Powers:	Corpus Prices:
Armor	Obvious Appearance
Immunity – Metal	Obvious to the Touch
Invisibility	Vulnerability x2
Intangibility	
Movement Powers:	Movement Prices:
Flight	Impaired Travel

Offensive Powers:	Offensive Prices:
Mystical Bolt	Avoidance
Mystical Blast	Weakness
Mystical Powers:	Mystical Prices:
Dread Hunter	Atmospheric Disturbance
Weather Control	Blocked from the World
Frightening Call	

QUICK STATS:

APPROACHER (MINIONS)	
Threat Level	4
Skills	Hand-to-Hand +1, Archery +2, Reflexes +3
Talents	Deadeye Shot
Powers	Flight 2
Equipment	None (Baykok weapons disappear if the Baykok is defeated and reappear in their hands if separated from them)

HUNTER BAYKOK (LIEUTENANT) Quick Character (550 points)	
Fear Rating	2
Initiative pool	Base: 6d - 6d
Melee pool	Base: 8d - Hatchet: 8d (DM +2)
Ranged pool	Base: 8d – Comp. Bow: 6d (DM +6)
Extras pool	6d
Defense pool	Base: 3d - 3d
Basic Talents	Attack Focus – Comp. Bow Attack Focus – Hatchet
Greater Talents:	Attack Specialist – Comp. Bow Deadeye Shot Fast Draw
Villainous Talents	Lightning Reload Intangible Missile
Powers (Prices)	<i>Flight 2</i> (Prey Exclusion – Cannot attack non combatants) <i>Frightening Call 3</i> (Blocked from the World – During the crescent moon) <i>Immunity-Metal 2</i> (Vulnerability-Bone)
True Faith: 0	Damnation: 5 Hero Points: 0
Health Track	(Toughness 4) 8/6/6/4/2
Equipment	None (Baykok weapons disappear if the Baykok is defeated and reappear in their hands if separated from them)

WATCHER BAYKOK (LIEUTENANT) Standard Character (575 points)	
Fear Rating	3
Initiative pool	Base: 6d - 6d
Melee pool	Base: 3d - Spear: 1d (DM +5)
Ranged pool	Base: 6d Ranged Dice Spear: 4d (DM +3) Mystic Blast: 8d (DM +4) Mystic Bolt: 8d (DM +4)
Defense pool	Base: 3d - 3d
Basic Talents	Basic Animism Commanding Presence Tough
Greater Talents	Convey Power Greater Animism Inspire
Villainous Talents	Intangible Missile
Powers (Prices)	<i>Flight 2</i> (Prey Exclusion) <i>Intangibility 2</i> (Obvious Appearance) <i>Mystical Blast 2</i> (Avoidance – Medicine Bags) <i>Mystical Bolt 2</i> (Weakness – An ash wood divining rod) <i>Weather Control 3</i> (Blocked from the World – Can only appear in storms)
Rites	Animism Rites: 2 Basic, 2 Greater
Abilities	Strength: 2 Education: 3 Courage: 4 Agility: 4 Reason: 3 Intuition: 2 Toughness: 2 Willpower: 5 Personality: 2
Background Skills	Animism 4(9), Herbalism 3(6), Myth and Lore 3(6), Occult 3(6), Stealth 3(7), Thrown 4(8)
Elective Skills	Archery 3(7), Command 4(7), Hand-to-Hand 1(3), Heal 2(4), Intimidate 2(4), Reflexes 2(6), Track 2(4)
True Faith: 0	Damnation: 9 Hero Points: 0
Health Track	5/4/4/3/2
Equipment	None (Baykok weapons disappear if the Baykok is defeated and reappear in their hands if separated from them)

SUGGESTED LOCALES:

Baykoks tend to live in the far north, and are seen in the New Netherlands region of the Grave New World most often. However, some are beginning to take up residence in Virginia, seeing that location as place of strife, and therefore a place that will breed powerful or braggart warriors.

Creating a Baykok: Initial Cost 40

FUNDAMENTAL POWERS:

All baykok begin with **Flight 2** as a power.

All baykok begin with the **Intangible Missile** talent.

FUNDAMENTAL PRICE:**Prey Exclusion ***

Baykok will not attack opponents who are non-combatants. Thus, innocent bystanders, children, or simple civilians who do not attack them have nothing to fear from these spirits.

DIABOLISTS (MORTALS)

Background: Just as shaman often communicate with spirits to interact with the natural world, diabolists consort with demons in order to gain control over it. Diabolists are those who have rejected the laws of nature and its delicate balance. Instead of trying to harmoniously communicate with spirits, these sorcerous individuals seek to forcibly bind spirits, daemons, and devils to their will. This forced entrapment of supernatural beings causes them to develop unnatural powers and face Prices from God Himself.

Like shaman, diabolists are often seen as mystical people, with a mysterious air about them. Many diabolists come across as madmen, for their ears are constantly filled with the whispers and chatterings of the spirits and devils they have bound to themselves. These people have seen beings that defy human comprehension and spoken to creatures that operate far outside of mortal ken. What makes the diabolist so dangerous is that they have looked upon things which would have driven most insane and still these individuals asked for more. Thus, almost all diabolists suffer from some form of mental illness.

Diabolists are mortals that seek to beat the Adversary at His own game. Instead of signing away their entire soul for power, diabolists sign away pieces of their soul away at a time. For example, a diabolist might create a demon-trap, but must give

away a that portion of his soul that remembers how to be angry or recalls his sadness. Thus, most diabolists are a bit distant and odd. Many are emotionless shells, who are missing vital parts of their being.

Virtually no Diabolist escapes the temptation of signing away their entire soul at some point. Once a diabolist begins the process of divesting part of their emotions and life force away, they begin to care less about the world and themselves. After a while, they become so callous that their own souls simply don't matter to them anymore.

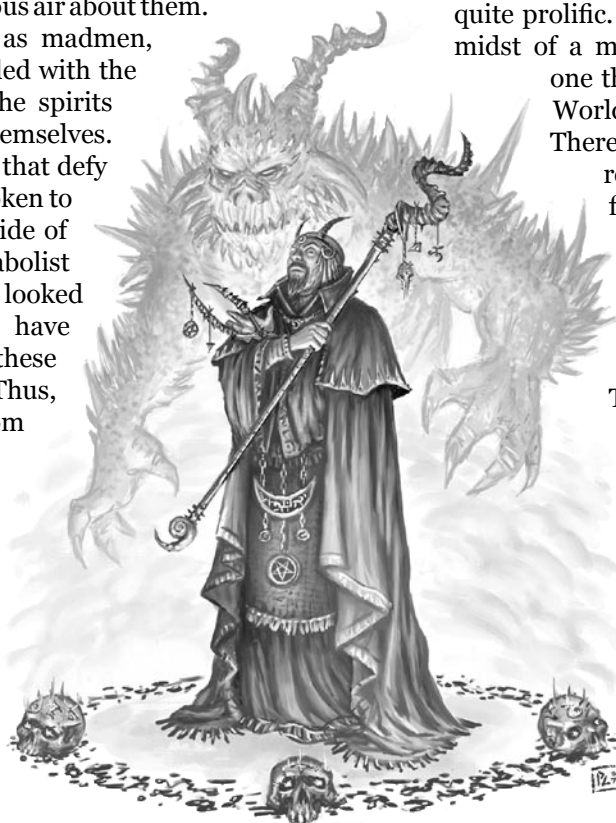
STRAINS:

Witch Doctors – Witch Doctors take many forms from the Caribbean houngan, to the African sorcerer. Most of these individuals fulfill some sort of role in their own society. For example, a houngan might be able to curse or disable an enemy for those who with enough money to meet his price. An African sorcerer might consult diabolical forces to advise his king. This makes the witch doctor far different than most witches, diabolists, and necromancers, who have to hide their identities. Witch doctors operate within the open light of day, supported by their communities. To the people around them, witch doctors are seen as a necessary evil, and a channel of communication with the dark powers of the world.

Some witch doctors are able to walk the borders between good and evil successfully. However, many are too tempted by the forbidden knowledge their summoned servants offer. Too often, witch doctors will go completely mad with the secrets uncovered during their communications with diabolicals.

Cultists – The rise of cults in this time period is quite prolific. In 1689, the world is still in the midst of a massive religious transformation, one that drives many to seek the New World as a place of religious freedom. There, in the wilderness, free from religious persecution, many cults form. Some cults flee Europe to try to establish themselves in the Americas. Other cults get started in the Grave New World.

Most cults are harmless. They follow some variant of Christianity, led by a radical new interpretation of a few key scriptural passages. Some cults, however, have fallen into whispering with daemons and devils. These cults are often visited by diabolical servants of the Adversary who whisper subtle temptations to the cult leader. Soon, without even realizing it, a cult leader can



Creating a Diabolist: Initial Cost 0

FUNDAMENTAL POWERS:

As a mortal a diabolist has no fundamental power, but may take a few powers. Doing so forever binds the diabolist to the Adversary.

FUNDAMENTAL PRICE:

Fragmented Soul

When a diabolist takes a power, the first price it must take is Fragmented Soul.

QUICK STATS:

CULTIST (MINIONS)	
Threat Level	2
Skills	Hand-to-Hand +1, Grappling +1, Reflexes +2
Talents	Talented, Lucky
Powers	None
Equipment	Dagger +2

WITCH DOCTOR (LIEUTENANT) Quick Character (660 points)	
Fear Rating	0
Initiative pool	Base: 6d - 6d
Melee pool	Base: 8d -Dagger: 8d (DM +3)
Ranged pool	Base: 5d -Pistol: 5d (DM +2)
Extras pool	7d
Defense pool	Base: 4d - 4d
Basic Talents	Attack Focus – Dagger Cheat Lucky Basic Animism Basic Diabolism Talented
Greater Talents	Greater Animism Greater Diabolism Attack Specialist – Dagger Danger Sense Life Drain Night Vision
Villainous Talents	Villainous Diabolism Permanent Rite
Powers (Prices)	Summon Lesser Minions 4 (Contracted Soul)
Rites	Animism Rites 2 Basic, 1 Greater Diabolism Rites: 2 Basic, 2 Greater and 2 Villainous
True Faith: 2	Damnation: 6 Hero Points: 0
Health Track	(Toughness 3) 6/5/5/3/2
Equipment	Dagger, pistol

ADDITIONAL POWERS AND PRICES:

Corpus Powers:	Corpus Prices:
Immunity	Reveal Nature
Mystical Powers:	Mystical Prices:
Summon Lesser Minion	Contracted Soul
Summons Greater Minion	Soul Outside

CULT LEADER (VILLAIN) Standard Character (730 points)	
Fear Rating	0
Initiative pool	Base: 5d - 5d
Melee pool	Base: 4d - Dagger: 4d (DM +2)
Ranged pool	Base: 7d Pistol: 6d (DM +2)
Defense pool	N+2d+2
Basic Talents	Commanding Presence Lucky Tough Basic Diabolism Basic Necromancy Torturer
Greater Talents	Convey Power Greater Diabolism Greater Necromancy Inspire
Villainous Talents	Villainous Diabolism Permanent Rite
Powers (Prices)	Summon Greater Minion (Fragmented Soul)
Rites	Diabolism Rites: 2 Basic, 2 Greater, 1 Villainous Necromancy Rites: 2 Basic, 1 Greater
Abilities	Strength: 2 Education: 5 Courage: 3 Agility: 3 Reason: 3 Intuition: 2 Toughness: 2 Willpower: 4 Personality: 4
Background Skills	Command 3(6), Diabolism 4(8) Firearms 3(5), Intimidate 4(8), Myth and Lore 3(8), Occult 4(9)
Elective Skills	Animism 4(8), Charm 3(7), Deceive 3(7), Hand to Hand 2(4), Reflex 3(5), Research 2(5), Trained Knowledge – Current Events 3(8)
True Faith: 0	Damnation: 7 Hero Points: 0
Health Track	4/3/3/2/1
Equipment	Buff coat, dagger, pistol

quickly become a diabolist, learning secret rites to binding and forcing spirits and devils to do their bidding. It is easy to fall prey to such temptation. After all, isn't binding a devil so it cannot do any more harm a *good thing*?

ORGANIZATIONS:

The Children of Ghan – The Children of Ghan is a league of diabolists that have banded together for one purpose – to assemble the various hosts of Legion. As it states in the Bible, Legion was a demon-possessed man who was occupied by many spirits, daemons, and devils. It was Jesus himself who banished the possessing entities from Legion's body, and caused those beings to enter a herd of pigs, which then ran into the sea and drowned.

The Children of Ghan are trying to reassemble the various spirits of Legion, so that they might one day become a threat unlike any the world has known. The lesser members of the organization believe that they are mustering the possessing devils together so that they can be controlled and corralled. However, the lead members know the horrid truth – they have already given over their souls to Legion and are seeking to gather the possessing devils for their sake and their sake only.

The Shango Lodge – Down in the bayous off of the Gulf of Mexico, a group of witch doctors and conjure women have allied themselves, forming the infamous organization known as the Shango Lodge. The Shango Lodge is the second largest criminal organization in the New World, just behind the infamous Inked Palm.

The Shango Lodge was formed initially for defense. As African slaves rebelled against their Spanish masters in the Caribbean, numerous houngans and witch doctors banded together to provide the rebels with leadership. This loose confederation of diabolists all worked together to free their own people and escape to the bayou.

Today, however, the Shango Lodge has become insular and xenophobic. Anyone who is not “of the people” is not welcome in their territory. In order to survive, the Shango Lodge has turned to pirating, theft, raiding, and mercenary work. Because they are backed by a league of diabolists, the Lodge has now been able to spread their influence all over the Americas, so much so that they have operatives in every city.

LINDWORM (BEAST)

Background: Lindworms are a relative of the great wyrms (sometimes called dragons). Like the great and powerful wyrms, lindworms have no place in the natural cycle of nature. They are blights upon the face of the earth. Thus, many cultures attribute great honor and glory to those who can kill one of these wretched beasts.

Lindworms have appeared throughout history, in both the New World and the Old World. They always appear to be strange, serpentine creatures with fish-like heads and needle sharp teeth. Some have powerful, toad-like forearms. Others have wings. Still others have both forearms and wings. A particular breed of lindworm, known

as the wyvern, even has a stinger on the end of its tail.

Because lindworms are not part of nature, they utterly destroy any environment in which they live in for very long. They will overfeed, wiping out the animal population in the area. Their very presence will poison the ground upon which they tread. A swamp where a lindworm dwells will become fetid and decayed. A river where they make their nest will become brackish and filled with bizarre life.

STRAINS:

Wyverns – A wyvern is a breed of lindworm which has wings, forearms, and a stinger upon its tail. Wyverns tend to live in rocky areas high up in the mountains. They tend to feast upon all of the avian life in a particular area, causing the insect and rodent population to explode. Most areas where wyverns dwell are infested with all manner of carrion, most of them corrupted by the presence of the wyvern itself.

Blood Guppy – The blood guppy is a form of lindworm that favors the water. It has no wings, but does have a pair of powerful forearms. Blood guppies are infamous for lying in wait in mud, quicksand, or murky water and swallowing up its prey and taking it down into the murky depths with it. Blood guppies tend to ingest all of the fish in any area it dwells in, meaning that it is usually unnaturally quiet and still in any waters a blood guppy inhabits, and most water that it lives in is filled with strange, multi-colored algae.

Lambton Worm – Lambton worms are exceedingly dangerous, perhaps the most daunting of all lindworms. Lambton worms are infamous for their ability to regenerate their bodies from even the smallest piece. In the past, when people have fought these fearsome beasts, lambtons have reportedly been ground into small bits, only to return the following morning. Only by burning the entire body or washing the severed parts along a fast-moving stream can prevent a Lambton worm from reforming. These fearsome monsters are named after the infamous lindworm which attacked the village of Lambton, England.

ORGANIZATIONS:

None

SUGGESTED LOCALES:

Wyverns love rocky, mountainous areas. Blood guppies favor swamps, muck, quicksand, rivers, or beaches. Lambton worms love dwelling in wells, swamps, and other places that have standing water.

Creating a Lindworm: Initial Cost 95

FUNDAMENTAL POWERS:

All lindworms begin with the **Durability 4** power.

All lindworms begin with the **Claws, Fangs, Hulking Body**, and **Giant Body** talents.

QUICK STATS:

WYVERN (LIEUTENANT) Quick Character (750 points)	
Fear Rating	4
Initiative pool	Base: 6d - 6d
Melee pool	Base: 10d Claws: 9d+2 (DM +6) Fangs: 9d+2 (DM +6) Tail: 10d+2 (DM +8) + poison
Ranged pool	Base: 5d
Extras pool	7d - 7d / 5d movement skills
Defense pool	Base: 3d - 3d +3
Basic Talents	Attack Focus – Tail Claws Lucky Talented – Hand-to-Hand
Greater Talents	Attack Specialist – Tail Danger Sense Deft Disarm Fangs Night Vision Sweep Tough
Villainous Talents	Brutal Charge Hulking Body Giant Body Tail
Powers (Prices)	Durability 4 (<i>Vulnerability – Wood</i>) Armor 3 (<i>Obvious Appearance</i>) Flight 3 (<i>Lair</i>) Fury 2 (<i>Weakness – Dragonsbane</i>) Poison 4(<i>Weakness – Holy Symbols</i>)
True Faith: 2	Damnation: 12 Hero Points: 0
Health Track	(Toughness 5) 13/11/9/9/6/4
Equipment	None

BLOOD GUPPY (LIEUTENANT) Quick Character (650 points)	
Fear Rating	3
Initiative pool	Base: 6d - 6d
Melee pool	Base: 8d Claws: 9d+2 (DM +6) Fangs: 9d+2 (DM +8) Tail: 9d+2 (DM +6)
Ranged pool	Base: 5d
Extras pool	8d - 8d / 6d movement skills
Defense pool	Base: 3d - 3d +3
Basic Talents	Attack Focus – Fangs Claws Strong Lungs
Greater Talents	Attack Specialist – Fangs Danger Sense Fangs Iron Grip Slam

Villainous Talents	Hulking Body Giant Body Tail
Powers (Prices)	Durability 4 (<i>Vulnerability – Fire</i>) Armor 3 (<i>Damage – Cold Iron</i>) Engulf 3 (<i>Prey Exclusion – Blood guppies will not attack someone who cannot see</i>) Swimming 2 (<i>Impaired Travel – Cannot travel while it rains or storms</i>)
True Faith: 2	Damnation: 8 Hero Points: 0
Health Track	(Toughness 4) 12/8/6/6/4/2
Equipment	None

LAMBTON WORM (VILLAIN) Standard Character (975 points)	
Fear Rating	6
Initiative pool	Base: 6d - 6d
Melee pool	Base: 11d Claws: 10d (DM +6) Fangs: 11d (DM +8) Tail: 10d (DM +6)
Ranged pool	Base: 4d
Defense pool	N+5d+3
Basic Talents	Attack Focus – Fangs Claws Lucky Talented – Hand-to-Hand
Greater Talents	Ambush Attack Attack Specialist – Fangs Canny Fighter Danger Sense Fearless Iron Grip Second Wind Sweep Tough
Villainous Talents	Brutal Charge Hulking Body Giant Body Shattering Attack Tail
Powers (Prices)	Durability 5 (<i>Vulnerability – Cold Iron</i>) Armor 3 (<i>Obvious Appearance</i>) Regeneration 5 (<i>Damage – Flowing water</i>) Fury 3 (<i>Prey Exclusion – Children</i>) Debilitating Aura 4 (<i>Atmospheric Disturbance</i>)
Abilities	Strength: 7 Education: 1 Courage: 3 Agility: 4 Reason: 1 Intuition: 3 Toughness: 6 Willpower: 2 Personality: 1
Background Skills	Hand-to-Hand 4(11), Climb 3(8), Parry 4(11), Stealth 4(6), Swim 4(9), Notice 3(6)
Elective Skills	Endurance 4(10), Grapple 5(12), Jump 2(7), Reflexes 4(6), Resolve 3(6), Throw 4(11), Track 1(2)
True Faith: 0	Damnation: 16 Hero Points: 0
Health Track	16/13/10/10/7/4
Equipment	None

FUNDAMENTAL PRICE:**Vulnerability****ADDITIONAL POWERS & PRICES:**

Corpus Powers:	Corpus Prices:
Armor	Obvious Appearance
Regeneration	Damage
Movement Powers:	Movement Prices:
Flight	Lair
Swimming	Impaired Travel
Offensive Powers:	Offensive Prices:
Engulf	Prey Exclusion
Fury	Weakness x2
Poison	
Mystical Powers:	Mystical Prices:
Debilitating Aura	Atmospheric Disturbance

NECROMANCERS (MORTALS)

Background: In this new Age of Reason, there are those who are not content to wait for the slow and laborious process of science. These corrupted scholars seek knowledge of the forbidden, dark paths to power, and short cuts in Nature's Laws. The ultimate achievement of any corrupted scholar, of course, are the paths that some use to circumvent death.

When a hermetic scholar starts learning about these methods...they make the final transition into the dark art of necromancy. She finally becomes a necromancer in body and soul.

Most necromancers usually have a wide variety of interests. They are not limited to a love of death. However, their perceived "power over death" represents for them the sorts of rewards they seek to gain by pursuing the dark arts. Most necromancers are dangerous individuals because they are the sorts of people who seek knowledge at any cost. Furthermore, these are also people who usually search for the wrong kind of knowledge, like the secret to immortality or the ability to bring the dead back into this world.

STRAINS:

Heretic Scholars – These necromancers begin their careers as scholars, magi, or even clergymen. They often begin the study of the Dark Arts as a way to protect themselves against it. Eventually, however, those that study black magic long enough may sometimes begin to try to bind minor daemons and devils. After all, if one binds such a creature, aren't they bending the Adversary's power to good? Aren't they turning the tables on the forces of evil?

If they are ever discovered, these heretic scholars are often called out as blasphemers for their dabbings, and for good reason. Most may start out altruistically, but almost always begin to use their powers for themselves.

It often starts with something small, like using a power to procure a bigger library (to better research the enemy) or to line one's pocket (getting necessary resources to the fight against the Adversary). It is not long before such individuals end up doing all manner of evil, all believing themselves to be justified in their actions, because they seek some "greater good".

Liches – A lich, simply put is a necromancer who has pursued knowledge in order to cheat death in some way. Some liches have not yet found a way into undeath. Others have broken the barriers of humanity and become a twisted nightmare of what they once were. Liches are found in many cultures, all over the world. Some say that the dark practice of trying to gain immortality began in India, others say that it began in Egypt at the dawn of civilization. Wherever it may have started, liches are a legendary threat in the World of Witch Hunter.

What makes a lich so dangerous is that each one is a person who was willing to set aside their humanity in search of some form of prolonging their life. Most liches are so far distant from their former humanity that they are barely recognizable. The Waxen Bride of Florence is supposedly a woman who has only a skull for a face. To maintain her youth, she must surgically cut off the faces of other women and stretch them to fit her bony head. The Twisted King of Majorca lives below the ground and scuttles about on four arms and four legs. Each lich is very different from the next, because they have all found their own way of cheating death for a time. But in the end, few liches escape a final death, for even the Adversary awaits his toll in Hell.



QUICK STATS:

NECROMANTIC DABBLER (MINIONS)	
Threat Level	2
Skills	Hand-to-Hand +1, Pistol +1
Talents	None
Powers	None
Equipment	Dagger (DM +1), Pistol (DM +2)

HERETIC SCHOLAR (LIEUTENANT)	
Quick Character (555 points)	
Fear Rating	0
Initiative pool	Base: 6d - 6d
Melee pool	Base: 5d - Dagger: 5d (DM +1)
Ranged pool	Base: 8d - Musket: 7d (DM +3)
Extras pool	7d
Defense pool	Base: 4d - 3d
Basic Talents	Bookworm Dilettante Basic Hermetic Basic Necromancy Talented - Necromancy
Greater Talents	Greater Hermetic Greater Necromancy
Villainous Talents	None
Powers (Prices)	None
Rites	Hermetic Rites: 2 Basic, 1 Greater Necromancy Rites: 2 Basic, 2 Greater
True Faith: 2	Damnation: 5 Hero Points: 0
Health Track	(Toughness 3) 6/5/5/3/2
Equipment	Dagger, Musket

Creating a Necromancer: Initial Cost 0

FUNDAMENTAL POWERS:

As a mortal a necromancer has no fundamental power, but may take a few powers. Doing so forever binds the necromancer to the Adversary.

FUNDAMENTAL PRICE:

Atmospheric Disturbance

When a necromancer takes a power, the first price it must take is Atmospheric Disturbance.

ADDITIONAL POWERS & PRICES

Offensive Powers:	Offensive Prices:
Create Undead Spawn*	Frailty
Sap Ability	Offensive Limitation
Mystical Powers:	Mystical Prices:
Summon Greater Minions	Mystical Limitation

*A necromancer that creates undead spawn creates revenant spawn.

LICH (VILLAIN)	
Standard Character (890 points)	
Fear Rating	0
Initiative pool	Base: 3d - 3d
Melee pool	Base: 8d - Pick: 7d (DM +5)
Ranged pool	Base: 2d
Defense pool	N+3d+2
Basic Talents	Attack Focus - Pick Commanding Presence Cheat Basic Diabolism Basic Hermetic Basic Necromancy
Greater Talents	Attack Specialist - Pick Convey Power Permanent Rite Greater Hermetic Greater Necromancy Tough
Villainous Talents	Villainous Necromancy Undead
Powers (Prices)	Create Undead Spawn (<i>Atmospheric Disturbance</i>) Summon Greater Minion (<i>Mystical Limitation - Summon minion only works at night</i>)
Rites	Diabolism Rites: 2 Basic Hermetic Rites: 2 Basic, 1 Greater Necromancy Rites: 2 Basic, 2 Greater, 2 Villainous
Abilities	Strength: 4 Education: 5 Courage: 3 Agility: 2 Reason: 4 Intuition: 3 Toughness: 5 Willpower: 4 Personality: 2
Background Skills	Herbalism 3(8), Myth and Lore 3(8), Occult 5(10), Research 4(8), Necromancy 4(8), Hermetic 5(10)
Elective Skills	Construct 2(7), Diabolism 2(4), Hand-to-Hand 4(8), Search 3(7), Concentrate 3(7), Notice 2(5), Reflexes 2(3), Resolve 2(5), Trade 3(7)
True Faith: 0	Damnation: 9 Hero Points: 0
Health Track	10/9/9/6/4
Equipment	Pitch jacket, pick



ORGANIZATIONS:

The Eighth Seal – This secret society of necromancers and diabolists pose as a group of scholars, researchers, and scientist. In truth, each member of the Eighth Seal is beholden in some way to the Adversary and does his work, knowingly or unknowingly.

To join the Eighth Seal, one must be invited. Usually this society invites people who have been rejected from the college of magi, those who could not pass the rigorous standards proposed by that august body. The Sealers always try to recruit those who are on the cutting edge science or who delve into the nature of the Invisible World through their work. At first, those who join are treated to vast libraries and access to untold information. But eventually, all members are initiated through rites which give a piece of their soul away to the Adversary. As members increase in rank through the society, they must undergo more and more rites, each time giving away more of their soul. By the time most people discover what is going on, they are missing so much of their soul that they simply don't care any more.

The Eighth Seal is based out of London, but has branches all over the world. Their chief aim is to corrupt as many learned men and women as possible. As a secondary goal, they also seek to amass a large army of supernatural creatures, from devils to revenants. Their third goal is to further research into the supernatural. Often, they do so by opening ancient secrets beyond their control or using hapless victims to perform mystical experiments upon them.

Mortuus Imperius – This organization began with Emperor Nero, who sought a way to cheat death during the twilight of his rule. Though Nero never survived to see his dream come to fruition, the organization he founded went underground and lingered to this very day.

The Mortuus Imperius is headed up by a circle of nine liches, each hailing from a different country. These antiquated, bizarre beings are in constant search of a "complete" answer to the immortality question...how can someone become immortal yet retain their humanity? Their search for answers has led them to raid libraries, perform arcane experiments on human test subjects, perform vivisections on all manner of people...the list goes on.

In the meantime, while the Imperius still looks for the answer to their ultimate question, they have hoarded centuries' worth of knowledge in their vaults and have some of the darkest operatives known working for them.

PHANTOMS (GHOST)

Background: Phantoms are some of the most common and the most dangerous form of threat in the Grave New World. Whether it be an Algonquin tale of a specter who steals new-born children, or a phantom horseman who continually looks for his head, just about every land or nation has tales about phantoms.

Strictly speaking, phantoms are a type of ghost. They are the spirits of the dead brought back through some injustice, or task left undone. Those who see a phantom often speak of a strange light that burns within them, and their spectral, transparent shape. However, a few phantoms appear to be normal humans at a distance.

Phantoms are usually not tied to any specific place. They are free to roam the land, seeking out some means of earthly peace. All phantoms are driven by a specific need, whether it be for justice, revenge, lost love, or duty.

STRAINS:

Forever Highwaymen: The Forever Highwaymen are types of phantoms that are most commonly found on roads or large stretches of land. They seek victims who are foolish enough to wander into their territory. These spectral raiders will usually attempt to kill their victims, or force some price from them.

Wailing Women: In Spanish Florida, these beings are known as La Llorona. The spirits of Wailing Women are the wandering specters of women who have lost a child, or died in childbirth. According to legend, these anguished spirits try to spirit away the bodies of unattended children, or kill mothers who are too prideful of their own children.

Spirit Huntsmen: Spirit Huntsmen are phantoms who roam the land, seeking to hunt down a forever unattainable goal. Numerous Native American tales speak of Spirit Huntsmen who are in constant pursuit of a spirit animal that they can never catch. Should they come across hapless mortals, they attempt to add them to their hunt, creating an ever-swelling pack of ghostly hunters. In Ireland, the most infamous example of this is the Wild Hunt.

ORGANIZATIONS:

The Redman Brides – This group of terrifying phantoms were all once brides of a particular English lord, one Sir Thomas Redman. Sir Redman kept an isolated home on the coast of England and illegally practiced polygamy. There, Sir Thomas Redman, his nine brides practiced all manner of debauched behavior. Yet as bizarre as this behavior was, the Redman household took it to another level when they began to incorporate bloody murder into their ritualistic hedonism.

It wasn't long until the authorities caught wind of Sir Redman's transgressions. Rather than the courts Sir Redman and his nine brides escaped to the colonies. However, upon arrival of his ship to the New World, it crashed upon the shores of North Carolina.

To this day, Sir Thomas Redman and his nine brides are said to still haunt the shores of North Carolina, inviting people to take part in their debaucheries. Often, a single Bride will linger outside of a small village and entice people to wander off into the woods where the rest of the Brides are waiting.

The Lost Regiment – The soldiers of the Lost Regiment were once a group of Dutch soldiers who went out into the Adirondacks in the northern part of the colonies to hunt down a great beast. The entire regiment got caught in a terrible snowstorm. During the blizzard, ten of the men struck out on their own and escaped the Adirondacks, leaving their fellow soldiers behind.

Ten years later, the Lost Regiment rose up from the dead, and began to roam the land, searching for the deserters that left them behind. The problem is that the Lost Regiment tries to claim *anyone* who even bears a passing resemblance to their former compatriots. Rumor has it that the Regiment will not rest until all ten deserters are brought to face their ghostly number.

SUGGESTED LOCALES:

Phantoms can literally appear anywhere in the world, from the high seas to a lonely stretch of desert. Literally anywhere a human might have perished in search of something or longing for something can be a place where a phantom appears.

Creating a Phantom: Initial Cost 70

FUNDAMENTAL POWERS:

All phantoms begin with **Intangibility 3**
All phantoms have the **Undead (Villainous)** and the **Restless (Villainous)** talent.

FUNDAMENTAL PRICE:

Focus Bound

QUICK STATS:

LA LLORONA (LIEUTENANT) Quick Character (660 points)	
Fear Rating	3
Initiative pool	Base: 8d - 8d
Melee pool	Base: 6d - Withering Touch: 8d (DM +3)
Ranged pool	Base: 6d
Extras pool	6d - 6d / 7d movement skills
Defense pool	Base: 4d - 4d
Basic Talents	Basic Witchcraft Lucky
Greater Talents	Greater Witchcraft
Villainous Talents	Grace and Speed
Powers (Prices)	Intangibility 3 (<i>Focus Driven</i>) Apparition 1 (<i>Restriction – Holy Ground</i>) Siren Call 3 (<i>Weakness – Sound of Church Bells</i>) Withering Touch 3 (<i>Prey Exclusion – Children</i>)
Rites	Witchcraft Rites: 2 Basic, 2 Greater
True Faith: 0	Damnation: 7 Hero Points: 0
Health Track	(Toughness 3) 6/4/4/3/2
Equipment	None

FOREVER HIGHWAYMAN (LIEUTENANT) Standard Character (620 points)	
Fear Rating	2
Initiative pool	Base: 7d - 7d
Melee pool	Base: 6d - Sword: 4d (DM +5)
Ranged pool	Base: 6d - Pistol: 6d (DM +2)
Defense pool	4d+2
Basic Talents	Attack Focus - Pistol Swords School – Freifechter -Sacrifices Must Be Made -Like an Eggshell Before a Hammer
Greater Talents	Attack Specialist – Sword Deadeye Shot Fast Draw Speed Loader
Villainous Talents	Restless Ricochet Shot Undead
Powers (Prices)	Intangibility 3 (<i>Focus Driven</i>) Mortal Mask 2 (<i>Obvious to the Touch</i>) Sap Ability – Strength 3* (<i>Prey Exclusion – Gentle Ladies</i>) *The Forever Highwayman saps Strength from victims with shots from his ghostly pistol.
Abilities	Strength: 3 Education: 1 Courage: 3 Agility: 4 Reason: 2 Intuition: 2 Toughness: 4 Willpower: 3 Personality: 5
Background Skills	Charm 4(9), Deceive 4(9), Hand-to-Hand 3(6), Reflexes 4(8), Ride 3(6), Stealth 4(7)
Elective Skills	Empathy 2(4), Firearms 3(6), Intimidate 2(7), Jump 2(5), Notice 2(4), Resolve 2(5)
True Faith: 0	Damnation: 5 Hero Points: 0
Health Track	8/6/6/4/2
Equipment	Buff coat, sword, pistol

ADDITIONAL POWERS & PRICES

Corpus Powers:	Corpus Prices:
Intangibility	Damage
Invisibility	Obvious Appearance
Mortal Mask - Phantoms with this power must assume the appearance they had in life.	Obvious to the Touch
Movement Powers:	Movement Prices:
Apparition	Lair
Flight	Restriction
Offensive Powers:	Offensive Prices:
Crippling Strike	Prey Exclusion
Sap Ability	Weakness
Withering Touch	
Mystical Powers:	Mystical Prices:
Siren Call	Feeder – Souls

FEATURE VILLAIN: The Grey Pilgrim (Villain), Standard Character (1,560 points)

Quote: “You may not know me, Witch Hunter, but I know all about you. When you were born, how you learned to read, when you truly discovered the Invisible World. I even know the manner of your death. Shall I tell it to you?”

Background – The Grey Pilgrim is one of the most dreaded beings in the Grave New World. This powerful spirit roams the land on a horse of shadow, drabbed in a luminous grey cloak, the precise color of ash. The Grey Pilgrim has but one purpose – to hunt down and destroy Witch Hunters wherever they are found.

It is said that the Grey Pilgrim was once a Witch Hunter himself – a pilgrim minister once known as Reverend John Hammett. This stern-faced, stern-hearted man once led an entire band of Witch Hunters across the colonies in search of devils to purge. Hammett’s Hammers, as the band was known, was known for burning their prey at the end of their signature long torches.

Despite his use of fire, the Reverend Hammett himself was famous for his wintry pronouncements. His sonorous, cold voice would carry the terrible chill of final justice with it each time he was about to send one of his opponents into the next world. However, the Reverend became more and more extreme in his methods and punishments as he fought increasingly powerful opponents

At some point in his career, Hammett decided that the most dangerous threat to the land were those who did not possess the courage to rise up and fight the forces of darkness. After all, even the lowliest prostitute could become a Witch Hunter by taking a stand. Chillingly, he began to condemn those he considered guilty of the “sin of cowardice” to death in his own icy, methodical manner. In time, Hammett’s warped justice became too much even for his band.

Hammett chided his men for their weakness. With a sudden but calculating precision, he struck down two of his own band. In retaliation, the other Witch Hunters fought back. It finally took five grown men to finally pin him down and throw the minister onto a burning pyre of wood. Even while burning, Reverend Hammett never shouted or raged. He merely looked into the eyes of each of his men and with icy determination stated that he would have his revenge.

Ten years later, the ghastly specter of John Hammett rose from the dead as one of the Grave New World’s most deadly villains – The Grey Pilgrim. The Grey Pilgrim is a particularly dangerous opponent for Witch Hunters, for he likes nothing better than to hunt them down as he once did the minions of the Adversary.

THE GREY PILGRIM (VILLAIN) Standard Character (1,560 points)		
Fear Rating	5	
Initiative pool	Base: 11d - 11d	
Melee pool	Base: 10d - Sword: 9d (DM +4) Withering Touch: 13d (DM +6)	
Ranged pool	Base: 11d - Pistol: 11d (DM +2)	
Defense pool	N+5d+2	
Basic Talents	Attack Focus - Pistol Attack Focus - Sword Lucky Sword School – Flor di Battaglia -Patience of the Lynx -Speed of the Tiger -Never Unarmed Pugilist Skilled – Hand-to-Hand	
Greater Talents	Attack Specialist – Sword Sword School – Flor di Battaglia -Heart of the Lion -Master of all Weapons Dual Shot Far Reaching Attack Marksman Slam	
Villainous Talents	Armor Piercing Shot Brutal Charge Mark of the Beast Sword School – Flor di Battaglia -Flawless Technique Undead	
Powers (Prices)	Intangibility 3 (<i>Focus Driven</i>) Apparition 2 (<i>Restriction – Running Water</i>) Crippling Strike 5 (<i>Prey Exclusion – Innocent*</i>) Invisibility 3 (<i>Obvious to the Touch</i>) Withering Touch 5 (<i>Weakness – Daylight</i>) *Even in death, the Grey Pilgrim believes that he serves some greater good. He will not attack those whom he considers truly innocent – children, those of simple intelligence, or legitimate members of the clergy.	
Abilities	Strength: 4 Education: 3 Courage: 5 Agility: 7 Reason: 4 Intuition: 6 Toughness: 4 Willpower: 5 Personality: 4	
Background Skills	Command 3(7), Concentrate 2(7), Deceive 2(6), Firearms 5(11), Hand-to-Hand 7(10), Ride 3(9), Trained Knowledge – Philosophy & Theology 3(6)	
Elective Skills	Empathy 2(8), Gossip 3(7), Grapple 4(8), Intimidate 4(8), Myth and Lore 3(6), Notice 4(11), Occult 3(6), Reflexes 4(11), Research 3(7), Search 4(6), Stealth 5(11), Subterfuge 2(11), Throw 3(8), Track 5(11)	
True Faith: 0	Damnation: 15	Hero Points: 0
Health Track	8/6/6/4/2	
Equipment	Buff coat, Sword of the Pyre – The sword of the Grey Pilgrim causes its victim feel as if they are burning, causing 1 hit per round for three rounds after a single hit, ornate pistol.	

Roleplaying –The Grey Pilgrim appears to be a long-faced man whose eyes cannot be seen beneath his grey cloak. His hands, if they are ever seen, still bear the hideous scarring of the fire which consumed the Grey Pilgrim's soul.

In life, Hammett was known for his collected and implacable manner. As a phantom, he still possesses the chilling calm that he did in life. He never allows himself to get angry, impatient, or out of sorts. He addresses everyone in the same frosty, sonorous tone, sternly chiding his victims for their mistakes.

Tactics – In life, the Grey Pilgrim used his research and investigative skills against his enemies. In death, these remain his most dangerous weapons. By the time anyone faces him, he usually has discovered everything about his opponent's background and weaknesses. The Grey Pilgrim never faces anyone unless he is assured of his own victory.

When he does fight, Grey Pilgrim rarely fights out in the open, preferring to use stealth and his intangibility as his advantages. The only case in which he will fight out in the open is if he can get an opponent alone. In these cases, he takes great pleasure in taking part in a duel.

REVENANT (UNDEAD)

Background: Perhaps the most common form of undead, revenants can be found around the world, from the graveyards of the Old World, to hidden temples in Africa, to voodoo shrines in the Caribbean. Strictly speaking, a revenant is a rotting corpse raised from the grave by any number of means.

Some revenants rise up from their eternal slumber if they have been killed unjustly, or they have some need for revenge. Other revenants are created by foul magic. When a revenant is created in this way, the sorcerer that raises them summons back the dead's soul from the grave, and cuts out the parts which make the soul independent and self-motivated, creating a perfect undead soldier.

STRAINS:

Ghuls –In the World of Witch Hunter, a ghul is a corpse of a mortal or beast that had risen out of some need for revenge or hate. For example, an entire village slaughtered mercilessly by a warlord might, on some dark night, arise to take revenge on the living. Ghuls are sometimes indiscriminate in their rage, attempting to kill everyone around them. Some are more focused, pursuing the ones that caused their untimely death. Ghuls usually manifest from the site of large-scale killings, meaning that usually they appear in great masses.

Ghuls are always in various states of decay, and have no eyes, simply glowing points of light where eyeballs once peered out at the world. Ghuls constantly crave the sustenance of living flesh. Wherever they can find mortals, they will pursue them until their prey is eaten.



Almost no ghuls can talk, and those that do usually can only utter the most basic of phrases. "Coming...get you." "You die!" "Hungry...." While this might cause some to underestimate ghuls, these undead possess an uncanny animal cunning which often takes their victims by surprise.

Zombies– A zombie is an undead being raised deliberately from the grave by an outside party like a necromancer or sorcerer. These creatures have the part of their souls that remembers ambition, compassion, desire, and love cut out of them at creation, making them perfect, unquestioning automatons.

Zombies are slightly more intelligent than ghuls and are capable following complex directions. For example, a necromancer might instruct a zombie to search the city for a particular person; hide in a specific place until a signal is given; or to build a small shelter. However, zombies cannot communicate verbally at all. Nor can they write. They can only sign basic things to their master.

Zombies appear to have a slightly greenish tinge to their skin. Their hair and nails tend to be long, having continued to grow while they have been in the grave. Most hideous of all, the process to make any zombie revenant requires the necromancer to devour the zombie's lips, meaning all zombies have the same hideous grimace upon their face – a lipless scream that is forever locked on their face.

Wight – Wights are the raised bodies of those who have fallen under some unfortunate curse. For example, an old miser might be cursed to rise again so that he will never have eternal rest. Likewise, whole groups of people might be cursed to walk as the dead, like the dreaded Children's Parade which still walks the land in the New Netherlands.

Wights have leprously-white skin, with sanguine eyes that are flush with blood. Their skin often develops tears and holes, showing the striated muscle beneath. This brand of revenant is quite intelligent, possessing all of the memories of its past life. Usually most wights are filled with a burning jealousy for the living, and long for the days in which it was once mortal.

Organizations:

The Crew of the Conqueror Worm – The crew of the Conqueror Worm were once the crew of a pirate and slaving vessel called the Peerless. However, the infamous crew was cursed by one of the slaves they had captured, an African witch-priest. On that day, the entire crew contracted a strange disease that killed their flesh and trapped their souls within a rotting corpse. Plagued by an undead illness, no port in the world would ever welcome them again.

Today, the Conqueror Worm carries a crew of wights and travels around the world. Crews have seen it off the shores of both India and the New World. No shore is safe from her ghostly form. Legend has it that the Conqueror Worm can appear wherever it wishes, but the truth is more chilling than that. Captain Nin's main prerogative is to swell the ranks of her crew. She has been successful in this regard, so that now there are five different ships that bear the name Conqueror Worm. Each of them operates simultaneously, making people believe that the ship can be in many places at once. She is seeking to expand her fleet by recruiting more people to join her on her undead voyage. Nin's end goal is to perhaps create a small town filled with undead like herself. Right now, she has her sights set on New Amsterdam as her new place of residence.

The Charnel Menagerie – When the island of Haiti rebelled and gained its independence, one of the freed members of the rebellion was a wild and rebellious hougan, or voodoo priest, by the name of Papa Grinn. Papa Grinn immediately used his newfound freedom to turn a profit. He joined the infamous Shango Lodge and began to hire out his services as a vodoun to whomever could pay his bill. As a result, he quickly rose in the underworld as a necromancer for hire.

Papa Grinn specializes in raising the dead for specific purposes like assassination, striking fear into a populace, or protection. Very few are able to afford his high price, but those that do rarely regret it, since almost no one in the underworld can claim to use zombies as retainers.

Papa Grinn's macabre creations are known for their bizarre appearance. He always modifies the zombies he creates, attaching animal parts to their rotting bodies. Thus, his zombies might have horses' heads, goat's hooves, or animal claws for hands.

SUGGESTED LOCALES:

Any

Creating a Revenant: Initial Cost 40

FUNDAMENTAL POWERS:

All revenants begin with the **Regeneration 2** power

All revenants begin with the **Undead** talent.

FUNDAMENTAL PRICE:

Vulnerability – Fire

ADDITIONAL POWERS & PRICES

Corpus Powers:

Corpus Prices:

Armor

Damage

Gestalt Body

Obvious to the Touch

Movement Powers:

Movement Prices:

Apparition

Impaired Travel

Jumping

Restriction x2

Wall Crawling

Mystical Powers:

Mystical Prices:

Create Undead Spawn

Focus Bound

FEATURE VILLAIN:

Captain Nin of the Conqueror Worm (Villain), Standard Character (1,175 points)

Quote: *"It's a shame we cannot come to some mutually beneficial arrangement. But maybe it's because you lack the proper...perspective. We'll talk some more after you die, right?"*

Background: Nin began life as a high profile courtesan who worked the costal cities of Siam. Her clientele was affluent enough that she got to service men and women all over the globe from India to Shanghai to Constantinople. She became the captain of her own ship through circumstance. When a plague struck the ship that she was on, it was her leadership and courage that allowed the handful of uninfected crewmen to survive.

The crewmen were so impressed with Nin's leadership abilities that they encouraged her to become a captain in her own right. She did so, starting small and quickly turning to pirating and slaving as a way to increase her profits. Captain Nin and her crew took a turn for the worst, however, while transporting a shipload of slaves from Africa to the Carriibbean.

The slaves below decks got a strange illness and to prevent it from spreading to everyone, Nin had the captured slaves who were infected thrown overboard. Her

QUICK STATS:

GHULS (MINIONS)	
Threat Level	3
Skills	Hand-to-Hand +2, Grappling +2, Climb +2
Talents	Iron Fisted
Powers	None
Equipment	None

ZOMBIE (LIEUTENANT)	
Quick Character (525 points)	
Fear Rating	2
Initiative pool	Base: 5d - 5d
Melee pool	Base: 7d - Claws: 7d (DM +4)
Ranged pool	Base: 6d - Hatchet: 5d (DM +2)
Extras pool	6d - 6d / 7d movement skills
Defense pool	Base: 3d - 3d+3
Basic Talents	Attack Focus – Claws Claws Talented – Hand-to-Hand
Greater Talents	Attack Specialist – Claws Tough Slam
Villainous Talents	Brutal Charge Grace and Speed
Powers (Prices)	<i>Regeneration 3 (Vulnerability – Fire)</i> <i>Armor 3 (Damage – Holy Water)</i> <i>Gestalt Body 2 (Obvious to the Touch)</i>
True Faith: 0	Damnation: 6 Hero Points: 0
Health Track	(Toughness 4) 9/7/7/5/3
Equipment	None

crew linked all of the sickly captives together with a chain and threw them down into the depths, and watched as one body slipped by after another. The last one to go was an African witch-priest who cursed Nin and her crew.

After that incident, Nin and her crew contracted a strange illness that slowly killed their flesh but preserved their souls. They had become wights. Wherever they went, they spread their bizarre illness as well. Thus, Captain Nin's ship, *The Peerless*, took on a new name – *The Conqueror Worm*.

Roleplaying: Nin appears to be a comely Asian female, who wears a half-mask over her chalk-white face to hide the fact that it is rotting away. She usually wears a hat or bandana over her head to affix her mask in place. She is never without her cutlass and pistol, both of which are said to have been carved out of the bone of some strange beast.

As a former high-profile courtesan, Nin has an intimate understanding of people. She understands what they want, how they think, and what they want to believe. She is a charismatic and even inspiring speaker. However, all of this conceals a wicked temper and a sadistic instinct. More than anything, Nin wants to possess her humanity once again. If she was presented with a way of doing that, she would do anything to get it.

CAPTAIN NIN OF THE CONQUEROR WORM (VILLAIN)	
Standard Character (1,175 points)	
Fear Rating	4
Initiative pool	Base: 11d - 11d
Melee pool	Base: 10d - Rapier: 10d (DM +5) Dagger: 10d (DM +1)
Ranged pool	Base: 11d - Pistol: 11d (DM +4)
Defense pool	N+5d+6
Basic Talents	Attack Focus - Pistol Attack Focus – Rapier Charismatic Cheat Lucky Sword School – Acciaio Mantello -Cloak and Blade - Cloak Mastery - Hidden Blade
Greater Talents	Attack Specialist – Rapier Dual Shot Fast Power Feint Inspire Slam Speed Loader Swords School – Acciaio Mantello -Cloak Dance -Lost in the Fold Tough
Villainous Talents	Master Manipulator Quick Spawn Ricochet Shot Sword School – Acciaio Mantello -Final Dance Undead Villainous Caveat
Powers (Prices)	<i>Regeneration 4 (Vulnerability – Fire)</i> <i>Armor 5 (Damage – Holy Water)</i> <i>Jumping 3 (Impaired Travel – Captain Nin can never travel during sunset or sunrise)</i> <i>Create Undead Spawn 2 (Focus Bound – Captain Nin is in a continual search for a way to regain her humanity)</i>
Abilities	Strength: 2 Education: 3 Courage: 4 Agility: 6 Reason: 3 Intuition: 4 Toughness: 3 Willpower: 3 Personality: 5
Background Skills	Firearms 5(11), Charm 5(10), Command 5(9), Empathy 5(9), Sail 4(10), Navigation 4(8)
Elective Skills	Acrobatics 2(8), Balance 2(8), Climb 2(4), Deceive 6(11), Hand-to-Hand/Rapier 4(10), Intimidate 5(10), Perform – Dance 3(9), Profession – Courtesan 2(5), Reflexes 5(11), Swim 2(4), Stealth 3(10), Subterfuge 4(10)
True Faith: 0	Damnation: 12 Hero Points: 0
Health Track	7/5/5/4/3
Equipment	Rapier and pistol of the Deep – Captain Nin's bone sword and bone pistol have been carved from the bones of a wyvern, giving them +2 to their DM.

Tactics: Because Nin wears a half-mask, she has many other female wights in her fleet who pose as her. Some of them simply look like her, others wear full masks so they can pose as her. Often times, those hoping to face Nin in combat find out they are merely fighting one of her many doubles.

When actually engaged in combat, Captain Nin uses as many of her crew to help. She prefers to let others do most of the fighting for her, while she snipes at her opponents at range. All the while, she will rally her minions, using her charisma to bolster them. If engaged in melee combat, she tries to get her crew to keep her opponents separated so that she can engage in combat with them one by one. It is said that on the rare occasions that Captain Nin fights, that she moves with the eerie grace of a dancer.

VAMPIRES (UNDEAD)

Background: Legends of vampires exist in just about every culture. Whether it be the vetalas of India, or the vrykolakas of Greece, or the apotamkin of the Grave New World, vampires exist the world over in many forms.

If the occultists are to be believed, there exists at least twenty different rituals that allow one to transform themselves into a vampire. These rituals are hideous in the extreme, and require drinking blood multiple times over the course of rite. Most who perform the rituals required for immortality usually fail, ending their own lives in hideous death. Those that succeed become what are referred to as master vampires, being legendary in their power. These master vampires can pass on their curse to others, who then become infectious vampires. Infected vampires have been known to become powerful in their own right, but only after centuries of building up ability and knowledge.

All vampires have one thing in common – they must drink the blood of the living on a regular basis, or they begin to wither and vanish.

STRAINS:

Vrykolaka: Vrykolakas are almost so human, so life-like that it is sometime hard to think of them as being undead. The vrykolaka strain of vampire was created when a Grecian nobleman named Tithonus sought for a way to make his entire family immortal.

The solution Tithonus discovered required a ritual in which his entire family was made to drink the blood of his body until his husk was dry. The Greek's family did as he asked, while his own wife, Ganymede, conducted the ritual. Today, in 1689, Tithonus's family survives. Every one of them is an immortal being who has all of the characteristics of a human, except that they never age, due to their regular consumption of living blood. Other than that, however, they have no other vampiric traits. Vrykolaka don't even have fangs. Because of this, it is quite easy for them to blend into human society.

The vrykolakas have an extensive network of operatives all over the world, and now seek to extend their power base into the Grave New World. The vrykolaka's end goal is to consolidate the power of their special cult. They often try to "recruit" powerful people into their society, so that they can spread their influence. As undead, vrykolakas have no sense of love, warmth, or affection. These parts of their souls have perished. Because of this, they see humans as living cattle, whose sole purpose is to be food.

Apotamkin: While some vampires are calculating and deliberate in their feeding methods, the apotamkin are rabid feeders of blood. The apotamkin are bogeyman monsters that haunt the northern tribes of the Grave New World. Upon their death, these vampiric beasts forget almost all of their former lives, becoming bestial and primitive. Most apotamkin appear to be human at first glance, but their blood-red eyes, and dark, swarthy skin, and hunched backs reveal their true natures. They typically move with skulking, slinking motions.

The apotamkin usually hunt in packs, lurking about in the lonely places of the world, ready to set upon some wandering traveler. The apotamkin particularly love the taste of children. They can "smell" youth in some way, and will always target the youngest of any group first.

Vampyr: The vampire strain that most of Western society is familiar with is the vampyr. The vampyr excels at looking and appearing human. It *appears* warm to the touch. Indeed, a vampyr can make it itself appear to eat food, and engage in all of the other acts a human might participate in. However, this human-like form is merely an illusion. Behind its guise, a vampyr appears to be an emaciated corpse, with varicose veins running throughout its transparent skin. Master vampyrs have a veil of cobwebs over their pale and shrivled bodies worn like a shroud of some kind.

Vampyrs often have a hard time relating to humans. They cannot understand suffering or grief; nor can they understand laughter or joy. Some vampyrs, in an effort to understand emotions will become obsessed with torturing their victims, trying to evoke a wide variety of emotions within their subjects, in an effort to recapture what they have lost.

Viscerata: The viscerata are an elite group of vampires who keep their numbers deliberately small. These beings live normal lives, walk about in the sunlight, and participate in everyday activities. Most viscerata vampires don't even realize that they are vampires. However, when a convenient prey is around, the viscerata's true colors show. They undergo a transformation that drives some men mad. Their skin grows thin as it stretches and pulls. The body expands, and something deep inside of it can be seen wriggling to break free. Then, within a single moment, the viscerata rips free from its host's body, throwing off its skin like a caul.

QUICK STATS:

APOTAMKIN (LIEUTENANT)		
Quick Character (495 points)		
Fear Rating	2	
Initiative pool	Base: 6d - 5d	
Melee pool	Base: 7d - Claws: 7d+1 (DM +5) Fangs: 6d+1 (DM +4)	
Ranged pool	Base: 5d - Comp. Bow: 6d (DM +6)	
Extras pool	5d - 5d / 4d movement skills	
Defense pool	Base: 3d - 3d	
Basic Talents	Attack Focus - Claws Claws	
Greater Talents	Attack Specialist - Claws Fangs	
Villainous Talents	Brutal Charge Hulking Body Undead	
Powers (Prices)	<i>Immortality 2 (Feeder - Blood)</i> <i>Regeneration 2 (Vulnerability - Wood)</i> <i>Fury 1 (Weakness - Birch Bark)</i> <i>Create Undead Spawn 1 (Ward (cannot turn those wearing a medicine bag into undead spawn))</i>	
True Faith: 0	Damnation: 4	Hero Points: 0
Health Track	(Toughness 4) 8/6/6/4/2	
Equipment	None	

In their true form, viscerata vampires resemble tall, walking bats with large, translucent wings for arms. Viscerata vampires may stay free from their host body for only so long. After a while, they must steal off to a private place, where they spin a cocoon around themselves, and regrow their same body around their true form. Vicerata vampires can often slowly take over whole communities, infecting families and networks of people insidiously. These sad victims rarely realize what is growing inside of them. Most never know, only understand that they have “blackouts” from time to time.

ORGANIZATIONS:

Hellfire Circle – The infamous “Hellfire Circle” has its base of operations in the Italian alps, but has influence all over the globe. This sect of vrykolakas was once an order of Italian knights. However, a number of their key members were recruited into the folds of the vrykolakas. Ever since then, the Hellfire Circle has functioned as a special strike force for vrykolakan society. If there is a problem the society needs fixing, the Hellfire Circle is sent to deal with it. Need a politician bumped off so that a vrykolaka can take his place? Send Hellfire. Need to rescue one of the family from prison? Send Hellfire

One of their more important bases is located in London, England. There, this sect goes by the name of the “Circle of Honor”, and a league of Catholics in London. One day, the Hellfire Circle will give rise to the infamous Hellfire Club, which will also originate in England.

VAMPIR (LIEUTENANT)

Quick Character (710 points)

Fear Rating	5	
Initiative pool	Base: 8d - 8d	
Melee pool	Base: 7d - Fangs: 6d (DM +2)	
Ranged pool	Base: 7d - Crossbow: 7d (DM +4)	
Extras pool	7d - 7d	
Defense pool	Base: 4d +2	
Basic Talents	Attack Focus - Crossbow Basic Necromancy Feint	
Greater Talents	Fangs Mark of the Beast Humiliating Attack Sweep Night Vision Tough	
Villainous Talents	Escape Artist	
Powers (Prices)	<i>Immortality 3 (Feeder - Blood)</i> <i>Mortal Mask 2 (Damage - Sunlight)</i> <i>Elusive 2 (Vulnerability - Silver)</i> <i>Suggestive 4 (Ward - Holy Symbols)</i> <i>Summon Greater Minion 4 (Ward - Mirror)</i>	
Rites	Necromancy Rites: 2 Basic	
True Faith: 0	Damnation: 13	Hero Points: 0
Health Track	(Toughness 4) 8/6/6/4/2	
Equipment	None	

The Knights of the Dragon – The Knights of the Dragon are a group of vampyrs that are based out of Romania. This powerful league of undead are descended from a long line of warriors, rulers, tyrants, and generals. Each one of this august body has served in the military while in life. It is, after all, a prerequisite to join.

The Knights of the Dragon exist to prepare the world for “The One Who is Coming.” The Dragon Knights believe that their progenitor, a vampiric messiah, will come from the depth of the earth, and raze it to the ground. In order to prepare the world for his coming, the Knights of the Dragon work to destabilized the world’s nations and throw its armies into disarray. Their organization is led by a tyrant known only as Mineah the Bad, who is famous for his violent rage and sadistic tendencies.

SUGGESTED LOCALES:

While vampires live everywhere upon the earth, for some unknown reason, most vampires tend towards colder climates. Vampires are creatures of solitude, and so prefer areas where they can secret themselves away. Caves, dark forests, or ruins where few dare to tread make ideal locations for vampires to roost. When vampires do try to assimilate themselves in society, they try to live in places where they can find some relative peace and quiet. Taverns, inns, and other areas where people congregate all of the time would be the least desirable places for a vampire to make its home.

Creating a Vampire: Initial Cost 50

FUNDAMENTAL POWERS:

All vampires begin with **Immortality 2** as a power.

All vampires have the **Undead (Villainous)** and the **Fangs (Greater)** talent.

VRYKOLAKA (MINIONS)	
Threat Level	3
Skills	Hand-to-Hand +2, Firearms +1, Stealth +2, Profession +1
Talents	Fangs (G), Undead (V)
Powers	Immortality 2
Equipment	None

VISCERATA (VILLAIN) Standard Character (630 points)	
Fear Rating	4
Initiative pool	Base: 4d or 7d*
Melee pool	Base: 8d - Claws: 7d or 10d* (DM +4) Fangs: 8d or 11d* (DM +5)
Ranged pool	Base: 2
Defense pool	N+4d or N+7d
Basic Talents	Attack Focus – Fangs Basic Animist Talented – Hand-to-Hand Talented – Grapple
Greater Talents	Attack Specialist – Fangs Deft Disarm Far Reaching Attack Fangs Iron Fisted Night Vision Slam
Villainous Talents	Brutal Charge
Powers (Prices)	Immortality 2 (<i>Feeder – Blood</i>) Monstrous Form 3 (<i>Restriction – Holy Ground</i>) Regeneration 3 (<i>Corpus Limitation – Can only regenerate in Monstrous Form</i>) Flight 3 (<i>Vulnerability – Wood</i>) Animal Control 2 (<i>Ward – Cannot control animals who have been coated with pulped mandrake</i>)
Rites	Animism Rites: 2 Basic
Abilities	Strength: 4 Education: 3 Courage: 4 Agility: 2 Reason: 2 Intuition: 4 Toughness: 5 Willpower: 3 Personality: 2
Background Skills	Hand-to-Hand 4(8), Grapple 3(7), Contortionist 2(4), Stealth 2(4), Notice 3(7), Reflexes 2(4)
Elective Skills	Intimidate 2(4), Climb 2(4), Herbalism 2(5), Myth and Lore 2(5), Occult 3(6), Animism 2(5)
True Faith: 0	Damnation: 11 Hero Points: 0
Health Track	10/8/8/5/3 or 16/12/12/8/4
Equipment	None
*The second value represents the creature's dice pools while in Monstrous Form	

FUNDAMENTAL PRICE:

Feeder – Blood

Corpus Powers:	Corpus Prices:
Mortal Mask	Damage
Monstrous Form	Vulnerability
Mist Form	Corpus Limitation
Invisibility	Reveal Nature
Regeneration	
Movement Powers:	Movement Prices:
Flight	Lair
Wall Crawling	Restriction
Elusive	Impaired Travel
Offensive Powers:	Offensive Prices:
Create Undead Spawn	Frailty
Sap Ability – Toughness	Weakness
Fury	
Mystical Powers:	Mystical Prices:
Siren Call	Feeder – Souls
Summon Lesser Minion	Ward x2
Summon Greater Minion	
Suggestive	
Animal Control	
Weather Control	

WENDIGO (ACCURSED)

Background: One of the most feared creatures in all of the Grave New World is the infamous wendigo, renowned as a Native American cannibalistic spirit. In truth, the wendigo is both a spirit as well as flesh and blood creature. A wendigo is created when someone in the Northern Americas feasts upon human flesh while a wendigo spirit is nearby. Should this happen, the wendigo spirit travels to the body of those have dared to dine upon their own mortal kin. There, it symbiotically merges with its host, body and soul. In game terms, those who dine upon human flesh while near one of these spirits must make a True Faith (Will) check, with a Difficulty of 1-6 (the spirit's Damnation score). Those that succeed eat their horrid repast and may later recover. Those that faith the roll, however, transform into wendigo. The process can take seconds or days, depending on the severity of the failure.

Once infected, the wendigo becomes a ravenous creature who desires nothing more than the taste of humanity. Wendigo remember their past lives with vivid clarity, though the wendigo spirits within them drives their hunger to blind them to any attachments they might have had to past friends or family. These awful creatures have been known to weep openly, even as they were chewing upon the remains of their own families.

QUICK STATS:

NORTHERN GIANT WENDIGO (LIEUTENANT) Quick Character (615 points)		
Fear Rating	3	
Initiative pool	Base: 6d - 7d	
Melee pool	Base: 7d - Claws: 7d+1 (DM +4) Fangs: 6d+1 (DM +4)	
Ranged pool	Base: 6d	
Extras pool	7d	
Defense pool	Base: 3d - 3d	
Basic Talents	Attack Focus - Claws Claws Incredible Actor	
Greater Talents	Agile Runner Danger Sense Fangs Slam Stealthy	
Villainous Talents	Grace and Speed Hulking Body Quick Spawn	
Powers (Prices)	Carnivate 3 (<i>Feeder - Human Flesh</i>) Mortal Form 2 (<i>Weak Spot</i>) Rampage 2 (<i>Prey Exclusion - Cannibals; will not attack those who have consumed mortal flesh</i>) Create Monstrous Spawn 3 (<i>Weakness - Fire</i>)	
True Faith: 0	Damnation: 7	Hero Points: 0
Health Track	(Toughness 4) 8/6/6/4/2	
Equipment	None	

STRAINS:

Northern Giant Wendigo - These wendigo are the ones most commonly known in the Grave New World. They are known as massive creatures who stand a little over seven feet in height. They are extremely bulky in form and are known to possess great strength. Those that meet these wendigo often report that these savage beasts do not often have much in the way of intelligence.

Giant Wendigo tend to keep to themselves in the wilderness, staying out of sight, and stalking humanity when they grow hungry enough. If a giant wendigo can take human form, it will often appear as a wandering (if unintelligent) traveler on a cold winter night.

Rimefrost Wendigo - While not as strong, the Rimefrost wendigo are smarter than their larger cousins, the Northern Giant Wendigo. Rimefrosts are also taller than other strains of wendigo, usually standing well over seven feet tall. What makes the Rimefrost truly unique is that its entire body is made of ice. They appear to be towering, lithe creatures with crystalline spines that hang from their body like fur. They continually breathe frozen air, perpetually casting white clouds from their mouths and nostrils.

Rimefrost Wendigo typically have more mystical and supernatural powers than their psychical cousins. The legends of these types of wendigo often portray them

RIMEFROST WENDIGO (LIEUTENANT) Quick Character (750 points)		
Fear Rating	4	
Initiative pool	Base: 5d - 4d	
Melee pool	Base: 8d - Claws: 7d +1 (DM +5) Fangs: 8d +1 (DM +7)	
Ranged pool	Base: 8d Composite Bow: 7d (DM +4)	
Extras pool	7d	
Defense pool	Base: 3d+3	
Basic Talents	Attack Focus - Composite Bow Attack Focus - Fang Basic Animism Basic Diabolism Claws	
Greater Talents	Attack Specialist - Fangs Fangs Greater Diabolism Slam	
Villainous Talents	Grace and Speed Hulking Body Villainous Diabolism	
Powers (Prices)	Carnivate 3 (<i>Feeder - Human Flesh</i>) Armor 3 (<i>Obvious Appearance</i>) Ice Form 4 (<i>Soul Outside</i>) Chilling Wind 3 (<i>Riddle Bound</i>)	
Rites	Animism Rites: 2 Basic Diabolism Rites: 2 Basic, 2 Greater, 2 Villainous	
True Faith: 0	Damnation: 10	Hero Points: 0
Health Track	(Toughness 4) 8/6/6/4/2	
Equipment	Composite Bow	

as calling wintry storms or freezing people's heads with a touch. It is said that if one looks carefully at a Rimefrost Wendigo in the right light, they can see it's crystalline, ice heart deep within its transparent chest.

Stalkers - Stalkers are tall creatures, like their cousins, but tend not to be quite as towering. They usually stand just under seven feet. Stalkers are tall, long-limbed, and skeletal, with bulging eyes. Mangy patches of long, white fur clings to their body. Stalkers almost always have the ability to take human form, and tend to be quite intelligent. These beings are not raging monsters, but are instead cautious hunters. They usually have numerous skills that they use to disguise themselves. Many stalkers will take up residence in human communities for a long time, slowly and cautiously preying on victims from outlying communities.

STALKER WENDIGO (VILLAIN) Standard Character (855 points)			
Fear Rating	4		
Initiative pool	Base: 8d		
Melee pool	Base: 7d - Claws: 7d+1 (DM +4)		
Ranged pool	Base: 5d		
	Musket: 6d (DM +3)		
Defense pool	N+4d		
Basic Talents	Attack Focus – Claws		
	Attack Focus – Musket		
	Claws		
	Talented – Charm		
	Talented – Deceive		
Greater Talents	Unreadable		
	Ambush Attack		
	Attack Specialist – Claws		
	Deadeye Shot		
	Marksman		
Villainous Talents	Speed Loader		
	Hulking Body		
Powers (Prices)	Master Manipulator		
	Carnivate 3 (<i>Feeder – Human Flesh</i>)		
	Mimicry Mask 4 (<i>Vulnerability – Bone</i>)		
	Immortality 4 (<i>True Name</i>)		
	Create Monstrous Spawn 2 (<i>Prey Exclusion – Children</i>)		
Rites	None		
Abilities	Strength:4	Education:3	Courage:2
	Agility:5	Reason:4	Intuition:4
	Toughness:3	Willpower:4	Personality:5
Background Skills	Hand-to-Hand 3(7), Grappling 4(8),		
	Charm 4(9), Deceive 5(10), Empathy 3(7),		
Elective Skills	Necromancy 4(8)		
	Firearms 3(8), Gossip 3(8), Stealth 3(7),		
	Occult 2(6), Subterfuge 3(8), Myth and		
True Faith: 0	Lore 3(7), Notice 3(7), Reflexes 4(8),		
	Resolve 2(4)		
Health Track	Damnation: 10		
Equipment	Hero Points: 0		
	6/4/4/3/2		
	Musket, Powder and Shot		

ORGANIZATIONS:

White Death – One of the few known organizations of Wendigo to exist is that of the White Death, located all over the northern areas of the Grave New World. This loose organization of wendigo is wide-ranging, appearing in various areas that are sometimes thousands miles apart.

The White Death exists to swell its ranks with ever more wendigo creatures. These loosely affiliated wendigo strike at human communities, trying to infect a person here or there with the wendigo curse. On occasion, the White Death will make a more concerted effort to add wendigo to their ranks. When they are doing this, the White Death will cut off the food supply to a community, slowly starving them to death. Then they will wait until some members of the community turn to cannibalism in order to survive. Only then, when the community is tearing itself apart from within, does the White Death arrive, and reap the remaining members of the community for meals.

The Feaster's Club – The Feaster's Club is a fine dining club located in the friendly city of Philadelphia. There, high class members of society hobnob, eat fine meals, and drink expensive wines. Many of Philadelphia's upper crust of society meets here. While most of what goes on at the Feaster's Club is quite mundane, after hours, the club changes dramatically. Special guest of the club may sample rare and strange meats found deep within the woods of the New World. Occasionally, a special guest of the club will be recruited by the High Table of the Feaster's Club. These poor individuals are turned into wendigo after they have inadvertently dined upon human flesh. The Feaster's Club is seeking to expand its membership, opening branches in Boston and possibly New Amsterdam.

Suggested Locales: Wendigo prefer the cold weather more than anything else. They usually appear either in cold climates, or when a deep winter sets down in a particular area. On occasion, when an area has an usually severe blizzard, a wendigo or a community of them will take up residence in that location.

The wendigo prefer areas where there are deep woods for them to hide away in. When blending in with human society, wendigo will often make their lairs close to where they can eat a lot of food, all of the time. City-dwelling wendigo often live near taverns or butcher shops, so that they can find an occasional snack to satisfy their hunger.

Creating a Wendigo: Initial Cost 50

Fundamental Powers:

All wendigo begin with **Carnivate 3** as a power.

All wendigo have the **Hulking Body** talent.

FUNDAMENTAL PRICE:

Feeder – Human Flesh

ADDITIONAL POWERS & PRICES

Corpus Powers:	Corpus Prices:
Armor	Obvious Appearance
Ice Form	Soul Outside
Mimicry Mask	Vulnerability
Mortal Form	
Movement Powers:	Movement Prices:
Jumping	Restriction
Offensive Powers:	Offensive Prices:
Create Monstrous Spawn	Offensive Limitation
Fury	Prey Exclusion
Rampage	Weakness
Mystical Powers:	Mystical Prices:
Chilling Wind	Riddle Bound
Immortality	True Name

WEREWOLF (ACCURSED)

Background: The werewolf is one of the more prolific creatures in the World of Witch Hunter. This creature has existed alongside mankind for as long as humanity has existed, making it one of the older forms of evil as well.

It is said that the first werewolves resulted from strange couplings between man and beast. These matings were presided over by a shaman who invoked the names of demons and ancient gods over the rutting couple. The spawn of these unholy unions slinked around during the dawn of civilization, passing on their curse through their infectious bite, or by mating with man or beast.

Today, werewolves come in many different forms, the result of various magics mingling with the chaotic bloodlines of barbarians, criminals, and savages. Werewolves are spawned in both the Old World and the Grave New World. Each werewolf is different, but all are incredibly dangerous opponents.

STRAINS:

Manwolf – Manwolves are the werewolf that most colonists are familiar with from legend. These beings originate from the dark places of Europe, such as the high Pyrenees, the Black Forest, the wilds of Romania, or even the Appalachian Mountains of the Grave New World. These creatures are best known for their hybrid form, which mingles wolf and man in a massive, almost beautiful form.

Manwolves usually spend their days in solitary confinement, until the urge to hunt begins to swell within them. Then, these creatures will usually travel into human communities disguised as a human or wolf, hoping to find easy prey. Most manwolves completely and totally realize what they are, and have come to see humans as easy prey. After all, a woodland animal bolts at the first sign of a predator. However, humans will dare to talk to a stranger, and some will even welcome them into their homes.

Wolfen – Wolfen are humans who have gained the ability to change into a wolf through magic and ritual. These mortals have no relation to the werewolves of ancient legend, but are still just as dangerous.

Wolfen usually come from tribal cultures such as the Celtic tradition or the Native American tradition. Those who wish to become wolfen usually carry a mystical wolf's pelt with them. When they wish to change into a wolf, they simply don the pelt, and take the shape of their revered beast. Most wolfen in this time period originate from the Grave New World. There are very few left in the Old World.

Most wolfen see civilization as a threat to their way of life. They particularly hate evangelical Christianity, which they see as a danger to their own shamanic traditions. Wolfen will usually target small communities or villages they see as a sign of encroaching civilization, and will always attempt to destroy objects of religious value. They will even do this to Native American villages. Indeed, most wolfen see even Native Americans as too "man-like" and "civilized".

Incarnate – Each incarnate is descended directly from one of the primordial werewolves that was born around the dawn of man. When werewolves were first created, each one was given a powerful spirit in which to live out the ages. When an incarnate werewolf infects someone with its curse, it passes along its consciousness. As the infected victim struggles against their infection, their minds are slowly erased as the personality of the incarnate werewolf takes over. Most incarnate werewolves cannot infect more than one body at a time. However, there are some stories about incarnate werewolves who can implant their personalities on many people at once, though these are mere legends.

Each incarnate werewolf possesses lifetimes of experience, for with each person an incarnate werewolf inhabits, she steals the memories of the one possessed. Therefore, any incarnate werewolf is a veritable storehouse of ancient knowledge, and this alone makes them dangerous.

Most incarnate werewolves follow primeval agendas that span millennia. These mysterious goals are usually things that require the patience of centuries to complete. The incarnate werewolf Lucia, for example, has been trying for centuries to unlock a site in Southern England that is supposedly a portal to Hell. Sometimes, two incarnate werewolves will come into conflict, and these long-lived rivalries can continue for hundreds of years.

ORGANIZATIONS:

The Silent Lodge – For as long as anyone can remember, the Silent Lodge has dwelled amongst the ranks of Man. The Silent Lodge is a group of wolfen werewolves who seek to destroy the "civilized" aspects of humanity from the inside out. Unlike most of their wolfen brethren, the Silent Lodge dwells amongst mortals, living side-by-side with humans. However, on dark nights when the moon is full, the Silent Lodge dons their wolf-skins and spreads terror, destruction, and mayhem in an attempt to undermine all of civilization from within.



QUICK STATS:

MANWOLF (LIEUTENANT) Quick Character (630 points)	
Fear Rating	4
Initiative pool	Base: 7d or 10d* – 9d or 12d*
Melee pool	Base: 7d or 10d* Claws: 7d or 10d* (DM +4) Fangs: 7d or 10d* (DM +4)
Ranged pool	Base: 4d or 7d
Extras pool	7d or 10d* (+1 Notice)
Defense pool	Base: 4d or 5d*
Basic Talents	Attack Focus – Claws Attack Focus – Fangs Claws
Greater Talents	Danger Sense Fangs Far Reaching Attack Swift Tough
Villainous Talents	Brutal Charge Incredible Dodge Incredible Leaper
Powers (Prices)	Monstrous Form 3 (<i>Reveal Nature</i>) Regeneration 4 (<i>Vulnerability – Cold Iron</i>) Fury 3 (<i>Weakness – Wolfsbane</i>) Rampage 3 (<i>Prey Exclusion – the elderly</i>)
True Faith: 0	Damnation: 11 Hero Points: 0
Health Track	(Toughness 4) 9/7/7/5/3 or 15/12/12/8/5*
Equipment	None
* These values represent the creature in bestial form	

The Lodge is very much a secret society which has members from a wide variety of organizations, tribes, nations, and companies. It has members who are both male and female, Native American, and European. Even though most join the Silent Lodge in hopes of gaining power, the rituals that the Lodge places upon its incoming members twists their minds. Anyone who joins the Lodge begins to see civilization as the downfall of the world, and soon fall in line with the Lodge's goals.

The Brotherhood of Sukov – The origins of the Brotherhood of Sukov begins with the Hun invasions of Russia all the way back in the 4th century, CE According to legend, a single Siberian leader by the name of Balaki Sukov made a pact with the infamous witch Baba Yaga to safeguard their Rus clan. They were transformed into werewolves in order to protect their people.

Today, the Brotherhood of Sukov lingers on the face of the world like a roving cancer. The original reason for their existence, the Hun invasion, has long since dwindled away into nothing. Their own clan has long disappeared. Thus, the Brotherhood of Sukov wanders the whole of the globe, warriors with no purpose. Such an existence has made them violent, bloodthirsty, and savage. Most of the original members of the Brotherhood of Sukov have died. Their offspring, in the form of

WOLFEN (LIEUTENANT) Quick Character (775 points)	
Fear Rating	3
Initiative pool	Base: 8d or 10d*
Melee pool	Base: 7d or 9d* Claws: 7d or 9d* (DM +4) Fangs: 6d or 8d* (DM +4)
Ranged pool	Base: 9d or 11d* Composite Bow: 7d or 9d* (DM +4)
Extras pool	7d or 9d*
Defense pool	4d + 2
Basic Talents	Attack Focus – Composite Bow Attack Focus – Claws Basic Animism Basic Diabolism Claws Tough
Greater Talents	Ambush Attack Attack Specialist – Comp. Bow Attack Specialist – Claws Deadeye Shot Dual Shot Fangs Fast Draw Marksman Slam Sneaky
Villainous Talents	Lightning Draw Lightning Reload Penetrating Shot Pinning Shot Stab and Shoot
Powers (Prices)	Monstrous Form 2(<i>Reveal Nature</i>) Animal Control 2 (<i>Mystical Limitation – Can only use its Mystical powers while wearing a wolf pelt</i>) Armor 2 (<i>Corpus Limitation – Can only use its Corpus powers while wearing a wolf pelt</i>) Frightening Call 4 (<i>Ward – Wolfsbane</i>)
Rites	Animism Rites: 2 Basic Diabolism Rites: 2 Basic
True Faith: 0	Damnation: 8 Hero Points: 0
Health Track	(Toughness 3) 9/7/7/5/3 or 13/10/10/7/4*
Equipment	Composite Bow
* These Values represent the creature in bestial form	

manwolves, survive. These ragged descendents are cursed to roam the earth as their predecessors were. They are led by Balaki Suvok, who still survives as an incarnate werewolf.

Suvok has finally led the band all the way to the Grave New World, where he seeks to find a way to break the curse that causes him and his band to wander the land. Suvok and his group of manwolves are quite willing to murder, torture, and use any means necessary to accomplish their goals.

SUGGESTED LOCALES:

Werewolves can literally be found anywhere in the World of Witch Hunter. As an accursed species as old as humanity itself, werewolves have spread to every corner of the globe. Indeed, many werewolves dwell in places that have yet to be explored by man.

Creating a Werewolf: Initial Cost 35

FUNDAMENTAL POWERS:

All werewolves begin with **Monstrous Form 2** as a power.

All werewolves begin with the **Claws** and **Fangs** talents.

FUNDAMENTAL PRICE:

Reveal Nature

ADDITIONAL POWERS & PRICES

Corpus Powers: Corpus Prices:

Armor	Corpus Limitation
Regeneration	Damage Vulnerability

Offensive Powers: Offensive Prices:

Create Monstrous Spawn	Offensive Limitation
Fury	Prey Exclusion
Infectious Persona	Weakness
Rampage	

Mystical Powers: Mystical Prices:

Animal Control	Mystical Limitation
Frightening Call	Ward

FEATURE VILLAIN:

Balaki Sukov (Villain),
Standard Character (1,515 Character Points)

Quote: *"In the next moment, either you'll have destroyed me, or I will be holding your beating heart in my mouth. Either way...I win."*

Background: Balaki Sukov has dwelled upon the earth for over 1200 years, an existence that grates upon his enduring soul. Sukov's immortality began when he first sought to protect his Siberian clan against the incursions of the Huns in the 4th century. He sought out the aid of the infamous Baba Yaga, the mystical Grand Witch of Russia.

Baba Yaga drew Sukov and twelve of his best men into her weird and bizarre hut, which walked of its own accord. There, she made a deal with the gathered warriors. She could give them powers to repel the Huns, but there would be a

BALAKI SUKOV (VILLAIN)

Standard Character (1,515 Character Points)

Fear Rating	6
Initiative pool	Base: 11d - 15d*
Melee pool	Base: 12d or 15d* Claws: 12d or 16d* (DM +4) Fangs: 12 or 15d8 (DM + 4) Bastard Sword: 10d or 14d* (DM + 6)
Ranged pool	Base: 5d or 8D* Composite Bow: 8d or 11d* (DM +4)
Defense pool	N+5d+3 or N+9d+3*
Basic Talents	Adaptable Animal Empathy Attack Focus – Claws Attack Focus – Bastard Sword Claws Commanding Presence Swords School – Freifechter -Sacrifices Must Be Made -Like an Eggshell Before a Hammer
Greater Talents	Animal Trainer Attack Specialist – Bastard Sword Danger Sense Fangs Far Reaching Attack Inspire Slam Swords School – Freifechter -Biting Blade -Meeting the Charge Tough
Villainous Talents	Brutal Charge Shattering Attack Swords School – Freifechter -Like a Hot Knife Through Butter Veteran Warrior
Powers (Prices)	Monstrous Form 4 (<i>Reveal Nature</i>) Armor 3 (<i>Vulnerability – Gold</i>) Regeneration 3 (<i>Damage – Gold</i>) Infectious Persona 3 (<i>Prey Exclusion – Russians, Children</i>) Frightening Call 5 (<i>Mystical Limitation – Sukov can only use his Frightening Call in the light of the moon</i>) Create Monstrous Spawn 1 (<i>Weakness – Wolfsbane</i>)
Rites:	None
Abilities	Strength:6 Education:1 Courage:6 Agility:5 Reason:2 Intuition:5 Toughness:5 Willpower:5 Personality:4
Background Skills	Grapple 5(10), Hand-to-Hand 6(12), Command 4(10), Ride 6(11), Animal Care 5(10), Survival 4(9)
Elective Skills	Archery 6(10), Throw 5(9), Intimidate 4(8), Acrobatics 3(8), Stealth 3(8), Swim 2(8), Heal 2(7), Myth and Lore 1(2), Survival 5(10), Track 5(10), Notice 3(8), Reflexes 4(9), Resolve 4(10)
True Faith: 0	Damnation: 10 Hero Points: 0
Health Track	(Toughness 5) 11/9/9/6/4 or 19/15/15/10/6*
Equipment	Bastard sword, Composite Bow
* These values represent the creature in bestial form	

great price to pay. Sukov and his twelve trusted warriors acquiesced to the bargain.

Sukov's men successfully repelled the attacks, but when their families found out what they had become, they were banished from their own clan. They had won their victory, but in the end all of the men paid dearly. For not only were they cast out from their own people, but they were forever cursed to roam the span of the earth. In time, these men turned bitter and began to prey on the very people they sought to protect. Eventually, the reason for their conversion into werewolves was lost, and they began to hunt men for the sake of sport. Now, nothing is left for them except the thrill of the hunt, the only act which gives their empty lives any meaning.

Sukov is one of the few incarnate werewolves on the earth that can transplant his personality onto more than one individual at a time. The incarnate never allows there to be more than three individual copies of himself at any one time. Approximately five hundred years ago, his band split, because there was an argument amongst the Brotherhood over which was the *real* Sukov. It is for this reason that there can never be more than three Sukovs upon the earth.

Roleplaying: In life, Sukov was a powerful, stout warrior, who was as able on a horse as he was on his feet. As an incarnate werewolf, however, Sukov has traded bodies so many times that his original appearance has been lost in the span of history. However, anyone infected by Sukov will gain an odd twitch about the left eye – a small trait left over from Sukov's original body.

Of all of the men in his band, only Sukov survives. The werewolves he leads about are the descendents of his original men. He looks after them like children, and they see him as a father. Sukov is surly and brooding being, who is long tired of his own existence. Whenever Sukov looks at one of his followers, he sees the eyes of the men who trusted him when he convinced them to make their damned pact with Baba Yaga. To cope with his guilt, he constantly seeks new challenges and new prey. Nothing fulfills him any more except the promise of some new opponent to vanquish.

Tactics: The most devastating of Sukov's abilities is his powerful Frightening Call. He favors a hunt in which he can use it, to corral and weaken his prey. Since Sukov always has three bodies roaming around, when he finally enters melee, he does so with relish and savagery. He usually has little regard to his own safety while fighting. With so much pent up aggression and frustration, Sukov welcomes battle with a sadistic relish. He even enjoys his own pain to a sickening degree.

WITCHES (MORTALS)

Background: When most Witch Hunters first begin their long hunt against the Adversary, most imagine their worst opponents to be devils from Hell, replete with hooves and horns. But of all the threats that a Witch Hunter might encounter, the most dire of these wears not horns nor hooves. The greatest enemy of all Witch Hunters walks in the open light of day with mortal form. Thus is it said: *Suffer not a witch to live.*

There are many in the world who would call themselves "witches". Many pagans and druids use that title, but these are not True Witches in the eyes of the Witch Hunter. Most Witch Hunters scoff at these pretenders, knowing full well that the True Witch secures his nature as tightly as a moth sleeping within its cocoon.

Witches are perhaps some of the most wicked and degenerate individuals that walk the earth. No sin is too great for them. No depravity taboo. In the World of Witch Hunter, witches perform all of the most horrid acts of legend, including human sacrifice, kidnapping children, drinking the fat of babies, and copulating with hosts of devils in hideous rites. Yet, the most frightening part of the tale is that these acts are merely the beginning of the story, not the end of it.

A witch is a person who has knowingly and willingly signed their soul over to the Adversary. With this knowledge in hand, they have no more illusions about their reality. All witches fully realize that they have nothing left to live for. This alone makes them incredibly dangerous. Because most witches want to avoid the suffering of the fiery pit, they will go to any lengths to make sure that in the end, it will be their side that wins.

The reasons for becoming a witch abound. Some do this to get revenge. These individuals often are powerless in some way and see no other recourse. Other witches seek temporal power or pleasures. These individuals are already so debauched that they see themselves going to Hell anyway, and figure they might as well have fun while they are doing it. Yet other witches believe that they are doing something good. They see their own soul as a sacrifice for some greater cause.

In the beginning, a witch might be the most constant and steadfast individual. However, as time progresses, any witch begins to fully comprehend the terrible reality of their immortal fate. It is at this turn that the witch becomes her most dangerous. Some witches begin to indulge in every manner of perversity available, madly trying to experience life to the fullest before going to Hell. Others, out of spite, make up their mind to take as many people as they can with them, and thus causes them to be drawn into hideous crimes.

STRAINS:

Satanist – There are those who actively turn away from the grace of God and embrace the Devil instead. These deluded souls usually turn to the Adversary when they feel wronged by the church somehow, a complaint not too uncommon in some parts of Creation. Hence, most satanists see themselves as heroic iconoclasts, rebelling against a corrupt system. They view the Holy Church as a bastion of lies and a foundation for the weak to place control over the powerful.

What makes the satanist so dangerous is that these devil-worshippers eventually reject *all* of God's morals, and learn to embrace the rites of the Evil One entirely. For such folk, the rules of normal civilization and society no longer apply. A law against stealing is seen as merely a tool for the ruling class to prevent the deserving from taking what is owed to them. Rules against murder are viewed as a way for the elite protect themselves from the righteous anger of the mob. And taboos against rape are scoffed at, seen as an outdated need to prevent people from experiencing life to the fullest.

Eventually, the satanist comes to believe that he or she *deserves* anything and everything that they can take for themselves. After all, the only true law is the law of the wild. Everything else is a lie passed down from a throne to the sheep that follow blindly.

Bargainers – Bargainers are Witches who have traded their souls to the Adversary for a specific purpose. Most bargainers trade their soul for power, wealth or pleasure, making them the most debase and corrupt people anyone can ever encounter in all of Creation. Such individuals have decided that earthy power, wealth, and pleasure are more important than their soul.



Serial killers of this time period are often bargainers, gaining powers to aid them in their unholy desires. Reclusive nobles, indulging in the most hideous of delights, may use Adversary given powers to help them hide in normal society. Then, there are those who trade their souls for a single purpose such as the love of another or revenge. These individuals are so obsessed with their desire that they are blind to all else.

There are a few bargainers who attempt to trade their soul for something altruistic, such as the life of a loved one. However, the Adversary never grants such wishes without some hideous twist. Usually any wish fulfilled in such a bargain is doomed to end in tragedy.

ORGANIZATIONS:

The Long Coven – This band of seven women is one of the most feared groups in all of the New World. Unlike most evils of this time, the Long Coven does not bother with hiding or subtlety. They operate within the open light of day.

This circle of seven is comprised of both satanist and bargainers. They have lived on Long Island since the 1630's. While the price on each of their heads is probably in excess of a thousand gilders, those who go looking for their lair usually wind up stripped of their skin. To this day, no one is quite sure where their base of operations is. The Coven simply appears on Long Island where they wish to appear. From time to time, the Long Coven will extract a toll from the people of the island. For example, the Long Coven once walked into Amityville and requested that all children under the age of one year be given to them. Those that opposed the Coven on that day were said to have been eaten alive right there on the spot...by invisible forces. To this day, no one knows why the Long Coven exacts their strange tolls. Some say that the Coven has gathered up numerous children to have them as slaves to excavate a great evil in the pit of the earth. Other tales say that the children gathered by the Coven are fed to a great beast whom the Witches keep chained up, awaiting a special day in which to wake him.

Each of the Long Coven's members are said to be of varying ages. Maidee Sutter, for example, is said to appear as a little girl of ten years of age, though she far older than that. Sybill Archer, on the other hand is said to be a tall, willowy brunette who is mute, but possesses the ability to speak through the mouths of others. The group is led by Uriel, an elderly blind woman who is said to be able to hear anyone whose feet are touching the ground.

The Devil's Own – The Devil's Own is a band of brigands and highwaymen who have long plagued the English countryside. This disparate group of men and women are infamous for their penchant for violence, debauchery and perversion. This loose affiliation of robbers operates not like an organization but more as a family, with each member calling each other "Brother" or "Sister". The elder members are even called "Father" and "Mother", in direct mockery of clerical practices.

QUICK STATS:

SATANIST (MINIONS)	
Threat Level	2
Skills	Hand-to-Hand +1, Firearms +2, Occult +1
Talents	Fearless, Attack Focus – Blunderbuss
Powers	None
Equipment	Blunderbuss (DM ++3)

SATANIST (LIEUTENANT)	
Quick Character (670 points)	
Fear Rating	None
Initiative pool	Base: 6d - 6d
Melee pool	Base: 6d - Dagger: 6d (DM +1)
Ranged pool	Base: 10d – Musket: 9d (DM +3)
Extras pool	7d
Defense pool	Base: 3d - 3d
Basic Talents	Attack Focus – Musket Basic Necromancy Basic Witchcraft
Greater Talents	Greater Necromancy Greater Witchcraft Speed Loader
Villainous Talents	Villainous Witchcraft Ricochet Shot
Powers (Prices)	Summon Lesser Minions 4 (Contracted Soul)
True Faith: 0	Damnation: 6 Hero Points: 0
Health Track	(Toughness 3) 6/5/5/3/2
Equipment	Musket, Dagger, Powder and Shot

It is believed that this group of bandits began like any other band of ne'er-do-wells. However, somewhere along the way, they turned to worshipping the Adversary, and incorporated that into their lawless practices. The Devil's Own mark those that they steal from, branding the unfortunate with a pentagram or goat's head. The victims of the Devil's Own are used as sex-slaves before they are tortured, humiliated, and killed during one of this band's drunken orgies.

It is currently believed that several members of the Devil's Own have fled to the New World and taken up residence, hoping to escape the noose which awaits them in Britain.

Creating a Witch: Initial Cost 0

FUNDAMENTAL POWERS:

As a mortal a witch has no fundamental power, but may take a few powers. Doing so forever binds the witch to the Adversary.

FUNDAMENTAL PRICE:**Contracted Soul**

When a witch takes a power, the first price it must take is Contracted Soul.

ADDITIONAL POWERS & PRICES**Mystical Powers:****Mystical Prices:**

Animal Control

Atmospheric
Disturbance

Longsight

Ward

Summon Lesser Minions

Weather Control

FEATURE VILLAIN:**“Mad” Mary Hark (Villain),****Standard Character (1220 points)**

Quote: *“Now you’re boring me. But don’t worry. Have you seen my **new** playmate?”*

Background: The story of Mad Mary Hark begins in Bethlem Royal Hospital, one of the earliest known insane asylums in the world. So infamous was Bethlem, that today it is the origin of the word “bedlam” as it came to be known.

Mary Hark was born to an inmate of that horrific institution, and was made to watch as doctors locked her mother up in a standing cage and spun her rapidly to rid her of the demons in her brain. They subjected her mother to many other forms of “treatment” like dunking in ice-cold water, or clamping an iron mask to her face. Finally, Mary’s mother died during a failed treatment, as doctors drilled holes into her skull to try to relieve “the stress on the brain.”

As the story goes, Mary prayed each night for deliverance from Bedlam, as she was taught by her mother. However, after her mother died, one of the inmates at Bedlam began to tell Mary about someone else to whom she could pray. The inmate told her that if she prayed to someone called the Horned Lord, that Mary would find that her wishes were granted.

The doctors began to treat Mary for the same maladies that her mother had. As the treatment began, Mary stopped praying to God and began to pray to the Horned Lord, swearing that if she could have her revenge, that she would forever be loyal to him. In that moment, her shackles were mysteriously thrown open. Mary fled the scene, but was wrestled down and put back into her lightless cell. From that time on, Mary developed an uncanny knack for knowing things about the staff members there. She could tell who was having an affair, who had a dark secret, even predict when friends or relatives would die. When this frightening and disturbing ability became too much to bear, one of the staff members of Bedlam went into her room to beat her senseless in an effort to get her to be silent.

The staff member never left the room alive. Reports of that night say that he was found strewn across Mary’s room, both skin and veins stretched out like yarn across the walls. Those who were able to flee the scene said that Mary could be seen in the corner of the room giggling and whispering to a black goat which sat at her side. Most of the staff left on that night, and those who

“MAD” MARY HARK (VILLAIN), Standard Character (1220 points)			
Fear Rating	None		
Initiative pool	Base: 10d - 10d		
Melee pool	Base: 4d - Hatchet: 4d (DM +2)		
Ranged pool	Base: 4d		
	Hatchet: 8d (DM +2)		
	Pistol: 7d (DM +2)		
Defense pool	N +5d		
Basic Talents	Attack Focus – Hatchet		
	Attack Focus – Pistol		
	Lucky		
	Basic Diabolism		
	Basic Necromancy		
	Basic Witchcraft		
	Talented – Witchcraft		
Greater Talents	Attack Specialist – Hatchet		
	Danger Sense		
	Dual Shot		
	Greater Diabolism		
	Greater Necromancy		
	Greater Witchcraft		
	Speed Loader		
	Swift		
Villainous Talents	Tumbling Escape		
	Villainous Necromancy		
Powers (Prices)	Villainous Witchcraft		
	Longsight (<i>Contracted Soul</i>)		
Rites	Summon Lesser Minion (<i>Atmospheric Disturbance</i>)		
	Diabolism Rites: 2 Basic, 2 Greater		
	Necromancy Rites: 2 Basic, 2 Greater, 1 Villainous		
Abilities	Witchcraft Rites: 2 Basic, 2 Greater, 2 Villainous		
	Strength:2	Education:3	Courage:5
	Agility:4	Reason:4	Intuition:6
	Toughness:5	Willpower:6	Personality:4
Background Skills	Acrobatics 4(8), Contortionist 4(8), Stealth 4(8), Witchcraft 5(11), Diabolism 4(8), Necromancy 4(8)		
Elective Skills	Deceive 3(7), Firearms 3(7), Hand-to-Hand 2(4), Myth and Lore 3(6), Occult 3(6), Pantomime 2(6), Reflexes 4(8), Survival 3(7), Throw 4(8)		
True Faith: 0	Damnation: 12	Hero Points: 0	
Health Track	10/8/8/5/3		
Equipment	Pistol, Hatchet, Powder and Shot		

stayed were found the next day, all having received the same in the same sadistic treatment that most of their patients had received.

Since that time, Mad Mary Hark has roamed the world, causing havoc and sorrow wherever she has gone. She tends to treat people as playthings, becoming cross and murderous when people defy her.

Roleplaying: Mary grew up without a real childhood, and so lives in a perpetual child-like state. It is her mind's only defense to the horrors she has seen. Mary sees people as objects and playthings, a perspective learned from the doctors who treated her mother. The doctors would always tell Mary that they were “playing with her mother.” And now, Mary has come to believe that play-time is something that involves torture, murder, and despair.

Mary's crimes are always bizarre, shocking, and somewhat child-like. Her crimes always involve her forcing people to perform child-like acts and then killing her victims when she grows bored. Once she slew all of the occupants of a noble's house and then had their bodies strung up like marionettes, so that she could play with them. In another case, Mary made a group of merchants play “tea” with her. All of the merchants died from burst bladders when they could no longer drink enough tea for her satisfaction. All of these crimes may very well be Mary's attempt to have the childhood that she was terribly denied in Bedlam.

Tactics: Mary may act child-like, but she is far more intelligent than she lets on. Typically, she uses her child-like demeanor to cause her enemies to underestimate her. She is also good at sizing up opponents. If she sees that she is outnumbered or outclassed, she has no problem running away, using one of her summoned minions to fight her battle for her.

THREAT TALENTS

BASIC TALENTS

BASIC DIABOLISM

Requirement: 3 Damnation points.

Description: You have betrayed all that is good and noble to dabble in the forbidden black arts of Diabolism. You are trained in the First Circle of the Diabolist tradition, and may perform basic Diabolist rites learned via the Basic Rite talent.

BASIC NECROMANCY

Requirement: 2 Damnation points.

Description: You have taken a bold step into the blasphemous arts of necromancy by completing the training in the First Circle of the Necromantic tradition. You may perform basic Necromantic rites learned via the Basic Rite talent.

BASIC RITE

Requirement: Any basic Sorcerous tradition

Description: From ancient scrolls, dusty tomes, or archaic manuscripts associated with your particular tradition, you learn and may cast a single basic rite. This rite must be associated with a tradition for which you have the basic talent.

BASIC WITCHCRAFT

Requirement: 1 Damnation point.

Description: Dabbling with demons, spirits, and worse horrors, you have acquired the filthy knowledge and training necessary to explore the macabre tradition of Witchcraft. You may now perform basic Witchcraft rites learned via the Basic Rite talent.

CLAWS

Requirements: None

This creature's claws are a natural weapon with a complexity of -1 a DM of +2. If this creature already has a natural weapon which grants it a DM (such as fangs), then increase its general DM of all attacks by +2. DMs of this nature are cumulative, so a creature with claws and fangs would have a DM +4, and a creature with claws, fangs, and a tail would have a DM +6. A creature with multiple natural weapons does not necessarily get multiple attacks.

SMALL BODY

Requirements: Strength and Toughness cannot be greater than 3

This creature is small in size, standing anywhere from 2 to 3 feet in height. The being gains a +1 to Acrobatics, Climb, Contortionist, Stealth, and Reflexes skills.

Any creature who is small in size (2 to 3 feet in height) must take this talent as part of their character creation.

GREATER TALENTS

DUAL SHOT

Requirements: Agility 3

Description: Dual Shot allows the creature to make ranged attacks against 1 additional opponent with the same attack roll. It may an attack roll as normal, but applies its successes against 2 targets instead of just one. For example, a phantom highwayman might raise two pistols and fire them at a two different targets. The phantom makes a Firearms (Agility) roll, scoring 3 successes. It applies these successes to both of the combatants it is fighting, not just one. If there were a third opponent in range, the phantom could not use its successes to attack the third opponent. Obviously, the creature must have 2 missiles to fire or throw in order for this talent to work. For example, Dual Shot would be impossible with a single, single-barreled pistol.

FANGS

Requirements: None

This creature's fangs are a natural weapon with a complexity of -1 a DM of +2. If this creature already has a natural weapon which grants it a DM (such as claws), then increase its general DM of all attacks by +2. DMs of this nature are cumulative, so a creature with claws and fangs would have a DM +4, and a creature with claws, fangs, and a tail would have a DM +6. A creature with multiple natural weapons does not necessarily get multiple attacks.

FAR REACHING ATTACK

Requirements: None

This creature can make melee attacks from a 10 yard distance. The manner of this attack may vary wildly, depending upon the creature. It may be that the creature has long tentacles that reach out and grab its opponents. It may be that the creature is lightning fast and can leap upon creatures savagely before leaping back to its position. The creature need not move to make its attack on anyone within 10 yards, so long as the creature can see its opponent. This becomes particularly significant if the creature can attack multiple creatures.

FAST POWER

Requirements: Reflexes 3

Description: Normally, using a power takes an action for a creature. This talent allows a creature to use 1 power a round as a free action. It need not concentrate to use its power.

GREATER DIABOLIST

Requirement: Basic Diabolist, 6 Damnation points.

Description: You are trained in the Second Circle of the Diabolic tradition, and may perform greater Diabolic rites learned via the Greater Rite talent.

GREATER NECROMANCY

Requirement: Basic Necromancy, 4 Damnation points.

Description: You are trained in the Second Circle of the Necromantic tradition, and may perform greater Necromantic rites learned via the Greater Rite talent.

GREATER RITE

Requirement: Any greater ritual tradition

Description: You may learn a single greater rite in a tradition for which you have the greater talent.

GREATER WITCHCRAFT

Requirement: Basic Witchcraft, 2 Damnation point.

Description: You are trained in the Second Circle of the Witchcraft tradition, and may perform greater Witchcraft rites learned via the Greater Rite talent.

POISON, NATURAL

Requirements: Fangs or other method of injecting the poison to the victim

Description: This creature can inject its victims with a toxin. This toxin is natural and not supernatural in any way. (For Supernatural Poison, see the 'Threats Powers' section). The creature must first cause at least one hit to the target with the attack that can inject the poison. Once this is done, then the victim has been poisoned and must immediately make an Endurance (Toughness) check with the Difficulty equal to the potency of the poison. The target must then make a check every round for a number of rounds equal to the potency of the poison.

If the victim succeeds in making the check, then no damage is taken for that round. Should the victim fail, he takes a number of hits equal to the number of successes the check was failed by plus the poison's DM.

See Table 4-10 for sample poisons.

SLAM

Requirements: None

Description: Slam allows the creature to make melee attacks against 1 additional opponent with the same attack roll. It may an attack roll as normal, but applies its successes against 2 targets instead of just one. It may attack any creature that it can reach. For example, a werewolf might make a Hand-to-Hand (Strength) roll, scoring 3 successes. It applies these successes to both of the combatants it is fighting, not just one. If there were a third opponent next to the werewolf, it could not use its successes to attack the third opponent. This talent is cumulative with powers like Fury, which allow the creature to attack multiple opponents in a single round.

This talent cannot be used in conjunction with Rapid Attack.

TINY BODY

Requirements: Strength and Toughness cannot be greater than 2

This creature is tiny in size, standing less than 2 feet in height. The being gains a +2 to Acrobatics, Climb, Contortionist, Stealth, and Reflexes skills.

Any creature who is small in size (less than 2 feet in height) must take this talent as part of their character creation.

VILLAINOUS TALENTS

GIANT BODY

Requirements: Hulking Body, Strength 4, Toughness 4

This creature is very large in size, standing over 8 to 16 feet in height or length. It also weighs in excess of 400 to 1000 lbs. It suffers a -2 penalty to all Movement skills, and a -2 penalty to the Reflexes skill. However, when making melee attacks against any creature smaller than it, it gets 2 free successes on all attack rolls. This talent replaces any benefits or penalties derived from the Hulking Body talent.

Any creature who is very large in size (standing over 8 to 16 feet in height and/or weighing in excess of 400 to 1000 lbs.) must take this talent as part of their character creation.

HULKING BODY

Requirements: Strength 3, Toughness 3

This creature is large in size, standing over 6 to 8 feet in height or length. It also weighs in excess of 300 lbs. The being suffers a -1 penalty to all Movement skills, and a -1 penalty to the Reflexes skill. However, when making melee attacks against any creature smaller than it, it gets

1 free success on all attack rolls.

Any creature who is large in size (6 to 8 feet in height and/or weighing in excess of 300 lbs) must take this talent as part of their character creation.

INTANGIBLE MISSILE

Requirements: None

Description: This creature's missile or bolts (whichever it uses) are intangible and may pass through unliving barriers. Whenever they strike living flesh, however, they stick and do damage. Armor does not provide any defense against intangible missiles. Attacking at an unseen target (like one that is one the other side of a wall) gives the target +3 to their Defense.

MARK OF THE BEAST

Requirements: None

This creature may leave the mark of Hell itself on anything that it attacks. Once it does damage to a target, the victim cannot heal its wounds normally. This applies only to the damage done by the creature. Damage from other sources heals normally. Not even the Heal skill will allow creatures to recover hits. A priest, shaman, witch doctor, or other spiritual leader must first bless the victim of this kind of attack. Thereafter, the victim must receive a blessing everyday in order to be healed. Once all damage from the Mark of the Beast has been healed, the victim may heal normally on its own.

QUICK SPAWN

Requirements: Create Monstrous Spawn power or Create Undead Spawn power

Description: This creature creates spawn instantly. Instead of the infection taking place in 1 night, it happens the moment the victim fails its roll against infection. Victims who succeed in their roll against infection are unaffected as normal.

RESTLESS

Requirements: None

This creature cannot so easily be destroyed. Whenever this creature is killed, it returns, coming back into the world. Creatures of this nature usually are ones that have unfinished business in the world. For example, a wight might be cursed to forever roam a particular graveyard, forever watching over it for eternity.

Creatures with this talent return one week after they have been destroyed. A Restless creature may be put to final rest, without chance of returning if a special ceremony is conducted. For example, a phantom might need a formal burial ceremony to be conducted. A vampire child might need to be baptized before it can be laid to rest. The exact ceremony varies from creature to creature, *requiring research*. The ceremony never takes more than an hour to complete.

TAIL

Requirements: None

This creature has a tail, which is a *natural weapon* with

a complexity of -1 with a DM of +2. If this creature already has a natural weapon which grants it a DM (such as claws), then increase its general DM of all attacks by +2. DMs of this nature are cumulative, so a creature with claws and fangs would have a DM +4, and a creature with claws, fangs, and a tail would have a DM +6. A creature with multiple natural weapons does not necessarily get multiple attacks.

A creature with a tail also has better balance, giving it +1 dice to all Movement skills.

TITAN BODY

Requirements: Giant Body talent, Strength 5, Toughness 5

This creature is extremely large in size, standing over 17 to 32 feet in height or length. It weighs in excess of 1000 to 5000 lbs. It suffers a -3 penalty to all Movement skills, and a -3 penalty to the Reflexes skill. However, when making melee attacks against any creature smaller than it, it gets 3 free successes on all attack rolls. This talent replaces any benefits or penalties derived from the Hulking Body talent or the Giant Body talent.

Any creature who is extremely large in size (standing over 17 to 32 feet in height and/or weighing in excess of 1000 to 10,000 lbs.) must take this talent as part of their character creation.

UNDEAD

Requirements: None

Description: This creature is now undead. That is, it has died and returned to the world as an animated corpse. In the World of Witch Hunter, undead creatures return with a fragment of their original soul. For example, ghul-revenants return with that part of their soul that remembers hunger and hate. The rest of the creature's soul languishes in spiritual torment. In almost every case, the piece of the soul that comes back with the corpse is full of some sort of dark emotion.

Undead creatures do not need to eat, sleep, or breathe. They are immune to the effects of poison and environmental damage. They may or may not appear to be rotting. Because undead only have pieces of their soul, they always have a -2 dice penalty to Empathy rolls.

VILLAINOUS CAVEAT

Requirements: Only Master Villains may take this talent.

This being is never defeated normally; it always faces defeat in some dramatic fashion, which allows for him or her to return in some mysterious manner. For example, as a hero does enough damage to kill a vicious cult leader, he might fall off a cliff to disappear in the river below. A master criminal might fall down dead at the cadre's feet, but when the body is examined, it is discovered to be a body double, not the real master at all.

This talent can be defeated if the Villainous Caveat is not convenient. For example, if the party confronts the villain in an open field, is sure that it is she that they are

fighting, and finally kill her...the Villainous Caveat would not help her escape her fate. The Villainous Caveat may also be defeated if, when the villain is defeated, the entire cadre each spends 1 Hero Point. For example, if the cadre has just defeated a necromancer, before drawing his hood back to check his identity, all of the players might elect to spend a Hero Point to ensure that it is indeed the necromancer they have been chasing for months.

VILLAINOUS DIABOLIST

Requirement: Greater Diabolist, 6 Damnation points.

Description: You are trained in the Second Circle of the Diabolist tradition, and may perform villainous Diabolist rites learned via the Villainous Rite talent.

VILLAINOUS NECROMANCY

Requirement: Greater Necromancy, 4 Damnation points.

Description: You are trained in the Second Circle of the Necromantic tradition, and may perform villainous Necromantic rites learned via the Villainous Rite talent.

VILLAINOUS RITE (RITE)

Requirement: Any villainous ritual tradition

Description: You may learn a single villainous rite in a tradition for which you have the villainous talent.

VILLAINOUS WITCHCRAFT

Requirement: Greater Witchcraft, 2 Damnation point.

Description: You are trained in the Second Circle of the Witchcraft tradition, and may perform villainous Witchcraft rites learned via the Villainous Rite talent.

VILLAINOUS SORCERY

DIABOLISM

BASIC DIABOLIC RITES

CIRCLE OF SUMMONING

Difficulty: Varies

Time: 1 hour/varies (usually 2 rounds)

Duration: 2x (number of successes) rounds (see below)

Strain: 2

Damnation: 2/6

Description: The Circle of Summoning is similar in many ways to the hermetic rite, 'First Circle of Binding'. This is the most basic of rites used by diabolists to call a denizen of Hell and to bargain with it for whatever service or power the summoner desires. The preparation time for the rite involves drawing or inscribing the mystical diagram upon a solid surface, normally in blood. The blood used for this rite is usually goat's blood, but the calling of more powerful demons demands the blood of an innocent. The casting itself requires a verbal invitation to the mortal world, followed by vocal entreaties, platitudes, demands, threats or abasements, depending upon the power of the creature being summoned.

The difference between this rite and the more powerful 'Portal to Hell' is that the diabolist must know the exact name and title, but not necessarily the True Name, of the demon it wishes to summon. Should the diabolist also know the True Name of the demon, then the duration of the circles power is multiplied by 5 not 2, see below.

A Circle of Summoning is roughly 3 feet in diameter, much like a standard hermetic Circle of Binding and requires a base time of 1 hour to inscribe. Refer to **Table 5-2: Circle Sizes and Effects** for details for creating circles of larger diameters or in less time.

A Summoning Circle has two inherent powers: it allows the diabolist to call a denizen of Hell to the mortal world and most importantly, it traps it there for a period of time where it can neither leave the area bounded by the circle nor can it use any of its power, physical or supernatural, to affect the area outside the circle.

Obviously, the stronger the demon, the stronger the magic infusing the Summoning Circle must be to contain its fell power. At the beginning of the rite, the diabolist must make a Sorcerous Tradition (Personality) roll. The number of successes will determine the Damnation score of the demon that the Circle can contain. Normally, diabolists are wise enough to ensure that demons being called are not more than they can handle, but should a demon's Damnation score be greater than power rating of the Circle of Summoning, then it may decide to ignore the summons or worse yet, appear and show its displeasure to the impudent mortal that dared summon it.

The amount of time that the diabolist has to bargain with the summoned creature is dependent upon the power of the circle, but it is never very long. Multiply the number of successes achieved when empowering the circle by two. That is the number of rounds the summoner has to strike a bargain with the creature. During this time, the diabolist may offer sacrifices, threaten the demon or bargain in any way he believes will allow him to strike a deal. If he sees that the demon is not interested or is stalling until the circle's power fades, the diabolist may, at any time, dismiss the foul beast back from whence it came. Should the diabolist be an unwary or just a fool and the duration of the rite elapses, the demon is then free to leave if it wishes, or it may simply step through the circle and show its profound gratitude at being summoned.

Finally, like a hermetic Circle of Binding, if the circle is broken, meaning that a portion of the blood has been wiped clean, the power of the circle immediately leaks out, ending its enchantment. A creature within the circle cannot affect the circle in any way, unless conditions as described above occur.

DIABOLIC PRESENCE

Difficulty: 1

Time: None/1 round

Duration: 10 minutes + 10 minutes per additional success

Strain: 1

Damnation: 1/3

Description: The diabolist intones the name of his demon prince, taking on some measure of his master's power and inhumanity. The diabolist gains a +1 bonus on Intimidate, Climb, Contortionist, Gamble, Search, and Notice checks. After seeing the results of any of the above skill checks, the diabolist may increase the bonus by +1 per 10 minutes by which he is willing to reduce the rite's duration.

DREAD OF THE DARK ONE

Difficulty: Varies

Time: None/1 round

Duration: 1 minute + 1 minute per additional success

Strain: 1

Damnation: 1/4

Description: By making the sign of the Devil, the diabolist strikes terrible fear in the hearts of his foes, who may make Resolve (Courage) skill checks to oppose his Sorcerous Tradition (Personality) skill check. The diabolist may target as many foes within range as he wishes, but they combine their Resolve (Courage) dice totals against his Sorcerous Tradition (Personality) skill check. The effect on the targets varies depending on the number of successes the diabolist has after the opposed checks, as shown below. The diabolist may use successes to increase the duration or to increase the effect, but the rite affects all targets equally.

Successes	Effect
1	Startled
3	Frightened
5	Terrified
7	Horried
9+	Horried and takes 1 hit

Unlike other kinds of fear, the target is not entitled to another Resolve (Courage) roll to reduce the duration.

LIMNED IN FIRE

Difficulty: 2

Time: 2 rounds/1 round

Duration: 1 minute + 1 minute per additional success

Strain: 2

Damnation: 2/4

Description: After anointing himself in a sacred oil mixed with the blood of an innocent, the diabolist lights himself on fire . . . but suffers no harm from the flames. Those near him, however, are another matter. Creatures with which the diabolist is in hand-to-hand combat or with whom the grappling suffer flame damage. The base damage is 1, but the diabolist may increase the damage by 1 per additional success on his Sorcerous Tradition (Personality) test.

Grappling characters take the hits on both the diabolists turn and on their turn, and cannot avoid

them short of removing themselves from the grapple. Characters with who the diabolist is in hand-to-hand combat may make Reflexes (Agility) skill checks each time they strike or are struck by the diabolist, taking 1 fewer hit per success on the skill check.

TRAPPED IN DARKNESS

Difficulty: 2

Time: 1 minute/1 round

Duration: 1 hour + 1 hour per additional success

Strain: 1

Damnation: 0/0

Description: The diabolist sits, stands, or lies absolutely still for one minute, after which he invites the darkness to surround and swallow him. For the duration of the rite, the diabolist's mere presence seems to give off darkness, so much so that candles are blown out, the sun seems to cloud over, and lanterns dim. He gains a +2 bonus to Stealth (Agility) skill checks, and may gain a +2 per additional success. However, his presence disturbs wild and domestic animals, and even humans may notice with a D4 Notice (Intuition) check that a strange presence seems to have darkened their vicinity.

As an interesting side effect, while the diabolist is cloaked in shadow, he becomes more attuned to that which is normally unseen. He gains no bonuses to Notice or Search skill checks, but while benefiting from this rite, he can see invisible spirits, auras, and effects, similar to the benefits of an Awakening animism rite.

GREATER DIABOLIC RITES

BLASPHEMOUS TRUTHS

Difficulty: 3

Time: None/1 round

Duration: Instantaneous

Strain: 2

Damnation: 1/3

Description: The diabolist utters words that the pure of heart cannot bear to hear. Everyone within hearing range that has a True Faith score suffers a penalty on all action skill checks (but not reaction skill checks) equal to their Faith score. The diabolist may increase the penalty suffered by one or more targets within short range by directing the words directly at them; he divides up any additional successes on his Sorcerous Tradition (Personality) roll as penalties applied to their action skill checks.

The effects of this rite persist independently for each character, until that character spends an action to make a Resolve (Courage) skill check. For every success on the check, his penalties are reduced by 1. A character may continue making this check each round (or not, as he wishes) until the penalties are gone.

THE UNSEEN HAND

Difficulty: 4

Time: None/1 round

Duration: Concentration, up to a maximum number of rounds equal to the diabolist's Damnation score.

Strain: 3

Damnation: 2/4

Description: The diabolist commands invisible demonic spirits to move things about in the mundane world. A success allows the diabolist to cause one item or person within short range to be moved as if picked up, pushed, or otherwise affected by a creature with a Body of 4, a movement of 3 in any direction (even in mid-air), and skill in Hand-to-Hand, Grapple, and Throw equal to the number of the diabolist's additional successes. In order to actually use Hand-to-Hand or Throw, the invisible force must pick up and use an item; Grappling can be performed as normal. Characters may resist the telekinetic grappling and attacks as normal.

The diabolist may increase the effective Body score of the invisible force by 1 for each round by which he is willing to reduce the rite's duration. If the diabolist knows his target's True Name, all of his invisible force's dice count as automatic successes against the target.

VILLAINOUS DIABOLIC RITES

PORTAL TO HELL

Difficulty: 4

Time: 12 hours/1 hour

Duration: 1 day + 1 day per additional success

Strain: 5

Damnation: 5/9

Description: This incredibly difficult rite requires the ritual torture of a human (one with no Damnation) from dawn to dusk, culminating in a profane series of dances and chants around the victim's slowly dying form. As the victim dies, his soul is consumed, swallowed up by a vortex of evil that opens into a temporary portal to Hell itself. An area within 1 mile of the rite is considered to be a Hellpoint (see "Hellpoints," page 175); the radius increases by 1 mile per True Faith point of the sacrificed human. In addition to the effects caused by a Hellpoint, the diabolist may attempt to summon several denizens of Hell from the portal to do his bidding.

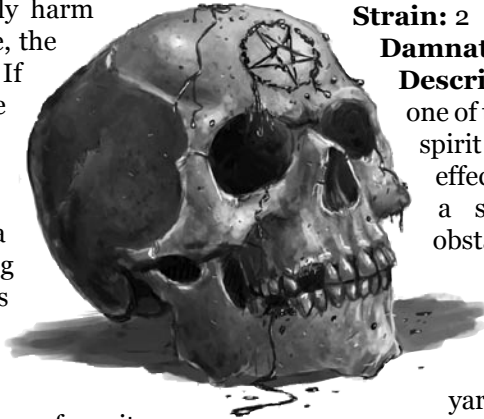
To attempt to summon demons through the portal, the diabolist must open his own flesh and let his blood pour it into the portal while he calls upon them to enter the world; this requires an hour of interrupted concentration. A diabolist must sacrifice at minimum 3 hits, which allows him to make one Sorcerous Tradition (Personality) roll. Count the successes including and beyond the initial one. He may then either call upon one demon with a Damnation score equal to that total or a number of demons with a Damnation score of 1 equal to the successes or any combination that does not exceed the total number of successes rolled.

Example: After years of nefarious doings and enacting blasphemous incantations, an aging Ethan Marshall performs the necessary preparations and enacts this foul rite. After rolling his Sorcerous Tradition

(Personality) check, he rolls a 2, 3, 4, 5, 7, 7, 8, 8, 9, and 9, for 6 successes. Since the rite required a minimum of 4 successes, Ethan has a total of 3 points for his demon or demons. He may summon up one demon with a Damnation score of 3, 3 demons with a Damnation score of 1, or any combination that does not exceed the number of points he scored.

Once the demon(s) appears the diabolist must make a Command (Courage) skill check as a free action against the demon's Resolve (Courage) skill check to control it. If he succeeds, the diabolist may command the demon to perform a task that will require a maximum number of hours equal to the number of successes, and it must obey. The demon must obey the diabolist precisely, and may not knowingly harm the diabolist. If the two checks tie, the diabolist and demon roll again. If the demon succeeds, it attacks the diabolist for a number of rounds equal to its successes, after which it is drawn back to Hell.

If the diabolist prepared a Circle of Summoning before calling the demon(s), the demon(s) is summoned directly into the circle, and must remain there until the circle's duration runs out, or until diabolist releases it to perform its duties, whichever comes first.



If the spirit overcomes the Séance's strength, it may flee the necromancer's body, do harm to it, or attack those attendants, at the GM's discretion. If the Séance participants release hands for any reason, the Séance's strength is broken.

If the necromancer knows the target spirit's True Name, the spirit remains under the necromancer's control throughout the rite, regardless of the Séance's strength.

PROJECTION

Difficulty: 3

Time: None/10 minutes

Duration: 10 minute + 10 minutes per additional success

Strain: 2

Damnation: 0/0

Description: The necromancer impersonates one of the spirits that he manipulates, freeing his spirit from his physical form. While under the effects of this rite, the necromancer becomes a supernatural, invisible spirit. Physical obstacles do not limit his projected form, but he can be trapped by Circles of Binding, summoned by a Séance, and so on. He can move 10 miles per hour in any direction; in combat, his form moves 15 yards at the cautious rate, 30 yards at a walk, and 90 yards at a run.

While in this form, a necromancer can see invisible spirits, auras, and effects as if under the effects of the Awakening animism rite.

NECROMANCY

BASIC NECROMANTIC RITES

SÉANCE

Difficulty: 2

Time: None/10 minutes

Duration: 1 minute + 1 minute per additional success

Strain: 1

Damnation: 0/0

Description: The necromancer uses meditation and willpower to summon the spirit of a described individual who either haunts the area or was laid to rest nearby. The difficulty decreases to 3 if the actual name of the deceased is known and to 2 if a relative or loved one of the deceased is present at the Séance. Once summoned, the spirit inhabits the body of necromancer. The spirit would then normally be able to say or do whatever it likes, including damaging its host body; however, the joining of hands of the participants in the Séance act similar to a Circle of Binding (see page 127), preventing the spirit from doing anything but answering questions truthfully. The strength of the Séance's Circle of Binding effect is equal to the highest Reason score in the group +1 per additional member of the group. The highest possible strength is equal to the Necromancer's Sorcerous Tradition (Reason) dice pool, but the necromancer cannot, obviously, reach this maximum alone.

REANIMATE THE DEAD

Difficulty: 3

Time: 1 hour/1 round/servant

Duration: 1 day + 1 day per additional success

Strain: 2

Damnation: 2/5

Description: The necromancer digs up a body that has been dead for no less than six months. Carving upon its brow the sigil of Osiris and slashing his hand so that some blood drips into the cadaver's mouth, the necromancer rekindles what little remnant of the life force remains. The necromancer must inflict one damage point per body he wishes to reanimate. The walking corpse is not as strong or resilient as a Zombie, but is able to follow simple commands, including attacking an enemy.

The necromancer can exert complete and total control over the reanimated corpse, and he may raise and control a number of these corpses equal to his Damnation score. Once this number is reached, a necromancer cannot raise more undead until their numbers are lowered by attrition or by the rite having expired.

The reanimated corpse(s) are considered a Minion Threat level 1. For every success generated above the necessary D3, the necromancer can add to the Threat level by one to a maximum of Threat level 4.

GREATER NECROMANTIC RITES

SLUMBERING DEATH

Difficulty: 6 (Ritual)

Time: 1 hour/10 minutes

Duration: 1 day + 1 day per additional success

Strain: 3

Damnation: 2/6

Description: The necromancer draws profane sigils and glyphs on a human corpse, readying it to summon its own soul back into its body, using it as an animating spark. Once he empowers the writings, they flare with crimson energy, indicating that the entity is trapped within. The corpse becomes a zombie—a foul undead creature powered by the essence of its own trapped soul. The necromancer can exert complete and total control over the zombie, and he may control a number of zombies equal to his Damnation score. Zombies under his control respond to simple commands such as attack, go, or guard. Once the necromancer gives a zombie an order, it does as commanded until it receives a new order. He may give orders to one or more zombies as 1 action.

If the Necromancer exceeds the number of zombies that he can safely control, newly created zombies are considered free-willed, and attack the closest living creature upon their rise.

TRAP GHOST

Difficulty: Varies

Time: 1 day/3 rounds

Duration: 1 day + 1 day per additional success

Strain: 3

Damnation: 4/9

Description: The necromancer crafts a clay, glass, or crystal vessel inscribed with glyphs (the 1 hour preparation time), then makes a Sorcerous Tradition (Reason) skill check; this check, which the GM rolls secretly, determines the vessel's power. When the necromancer holds the vessel aloft and speaks the appropriate words, he may make a Sorcerous Tradition (Reason) skill check opposed by the Courage (Resolve) skill checks of any spirits within close range. The spirit with the lowest skill check is sucked into the vessel. This rite can affect ghosts, projected spirits (by means of *Projection*), and spirits that have been summoned via a Séance and then somehow cast out of the body.

If the necromancer knows the True Name of a spirit present, he may attempt to suck in that spirit over all others within range.

Once the spirit is sucked into the vessel, it remains bound there for duration of the rite, after which it automatically breaks free unless you perform the rite again before it does so. The spirit also breaks free if the vessel is destroyed. Multiple spirits can be held in a single vessel; if the number of build points worth of spirits within the vessel ever exceeds 10 times the vessel's power, however, the vessel shatters and all of the spirits within are released.

A bound spirit may be used to power Necromantic

rites, giving the necromancer bonus dice on his Sorcerous Tradition (Reason) checks when performing Necromantic rites. Each bonus die “drains” the spirit of 1 point of its total Spiritual score; the spirit's Spiritual score is the sum total of its three Spiritual Abilities (Courage, Intuition and Personality). For every die beyond the 10th, the bonus die “drains” the spirit of 2 points of its Spiritual score. Once a spirit is exhausted of its Spiritual score, it is destroyed.

If an out-of-body character is trapped and used for these purposes, the same rules for a spirit are used. When the character is drained of all Spiritual points, it is destroyed and the character is dead.

VILLAINOUS NECROMANTIC RITES

RAISE THE DEAD

Difficulty: 10 (Ritual)

Time: 6 hours/10 minutes

Duration: Permanent

Strain: 7

Damnation: 5/9

Description: By laying a dead body upon a blanket or bed, bathing it in clear spring water, and dressing it in a new set of clean clothes sewn just for it, the necromancer can perform a supposed miracle: the returning of the dead back to life. However, only God possesses this power, and the necromancer's act is in truth a violation of all that is right and natural in the world.

To have even a chance of success, this rite should be attempted as soon as possible after the victim's death; every day thereafter that it is attempted, the base difficulty of 6 increases by one. Assuming the necromancer does



succeed, however, the person who returns is not the same; he returns to life as a thoroughly corrupt being with a base of ten Damnation points (-1 per Faith point he had in his previous life). In addition to the evil and depravity that comes naturally to a Accursed human, those who rise from the dead also require some particular vice in order to maintain their unnatural life. Some must drink the blood of the living, while others prefer a more solid meal of still-warm human flesh; some must kill others each night using the same method that killed them, or must track down everyone who knew them in life and murder them. Regardless of the specifics, it is certain to be grisly and evil.

The raised loathe themselves as much as they loathe all other living things, and are unlikely to bear much goodwill toward the necromancer who raised them. They are unable, due to the magic of the rite, to directly harm the one who brought them back from the grave; however, they may convince others to attack the necromancer, or may reveal his secrets to those who would see him come to harm.

If the necromancer knows the target's True Name, the unfortunate creature is also raised as his thrall, and cannot say or do anything, even indirectly, that would harm the necromancer, and must also follow all of his instructions. Such servants tend to be kept at the necromancer's beck and call.

WITCHCRAFT

BASIC WITCHCRAFT RITES

CHARM

Difficulty: 2

Time: 1 hour/1 minute

Duration: 1 hour + 1 hour per additional success

Strain: 1

Damnation: 1/3

Description: The witch bathes herself, lies naked beneath the moonlight among patches of nightshade and mandrake, and breathes in the perfume of darkness. When she rises, she exudes a supernatural charm and sexuality that lures others to her. Because the preparation for this rite can only be performed at night, a Charmed witch is only like to appear in the early morning or in the late evening.

A Charmed witch gains a +1 bonus on all Personality skill rolls. Before rolling, the witch may increase the bonus for a single roll by +1 per hour by which she is willing to shorten the duration of the rite.

An alternative version of this rite allows the witch to target a specific individual. To do so, she needs either his True Name, a keepsake freely given to a lover, nail clippings or a lock of the target's hair. The first time the targeted individual interacts with the witch during the duration of this variant rite, he must make a Concentrate (Will) skill check with a penalty equal to the number of additional successes the witch did not apply to the rite's duration. If he fails to score any successes, he becomes

completely enamored of the witch, thinking her the wisest, most beautiful, and kindest creature in all of creation. He sees everything she does in the best light, and is willing to trust her in all things. He stops short of harming others that he loves or harming himself, but might be easily tricked into accidentally doing either.

If the target succeeds at the skill check, or once the rite's duration ends, he generally has the opposite reaction, and is disgusted by his previous, false feelings toward the witch. If the witch knows the target's True Name, the target instead experiences lingering feelings of warmth and trust toward the witch.

HEX

Difficulty: 1

Time: None/1 round

Duration: 1 day + 1 day per additional success

Strain: 2

Damnation: 1/4

Description: This rite is the most well-known of the witchcraft rites, and is used for everything from damaging a neighbor's crops to striking his children with illness to punishing suitors who rebuff the witch's advances. The various effects of this rite are as follows.

Item: This version affects 1 weapon or other item of 3 cubic feet (about the size of a plow, walking stick, or rifle) that you touch as a base, but may affect an additional item or additional cubic foot per additional success. Anyone who uses the item for the duration of the rite must roll a die for each full hour that he uses it. The witch may increase the number of dice rolled per hour by +1 per additional success. The effects of successes on these dice is shown below.

Successes	Effect
0	No Effect
1	Minor Mishap (the tool user is made to look embarrassed) or Accident (the tool user suffers 1 hit*)
2	Mishap (the tool user ruins an entire day of work) or Accident (the tool user suffers 2 hits*)
3	Major Mishap (the tool user destroys valuable equipment) or Accident (the tool user suffers 3 hits*)

* An individual can only suffer one accident from a hexed item for the duration of that rite; all other successes thereafter lead to mishaps

Because this rite only causes a mishap when someone uses the tool for at least an hour, it is quite difficult to convince anyone that the item is hexed. Indeed, it has become a common excuse for a child to claim that a hexed plow led to his furrows not being straight, or a hexed gate allowing the livestock to wander.

Land: This version affects a 30-foot-radius that you touch as a base, but may affect a radius that is 5 feet wider per

additional success. All plant life in the radius grows sickly and withered overnight, and healthy plant life cannot be grown there for the duration of the rite.

Person: The rite affects one creature with whom you make eye contact as a base, but may affect one additional creature near the original target per additional success. The witch may impose a continuous -1 penalty to any skill check of the creature for the duration of the rite. The witch may increase the penalty against any one creature, or impose a continuous -1 penalty to another skill check, by spending additional successes.

SCRY

Difficulty: 2

Time: 10 minutes/1 minute

Duration: 1 minute + 1 minute per additional success

Strain: 1

Damnation: 0/0

Description: After preparing a special cauldron or arranging rocks and sticks in mystic patterns around a pool of water, the witch peers within to see a faraway person, place, or item. She can see and hear clearly in a radius equal to 1-yard per point of her Sorcery score. How far she can Scry depends on her familiarity with the subject.

Unknown: Scry is not possible.

Incidental: She has met or seen the person, place, or item once. She may use this rite to view such a subject up to 100 feet away, plus 100 feet per additional success.

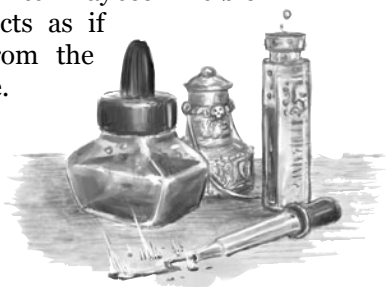
Casual: She has seen the person or studied the place or item several times. She may use this rite to view such a subject up to one mile away, plus one mile per additional success.

Known: She has had had extensive conversation with the individual, or has spent several days at the location or working with the item. She may use this rite to view such a subject up to 100 miles away, plus 100 miles per additional success.

Intimate: If a person, the target is a lover, sibling, dear friend, or hated enemy; if a place, it is a home, place of work, or favorite retreat; if an item, it is a keepsake, a family heirloom, or a preferred weapon or tool. The witch may use this rite to view such a subject anywhere in the world.

Those in the area are entitled to a D8 Notice (Intuition) roll to sense that they are being watched. If the witch knows the person's True Name, she may Scry on him from any distance, regardless of her familiarity with him.

While scrying, a witch may see invisible spirits, auras, and effects as if she were benefiting from the Awakening animism rite.



GREATER WITCHCRAFT RITES

LEVITATE

Difficulty: 3

Time: None/3 rounds

Duration: 1 minute + 1 minute per additional success

Strain: 2

Damnation: 2/5

Description: By invoking six names of the Adversary, the witch causes herself to levitate above the ground. On each of her turns that she sustains this hex, starting on the turn that she performs it, she may levitate up one yard. She takes a -2 dice penalty to all Strength and Agility rolls due to disorientation on the first round. On the second, this penalty drops to -1 die, and vanishes completely on the third. Thereafter, she can fly at a speed equal to your normal movement rate. She may also change altitudes as part of her normal movement, ascending or descending 1 yard for every 2 yards of movement spent.

Should the witch elect to use a foci such as a broom, plow or other such item, all penalties are reduced to 0.

SHAPESHIFT

Difficulty: 6 (Ritual)

Time: None/3 rounds

Duration: 10 minutes + 10 minutes per additional success

Strain: 3

Damnation: 3/5

Description: With the blessing of the Adversary, the witch assumes the form of an animal but retains her own mind. She uses the Body, Strength, Agility, Toughness, and speed of the selected creature, and gains all of its traits of the animal. She retains all other attributes, abilities, skills, and qualities. She is restricted to nocturnal creatures, and they may range in size from the size of a sparrow to that of a wolf.

VILLAINOUS WITCHCRAFT RITES

DRAIN

Difficulty: 5

Time: None/1 round

Duration: Instantaneous

Strain: 3

Damnation: 4/8

Description: The witch arranges her fingers in an impossible shape and sends a thread of inky blackness at a target within close range, draining its life energy to repair her own injuries. The target must make a D5 Endurance (Toughness) skill check or lose a number of hits equal to the amount by which he failed the skill check; the same number of hits are then removed from the witch. The witch may increase the difficulty of this skill check by +1 per additional success, which allows for an even higher number of hits to be drained and gained.

THREAT POWERS

READING THE ENTRIES

Factor Limit: When a creature takes a power, that power must have a power factor, determining how potent this particular supernatural capability is. The factor limit tells the maximum allowed value for that particular power.

Range: Powers always have a range of 1 yard, 10 yards, 100 yards, 1000 yards, line of sight, or self. The entry “self” means that the creature can only use that power on itself.

Area: This determines how much of an area the power can affect, if any. The number listed always reveals the diameter of the area.

Renounce: This shows whether the power can be renounced or not. See the renounce talent for more details.

Opposed: This shows if the power may be resisted by a victim. This entry will always show the name of an ability, such as “Resolve”. To resist a power, any victim must roll their Faith score plus the listed ability. For example, the Suggestive power may be resisted when the victim rolls their Faith and their Reason scores combined. The Difficulty of these rolls is always the power factor of the power.

CORPUS POWERS

ARMOR

Factor Limit: 5

Range: Self

Area: N/A

Renounce? No

Opposed: No

This power gives the creature armor. The armor may appear in many forms from tough skin, to a scaly hide, to chitinous plates, to regular, mortal skin. Each power rank grants a rank of armor. For example, a creature with Armor 2 would have 2 ranks of armor. This armor does not affect the creature’s agility.

A creature’s armor is not cumulative with other types of armor. For example, a creature with Armor 3 who also wears a buff coat gains no additional benefit from the coat. When a creature decides to wear outside armor, always use the armor of the highest value. In the previous example, the creature would have an Armor 3 because its own armor was better than that of the coat.

CARNIVATE

Factor Limit: 5

Range: Touch

Area: 1 creature

Renounce? Creature

Opposed: No

One of the most horrid powers the Adversary can offer is the ability to gain strength by consuming the flesh of the living. The Carnivate power manifests visually in different ways. Some creatures grow more and more robust and

muscular with their perverse repast. Others begin to glow with dark power.

Once this being has eaten the body of a living mortal, it gets one 1 free success on all Hand-to-Hand attack rolls. It may consume more living beings, each one giving it an additional free success up to the limit of its power factor. For example, a creature with Carnivate 3 might consume three mortals for 3 free successes on all of its attack rolls. However, consuming even more living beings would give the horrid creature no more benefit.

This creature loses -1 bonus success for each hour that passes after it consumes living flesh. It loses these bonus successes until they return to what is normal for the creature.

DURABILITY

Factor Limit: 9

Range: Self

Area: N/A

Renounce? No

Opposed: No

This creature has extra health levels. Unlike most beings, which have 5 health levels, this creature has 6 health levels. This extra health level is equal to the creature’s Toughness x power factor. When this creature takes hits, it is marked off of the extra health level first, before damage is applied to its regular health track.

For example, normally a creature with Toughness 3 would have a health track of 6/5/3/3/2. However, if that creature had Durability 3, its health track would look like this: 9/6/5/3/3/2. The new health level is equal to the creature’s Toughness (3) multiplied by the power factor (3).

GESTALT BODY

Factor Limit: 3

Range: Self

Area: N/A

Renounce? No

Opposed: No

This creature’s body can be severed and chopped up...but continues to operate independently if has been ripped to pieces. When this creature loses one level of its health track, it loses a body part like an arm, leg, or even head. The severed parts of the creature’s body still function, however, crawling, quivering, and rolling along the ground.

Each severed part becomes a minion with a Threat Factor equal to the creature’s power factor. Independent parts move at one-quarter speed of its host. For example, a zombie might have the power Gestalt Body 3. When it loses its first level from its health track, the GM rules that one of its arms is sliced off. The arm now can roll 3 dice to attack, jump, etc, because it is counted as a Threat Factor 3 Minion. It moves at 1/4th of the zombie’s land speed.

Creatures that lose a leg cannot hop about, but must crawl along the ground, usually at one-quarter their normal land speed. The Wall Crawling power allows the creature to move at its climbing speed.

ICE FORM

Factor Limit: 5

Range: Self

Area: N/A

Renounce? Creature

Opposed: No

Through its mystical power, this creature can transform its body into living ice. Both spectral and terrible, this form gives off prismatic reflections in the light, often reflecting the fear-filled faces of those its stalks. The creature gains an armor value equal to the power factor.

Furthermore, anyone touching the creature or grappling it takes 1 point of environmental damage per power factor each round. This environmental damage applies whether the ice creature is grappling or being grappled. For example, a creature with Ice Form 3 would cause 3 hits a round to whomever it touches. The Damage Modifier from physical attacks from the creature is raised by +1. For example, a creature with Ice Form 2 would do 2 hits of damage against anyone grappling with it. This same creature would add +1 to all physical DMs.

The temperature of its environment does have an effect on this creature. A warm climate does not affect this creature, but a hot climate (70 degrees or above) causes the being to start taking 1 point of damage per round.

Increase the DM for any heat or flame attack against this creature by +3.

IMMUNITY

Factor Limit: None

Range: Self

Area: N/A

Renounce? No

Opposed: No

This creature takes less damage from a particular source. The common variants are below. Thus, a creature might be resistant to fire or cold, steel or wood. For each power factor the creature has, it removes that many successes from any incoming attack from that source. For example, a creature with Immunity – Fire 3 would remove three successes from any attack involving fire before resolving damage.

Common Variants: Fire, Cold, Metal, Wood, Lead

INTANGIBILITY

Factor Limit: 3

Range: Self

Area: N/A

Renounce? Creature

Opposed: No

This being has a limited ability to become immaterial. While immaterial, this creature is immune to normal damage from physical attacks. However, it may always be damaged by blessed weapons, or if the attacker can renounce the creature's power.

- At factor 1, this creature may become immaterial for only short periods of time. It may become immaterial for the duration of one attack per round. This is a special

action that does not count against the number of reactions the creature has per round. Thus, if attacker strikes at the intangible creature, it can dissolve itself, making it immune to that attack. However, a second, third, and successive attacker could strike the intangible creature normally.

- At factor 2, this creature is immaterial most of the time. It can pass through objects or barriers – including walls, floors, or ceilings. It may move through solids at full running speed. The being cannot fly, but it may move through any floor or ceiling up to running speed if it can reach it. This creature never leaves any tracks, footprints, or signs of its passing. It may become material and solid at will. Becoming solid is a free action which it must take during its initiative. Once it become solid, it must stay that way for one round. While this creature is immaterial, it cannot harm other creatures physically. Therefore, it must become solid in order to harm others, leaving it vulnerable to attack for 1 round.

- At factor 3, this creature is immaterial all of the time, with all of the abilities that state bestows. However, the creature may attack physical beings normally, even though this creature is untouchable by normal means. It may interact with the natural world, even though the natural world cannot interact with it. For example, while an opponent might swing his sword through an intangible creature, that creature can still physically strike its attacker. The intangible opponent can even fire weapons at its victims. The ranged weapons become tangible and real the moment they are fired by the intangible attacker.

Blessed weapons bypass intangibility. If the creature's power is renounced, it is tangible to everyone.

INVISIBILITY

Factor Limit: 9

Range: Self

Area: N/A

Renounce? Creature

Opposed: Intuition

This being has the ability to become unseen by the human eye. With but a thought, it can fade from view like a shadow or a winsome mist. An invisible creature subtracts -3 from any and all attacks, and gets +2 extra dice on all attack rolls against opponents who cannot see it. For example, if someone attacked an invisible creature with 5 successes, that character would have to take away at least 3 successes from their attack roll. The second and third attackers would have to do that as well. The -3 from all incoming attacks is in addition to any Defense the creature might have. Unfortunately, the invisible creature would have +2 extra dice to attack rolls against any of the three opponents facing it in this example.

Those who are faithful, however, may be able to pierce the creature's deception. Those trying to perceive the creature must roll their Faith (Intuition) with the power factor as the difficulty. Anyone trying to pierce the creature's invisibility can only roll once per scene.

- Those who succeed by +2 are so revealed by God, that the creature loses its Invisibility power for 1 round. The Witch Hunter who made the roll can see it completely for the rest of the scene.

- Those who succeed by +1 can see the creature completely for the rest of the scene.

- Those who succeed can see the creature murkily. They subtract just 1 success from their roll against the creature.

- Those who fail by -1 can still “feel” where the creature is. They can sense the general direction in which the creature lies.

- Those who fail by -2 cannot find the creature or see it in any way.

This creature may be invisible as long as it wishes. However, once it becomes visible, it cannot become invisible again until the next sundown.

MIST FORM

Factor Limit: 9

Range: Self

Area: N/A

Renounce? Creature

Opposed: No

This power allows a creature to collapse upon itself, falling away into a mist, a fine smoke, or wispy shadowstuff...the exact form varies from creature to creature. No matter how the creature's alternate form *looks*, however, a creature with Mist Form becomes transparent and immune to physical attacks. Creatures in mist form likewise cannot make physical attacks on anyone else. Mist-form beings cannot fly but may flow along the ground and up inclines or stairs. In this form, the creature cannot climb walls or other vertical surfaces. It may also slip through any crack that would normally allow air through. While in this form, the creature may travel as fast as it normally could on land.

Creature in mist form can be struck by blessed weapons or once their power as been renounced by a Witch Hunter.

The creature can remain in mist form for as many hours as it has power factors. After it has used the power once, it cannot use it again until the next sundown.

MONSTROUS FORM

Factor Limit: 5

Range: Self

Area: N/A

Renounce? Creature

Opposed: No

This creature can transform itself into a horrid shape, taking on hideous proportions. Some beings rip from their skin, revealing their true nature. Others slowly metamorph into their form, their flesh bubbling and ripping into their mold. Transforming into a monstrous form takes an action.

While this creature is in its monstrous form, it has enhanced physical abilities (Strength, Agility, and Toughness). It adds +1 dice per power factor to one of

these abilities while in this form. For Quick Characters, add +1 dice to all of its dice pools except for the Extras pool while the creature is in Monstrous Form. The transformation is temporary, however. A creature may remain in its altered state for a whole scene. Thereafter, it must revert back to its normal form. Reverting back to a standard form requires an action. The power factor determines how many times a creature can change before sunset.

For example, a werewolf with Monstrous Form 3 might transform and attack opponents, gaining +3 to Strength, Agility, and Toughness. Then, it runs away. The scene changes and it must revert back to its mortal shape, taking an action to do so. When Witch Hunters find the werewolf, it must transform again to attack the cadre. If it should run away again, it would only be able to transform 1 more time before sunset.

MORTAL MASK

Factor Limit: 9

Range: Self

Area: N/A

Renounce? Creature

Opposed: Intuition

With a glimmer or a wink, by stepping behind a tree, or simply willing its body into another form, this being may assume the form of a normal human. It looks and appears to be human, and is warm-blooded to the touch. When this creature assumes this form, it must choose a single appearance that it always assumes when turning mortal. For example, a creature might always appear to be an old, white-haired man when it assumes mortal form. However, once in mortal form, it may disguise itself like any other human.

Those trying to pierce through the disguise may make a Faith (Intuition) roll. The number of success they get on their roll determines how well they are able to pierce the disguise.

- Those who succeed by +2 are able to see the creature for what it truly is.

- Those who succeed by +1 are able to determine that the creature is not human.

- Those who succeed regularly are able to determine that the creature is simply in disguise.

- Those who fail by -1 can still sense that something is “not quite right” about the creature.

- Those who fail by -2 can sense something wrong, but cannot figure out who or what is putting them at unease.

MIMICRY MASK

Factor Limit: 9

Range: Self

Area: N/A

Renounce? Creature

Opposed: Intuition

This being can transform itself into mortal shape, but it can assume any human shape that it wishes. It might transform itself into someone young, old, short or tall. It

may even copy the appearance of another person. Should this being copy another being, it does not gain any of the memories, personality, or mannerisms of the person it copies.

When this creature assumes this form, it takes an action, during which time the creature's body must expand or contract to fit the new shape. This means that the creature will need clothes of the appropriate size nearby. While this creature undergoes its change, it has no Defense.

Those trying to pierce through the disguise may make a Faith (Intuition) roll. The number of success they get on their roll determines how well they are able to pierce the disguise.

- Those who succeed by +2 are able to see the creature for what it truly is.
- Those who succeed by +1 are able to determine that the creature is not human.
- Those who succeed regularly are able to determine that the creature is simply in disguise.
- Those who fail by -1 can still sense that something is "not quite right" about the creature.
- Those who fail by -2 can sense something wrong, but cannot figure out who or what is putting them at unease.

REGENERATION

Factor Limit: 9

Range: Self

Area: N/A

Renounce? Creature

Opposed: No

A discouraging power to face, when wounded, this creature seals up its own wounds. Some beings' blood actually crawls back into their body, while others' wounds simply fade from view. Yet others manifest gaping and terrible trauma, but it seemingly does not affect them.

A creature with the Regeneration power heals back 1 point of damage per round per power factor. Thus, a creature with Regeneration 3 heals back 3 points of damage per round. This creature heals back this damage even if their health track is reduced to 0. Damage from Regeneration cannot be healed by damage caused by a creature's Damage price or Vulnerability price. For example, a werewolf with Regeneration 3 might be able to heal back 3 points of damage every round. However, once struck by a silver weapon, the damage done by the silver weapon does not regenerate back.

A creature with this power must take either the Damage Price or the Vulnerability Price.

MOVEMENT POWERS

APPARITION

Factor Limit: None

Range: Self

Area: N/A

Renounce? Creature

Opposed: No

One of the more feared powers of the Adversary, this power allows a creature to pursue its victim until the ends of the earth. The creature must designate a target that it can perceive. Once it has designated that target, it can appear near the target, no matter how fast or far the target moves. The creature always appears out of sight from the target but can move towards its victim at will once it does appear. For example, a horse rider might be trying to escape a creature with the apparition power. As the horse and rider look behind them, they see nothing. When they look up, the creature appears before them. The creature can never appear closer than 10 yards from its target, but may continue to reappear near its target until it chooses another.

For each power factor of this power, the creature can reappear before a target 1 time. For example, a zombie-revenant with Apparition 3 can reappear near its victim 3 times. Thereafter, the creature must wait until sundown to activate this power again.

ELUSIVE

Factor Limit: 3

Range: Self

Area: N/A

Renounce? Creature

Opposed: No

This creature is deceptively fast, capable of shifting and slinking about in the blink of an eye. It gets +1 free success on its Defense roll equal to its power factor each round. Thus, a creature with a Defense pool of 3 and Elusive 2 would roll 3 dice and to see how many successes it would be able to remove per round, and add 2 to that number.

A creature cannot use this power while it is wearing outside armor of any kind. This power can be used with the Armor power, however. When used with the armor power, the Defense benefits are cumulative.

FLIGHT

Factor Limit: 5

Range: Self

Area: N/A

Renounce? No

Oppose: No

This power allows a monster to fly. Each power factor put into this power allows the creature to move at faster and faster speeds.

- At factor 1, the creature may float through the air at half of its base land speed.
- At factor 2, the creature may fly at its base land speed.
- At factor 3, the creature may fly at double its base land speed.
- At factor 4, the creature may fly at triple its base land speed.
- At factor 5, the creature may fly at quadruple its base land speed.

JUMPING*Factor Limit: 7**Range: Self**Area: N/A**Renounce? No**Oppose: No*

The creature may leap great distances. Add +10 yards of jumping distance for each power factor. For example, Jumping 3 would +30 yards to a creature's normal jumping distance.

WALL CRAWLING*Factor Limit: 3**Range: Self**Area: N/A**Renounce? No**Oppose: No*

Like a scabbling insect or quivering bat, this power gives the creature the ability to travel up walls. It may never fail a climb check. Each power factor put into this power allows the creature to move at faster and faster speeds.

- At factor 1, the creature may climb at half of its base land speed.
- At factor 2, the creature may climb at its base land speed.
- At factor 3, the creature may climb at double its base land speed.

OFFENSIVE POWERS**CREATE MONSTROUS SPAWN***Factor Limit: 3**Range: Touch**Area: 1 creature**Renounce? Target**Oppose: Toughness*

This creature can create more of its kind through an attack or touch. As the transformation takes hold, a victim of this power begins a painful, horrific transformation into a servant of the Adversary.

- At factor 1, the creature must actually bite a victim to spread its infection. It must have the Fangs talent and must have done damage with that form attack.
- At factor 2, the creature has only to touch the victim to spread its infection. To merely touch a victim, a monster makes a regular attack with a +2 die bonus. Success on the attack means the victim has been touched. A touch attack that misses does no damage.
- At factor 3, the creature needs only to taste the victim's blood to spread its infection, even if miles separate the creature from its target.

Potential victims must make a Faith (Toughness) check. Those who fail slowly begin to turn into the same type of monster as the creature who bit them. It takes until the next sundown for the infection to take hold. Until that time, the victim may have the power renounced from them.

If the victim successfully fights off the infection, it is immune to the Create Monstrous Spawn power from that particular creature forever.

**CREATE UNDEAD SPAWN
(BASIC OR GREATER)***Factor Limit: 3**Range: Touch**Area: 1 creature**Renounce? No**Oppose: Toughness*

This creature can create more of its own kind through a hideous process. This power only allows the creature to create undead spawn. It cannot create living spawn, such as a wendigo or a werewolf, with this power.

- At factor 1, the creature must kill a human. After it has done so, the human will rise in one night as a creature of the same type as the one that killed it. This presumes that the victim's body has not been destroyed, of course.
- At factor 2, the creature has only to touch, not kill the victim to spread its infection. To merely touch a victim, a monster makes a regular attack with a +2 die bonus. Success on the attack means the victim has been touched. A touch attack that misses does no damage.
- At factor 3, the creature need only to consume some piece of the victim's flesh or blood, such as hair, skin, bone, or blood. It may infect creatures at a distance, even if miles separate them.

Potential victims must make a Faith (Toughness) check. Those who fail slowly begin to turn into the same type of monster as the creature who infected them. It takes until the next sundown for the infection to take hold. Until that time, the victim may have the power renounced from them.

If the victim successfully fights off the infection, it is immune to the Create Undead Spawn power from that particular creature forever.

CRIPPLING STRIKE*Factor Limit: 5**Range: 100 yards**Area: 10 yards**Renounce? Target**Oppose: Toughness*

Through its dark will, this creature can cause others far away to become crippled or impaired in some way. This power manifests itself in some way, such as an invisible choke, the squeezing of the brain, bleeding of the eyes, or worms squirming beneath the victim's skin.

The creature targets victims within the range of its power. Anyone within the area of effect makes a Faith (Toughness) check with the difficulty of the creature's power factor. Those that succeed are immune to Crippling Strike from that creature for the rest of the scene. Those that fail the roll suffer a penalty to all attacks and skill checks equal to their failure. They also suffer a like amount of damage. The penalties and damage continue each round until the victim makes their check.

For example, a phantom might choke two victims with Crippling Strike 3. The victims roll their Faith (Toughness) check and comes up with just 1 success each. Because the targets failed by -2, they both suffer -2

to all attacks and skill checks. They also suffer 2 points of damage. The victims make their Faith (Toughness) roll each round until they succeed or die.

ENGULF

Factor Limit: 5

Range: Touch

Area: 1 creature

Renounce? No

Oppose: Strength

This creature engulfs others. Engulf might mean different things, depending upon the creature. For example, a worm might try to chew something up in its mouth, while an amorphous blob might wrap its body around its victim. A tentacled menace might try to draw its prey into its mouth. When making an engulfing attack, the creature makes an attack at -2 dice. Should the attack succeed, the target takes damage and is engulfed *but not swallowed* by the creature. Engulfed victims are damaged by the creature each round. They take damage from the creature as if the creature was making an attack against the target, without the target's Defense. Victims who are engulfed cannot attack the creature. They may only attempt to escape. Escaping is a Faith (Strength) check against the creature's power factor.

The varying levels of power factor allow the creature to swallow larger and larger objects or creatures.

- At factor 1, the creature can swallow an adult human-sized being whole.
- At factor 2, the creature can swallow a hulking or horse-sized being whole.
- At factor 3 or higher, the creature can swallow a giant or cottage-sized being or object.

FREEZING TOUCH

Factor Limit: 5

Range: Self

Area: N/A

Renounce? Creature

Oppose: No

With but a touch, this creature can freeze water, wilt plants, frost windows...and burn flesh.

The creature's touch is a weapon with a DM equal to the power factor. To merely touch a victim, a monster makes a regular attack with a +2 die bonus. Success on the attack means the victim has been touched. A touch attack that misses does no damage.

Those damaged by the creature's touch also suffer a -1 die penalty to all rolls, due to the numbing cold that fills their body. Withering touch is a special attack that does not stack with other kinds of damage such as that from other powers or modifiers like the claws, fangs, and pugilism talents

FURY

Factor Limit: 5

Range: Self

Area: N/A

Renounce? No

Oppose: No

This fearsome being can attack multiple targets at once, exploding into a storm of savagery and devastation. The creature makes one Hand-to-Hand attack roll, but applies those successes to multiple targets within its reach. It may attack one additional target for each power factor. So a creature with Fury 3 could attack four targets with 1 attack roll. If it rolled 6 successes on its attack roll, then it would apply the 6 successes upon each of the four targets.

Fury does not allow a creature to attack a single target multiple times.

INFECTIOUS PERSONA

Factor Limit: None

Range: 1 attack

Area: N/A

Renounce? Target

Opposed: Will

This rare power is spoken about in legend and written in fear by ancient texts. This ability allows a creature to infect a mortal, supplanting that mortal's personality with its own. Thus, a werewolf might infect an innocent girl, who would gain the personality and memories of the original werewolf. Both creatures would share the same personality and memories of the original up until the point of infection. Thereafter, both would lead separate existences. Some creatures of this nature cannot help themselves, and spend their existence fighting off their competing personalities. Others cooperate with their other selves.

In order to accomplish this hideous task, the creature must be able to peer into the eyes of its victim for three full rounds. If the victim is unwilling, the creature must pin its opponent with a grapple. After three full rounds, the victim makes a Faith (Willpower) check, with the difficulty of the creature's power factor.

- Those who succeed by +2 are forever immune to the use of this power by any creature.
- Those who succeed by +1 are forever immune to this use of this power by this particular creature.
- Those who succeed are able to resist the creature's power and retain their own mind.
- Those who fail by -1 become a "split personality". During times of stress, the victim must make a Faith (Willpower) roll or shift into the creature's persona for the rest of the scene. This state persists until the victim can have the power renounced.
- Those who fail by -2 lose themselves and their mind. They take on the persona of their assaulter.

Taking on the persona of the original creature does not mean that the victim has any of the powers or abilities of the creature. They retain the skills of the

original creature, but none of the talents, powers, or ability scores of the original.

Creatures with the Create Monstrous Spawn or Create Undead Spawn powers can use those powers in conjunction with Infectious Persona. A victim who has been infected with a persona *and* becomes the creature's spawn turns into a duplicate of the original creature, with all of the memories of the original up until the time of infection. Thereafter, the two beings are separate.

MYSTIC BLAST

Factor Limit: 3

Range: 100 yards

Area: 10 yards

Renounce? No

Oppose: No

This creature may call down mystical blasts at a target. The blasts are explosions 10 yards in diameter, which may affect creatures within that area.

This creature must make a ranged attack to direct its blast. It makes one Throw (Agility) check. Each and every creature within the area is targeted when this power is used. For example, if a Baykok might target a pair of swordsmen who are standing within 10 yards of each other. It rolls 4 successes on its Throw attack roll. It then applies these 4 successes to each of the swordsmen, because both are experiencing the blast. The swordsmen could apply their Defense as normal.

The DM of its ranged attacks is equal to the power factor x2. Therefore a creature with Mystic Blast 2 would have a DM +4

MYSTIC BOLT

Factor Limit: 3

Range: 100 yards

Area: 1 target

Renounce? No

Oppose: No

This creature may fling mystical bolts at a target. The bolts themselves may manifest in any number of ways. They might be streams of hellfire, invisible arrows, or screaming souls.

This creature gains the ability to make ranged attacks with its mystical bolts. It uses the Throw skill to target opponents with this power. The DM of its ranged attacks is equal to the power factor x2. Therefore a creature with Mystic Bolt 2 would have a DM +4.

RAMPAGE

Factor Limit: 5

Range: Self

Area: N/A

Renounce? Creature

Opposed: No

As a creature rampages, it goes into a savage fury, ripping with its claws or hands, frothing at mouth, and its eyes burn with a sanguine light. Because of this power, this creature can go into a bloodthirsty craze, temporarily enhancing its might.

A creature may instantly go into a rampage as a free action. While in this state, its Strength is raised by +1 and it takes no dice penalties for damage. A rampage lasts for 2 rounds per power factor. Thereafter, it must wait until the next sundown to be able to activate its power again.

SAP ABILITY

Factor Limit: 9

Range: Self

Area: N/A

Renounce? Target

Oppose: Courage

The attack of this creature can sap 2 ability points away from its victim with a simple attack. This attack may manifest itself in different ways. It might be a venomous bite, or a soul-sucking kiss. The creature must hit its target to engage this power. Should the attack succeed, the creature has a chance to drain 2 ability points from its victim. The victim immediately makes a Faith (Courage) roll with a difficulty of the power factor. If the target fails the roll, then he or she loses 2 points from a specific ability score.

Victims who have a physical ability (Strength, Dexterity, and Toughness) fall to 0 slumps to the ground, paralyzed. Those who lose all of the points of a mental ability (Education, Reason, and Willpower) become animalistic and feral. Anyone who loses all the points of a spiritual ability (Intuition, Personality, and Courage) becomes listless and catatonic.

Which ability score is drained is determined when this power is given to a creature.

Victims of the sap ability power heal back lost ability points at the rate of 1 point per sunrise that passes. So, at the next sunrise, the victim gets 1 ability point back. On the following sunrise, another ability point returns. Alternatively, renouncing the power upon the victim causes all ability points lost to return.

SUPERNATURAL POISON

Factor Limit: 7

Range: Attack

Area: 1 target

Renounce? No

Oppose: Toughness

This creature can inject its victims with a toxin. First, the creature must have fangs, claws, or a tail to deliver the poison to its victim. If the creature has any of these attack forms, then it must successfully attack its target to deliver the toxin to its victim's system. Once a creature as poisoned its prey, additional poison attacks do nothing more to the target.

If the victim is hit by the attack, he or she may make a Faith (Toughness) check against the power factor. Those that fail the roll are at a -1 to attacks and skill rolls. They also take 1 damage to each level of their health track. Those that succeed the check stave off the effects of the poison for an hour.

Every hour after the victim is poisoned, he or she must make another Faith (Toughness) check with the difficulty of the power factor. Each time the poisoned victim fails the roll, they suffer an additional -1 to attacks, skill rolls, and each level of their health track.

The poisoned victim must continue to make Faith (Toughness) checks every hour for as many hours as the power factor. For example, if a Witch Hunter was poisoned with the Poison 3 power, he might make his initial Faith (Toughness) check. However, an hour later, he will have to roll it again, with the same Difficulty of 3. A final hour would have pass before the third and final check due to poison.

Victims of this attack lessen their penalty by 1 for each sunrise that passes. So a Witch Hunter who was at -2 to all attacks and skill check due to poison would only have -1 to their roll after sunrise. On the following sunrise, his penalties would be gone.

WITHERING TOUCH

Factor Limit: 5

Range: Self

Area: N/A

Renounce? No

Oppose: No

This creature's touch extinguishes life. Insects die in its grasp and plants foul at its brush. Even the air it despoiled as its hands move through it.

The creature's touch is a weapon with a DM equal to the power factor. To merely touch a victim, a monster makes a regular attack with a +2 die bonus. Success on the attack means the victim has been touched. A touch attack that misses does no damage.

Withering touch slows creatures down, making them less able to defend themselves. A touched victim automatically removes 1 from their Defense, even if they chose not to spend it. Withering touch is a special attack that does not stack with other kinds of damage such as that from other powers or modifiers like the claws, fangs, and pugilism talents.

MYSTICAL POWERS

ANIMAL CONTROL

Factor Limit: 7

Range: Line of Sight

Area: 1 target

Renounce? Creature or Target

Opposed: Resolve (Courage)

This power allows a creature to attempt to control animal at a distance. It need not speak to use this power. The creature must spend an action to activate this power. The creature resists with its Resolve (Courage) with a difficulty of the creature's power factor. Those that fail the roll may come under the thrall of the creature.

- Those who succeed by +2 turn hostile against the creature, and are able to pinpoint where the creature is.
- Those who succeed by +1 turn hostile against the creature.

- Those who succeed are not affected by the power, but do not necessarily turn hostile against the creature.
- Those who fail by -1 fall under the thrall of the creature, but will not do anything that would threaten their life (jump off of a cliff; put their neck in the jaws of a predator, etc).
- Those who fail by -2 or more will do anything the creature directed them to do.

CHILLING WIND

Factor Limit: 5

Range: Line of Sight

Area: 100 ft.

Renounce? Target (see below)

Opposed: No

Through the powers of the Adversary, this creature can create a stiff wind which causes a dice penalty to all ranged attacks. The supernatural cold of the wind also causes damage each round to creatures within it.

The creature must spend an action to summon the wind. Thereafter, all ranged attacks in the chilling wind suffer a dice penalty equal to the power factor. The cold also causes 1 point of damage per power factor, each round.

When this power is renounced by a Witch Hunter, the weather conditions that have been created fade within 1 round. The creature that created the weather pattern cannot do so again until the following night.

DEBILITATING AURA

Factor Limit: 7

Range: Self

Area: 100 ft.

Renounce? Creature

Opposed: Courage

This dreaded power allows the creature to project a supernatural presence that debilitates all of its enemies. Anyone stepping within 100 yards of the creature begins to feel a dark energy about them. This sensation might manifest in any number of ways. It might be a burning feeling upon the skin, a great weight upon the chest, or the insane sounds of whispering and laughing all around.

Those within the Debilitating Aura suffer penalties to all attack rolls and skill checks. The penalty depends on how badly the victim's fail their rolls. Victims of this power they may resist with a Faith (Courage) roll with the difficulty being the power factor.

- Those who succeed by +2 are bolstered by their Faith. They gain a +1 bonus to all attack rolls for the rest of the scene, instead of a penalty.
- Those who succeed by +1 are not affected by any Debilitating Aura from any creature for the rest of the scene.
- Those who succeed are not affected by Debilitating Aura from this particular creature for the rest of the scene.
- Those who fail by -1 suffer half of the power factor as a penalty to all attack rolls and skill checks.
- Those who fail by -2 or more suffer the power factor as a penalty to all attack rolls and skill checks.

FORESIGHT

Factor Limit: 3

Range: Self

Area: N/A

Renounce? Creature

Opposed: No

This power allows a creature to sense danger before it happens. This creature is never surprised or caught unawares. Also, it gets 1 extra Defense success each round equal to its power factor. Thus, a creature with a Defense pool of 3 and Foresight 3 would roll three dice to get the number of successes it could cancel, but also add three to the number of successes rolled.

This power is cumulative with armor.

FRIGHTENING CALL

Factor Limit: 7

Range: All those who can hear

Area: 1 victim per power factor

Renounce? Target

Opposed: Courage

This power allows a creature to create a terrifying sound that locks onto the mind of others, filling them with fear. It might be a chant, a speech, a song, a howl...anything the victims can hear. Creating a Frightening Call requires an action. The moment in which a victim can hear the Frightening Call, he or she may make choose to make a Faith (Courage) roll to resist, with the difficult of the creature's power factor.

- Those who succeed by +2 are immune to any Frightening Call from any creature that they might hear until the next sundown.
- Those who succeed by +1 are immune to that particular creature's Frightening Call until the next sundown.
- Those who succeed are not affected by that particular creature's Frightening Call for the rest of the scene.
- Those who fail by -1 are *rattled* and suffer -2 penalty to all attacks and skill rolls.
- Those who fail by -2 are *terrified*, suffering -3 penalty to all attacks and skill rolls. They attempt to flee from the situation as soon as possible.

IMMORTALITY

Factor Limit: 9

Range: Self

Area: N/A

Renounce? No

Opposed: Courage

This creature is an eternal being, capable of living forever, so long as it does not come to some violent end. Even still, this being may still live when subjected to physical harm.

Any time this creature is reduced to 0 damage by one of God's servants, the vanquisher must roll their Faith (Courage) against the creature's Immortality power factor. Should the attacker succeed in their roll, the creature is destroyed. However, if they fail their Faith test, the creature rises after the next sundown. Even completely destroying the creature's body does no good.

The creature in question simply reconstitutes, fading into being by the next sundown.

Villains who have this power are difficult to destroy. Those trying to destroy a Villain with this power must first defeat its Immortality power before making the final Faith check to permanently vanquish their foe. Keep in mind that a creature whose Immortality power has not been defeated returns to the world as itself in its same body.

INVULNERABILITY

Factor Limit: 5

Range: Self

Area: N/A

Renounce? No

Opposed: No

This creature lives a normal life span and ages normally. However, it cannot come to an end by any violent means. When the creature is reduced to 0 damage it stops moving and appears to be dead. However, upon sundown, the creature returns, either rising up from where it fell with no wounds on its body, or simply fading into existence.

The only way this creature can be permanently put down is by finding its specific flaw. This fatal flaw must be a substance or item of some kind. It might be something simple as a silver musket ball or as complex as the tears of an honest man. Whatever the substance or item, it instantly destroys the creature when it contacts it. The nature of the substance or item can be discovered through research, talking to experts, or exploration. The GM determines whether a Gossip, Research, Myth and Lore, or Occult rolls are needed to discover the fatal flaw.

Each power factor determines the Difficulty of any rolls needed to discover the flaw. For example, if an explorer stops by a small village and asks about a creature with Invulnerability 2, then the Difficulty for his Gossip rolls are 2. Multiple rolls might be needed as determined by the GM, but the Difficulty will always be the power factor. As a rule of thumb, any Witch Hunter should not have to consult any more sources than the power factor to discover the creature's fatal flaw. Finding those sources, however, is another matter.

LONGSIGHT

Factor Limit: 5

Range: Unlimited

Area: N/A

Renounce? Target

Opposed: Will

This creature has the uncanny ability to see from far the intimate details of another's life. By concentrating on a particular target, this creature may look into the victim's past as a series of images. This mediation requires an action. The creature witnesses the victim's strengths and weaknesses, hopes and fears. As a result, this creature gains +1 dice per power factor against its victim in all attacks and skill checks. The creature may use this power on a different target, but loses the bonus dice used on the original victim.

The target may resist this power by making a Faith (Willpower) roll, with the power factor as the difficulty. Those who succeed on their roll are immune to the creature's Longsight power until the next sundown.

SIREN CALL

Factor Limit: 7

Range: All who can hear

Area: 1 victim per power factor

Renounce? Creature or Target

Opposed: Will

This power allows a creature to create a haunting sound that locks onto the mind of others, compelling them forwards. It might be a chant, a speech, a song, a howl...anything the victims can hear. Creating a Siren Call requires an action. The moment in which a victim can hear the Siren Call, it may make choose to make a Faith (Willpower) roll to resist, with the difficult of the creature's power factor.

- Those who succeed by +2 are immune to any Siren Call from any creature that they might hear until the next sundown.
- Those who succeed by +1 are immune to that particular creature's Siren Call until the next sundown.
- Those who succeed are not affected by that particular creature's Siren Call for the rest of the scene.
- Those who fail by -1 are drawn towards the creature, moving towards the origin of the call at a normal pace. While in this state, they may speak and still defend themselves with their Defense dice. However, they will not attack, preoccupied with the Siren Call more than anything else. A creature thus affected will not endanger itself as it is drawn towards the creature, but try to circumvent dangers before it while yearning to get to the Siren Call.
- Those who fail by -2 or more wander towards the creature in a trace-like state. Affected victims do not heed dangers such as enemies, fire, treacherous water, or a cliff face when approaching the creature. Likewise, victims who are entranced by the Siren Call will not fight or defend themselves, losing all Defense.

Creatures who reach the source of the siren call stand and listen in stupor until it is over. Those affected by the call may make new Faith (Willpower) checks each round if they are slapped, jostled, or take damage. Otherwise, affected creatures remain affected until someone or something causes them to snap out of it.

SUGGESTIVE

Factor Limit: 7

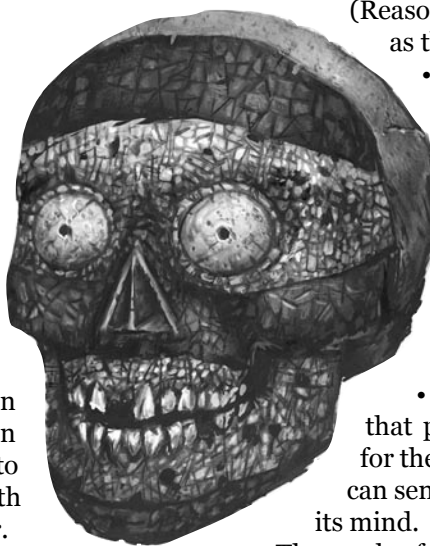
Range: Line of Sight

Area: 1 target

Renounce? Creature or Target

Opposed: Reason

This power allows a creature to attempt to control another at a distance, by planting an idea within his or her mind.



So insidious is the Suggestive power, that many hapless victims believe the idea in their mind to be their own. Using the Suggestive power requires an action. Those targeted by this power are able to make a Faith (Reason) roll to resist, with the power factor as the difficulty.

- Those who succeed by +2 are immune to the creature's Suggestive power until the next sundown, and can pinpoint the being that attempted to tamper with their minds.
- Those who succeed by +1 are immune to that particular creature's Suggestive power until the next sundown, and know the general direction in which the being lies.
- Those who succeed are not affected by that particular creature's Suggestive power for the rest of the scene. The would-be victim can sense that something tried to tamper with its mind.
- Those who fail by -1 follow the suggestion planted within their minds. They will not fulfill directives completely against their nature (like killing friends, family, or oneself). Once the directive is complete, the creature will not understand why it did what it did.
- Those who fail by -2 or more follow the suggestion planted within their minds. They will fulfill any directive, even if it is against their nature. Finally, when the victims are done with the act, they will fully believe that the action was their own idea.

SUMMON LESSER MINION

Factor Limit: 9

Range: 100 ft.

Area: 10 ft.

Renounce? No

Oppose: No

The creature may summon minions to its aid. These minions will always vary from creature to creature. For example, a vampire might summon up a pack of five wolves when he calls for aid. These creatures may just "happen" to be nearby or may be summoned up from thin air, depending on the nature of the creature. Summoning minions is a free action, but it takes one round for them to appear.

Summoned minions can never be more than Threat Level 2, and can only have +2 dice of bonus skills. For each power level, the creature may summon up to 2 minions. For example, a creature with Summon Lesser Minion 5 would summon 10 minions to its aide.

SUMMON GREATER MINION

Factor Limit: 9

Range: 100 ft.

Area: 100 ft.

Renounce? No

Oppose: No

The creature may summon more powerful minions to its aid. These minions will always vary from creature to creature. For example, a Baykok Watcher might summon Baykok Approachers to its aid. These creatures may just “happen” to be nearby or may be summoned up from thin air, depending on the nature of the creature. Summoning minions is a free action, but it takes one round for them to appear.

These summoned minions can be Threat Level 3 or 4. They have up to +4 dice of bonus skills. For each power factor, the creature may summon up to 1 greater minion.

WEATHER CONTROL

Factor Limit: 3

Range: Line of Sight

Area: 1000 yards

Renounce? Target (see below)

Opposed: No

This terrible power allows the creature to control the weather in a large area.

- At factor 1, the creature may create light weather phenomenon like heavy fog, rain, or snowfall. Attacks in the weather suffer a -1 die penalty.
- At factor 2, the creature may create moderate weather phenomenon. Strong thunder storms, blinding rain, powerful winds, or blizzards are possible. Attacks in the weather suffer a -2 penalty, skill checks suffer a -1 penalty. Those out in the weather suffer 1 point of damage if they are without protective clothing.
- At factor 3, the creature may create severe weather phenomenon. Devastating storms, sheets of rain, or blinding snow storms are possible. Attacks in the weather suffer a -3 penalty, skill checks suffer a -2 penalty. Those out in the weather suffer 1 point of damage for each round they are exposed. Protective clothing slows the damage to 1 point of damage per hour.

The weather pattern creature must be appropriate to the time of year, so snow cannot be wrought in the summer. This power lasts until the next sunrise, at which time the creature must wait until the next sundown to use the power again.

When this power is renounced by a Witch Hunter, the weather conditions that have been created fade within 10 rounds. The creature that created the weather pattern cannot do so again until the next sundown.

PRICES

CORPUS PRICES

CORPUS LIMITATION

This creature can only use its Corpus powers under certain circumstances. For example, a werewolf might only be able to change or go on a rampage during a full moon. If the conditions of the limitation are not met, *none* of the creature’s Corpus powers function.

Common Variants:

Day/Night – The creature can only activate its Corpus powers during the day or night.

Moon Phase – The powers in question can only activate during a particular phase of the moon.

Rage – The creature can only activate its powers when it is full enraged. If the creature is not enraged when it is encountered, it takes an action to become enraged, during which time it cannot take any other action and loses its Agility defense.

Feeding – This creature can only activate its powers for 1 day after feeding (on flesh, blood, or whatever it needs to feed upon). Thereafter, it loses its powers until it feeds again.

DAMAGE

This creature takes damage from the touch of a particular item or substance, such as sunlight. While in contact with the item or substance, the being suffers 3 points damage, unless the object already has a DM listed, such as Holy Water. This becomes very problematic if the substance is imbedded in the creature’s body (such as in the form of an arrow head or musket ball). If the substance is imbedded into the creature, then it must spend at least 1 round digging the substance out to stop the damage. During this time, the creature can take no other action and loses its Defense.

Minions with this weakness die if forced to be in contact with the item or substance for 2 rounds or more. *Common Variants: Cold Iron, Holy Eucharist, Holy Symbols, Holy Water, Silver, Sunlight, Water*

OBVIOUS APPEARANCE

This creature is very obviously a supernatural being. Not only that, but its obvious appearance makes it impossible for this creature to hide or be in disguise. For example, the creature might be titanic in size, it might glow luminously, or it might be wrapped in hellfire. Whatever the case, it fails all Stealth (Agility) checks automatically.

OBVIOUS TO THE TOUCH

This creature cannot hide its appearance or presence when it is touched. Anyone who even brushes up against the creature’s flesh or body will cause it to reveal its true nature. For example, a phantom might immediately be intangible at the touch; a vampire might be cold as a corpse when one touches them; or a creature might induce sharp pain whenever it is grasped.

REVEAL NATURE

Under the right circumstances, this creature reveals its true nature to others, readily identifying this being as a being from the Invisible World. For example, a vampire who steps in front of a mirror and casts no reflection would have the Reveal Nature – Mirrors price. The true nature of the creature is only revealed under the specific conditions set down when the threat is created.

Creatures who reveal their true nature do so in a variety of ways. They might glow in the light of the moon, or their form might become transparent if they wander too far from an object. Others might revert into a monstrous shape, like a werewolf in the light of a full moon.

Common Variants:

Day/Night – The creature is revealed during the day or night.

Moon Phase – The creature is revealed in the light of a particular phase of the moon.

Mirrors – The creature's reflection is abnormal in some way, revealing the creature as supernatural

Water – Dosing this being with water reveals its true nature

Tears – Rubbing the creature with tears causes it to reveal its true nature

Holy Water – Splashing the creature with holy water causes it to reveal its true nature

Grave Dirt – Sprinkling the creature with grave dirt reveals this creature's true nature.

VULNERABILITY

This creature takes extra damage from weapons of a specific make or substance. For example, a werewolf might take extra damage from a silver weapon, while a vampire might take more damage from a blessed weapon. When facing damage from a vulnerability, *double* the DM of the object used to harm the creature. Thus, a dagger that is normally DM +2 would be DM +4 as a vulnerability. The DM should be doubled *after* it is adjusted by various talents, powers, and abilities.

Common Variants:

Blessed – The object used to damage the creature must be blessed. The object need not necessarily be a “weapon” in the traditional sense.

Bone, Cold Iron, Gold, Silver, Wood

Fire – Fire, in general, does more damage to this creature than fire does to other creatures. Adjust the DM of the fire accordingly.

MOVEMENT PRICES

LAIR

This creature must return to its lair every day (24 hour period). If it is prevented from doing so for some reason, it suffers -1 a die penalty to all attacks and skill checks. It continues to suffer this cumulative penalty for each day that it does not return to its lair. For example, a vampire who is away from its lair for 3 days might suffer a -3 dice penalty.

If the creature is able to return to its lair, its dice penalty immediately goes away. However, it must linger within its lair for at least four hours to be able to venture out again without the penalty returning. So, the vampire in the above example would eliminate its die penalty if it returned to its lair. However, if it left again, it would immediately gain the -3 penalty again. Only by dwelling in its lair for four hours would it be able to leave again without the penalty and starting the process over again.

RESTRICTION

A creature with the *Restriction* price cannot enter a particular area or place of its own volition. For example, *Restriction – Running Water* means that the creature in question cannot enter an area with flowing water by itself. If a creature is forced into an area that is restricted to it, it begins to take damage. It takes 3 damage a round.

A creature may travel over a restricted area if it has the means. For example, a creature might use a bridge to cross over a river if it has the *Restriction – Running Water* price. However, a creature cannot come within 1 yard of the ground in a restricted area without taking damage. Thus, a low bridge would not be sufficient enough to protect a creature with the *Restriction – Running Water* price. Alternatively, flying creature with the *Restriction – Holy Ground* price would be able to fly over the holy ground, but not be able to touch down in it, or come within 1 yard of the ground in that area.

Common Variants:

Doorways – The creature cannot cross over the threshold of a doorway normally, but may do so if invited.

Running Water – The creature cannot cross over flowing water, but can cross still water.

Holy Ground – The creature cannot enter ground that has been sanctified or blessed by someone of religious authority.

Warded Areas – The creature cannot enter a warded area, or a place surrounded by religious symbols or artifacts. A break in the circle of religious symbols allows the creature to enter.

Water – The creature cannot enter water at all, whether flowing or still.

IMPAIRED TRAVEL

This creature cannot travel during certain times, and must stay in its current location whenever a particular even occurs. For example, a vampire might not be able to travel during the day. If the creature is forced to move about during this time (if it is chased, for example) then the creature is sluggish and weakened. In this state, the being moves at ½ speed, and is at -2 to all attack rolls, skill checks, and Defense. It will not voluntarily move of its own accord, unless its existence is endangered.

Common Variants:

Day/Night – The creature cannot travel during the day or the night.

Moon Phase – The creature cannot travel while a particular phase of the moon is in the sky.

Raining – The creature cannot travel in the rain.

Season – The creature is particular weak during a certain season

Sound – The creature is weakened and cannot travel while a particular sound can be heard, like church bells.

Holy Day – During a particular day of the week (such as Sunday) the creature cannot travel.

Prayer – While people in the area are praying, the creature cannot travel or escape easily.

OFFENSIVE PRICES

AVOIDANCE

This creature is repelled by an object or substance which is presented strongly to them. When in sight of such an object or substance, the creature must make a Resolve (Courage) check with a Difficulty of the presenter's Faith. If the creature fails its check, the creature may not approach, nor may it make ranged or magical attacks upon the presenter. The repelled creature is free to make ranged or magic attacks against the presenter's allies. If the creature succeeds in its roll, then the creature is free to act normally. Presenters who lose the contest may continually try to repel the creature with this weakness so long as they have Faith uses left.

Common Variants: Cold Iron, Holy Eucharist, Holy Symbols, Holy Ground, Holy Water, Sunlight

The Sound of Church Bells – If the sound of church bells is audible to someone in the area, the creature is affected, whether it can hear the bells or not.

FRAILITY

This creature is utterly powerless when in the presence of a particular object or substance. It retains all of its weaknesses as well. The object or substance must be within 1 yard of the creature to affect it.

Common Variants:

Cold Iron, Holy Eucharist, Holy Symbols, Holy Ground, Holy Water, Sunlight

The Sound of Church Bells – If the sound of church bells is audible to someone in the area, the creature is affected, whether it can hear the bells or not.

OFFENSIVE LIMITATION

This creature can only use its Offensive powers under certain circumstances. For example, a wendigo might only be able to infect others while it is outside in the cold. If the conditions of the limitation are not met, *none* of the creature's Offensive powers function.

Common Variants:

Day/Night – The creature can only activate its Offensive powers during the day or night.

Moon Phase – The powers in question can only activate during a particular phase of the moon.

Rage – The creature can only activate its powers when it is full enraged. If the creature is not enraged when it is encountered, it takes an action to become enraged, during which time it cannot take any other action and halves its Defense.

Location – This creature might only be able to use Offensive powers in a specific location, such as while in the out of doors, while in its lair, or in the woods.

Weather Conditions – This creature might only be able to use its Offensive powers during certain weather conditions, such as while it is not raining, while it is cold outside, or during storms.

PREY EXCLUSION

This creature cannot attack targets of a certain type. For example, this creature might be prevented from attacking all women, all children, or all those who are elderly. The ban on targets is always fairly broad. Target bans may be based on sex, age, ethnicity, nationality, profession, and clothing worn.

Common Variants:

Women, Men, Children, Adults, Elderly, Native Americans, Those clothed in unwoven clothes, Innocents, Criminals

WEAKNESS

This creature suffers a -3 dice to all attacks, skill checks, and reactions when in the presence of a particular object or substance. The object or substance must be within 10 yards of the creature to affect it.

Common Variants:

Cold Iron, Holy Eucharist, Holy Symbols, Holy Water, Sunlight

Herbal – When this variant is selected, a specific plant must be selected as well, such as wolfsbane, garlic, or mandrake.

The Sound of Church Bells – If the sound of church bells is audible to someone in the area, the creature is affected, whether it can hear the bells or not.

MYSTICAL PRICES

ATMOSPHERIC DISTURBANCE

This particular creature's presence disturbs the environment that it is in. While the creature is nearby, the air might turn cold, or an open flame might turn blue. Whatever the variant, this atmospheric disturbance is usually a dead giveaway that the creature is nearby, or that at least something odd is going on. An atmospheric disturbance takes place when the creature is within 10 yards, so it makes it hard to pinpoint exactly where the creature is based upon the disturbance.

Noticing an atmospheric disturbance is anywhere from Difficulty 1 to 3, depending on the circumstances. For example, it would be rather easy to see one's hearth flame turn blue, but not perhaps so noticeable if the hearth were in the other room where you could not see it directly.

Common Variants:

Open flame turns blue

Food immediate spoils – For example, milk might curdle, meat might turn rancid, and fruits might shrivel.

Preternatural Cold – The temperature drops by 5 to 10 degrees in the area.

Animal Unease – Animals within 10 yards of the creature become jittery, -1 to all Animal Care, Drive, and Ride checks.

Wilting Vegetation – All plants begins to wilt and die if the creature lingers for more than an hour in 1 location.

Insect invasion – Insects of every variety can be seen scurrying about wherever the creature is present.

BLOCKED FROM THE WORLD

During particular times or events, this creature is shunted into the Invisible World. During the time in which is forced from the material plane, this being cannot interact with the physical world in any way. Nor can it be seen. Once the event or phenomena is over, the being appears where it was last seen.

Common Variants:

Day/Night – The creature appear during the day or the night.

Moon Phase – The creature cannot appear while a particular moon phase is in the sky.

Storms – The creature appear while it rains or storms.

Calm Weather – The creature cannot appear in calm weather (meaning it can only manifest in storms).

Season – The creature is absent from the world during a particular season.

Ritual – The creature will vanish from the world while a particular ritual is conducted, but returns after the ritual is over.

CONTRACTED SOUL

This particular creature has contracted its soul out to the Adversary. As such, it no longer has any free will of its own, but must serve a devil of some sort. Should the devil that this creature serves be destroyed or sent back to Hell, the Contracted Soul creature also dies, and its soul is taken to Hell with its master. Those creatures that have Contracted Souls cannot use their Faith score, only their Damnation score.

FEEDER

This creature must feed upon some sort of terrible substance in order for it to live. While the creature is feeding, the creature cannot perform other actions. It also cannot use its Defense. Feeding typically takes between 1 to 3 actions.

If the creature does not feed at least once per day, the creature loses -1 Toughness. When its Toughness falls to 0, the creature perishes forever.

Common Variants:

Blood, Blood of the Living, Human Flesh, Living Flesh

Souls – This creature must drink the souls of humans it has killed. To do this, it must first kill a mortal. Thereafter, it may draw out the soul of the freshly killed at any time within 24 hours of being killed.

FOCUS BOUND

This creature has a driving goal that it tries to achieve on a nightly basis. If confronted with the object of the goal, the creature must make a Resolve (Courage) check to keep itself from pursuing it. The difficulty of the check depends on the proximity of the focus to the creature. The closer the focus is, the harder it is for the creature to resist. Creature's goal might be an action, such as hunting down the person that murdered it. It might be to protect a place or object. It might be to find something missing. The exact focus will vary between creatures.

- If the creature is just within sight of the focus, the difficulty of the Resolve (Courage) check is 1.
- If the creature is within 100 yards of the focus, the difficulty of the Resolve (Courage) check is 2.
- If the creature is within 10 yards of the focus, the difficulty of the Resolve (Courage) check is 3.
- If the creature is within 1 yard of the focus, the difficulty of the Resolve (Courage) check is 4.

The creature must make the check each round it is within the presence of the focus.

Common Variants:

To find a specific person

To destroy a certain kind of person – For example, all men, all criminals, or all clergy

To protect a specific place – The creature would have to make a check if the place of protection was threatened in any way.

To protect a specific place

To find something lost

FRAGMENTED SOUL

This creature, like an undead, has sacrificed parts of its soul for power. As a result, it is very much disconnected with humanity. It receives a -3 to all Interaction rolls. Because this being has only pieces of a soul, it cannot heal normally. In order to heal, the creature must actually stitch itself up. Thus, *someone* must be able to perform a Heal check upon the injured creature and must have surgical equipment to do it.

MYSTICAL LIMITATION

This creature can only use its Mystical powers under certain circumstances. For example, a wendigo might only be able to use certain powers when it is outside in the cold. If the conditions of the limitation are not met, *none* of the creature's Mystical powers function.

Common Variants:

Day/Night – The creature can only activate its Mystical powers during the day or night.

Moon Phase – The powers in question can only activate during a particular phase of the moon.

Rage – The creature can only activate its powers when it is full enraged. If the creature is not enraged when it is encountered, it takes an action to become enraged, during which time it cannot take any other action and loses its Defense.

Location – This creature might only be able to use Mystical powers in a specific location, such as while in the out of doors, while in its lair, or in the woods.

Weather Conditions – This creature might only be able to use its Mystical powers during certain weather conditions, such as while it is not raining, while it is cold outside, or during storms.

RIDDLE BOUND

A creature who is riddle bound loves riddles. Each time it encounters a mortal, it will ask the mortal a riddle. If the riddle can be answered, the creature then suffers the effects of another price, such as *avoidance*, *restriction*, *ward*, or *weakness*.

Once it has encountered a mortal and asked the mortal its riddle, the creature need not ask that mortal the riddle again. So long as the mortal leaves the question unanswered, the creature can interact with the mortal however it wishes.

If the creature encounters a group of mortals, it may ask the same riddle of the whole group or ask each individual a singular riddle. It's up to the creature. Telling riddles is a free action for the creature.

SOUL OUTSIDE

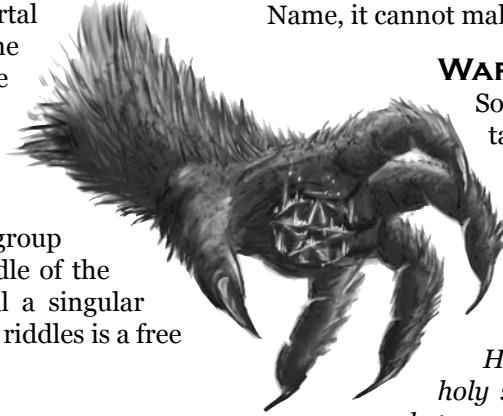
This creature has a vital part of its soul outside of its own body and placed it somewhere else. This separation of body and soul-piece *alone* does not make the creature particularly resistant against damage, powers, or spells. Should this vital part of the soul be destroyed, the creature itself is vanquished completely. It can never return to the world, despite any other powers or talents it might have.

The soul must be kept in some kind of container like a reliquary, phylactery, statue, box, or piece jewelry. Whatever item holds the soul immediately becomes fragile, capable of withstanding only 1/2 of the creature's Toughness in hits. This fragility sets hold once the item contains the soul of the creature, no matter how tough it once was before. Once the container is destroyed, the soul itself can be struck. The soul can only withstand 1 hit before it is vanquished. Once the soul is destroyed, the creature is likewise completely destroyed and can never return, despite any other powers or abilities that it might have.

The creature's soul may or may not be hidden in an inaccessible place. Such a decision will vary from creature to creature. However, it should be noted that the fragility of the container will limit where the soul can be placed. A container at the bottom of the ocean, of example, would be crushed by the pressure. Likewise, a container in a stone box a mile under the earth might get damaged as time passes.

TRUE NAME

A creature with the True Name price has a secret name by which it may be called. This secret name gives anyone who knows it power over the creature in question. Those who use the creature's True Name in conversation gain -3 difficulty to all Personality based checks against it. For example, a person who uses a demon's True Name in conversation would get -3 difficulty in Personality (Charm), Personality (Intimidate), and Personality (Deceive) rolls against it.



Furthermore, once a creature's True Name has been spoken aloud, that creature must make a Resolve (Will) roll to attack anyone who has uttered its name. The difficulty of that roll is equal to the speaker's Faith or Damnation score. Once a creature has made its Resolve (Will) roll to see if it can attack a speaker of its True Name, it cannot make another check until the next day.

WARD

Some creatures cannot affect particular targets with their powers, spells, or hexes. A being with the *Ward* price cannot use its supernatural powers or spells against a warded creature. What precisely wards targets from the creature's abilities varies.

Common Variants:

Holy Symbols – Those presenting a holy symbol by hand and interposing it between them and the creature are immune to the creature's spells or powers.

Mantra – Those orally chanting a prayer to their particular faith cannot be affected by the creature's spells or powers.

Special Clothing – Those wearing special garb are immune to the creature's spells or powers. Special garb varies. For example, some faeries cannot affect those who wear their clothes inside out.

Lead Shielding – Those presenting a lead sheet and interposing it between them and the creature are immune to the creature's spells or powers.

Mirrors – Those who place a mirror between themselves and the creature are immune to its spells and powers.

WORD IS LAW

This creature cannot break its word once it is given. The creature need not make a formal vow. If it says it will do something, it is bound by what it says. For example, if the creature says that it will release a prisoner at the break of day, it will do so, even if doing so would be detrimental or fatal to it. If the creature goes back on its word, it loses 1 die from all of its abilities per day. When it has lost all of the dice from all of its abilities, then the creature perishes forever.

If the creature is prevented from keeping its word, it still suffers ability damage from not keeping its word. Thus, most beings with this price will not give their word very easily, nor even make the simplest of agreements unless it is sure about what it is getting into. The creature is always bound by the letter of what it says, not the spirit of what it says. For example, a wendigo might say that it will release a prisoner in exchange for a mystical item. When it receives the item, it then may release the prisoner atop a high mountain or in the midst of a terrible snowstorm. After all, the wendigo merely agreed to a release of the prisoner, not the manner in which the prisoner was released.

Witch Hunter

THE INVISIBLE WORLD

CHARACTER NAME: _____

PLAYER NAME: _____

RELIGION: _____

NATIONALITY: _____

DESCRIPTION: _____

HEIGHT: _____ WEIGHT: _____ EYES: _____ HAIR: _____

CATALYST: _____

ORDER: _____

BACKGROUND: _____

SIN(VICE): _____

VIRTUE: _____

HERO POINTS: 00000 00000

TRUE FAITH: 00000 00000
00000 00000 :DAMNATION

ABILITY SCORES

PHYSICAL ABILITIES

STRENGTH

AGILITY

TOUGHNESS

MENTAL ABILITIES

EDUCATION

REASON

WILL

SPIRITUAL ABILITIES

COURAGE

INTUITION

PERSONALITY

SKILLS

TO KEEP TRACK OF YOUR BACKGROUND SKILLS FILL IN THE ☐ BEFORE THE APPROPRIATE SKILLS

SKILL (ABILITY) TOTAL = RANK + ABILITY + BONUS

FIGHTING SKILLS

- ☐ ARCHERY (AGI) _____ = _____ + _____ + _____
- ☐ FIREARMS (AGI) _____ = _____ + _____ + _____
- ☐ GRAPPLE (STR) _____ = _____ + _____ + _____
- ☐ HAND-TO-HAND (STR) _____ = _____ + _____ + _____
- ☐ THROW (STR) _____ = _____ + _____ + _____

INTERACTION SKILLS

- ☐ CHARM (PER) _____ = _____ + _____ + _____
- ☐ COMMAND (COU) _____ = _____ + _____ + _____
- ☐ DECEIVE (PER) _____ = _____ + _____ + _____
- ☐ EMPATHY (INT) _____ = _____ + _____ + _____
- ☐ INTIMIDATE (PER) _____ = _____ + _____ + _____
- ☐ PANTOMIME (PER) _____ = _____ + _____ + _____

MOVEMENT SKILLS

- ☐ ACROBATICS (AGI) _____ = _____ + _____ + _____
- ☐ CLIMB (STR) _____ = _____ + _____ + _____
- ☐ CONTORTIONIST (AGI) _____ = _____ + _____ + _____
- ☐ DRIVE (AGI) _____ = _____ + _____ + _____
- ☐ JUMP (STR) _____ = _____ + _____ + _____
- ☐ RIDE (AGI) _____ = _____ + _____ + _____
- ☐ ROW (STR) _____ = _____ + _____ + _____
- ☐ STEALTH (AGI) _____ = _____ + _____ + _____
- ☐ SWIM (STR) _____ = _____ + _____ + _____

REACTION SKILLS

- ☐ BALANCE (AGI) _____ = _____ + _____ + _____
- ☐ CONCENTRATE (WIL) _____ = _____ + _____ + _____
- ☐ ENDURANCE (TOU) _____ = _____ + _____ + _____
- ☐ NOTICE (INT) _____ = _____ + _____ + _____
- ☐ PARRY (STR) _____ = _____ + _____ + _____
- ☐ REFLEXES (AGI) _____ = _____ + _____ + _____
- ☐ RESOLVE (COU) _____ = _____ + _____ + _____

☐ SPEAK LANGUAGE

RANK LITERACY

NATIVE LANGUAGE: _____
OTHER LANGUAGE: _____

SKILL (ABILITY) TOTAL = RANK + ABILITY + BONUS

PROFESSIONAL SKILLS

- ☐ ANIMAL CARE (INT) _____ = _____ + _____ + _____
- ☐ CONSTRUCT (EDU) _____ = _____ + _____ + _____
- ☐ DISABLE (REA) _____ = _____ + _____ + _____
- ☐ EVALUATE (EDU) _____ = _____ + _____ + _____
- ☐ GAMBLE (INT) _____ = _____ + _____ + _____
- ☐ GOSSIP (PER) _____ = _____ + _____ + _____
- ☐ HEAL (INT) _____ = _____ + _____ + _____
- ☐ HERBALISM (EDU) _____ = _____ + _____ + _____
- ☐ MYTH AND LORE (EDU) _____ = _____ + _____ + _____
- ☐ OCCULT (EDU) _____ = _____ + _____ + _____
- ☐ NAVIGATION (INT) _____ = _____ + _____ + _____
- ☐ PERFORM (PER) _____ = _____ + _____ + _____

- ☐ PROFESSION (REA) _____ = _____ + _____ + _____
- ☐ RESEARCH (REA) _____ = _____ + _____ + _____
- ☐ SAIL (AGI) _____ = _____ + _____ + _____
- ☐ SEARCH (REA) _____ = _____ + _____ + _____
- ☐ SORCEROUS TRADITION _____ = _____ + _____ + _____

- ☐ SUBTERFUGE (AGI) _____ = _____ + _____ + _____
- ☐ SURVIVAL (INT) _____ = _____ + _____ + _____
- ☐ TRACK (INT) _____ = _____ + _____ + _____
- ☐ TRADE (REA) _____ = _____ + _____ + _____

☐ TRAINED KNOWLEDGE (EDU)

[illegible]

WEAPON:		C:		DM:	
RANGE:		SIZE:		WEIGHT:	
MELEE DICE:		RANGED DICE:			

RELOAD: _____

WEAPON:		C:	DM:
RANGE:	SIZE:	WEIGHT	
MELEE DICE:		RANGED DICE:	

RELOAD: _____

WEAPON:		C:		DM:	
RANGE:		SIZE:		WEIGHT	
MELEE DICE:		RANGED DICE:			

RELOAD:

ARROWS/BOLTS: ☐☐☐☐ ☐☐☐☐ ☐☐☐☐ ☐☐☐☐

POWDER & SHOT:	LBS	(SLINGERBULKER - 3 SHOTS PER LB.) (SLINGERBULK PISTOLS - 6 SHOTS PER LB.)
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SLINDERBLOSS - 3 SHOTS PER LB.
SLINDERBLOSS PISTOLS - 6 SHOTS PER LB.
PISTOLS - 12 SHOTS PER LB.
M. SHOTS - 6 SHOTS PER LB.

[illegible]

ARMOR:		AV:		DM:	
AP:		MP:		WEIGHT:	

ARMOR: AV: DM:
AP: MP: WEIGHT:

WEAPONS

WEAPON: C: DM:

RANGE: SIZE: WEIGHT

MELEE DICE: RANGED DICE:

RELOAD:

WEAPON: C: DM:

RANGE: SIZE: WEIGHT

MELEE DICE: RANGED DICE:

RELOAD:

WEAPON: C: DM:

RANGE: SIZE: WEIGHT

MELEE DICE: RANGED DICE:

RELOAD:

ARROWS/BOLTS:

POWDER & SHOT: LBS

BLUNDERBUSS - 3 SHOTS PER LB.

BLUNDERBUSS PISTOL - 6 SHOTS PER LB.

PISTOL - 12 SHOTS PER LB.

MUSKET - 6 SHOTS PER LB.

ARMOR

ARMOR: AV: DM:

AP: MP: WEIGHT:

ARMOR: AV: DM:

AP: MP: WEIGHT:

HEALTH TRACK

INJURY LEVEL EFFECT SCORE

HEALTHY TOUGHNESS x2

NONE

LIGHT TOUGHNESS x 1.5

-1

MODERATE TOUGHNESS x 1

-2

HEAVY TOUGHNESS x 1

-3

DYING TOUGHNESS x 0.5

-4

EQUIPMENT

BANKED MONEY:

MONEY:

COMBAT DICE POOLS

INITIATIVE

REFLEX (AGILITY)

DEFENSE

AVERAGE YOUR

AGILITY + TOUGHNESS (ROUND UP)

COMBAT SKILL REFERENCE

SKILL

TOTAL DICE

ARCHERY (AGI)

FIREARMS (AGI)

GRAPPLE (STR)

HAND-TO-HAND

USING (STR)

USING (AGI)

THROW (AGI)

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INJURY LEVEL		EFFECT	SCORE	
HEALTHY	TOUGHNESS x 2	NONE	00000	00000 00000
LIGHT	TOUGHNESS x 1.5	-1	00000	00000
MODERATE	TOUGHNESS x 1	-2	00000	00000
HEAVY	TOUGHNESS x 1	-3	00000	00000
DYING	TOUGHNESS x 0.5	-4	00000	00000

WEAPONS

WEAPON: C: DM:

RANGE: SIZE: WEIGHT

MELEE DICE: RANGED DICE:

RELOAD:

WEAPON: C: DM:

RANGE: SIZE: WEIGHT

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[illegible]

BANKED MONEY:

MONEY:

[illegible]

INITIATIVE ○

DEFENSE ○

AVERAGE YOUR
AGILITY + TOUGHNESS (ROUND UP)

COMBAT SKILL REFERENCE

SKILL	TOTAL DICE
ARCHERY (AGI)	_____
FIREARMS (AGI)	_____
GRAPPLE (STR)	_____
HAND-TO-HAND	_____
USING (STR)	_____
USING (AGI)	_____
THROW (AGI)	_____

[illegible][illegible][illegible]

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WEAPONS

WEAPON: C: DM:

RANGE: SIZE: WEIGHT

MELEE DICE: RANGED DICE:

RELOAD:

WEAPON: C: DM:

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DYING TOUGHNESS x 0.5

-4

EQUIPMENT

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[illegible]



Dark Providence

"The Lord saw how great man's wickedness on the earth had become, and that every inclination of the thoughts of his heart was only evil all the time." Genesis 6:5

Paradigm Concepts, Inc., the award-winning company that brought you *Living Arcanis*, presents **Witch Hunter: Dark Providence**! Presented by a bevy of talented horror adventure writers, **Dark Providence** provides a mixture of chilling horror and high-flying adventure never before seen in a role-playing game.

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