A World of Darkness Game
for Revised 3.5 Edition Rules

A New Vision of a Damned World

One year ago, eldritch horrors of cosmic malevolence called the Iconnu attempted to destroy our reality. They failed, but the attempt left the world in rapidly darkening shadow. Dead souls returned to claim living bodies, creating blood-drinking undead fiends: vampires. Bestial spirits came as well, to create werewolves, and demons formed bodies from worldly matter. Magic crashed back into the world, and mages wield its power for whatever purpose suits them. Humans called the Awakened unknowingly keep the darkness at bay. These supernatural creatures struggle against each other and clash in the shadows, most attempting to destroy the world, but a few fighting to preserve it. And over it all, the Iconnu still lurk, squeezing the world like an eggshell.

This book includes a complete setting:

a new vision of the World of Darkness.

- Characters play as vampires, mages, werewolves, demons or Awakened and wield frightening supernatural powers against their own kind.
- The world is the one we know, but now much darker: destruction in the central United States, nightmares coming to life and beasts roaming shattered cityscapes.
- This game uses a variation of the most popular roleplaying game system in the world.

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WHITE WOLF GAME STUDIO

MORE COMPLICATED NOW

Life had become more complicated now.

The last rays of daylight died, finally, beyond the hazy horizon.

Night seethed with a rush in Victor's limbs, and in his mind.

But at least it was life, Victor mused.

Life, once again.

Yes, his name was Victor.

His last name had been consumed by the darkness along with most of his other memories, but he did not mind.

It was enough.

In fact, he liked it that way.

He had no use for names.

No use for memories.

Not caring for, or even truly trusting, the noisy vehicles of the city, Victor walked. He withdrew into the hooded sweatshirt he wore to conceal his face. He kept his hands in his pockets. His appearance was haggard and rough — his eyes sunken and red. But mostly he was pale. No blood coursed in veins below his skin. His heart was a shrunken, lifeless thing.

His body was that of a boy. Sixteen years old at most, Victor believed. And a real Nancy boy from the sounds of all the screaming in his head. Most of the time, Victor was able to shut out the frantic noises the boy made. Victor was the master here, and it would stay that way.

You hear that, boy?

The people around him on the streets gave him none of their attention, which was just as he desired. They hurried home with shopping bags and dogs on leashes, believing themselves safe in the light of far too few streetlights. He could smell them as much as see them. To Victor, they were cattle to feed upon and nothing more.

This attitude was little different than that which he held in his previous life, when he served as a... physician, yes, that was it. Funny he should remember that now. He gave an involuntary shudder at the thought. So many patients. So many needy people. No one had ever concerned themselves with his needs. That he remembered. Infants, children, adults — they became just bodies to him, just work. And who could blame him for his attitude, when all he could hear was their ceaseless, selfish prattling? All he could smell was their sweat and their shit and their guts. Sometimes it was easier to just let them die. Or even help them die. Yes, surely the world was better off without them.

But that was then. Such details, and such thoughts, meant nothing now.

Now there was only Victor's need.

He turned down a particularly dark street that ran past a river. It seemed familiar to him. Perhaps he had hunted here before.

Insects and frogs filled the night with their songs from out of the darkness of the riverbank, but he paid them no mind. He was only interested in two things now: threats, and prey. For the moment, he spied neither.

Of course, Victor did have other concerns — other debts to pay. He had not brought his own soul back screaming and twitching from... well, wherever that was. No, he was given this gift — this second chance — by something else. Something entirely removed from his experience, either from back then or now. And although he did not understand what that thing was, he knew that he must act on its behalf. That need was woven into the very fabric of his new existence. In return for his regained life, Victor would occasionally hunt special, specific targets. Hardly any price to pay at all, really. He really gave it little thought.

He turned down a side street that wound about old houses glowing from the inside like paper lanterns at a party. It was a quiet street. Perfect. He slipped off the sidewalk, through the darkness and up against the peeling, paint-covered boards on the side of an ill-cared-for, sprawling home with a wide front porch. There, he waited, and watched. He let the night air, thick with the scent of grass clippings and pollen, wash over him, hoping to catch the scent of a possible quarry.

He hated people. All people. He always had, really, but now at least they served some purpose to him. Not only did their lives sustain his newfound existence, however, the hunt provided

him with other pleasures as well. He loved that he was stronger than them, and faster as well. He loved the look of hopeless realization that crossed their countenance just before he drained them of their very lifeblood. He remembered that look from his previous life, in flashes. He ignored such images.

Originally, he believed that the transition to his new existence had erased most of his memories, but deep in his dark soul he knew that wasn't true. He just didn't want those memories. He was weak, then — as weak as the boy whose body he had been given. Now, he was strong.

Now he held the power.

Something stirred in the shadows off to his left. Like a serpent surfacing above the water and then submerging again, leaving no trace of its passing, the dark thing moved. Victor looked more closely, drawing upon his auspex. That serpentine was familiar to him.

It was Renata. She was like Victor. The same forces that brought him back and gave him a new life did likewise for her. But she had not been as fortunate as Victor. Renata had lived in Poland, and died during some war apparently fought nearly sixty years ago. She didn't speak English, or know anything about living in America, and had to rely on her... what was the word? Host? That would do. Her host. She relied on him for information. That gave him an edge, and sometimes he peeked through the veil. You could see it in his eyes, and in his face. Her face. It was like she was really both of them, at once.

The thought disgusted Victor. He would not share this existence. It was his alone.

"Hello, Victor," she said. She spoke English with a European accent, which made no real sense, since she didn't speak English and the man she possessed was local. The accent, Victor had learned, indicated that she spoke as both of them at once. His words, and her intentions. The body that she had been granted was that of a middle aged man, clean shaven but rough skinned. It suited her poorly. Victor imagined that Renata was a silky beauty in her real life, but she had never actually given him any indication. Even in her manly form, she conveyed an unmistakable womanliness. It would be more disconcerting if such things mattered to Victor any longer, if they ever did. It was not flesh he craved in this new life.

Just blood.

"What are you doing out, Renata?" Victor said after giving her a small bow.

"As if you did not know," she replied.

Victor smiled with his eyes. He did know.

"I, too, feel the craving this night," he told her, nodding. He had encountered Renata on the hunt before. As much as he hated all others, it had been pleasant — comforting even — to speak with someone who understood his new existence from time to time. Renata was tolerable. Like Victor, her nature now elevated her above the rest of the mewling cattle around them. Victor would never use the word "friend," in either of his lives, but Renata was someone who might possibly understand some of the things he felt, believed, and experienced.

"And so I find you now here," she said quietly, looking past him down the street, perhaps a bit nervous.

"Yes. So? Why shouldn't I go where I please?"

"I don't know. There is just something... strange tonight."

"Strange how?"

She shook her head. "I am sure... nothing. Did you not tell me, though, that on your new body you once found an address—"

She stopped herself and backed further into the shadows. Victor turned to look where she had been looking. He saw a young woman walk out into the yard of the very house they stood beside. Her long, blonde hair was tied behind her head. Her slender, bare arms held a coiled green rubber hose. She knelt down just a few paces away from Victor and worked at affixing the end of the hose to a spigot on the side of the house.

He smiled.

Before he moved to strike, however, he looked around him, and down the street in both directions. He saw no one. The side yard here provided plenty of well-concealed space for him to carry out his deed once he dragged her back here. As she bent her head over the hose, it was almost as if she was offering herself to him. Just a few steps and a quick hand over her mouth and it would be done.

And yet he paused. Victor seemed unable to launch himself forward. Was Renata doing something to him? Was she going to steal his prey?

He looked at the unsuspecting woman. She finished attaching the hose, and turned her head slightly toward him.

Did he... recognize her?

No. Of course not. Everyone he knew — except for a small handful of people like himself and Renata — was long dead.

He heard Renata's ever-so-soft footfalls. She saw that he hesitated and was going to take the girl for herself. Damn her! And damn his inexplicable reluctance. Why wasn't he going forward? What held him back?

Renata stepped in front of him, crouched in a predator's pose, about to pounce.

"No," Victor whispered. But it was not Victor. His mouth had said it, but he had not willed it. "Run, Kathy!" No, it was not his will. It was the boy's. The boy's.

Silence, you little fool! You're not allowed to talk.

Victor's whole body convulsed, suggesting to him that whether it was truly his body at all might still be up for debate.

The girl — Kathy — looked up and into the darkness where they stood. "Ryan?" Her eyes were filled with both fear and hope.

Renata backed away from both him and the woman, ever the careful hunter. "Victor?" she whispered.

"Yes," Victor hissed as though in pain, though there was pain. Not physical pain. "Yes, I'm fine, we must—"

And then he doubled over. Victor's arms flailed, lurching and jerking at his sides. He appeared to throw himself at the ground.

You're not going to touch Kathy, you old bastard!

"Stop it, boy," Victor said aloud.

Renata continued to stare wide-eyed at the very dramatic and overt expression of what was actually an entirely inward struggle. Victor/Ryan thrashed on the ground. A passerby would have likely suspected an epileptic seizure.

Kathy moved toward them. "Ryan, is that you?" She was so close, either Victor or Renata could have reached out and torn her throat out in a single, rapid move. But there were other forces at work here now.

"Run, Kathy," Ryan said, with Victor's — no, it was his long before it was Victor's — voice. "Run home. Now."

Kathy's own confusion turned to fright, which evidently got the best of her. She ran, screaming. She called for the police. She called for her parents, and for the neighbors. At the sound of her shrieks, Renata scowled. She looked around, and then back at Victor. She spat upon his writhing form, and disappeared into the folds of the night.

You little punk kid! Victor had not been so angry, so filled with revulsion, since his "rebirth" into this new form. I'll kick your ass!

But no. "Punk kid?" "kick your ass?" Those weren't words he would use. Not even words he would think. Those were... the boy's words.

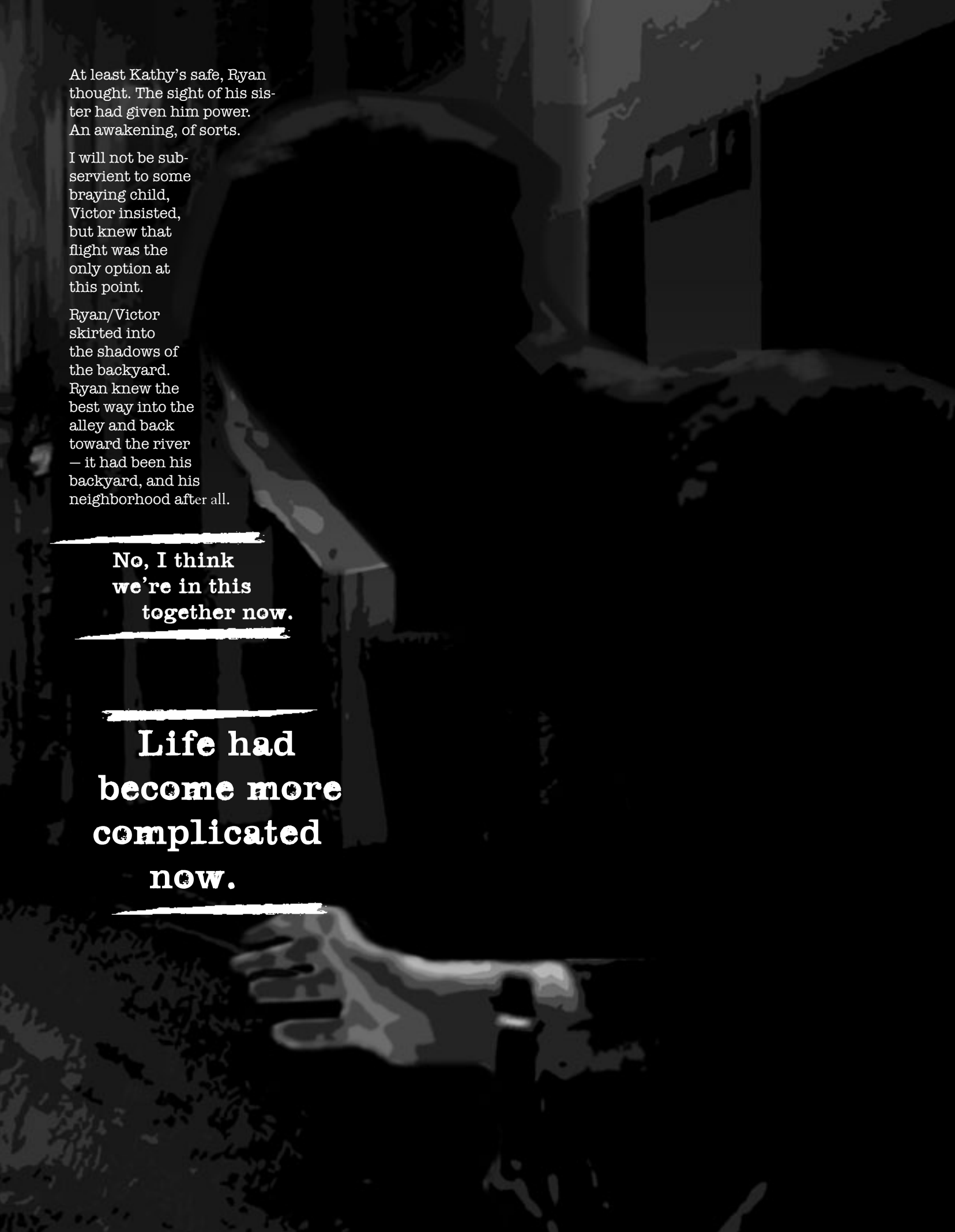
My name is Ryan, asshole.

"Shut the fuck up!" Victor screamed into the darkness. No, this was all wrong. Those were his emotions, but Ryan's words. He couldn't keep the boy out of his head anymore. They were fusing, somehow.

If you think you're going to try to boss me around in my own body anymore, you've got another thing coming, dickhead.

Shouts from neighboring houses accompanied the sounds of opening doors and people rushing into the street, and onto their freshly mowed lawns. These noises surrounded the continued screams of the woman, Kathy.

I don't want to go to jail anymore than you do, old man. Let's get out of here.


At least Kathy's safe, Ryan thought. The sight of his sister had given him power. An awakening, of sorts.
I will not be subservient to some braying child, Victor insisted, but knew that flight was the only option at this point.
Ryan/Victor skirted into the shadows of the backyard. Ryan knew the best way into the alley and back toward the river — it had been his backyard, and his neighborhood after all.
No, I think we're in this together now.
Life had become more complicated now.

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Introduction

It was the summer of 1991, at the GenCon game convention. I was still fairly new to the industry and my friend, Rob Bell, the *Champions* line editor, was "showing me the ropes" at GenCon. He asked me if there was anything that I'd seen at the convention that interested me. I said that there was a really interesting-looking game with a rose on the cover where you played vampires. I had been interested in vampires since I was very young. I had written a research paper on the topic in high school, and in so doing practically memorized the encyclopedia entry for "vampire." (There weren't a lot of source options back then.) While this was before the vampire and goth subcultures really existed, among some of my friends, I was known as the "vampire guy."

Anyway, Rob took me over to a little table with one guy behind it. On the table were arrayed a number of freshly printed *Vampire* books. Rob chatted with the guy behind the table and introduced me to Mark Rein*Hagen. I told him that I thought his new game looked amazing and gushed about it a little. He silently listened to me with an expression that spoke volumes: I wasn't telling him something he didn't already know. Out of the corner of my eye, I saw Rob give Mark a knowing look and motion with his head toward me. Mark sighed, and then said as condescendingly as I've even been spoken to, "Here you go, kid." He didn't need to add, "Now get away from me, son. You bother me," because it was already clear.

That was both my first and my last interaction with Mark. I did (and still do) love and appreciate the book.

But because of that, it's not without a feeling of more than a little irony that I present to you **Monte Cook's World of Darkness.**

You see, today, I count most of the folks currently at White Wolf among my best friends in the game industry. I've worked with them for years as publishing partners for my own Malhavoc Press. I was a little flabbergasted when Rich Thomas and Stewart Wieck approached me with the offer to take the World of Darkness — which had grown by leaps and bounds since 1991 and had become one of the most popular roleplaying games of all time — and do what I wanted with it. Now, I had already decided that my time in the game industry was winding down, but who turns down an offer like that? It's far too cool to say no.

So I said yes. I immediately began brainstorming ideas. At first, I thought about taking World of Darkness into the future, with faster-than-light ships and other planets. Then I thought about the distant past or taking the World of Darkness concepts and applying them to a quasi-medieval fantasy world that wasn't Earth at all.

Eventually, however, I settled upon a genre that I adore but have never had the opportunity to work with much: post-apocalypse. Vampires and werewolves in the ruins of society. I loved it. But better yet, what if whatever caused the apocalypse is the very thing that brought vampires, demons and so forth into the world? I loved that it would be a counterpoint to the long and detailed history of vampires, werewolves and demons in the original World of Darkness. Here, they would be brand-new additions to the world, still getting used to their place in things. And with this apocalypse came more than just these monsters in our midst. It changed the way the world worked, turning nightmares into reality in the dark corners of our planet.

But, I reasoned, some people aren't going to want to confine their gaming to a ruined world, so I made it only a "partial apocalypse." Now while that term seems a bit oxymoronic, it applies to this setting quite nicely. It's usually easier to juxtapose horror against a more realistic and understandable world, so I knew that at least part of the world should seem normal. Though with heavy emphasis on "seem."

To make this book happen, I was fortunate enough to get the assistance of two really great designers, Luke Johnson and Sean Reynolds. This book would not be nearly as cool as it is without their expertise, ideas and hard work.

Basic Concepts

If you're already familiar with roleplaying games in general, you can probably skip this section. If you're already familiar with both World of Darkness and the d20 System, you can definitely skip this section. Otherwise, you might want to take a look.

Brief Intro to Roleplaying Games

A typical roleplaying game (RPG) session involves you and your buddies sitting around a table, eating pizza, drinking soda, rolling funny-sided dice and making up stories. Each player in the game controls a single alter ego in the game's world; that's the player's character, or player character (PC).

One player, however, is the Game Master (GM). If this game were a computer game, the GM would be the CPU: he controls everything about the world aside from the PCs, from the weather to the villains to the innocent bystanders in the street.

Brief Intro to the World of Darkness

The World of Darkness is a setting. It is a modern-day setting keyed for horror games — though of course horror isn't the only emotion you can elicit when you play games set in the World of Darkness. The World of Darkness is much like the world we see outside our window, but unseen predators lurk in the shadows — predators that prey on the unsuspecting mass of humanity. These creatures range from those which our culture has already described in legends and stories (such as vampires) to those for which we have no name.

The World of Darkness is the most popular setting published by White Wolf, and you might be familiar with the World of Darkness from some of the other games set in it: **Vampire: The Requiem, Werewolf: The Forsaken, Mage: The Awakening** or perhaps **Promethean: The Created** or **Changeling.** The World of Darkness presented in this book is similar to but not identical to that other World of Darkness.

Any sort of game you want can take place in this World of Darkness, from normal humans confronting ever-more-horrific truths to games where players play vampires and werewolves engaged in a stealthy, shadow war of politics, intrigue and assassination to supernatural creatures waging open battle across the ruins of America's cities.

Brief Intro to the Game System

If you are familiar with other games set in the World of Darkness, you are familiar with the Storyteller system, which involves dice pools of d10s for task resolution (i.e., anytime you want to do anything, you roll a number of d10s). "Perhaps the biggest difference between those games and this one is that **Monte Cook's World of Darkness** uses the Revised 3.5 Edition rules.

The basic task resolution system in 3.5 Edition rules uses a 20-sided die." Whenever you want to do anything, from climb a wall to shoot a vampire to convince a bouncer to let you into the club, you roll a d20 and add some number. If your total is equal to or greater than a certain other number, you succeed. If your total is less than that number, you fail.

1. Roll a d20.
2. Add modifiers.
3. Compare your result to the target number.

The number you add to the d20 and the target number depend on your skills and abilities and on what you are trying to do. If you're trying to climb a wall, you'll have an easier time if you are a big burly character skilled at climbing (these factors add large numbers to your d20 roll) and if the wall was filled with hand and foot holds (which means your target number is low, like 10). Conversely, if you are shooting a handgun at a vampire, you'll have a difficult time if you are unskilled at using handguns and the vampire is far away (these factors add low numbers or even subtract from your d20 roll) and if the vampire is ducking and weaving to avoid you (which means your target number is high, like 20).

Dice

Dice rolls are described with expressions such as "3d4+3," which means "roll three four-sided dice and add 3" (resulting in a number between 6 and 15). The first number tells you how many dice to roll (adding the results together). The number immediately after the "d" tells you the type of die to use. Any number after that indicates a quantity you add or subtract from the result.

d%: Percentile dice work a little differently. You generate a number between 1 and 100 by rolling two different 10-sided dice. One (which you designate before you roll) is the 10s digit. The other is the 1s digit. Two 0s represent 100.

Rounding Fractions

In general, if you wind up with a fraction, round down, even if the fraction is one-half or larger.

Exception: Certain rolls, such as damage and hit points, have a minimum of 1.

Multiplying

Sometimes a rule makes you multiply a number or a die roll. As long as you're applying a single multiplier, multiply the number normally. When two or more multipliers apply to any abstract value (such as a modifier or a die roll), however, combine them into a single multiple, with each extra multiple adding 1 less than its value to the first multiple. Thus, a double (x2) and a double (x2) applied to the same number results in a triple (x3, because 2 + 1 = 3).

When applying multipliers to real-world values (such as weight or distance), normal rules of math apply instead. A blinded creature attempting to negotiate difficult terrain counts each square as four squares (doubling the cost twice, for a total multiplier of x4), rather than as three squares (adding 100% twice).

Faces

"Why do these people always live in places that smell like piss?" Baxter sniffed and scowled. "And why do people piss in alleys, anyway? Don't they have fucking bathrooms?"

Sadhvi didn't answer; she stood in the middle of the alley, and her gaze crept from one side to the other. Baxter sighed through his nose. He transferred his .45 automatic to his other hand and wiped his sweaty fingers on his jacket. He knew Sadhvi was scanning the alleyway for magical resonance, or something. He wrapped his fingers around his gun again.

"A person was here not long ago," Sadhvi said, glancing at him. "A person not a person. One of the shadow ones."

Baxter grunted. "Looks like Slick Eddy was right. That guy hasn't failed me yet. Can you tell what kind?"

Sadhvi hesitated, then shook her head. "I cannot. But it might still be here."

"Still —" Baxter cut off as a shape hurled out of the shadows to his right. Reflexes grabbed his legs and shot him backward, and his arms snapped up, firing a trio of shots; he knew they were too late even as his finger jammed the trigger. His dodge allowed the creature — snarling, bristling, fur, fangs — to shoot past him and rocket into Sadhvi. The two went down.

"Shit!" Baxter grunted as his back hit the ground. He rolled to his left. Shapes moved. One of them was hulking and snarling like a great dog; sick streetlight glinted off a strand of saliva as it whipped through the air. Sadhvi was tiny compared to the thing, but they rolled together, and Baxter couldn't get a clear shot. Fuck.

There was a wet, tearing sound. Sadhvi screamed.

Goddamn it! No choice. Baxter fired.

The huge shape reared up with a shriek, arching its back, crying a shout-howl to a moon that wasn't there. Sadhvi lay beneath it, and for one horrible second Baxter thought she was dead, but then her head jerked to face the thing, one hand came up, and there was a sound of rushing air. The wolf thing flipped into the air like a tossed drumstick. It rotated twice as it sailed up and backward.

"Nice," Baxter said as he sighted and squeezed off three shots — BAMBAMBAM! The thing was arcing through the air, silhouetted against a flickering light at third-story level; shooting it was target practice. The creature screamed again as the bullets struck; it jerked and twisted, then crashed to the ground in a heap of garbage 20 feet away.

Baxter sprang after it. These things were tough. A few special Baxter Love bullets would slow it down, but wouldn't stop it. He needed to get after it fast, before it had time to get to its feet.

He had barely taken a step when something gentle shoved him from behind, lifted him up, sailed him a foot or two off the ground toward his adversary.

Ah, good. Sadhvi can't be too messed up.

His feet touched down next to the creature. It was a werewolf — obviously. It resembled the classic man-wolf of horror films: all ropy, furred muscle, slashing claws and fangs, and feral instinct. Red-white smoke tendrilled up from bullet wounds in its side.

The werewolf's eyes blinked open. Baxter kicked it twice in the kidney and shot it in the right leg, just above the knee. It howled. Its face twisted. Hair receded. Muscles shrank. Its jaw cracked and disappeared.

Baxter frowned in disgust. No matter how many times he saw it, seeing the human form being brutalized like this always made his stomach turn. He held his gun at arm's length, pointed at the werewolf's forehead. He waited until it had completed its transformation, and a sandy-haired man in a tattered leather vest and jeans lay before him.

"Don't move, or I'll drill you through the fucking brain," Baxter said. He grinned. "Silver bullets, my friend."

The werewolf made a pained "ah." His head

dropped to the side, and his eyes caught on something. Despite himself, Baxter glanced away, following the creature's gaze. On the wall near them, human faces pressed out of the brick, as if people were trapped within and had shoved their screaming faces against the inside of the wall as it cooled. A spider the size of his head, abdomen bulbous and purple, crawled up the wall, inserted a clear proboscis into one of the faces' eyes, and its legs knelt. Pink fluid rose up the proboscis.

"Yuck," Baxter said. He glanced down at the werewolf, then snapped his gaze and gun away for an instant, squeezed a shot and blew the spider to smithereens. Then the gun was back, aimed at the werewolf's forehead.

"You're not working alone," Baxter said. "You'll lead me to the others." The werewolf stared at him. "You'll lead me to the others, or I'll shove a silver hook in your entrails and hang you up outside my office." Baxter didn't smile.

The werewolf gazed at him for a few seconds, then nodded.

"Wonderful," Baxter said. "Hey, Sadhvi! You up for more fun?" He glanced out of the corner of his eye and saw her staggering toward him, gripping her left arm. He started. "Good Christ!"

Sadhvi's arm was missing below the elbow.

"Sadhvi! Shit!" He glanced at her, then the werewolf (blood all over his mouth), then her. "How in God's name are you still standing?" Blood leaked from her stump — not the torrent he would expect.

"I . . ." She swayed. "I will get Sammy to patch me up. He owes me. You go on." She staggered to the wall with the faces (not seeing them) and leaned against it.

"Are you sure?" Baxter squinted down at the werewolf. "I could plug this guy and go with you. We could come back some other time."

Sadhvi shook her head. "We have been after this man too long. Go."

Baxter looked at her, then nodded. "Okay. I'll get him for you." He was hoping for a reaction, a smile, an affirmation, but she only nodded — her head dropping, her chin touching her chest.

"Okay," Baxter breathed out. He looked down at the werewolf, whose eyes glittered. Baxter stepped back and gestured with his gun. "Get up, fuckhead. Let's go."

The werewolf's mouth twitched, and Baxter was tempted to shoot him dead. He held back, hearing Sadhvi breathing near him. The werewolf rolled to his good side (well, to his better side), slid his leg under him and shoved himself upright. He swayed, glanced back at Baxter, then moved off. Baxter followed a few steps behind, pistol held at the werewolf's back.

The werewolf led him through tangled alleys, smoke pouring from manholes and sewer grates, for 10 minutes. Baxter kept a mental map of the twists and turns so he could find his way back after he did his business. The werewolf glanced back often, and once showed his pointed teeth in a bloody smile, but he didn't try anything funny.

Eventually they stood in front of a grimy, graffitied metal door in a brick building.

"This is it," said the werewolf. His voice was remarkably mild compared to his earlier bestial growls.

"Fantastic," said Baxter. "After you." He gestured with the gun.

Baxter wiped his mouth with his fingers. Fucker. That was dangerous. Now he knows I'm here. Ah well. He's just one guy. I'm too close for him to get away now.

The werewolf glowered, then reached out, twisted open the handle and pulled. The door opened into darkness. The werewolf looked back, smiled and disappeared within.

Almost. The rat-a-tat of Baxter's handgun was loud in the dripping streets, and all three bullets took the werewolf in the back of the head. The creature jerked, and stood for a moment half-enveloped in darkness. Then he fell forward, out of sight. Thump.

Baxter wiped his mouth with his fingers. Fucker. That was dangerous. Now he knows I'm here. Ah well. He's just one guy. I'm too close for him to get away now.

Baxter ejected his clip and loaded another. He held his pistol with two hands, upraised near his head, and moved into the darkness. He walked slowly; he gave his eyes time to adjust, and moved without a sound, creeping around the werewolf's fallen form.

After Baxter had gone maybe 20 feet into the darkness, bright lights snapped on. Their sudden hum was loud. Baxter squinted against them. Shapes — dark humanoid shapes — encircled him, 20 feet away.

"Shit."

"Shit indeed, Mr. Love," came a voice Baxter recognized. The fuzziness in his vision faded as his eyes grew accustomed to the light. Standing around him were a dozen men and women wearing a variety of dark, vintage clothing. Many were smiling, revealing pointed canines. Vampires, the lot of them. Fuck. Why hadn't he sensed them?

Directly in front of Baxter was a scrawny, dark-haired man in greasy coveralls. He was smiling. He was the one who had spoken.

"Slick Eddy?" Baxter said, blinking. He lowered his gun to waist level. It wouldn't do him much good now — maybe.

"Yes." Slick Eddy smiled, and his features distorted, changed; his form lengthened, his chest bulged, his coveralls flared. In seconds, in Slick Eddy's place was a lovely woman in a blue evening gown. "I am also Sheila Workman." The form flowed, and then was a kid, a boy of about 10, in a Little League uniform. "And Barty Collins." The form changed again, grew, kept growing. The legs merged together and grew red scales. The arms elongated, and black talons sprouted from them. The face was a horrible amalgam of human and reptile, with snakelike eyes and a pointed tongue. "But my true name," hissed the abomination, towering eight feet tall, "is Azrael, Lord of the Seventh Circle of Hell." Its eyes flared gold.

Baxter snorted. "I'll bet it is."

Azrael's form flowed and collapsed back into Slick Eddy. The creature smiled. "Ah, I have waited long for this day, Mr. Love."

"Yeah. Half a year, I guess," said Baxter, thinking back to when he had first met Slick Eddy.

"Nearly a full year, perhaps. I organized our initial meeting well in advance."

"Pretty clever of you. Guess you think I'm pretty special."

Slick Eddy shrugged. "My masters apparently think so. They will be pleased by your destruction." The vampires around the room stirred, murmured, excited. Several smiled.

Baxter snorted a laugh. "Your masters probably don't even know you exist, 'Azrael.' Amazing. I know more about them than you do."

Slick Eddy waved a hand. "Say what you will, you are dead soon, Mr. Love. Frustrating, is it not? Even with your capabilities, you remain inferior to one such as myself."

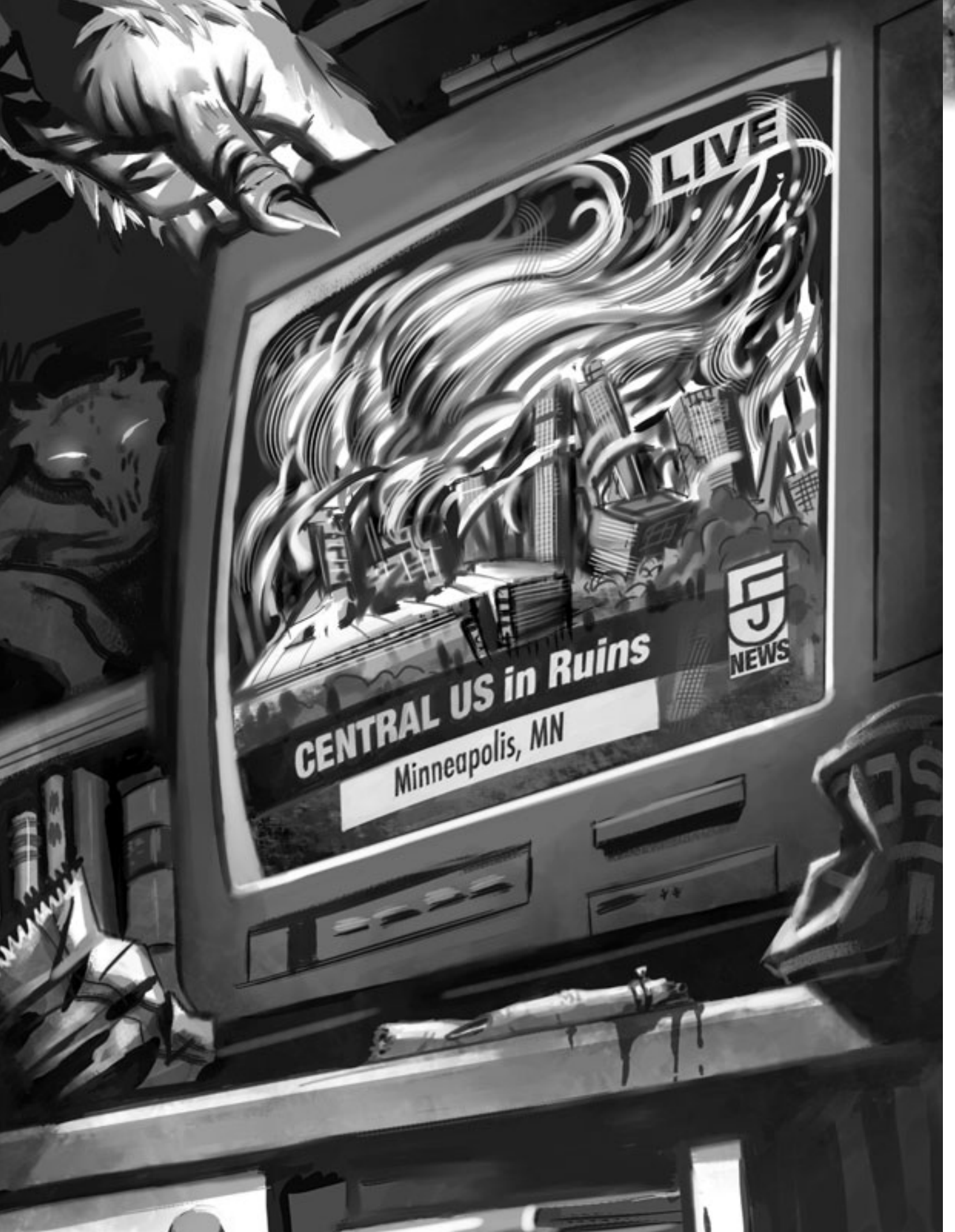
"Yeah, you're pretty slick, Slick Azrael. But despite all your capabilities, you have at least one obvious flaw. Don't feel too bad about it. A lot of people have it. All the Bond villains, for example. I have it, too, if you want to know the truth. Hell, as long as you're being honest with me, I can return the favor."

"Oh?" Eddy looked amused. "And what is this flaw, Mr. Love?"

"Pride. You went and revealed yourself to me. Sloppy."

Eddy laughed. "I do not believe it matters, Mr. Love, seeing as how you're about to die."

"Mmm." Baxter nodded. "I wouldn't be too sure." His lips jerked into a smile, his fingers brushed metal and fire filled the room.


LIVE
CENTRAL US in Ruins
Minneapolis, MN
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NEWS

Everything was fine. Well, we didn't realize that then. We thought everything was fucked up. But in retrospect, we had it really good. Then, the world ended.

Or rather, it was supposed to end. We couldn't even do that right, as it turns out. Now everything's a nightmare.

And most people don't even know about it. They know *something* happened. But they don't know the *truth*.

One year ago, things — a friend of mine used the term "eldritch horrors of cosmic malevolence," which seems about right — called the Iconnu, or sometimes the Unbidden, attempted to consume our reality, reshaping it for some unknowable purpose. This attempt, called the Intrusion, should have spelled the end of the world, with little humanity dying a swift, horrific death and six billion souls consumed by these Unbidden fucks who didn't even fully recognize their existence. Yeah, that's right. The Iconnu weren't even really aware of us. As I see it, we're as unknowable to them as they are to us. We were just too insignificant for them to notice.

Yet the Intrusion wasn't the end of the world. See, in the end, humankind was far stronger than the Iconnu understood — not in force of arms or physical strength (*certainly*) or even wisdom, but in spirit. Since then, we've learned that key individuals around the globe unconsciously hold it all together. As my friend said, "They maintain the fundament of reality." In other words, they kept — and keep — the Iconnu from bringing about the apocalypse.

Despite this resistance, the Iconnu established a sort of foothold in the world — specifically in the middle of North America. The site of their intrusion into our reality yawns wide in the Great Plains of the United States. It's a goddamned seething sphere of nightmarish unreality. The poor people there were consumed in a conflagration greater than any the world had ever seen. No atom bomb. No explosion. Nothing. Just suddenly Middle America is . . . well, we don't have words that really describe it. It's just gone.

Furthermore, the Intrusion sent a ripple through existence that altered the rest of the world. Changed the whole nature of reality, really. This ripple, called the Nightmare Wave, left its mark in many ways, some small, others not so much. In some locales, particularly those close to the Intrusion Point, the Nightmare Wave wrought terrible physical destruction. In others, the changes the ripple brought were subtler and more insidious. Imagine: People in one small town suddenly gain the taste — the *need* — for human flesh. A broken, unplugged jukebox in a condemned diner plays songs that give clues to events that haven't yet happened. Cockroaches in an old warehouse communicate and think with a single mind, and combine themselves physically into one monstrous creature. I shit you not. I've seen all that firsthand. And worse.

So, the Iconnu blasted away a million people, wrenched a chunk of the United States into a seething maelstrom of unreality, and gave life to horror-dreams across the world. But their goal was to wipe us out entirely, so their "victory" (if I can use such a term when there wasn't even a battle) was a partial one. Unsatisfied, the Iconnu then loosed spirits and demons into the material world. At first I think they were just trying to figure out what was stopping them from their goal, like when you stop on the street to figure out if there's gum on your shoe. Some of these spirits merged with human bodies and souls to become composite entities. Others clothed themselves in earthly matter and took on the guise of men and women. These beings seek to complete the world's destruction — through terror, through misinformation, through assassination and brutality and murder. Though it may be important to know that as strange and horrific as they are, they're not the Iconnu themselves. Even to these demons and things, the Unbidden are alien and unknowable. These things are more like agents, corrupted and converted to work for *them*.

Yet again something happened that the Iconnu did not expect. Once more they underestimated the human spirit. Some of the possessed humans retained control of their bodies. They resisted the Iconnu and maintained their free will. Many turned their powers against the Iconnu and work to save humanity.

That brings us to now. We're in the wake of a focused apocalypse. These agents of the Iconnu travel throughout the world, seeking to complete its destruction. Their own kind fights against them, along with true human allies — some who know more than others, and some who wield ancient powers given new potency. A maelstrom of warping reality howls like a sonofabitch in the middle of what was once the world's most powerful nation. The Nightmare Wave's influence haunts sites across the globe. Government agencies and tough-minded individuals work to stop the Iconnu's agents, and people throughout the world attempt to discover what's really happened and what's happening. Few of them get close.

We're fighting a shadow war for Earth and all humanity.

The Iconnu

One year ago, the Iconnu forever altered Earth by intruding a portion of their reality into ours.

Iconnu literally means "stranger." (Though in what language, I don't know.) They are also called "the Unbidden": uninvited or unasked for. An understatement.

CHAPTER ONE—A WORLD IN DARKNESS

THE WORLD YOU KNEW

It's today. Or maybe tomorrow. The world in **Monte Cook's World of Darkness** is Earth as we know it, with all its shortcomings, problems, sorrows, joys, blessings and triumphs.

At least, it was the world we know, until a year ago, when everything changed. Yet still, it's similar. The events of one year ago are easy to grasp, though only a few know the truth about them — and no one knows the whole truth, because it is, in fact, unknowable.

Since the setting is present-day Earth, the world is familiar. Though supernatural beings now exist in the world, they have not had a long, secret history of interaction with humanity. They showed up a year ago. Thus, to play this game, you don't need to read through lengthy histories; the history is all here, in this chapter.

In addition, the technology, the people and the cities are elements we all know. Characters have access to information, technology and weapons that you are familiar with in the real world. Characters likely can drive cars, use computers and have cell phones. They conceivably could fly jet airliners, fire automatic rifles, develop anti-venom serums and hack into computer networks.

The difference is: they do so while struggling against eldritch horrors beyond their ability to comprehend.

The Iconnu are beings beyond space and time as we understand such things. And as I've said, they are utterly unknowable and alien. Not just in form (they are not made of matter), but also in concept and motive. I don't even know if "being" is the proper word for these things. Maybe "entity" would be better. Certainly not "gods." Certainly.

And, good or bad, the absolute lack of comprehension works both ways. Just as we humans cannot comprehend the Iconnu, they cannot understand us. They barely recognize people as living, thinking beings — in fact, I believe that, at least on some basic level, the Iconnu don't. When they created the Intrusion, they had no idea why it didn't work.

It's like when I get on a plane, and I get sick from some virus on the plane and it ruins my vacation. I can't see the virus, wasn't expecting the virus and can only do something about it after the fact (and truthfully, I can't do much). The Iconnu are me in this analogy. We're the viruses.

The Iconnu aren't going away for vacation, however. They destroy things. That's what they do.

Why do they do it? I don't know. I have some theories, and the few other people who know as much as I do also have theories. Maybe it's just their *nature*. In the same way that fish swim and birds fly and people must dominate the environment, that's just what the Iconnu *do*. It's like that old parable of the turtle and the scorpion: The turtle agrees to swim the scorpion across the ocean, because he knows that if the scorpion stings him, they'll both drown. But the scorpion stings the turtle anyway. "Why?" asks the turtle, as they go under. "Because it's my nature," replies the scorpion.

Or maybe that's not it. Maybe the Iconnu destroy for some purpose. Maybe they have to do so to propagate their species. Maybe they destroy reality (as we know it) to create some higher — or, at least, *other* — reality that we cannot perceive or even comprehend.

In any case, we'll likely never know, and if we did know, that knowledge would consume us and destroy us utterly — I shit you not. It's that far beyond us. All we can do is struggle to maintain our reality. This process is somehow connected to consciousness and willpower — again, in some fashion that we'll never fully understand.

Agents of the Iconnu

As I mentioned, when the Iconnu entered our world, imprinting their reality on ours, Earth should have been tossed in the shitter. But that didn't happen, because. . . . Well, it's another one of those things we can't comprehend in its entirety. Certain people out there are more . . . *human* than others. They have strong wills. Strong spirits. Whatever you want to call it, somehow, subconsciously, they kept the Iconnu from armageddoning our asses.

If the Iconnu have done anything worthwhile, they've answered a few questions instead of sparking them. We know something more about death, thanks to them — death, and what comes after. Spirits. Ghosts. Whatever you want to call them, they're really out there. And those bastard Iconnu use our own dead against us.

The Iconnu's solution to the problem they encountered when they entered our reality (i.e., us) was to call up spirits. Spirits of dead people — *evil* dead people. And the Iconnu didn't stop with them; the Iconnu also summoned *other* spirits, spirits that have little to do with humanity. These were bestial creatures from . . . somewhere. Somewhere I don't like to think about, but some might call it "the void." Some might call it "Hell."

There are lots of names for these agents. You'll almost certainly hear them called vampires, werewolves and even demons. Really, the names fit. It may sound like an old movie, but trust me — the names fit.

The Iconnu summoned these spirits and had them investigate and *deal with* the problem. (To continue my above metaphor, similar to doctors using antiviral agents to *deal with* a virus, or antibiotics to *deal with* bacterial infection.)

So now the world sort of looks like it did a year ago, but with possessed people and monsters from other dimensions slinking around in the

STATS FOR THE ICONNU

The Iconnu, despite their importance in the setting, never come on stage in this game. They don't have hit points or Defense. They exist only as catalysts for the story. Even if you play a campaign in which the player characters are all servants of the Iconnu, the characters don't get to meet with the Iconnu, commune with them or interact with them in any meaningful way.

shadows — or, in some cases, in broad daylight — and killing each other. Weird things happen for no apparent reason. A giant, roiling ball of mean has taken over about 300 square miles of the north-central United States. And somewhere out there are the Iconnu, which caused all this destruction without even knowing what they did.

A few folks think we can end this war by destroying the Iconnu. Poor saps. I don't suppose we can even. . . . Well. "Destroying" them is a laughable concept. I don't think we can even have meaningful *interactions* with them. I don't even think their *servants* — the soul-bloated beasts and blood-drinkers in our midst — interact with the Iconnu. Their instructions are more like instincts and primitive drives than anything related to discourse.

Bottom line: The Iconnu want for nothing that we can understand, other than our (and our reality's) destruction. They don't want to be worshipped, they don't feed on our souls and they don't want to bring misery or pain. They aren't devils or demons or even evil gods. They are simply unknowable — and yet a threat. Like a boot coming down upon our little anthill, they hardly know we're here. And those spirits they summon? Well, sometimes you have to grind the boot to make sure you get all the ants.

The Intrusion

When the Iconnu attempted to access our reality, the event became known as the Intrusion, and the pinpoint spot where it occurred, the Intrusion Point. The Intrusion event should have metaphysically cracked open our world — some of my colleagues say our entire *universe* — like an egg, destroying it utterly. But it didn't. Instead, our reality proved unbreakable, not due to its inherent resilience but the strength of will of the intelligent beings who inhabited it. On a purely subconscious level, millions of people held the world together.

We have a name for these people — they are the Awakened, and we're still trying to figure out what makes them special. In some ways, they seem like the most *human* people humanity has to offer. A year later, we're pretty sure the Awakened staved off the world's destruction because of their strong connection to it — their inherent force of personality and spirit was too strong to allow reality to be destroyed.

It's important to point out that millions of people contributed to this unconscious resistance. "Millions" sounds like a lot, but compared to the six or seven billion of us who exist, it's a drop in the bathtub. Shows that most people just don't have what it takes to subconsciously fight incomprehensible beings from realms beyond human knowledge. Only these select few, less than 1% of all humanity, served as the anchor points to reinforce and protect reality. Those of us in the know believe the Awakened still serve that purpose, and if the Iconnu's agents find and slay these millions . . . *pop* goes the universe.

The Intrusion's Influence

When the Iconnu's Intrusion failed, the area around the point of their Intrusion — a singularity of madness — was left a physical and spiritual wasteland, gripped in the horror of unreality. The laws of physics are gone there, leaving all things utterly unpredictable. This place lies in the upper Great Plains of the United States, sort of near the midpoint of North America — in the northeastern portion of South Dakota.

Let's say you're far away from the Intrusion Point — California, say — and for some crazy reason you want to go take a gander at the point. Not a great idea, but, hey, it's your death.

First off, I should let you know that the Intrusion's effects are felt throughout the world. Primarily, these effects come indirectly, from the possessed creatures and physical spirits that roam the world at the Iconnu's instinctive request. However, some effects are more direct. When the Intrusion occurred, a ripple of metaphysical and physical madness pulsed out from the point, like a single shockwave that swept around the world in decreasing potency. This pulse is called the Nightmare Wave, and, if you're unlucky, you can feel its influence anywhere in the world.

The Haunted Lands

Things get worse when you approach the Intrusion Point. It starts about 500 miles out (in any direction — even up or down). In this area, and moving inward (toward the point), the Nightmare Wave's effects are palpable and much more frequent that elsewhere in the world. These are the Haunted Lands. Kansas City, Denver, Winnipeg and dear old Chicago fall into this realm. *Strange things* happen here. (See below for more information on the Nightmare Wave and its effects.)

In addition to the Nightmare Wave, strange weather patterns play havoc in the Haunted Lands. Thanks to a huge hemisphere of air suffering the effects of collision with the Iconnu's reality (see "The Conflagration," below), unnatural and often dangerous weather spreads from the Intrusion Point. The Haunted Lands feel this, though not so keenly as the other areas. Sudden heat waves in excess of 110 degrees. Hail in the summer. Tornadoes. The area's ecosystem is decimated, and God knows how — and *if* — it will recover.

So the Haunted Lands are bad, but not *real* bad. At least people live there. (People and other things that are much, much worse.) You pass through about 250 miles of Haunted Lands. Once you get within 250 miles of the Intrusion Point, you officially enter the Annihilation Zone.

The Annihilation Zone

The Annihilation Zone starts when you get within 250 miles of the Intrusion Point and stops when you get within 150 miles of it. This 100-mile-wide swath is filled with rubble, smashed buildings and broken, deformed bodies. The sky churns. The earth shudders. The devastation is terrible, and the landscape forlorn. A solitary crow caws in a ravaged tree. Somewhere in the distance, a spatter of gunfire.

When the Intrusion occurred, everything — people, buildings, rock, air — in a 300-mile diameter was annihilated. (That area is now the Conflagration; see below.) The annihilation of earth and air in this area created — and continues to create — earthquakes and wild, violent weather patterns that destroy buildings, bridges, roads and other infrastructure. The assault killed hundreds of thousands of people. The Annihilation Zone suffered, and still suffers, these effects. It is a wasteland pulled from the most frightening of post-apocalypse sci-fi writers.

And that's not all, folks. The Nightmare Wave effect is strong in the Annihilation Zone, changing people and animals in disturbing ways, warping matter and altering the rules of physics on a regular basis. A woman's legs grow to 10 feet in length. A pack of stray dogs sprout sticky, compound eyes across their bodies. A man is abruptly flung into the air, then plummets, screaming, to splatter like a cantaloupe on the ravaged remains of the sidewalk.

Many people have been evacuated from the Annihilation Zone, but some people still dwell in this horrific region. Why? I couldn't tell you. Simple human craziness. The Annihilation Zone also plays home to tens or hundreds of thousands of troops — from the United States and its allies — who try to smack down the locals with martial law and control the chaos seeping from the Intrusion Point.

The Annihilation Zone includes Minneapolis/St. Paul, but not quite Omaha or Rapid City.

The Conflagration

A 150-mile radius around the singularity — the Intrusion Point — is entirely uninhabitable. This 300-mile-diameter area, called the Conflagration, has no life. Any living creature — from virus to person — perished instantly. This destruction means the Intrusion killed around a half million people right off the bat. Combine that with the poor folks in the Annihilation Zone who were ripped apart by ensuing disasters, and the death toll for the Intrusion stands at around a million.

This 300-mile-diameter area, for all intents and purposes, no longer exists in our universe. Instead, it's a horrible cacophony of swirling energy, churning matter and things for which we don't have names or definitions. Inorganic matter in this region is in a constant state of flux, warping and changing state from gas, liquid, solid and energy. Think about it: an area approximately 300 miles across is just gone. The Earth's crust has been punctured, but the Conflagration annihilated the resultant magma displacement. This destructive, consuming field is hardest on the air, churning new, drastic and dangerous weather patterns to life.

Entering the Conflagration is deadly. The vast majority of those who enter it are eradicated. A few come out, hideously

GM'S NOTE — MOVING THE INTRUSION

The default location for the Intrusion is in the north-central United States, but you (the GM) can easily move the point elsewhere for your particular campaign. Making the change is probably just a matter of geography — instead of the Conflagration, Annihilation Zone and Haunted Lands extending and encompassing the locations mentioned here, they are instead in the middle of Russia, or the Serengeti or wherever.

Also, you probably want to pick cities analogous to Chicago (a metropolis in the Haunted Lands) and Minneapolis (a big city in the Annihilation Zone, at the edge of the Conflagration), as those cities are described in detail in Chapters 9 and 10 and make excellent settings for your campaign. Again, making the change should primarily be a matter of geography and culture. Chicago becomes Berlin, and Minneapolis becomes Vienna, for example.

However, you might choose to move the Intrusion Point to a location that affects more details in your campaign. Some options are discussed below.

THE MIDDLE OF NOWHERE

You might move the Intrusion to some vacant and inhospitable area of the globe. Not many remain, but the Intrusion could occur in Antarctica, in the northern Arctic or (less remote) the Sahara desert. In this case, the Conflagration, the Annihilation Zone and the Haunted Lands don't affect people nearly as much. The people in the world still know that something happened, certainly, but due to the remoteness of the location, they don't have as much information on it. They don't understand it even to the degree in which they do in the default setting. They may also be less concerned about it, with fewer troops to keep people away from the Intrusion Point — and fewer agents working to undermine the Iconnu's servants.

Adventures in such a campaign may involve the player characters attempting to find the source of the strange happenings in the world and/or directly investigating the Intrusion for the first time. All in all, the world in this campaign more closely resembles the real world, but with unnatural happenings in the shadows.

MAXIMUM DAMAGE

While the fact that a 500-mile-diamater area of the United States was decimated is less than ideal, from a pragmatist's point of view, it could have been a lot worse. What if the Intrusion had occurred in Washington, DC? Or densely populated New England?

If you want to increase the post-apocalyptic flavor of your campaign, consider moving the Intrusion to someplace where it would deal lasting damage to humankind's frail government structures. It might occur in Washington, DC, thereby slaying the president and joint chiefs — or altering them so that they serve the Iconnu or their own warped purposes. America could be left leaderless, with mass panic, or with several "leaders" coming to the fore and vying with one another for the de facto presidency. A similar situation could occur in the capital of any other nation.

For a particularly grim and ironic effect, the Intrusion could wipe out the leaders of almost every nation as they met for a great peace conference. Such an event would make the Intrusion's location seem almost purposeful — and maybe it was, but who can tell? Maybe it was all a terrible, cosmic coincidence.

GM'S NOTE — MOVING THE INTRUSION (CONT'D)

IN THE OCEAN

Earth is mostly covered with water, so, if the Intrusion's location is purely random, it would make sense if the Intrusion occurred out in the ocean. The ramifications are similar to those of a remote location (above), save for two facts: more people would know about it (due to shipping lanes and the like) and, more importantly, the drastic effect the Conflagration would have on the ocean's currents and ecosystem.

The Conflagration's effects on the ocean would be similar to those the Conflagration has on weather patterns but on a grander scale. Currents — including those strong currents by which mariners have navigated for centuries — would be irrevocably altered. Trade across the ocean grinds to a standstill as ships become becalmed, are carried far off course or sink in freak whirlpools. Investigating the occurrence — if any meaningful investigation can take place — becomes more difficult, and both air and sea travel are remarkably perilous.

IN THE SKY

The Intrusion could take place high in the sky, perhaps in Earth's atmosphere. The primary difference in this case is that the changes in the weather patterns are about twice as severe as presented in the default setting, but the Conflagration and Annihilation Zone have less direct effect on the world, because they're at least partially above the ground. You also get the interesting visual effect of having the Conflagration — in all its alien majesty — visible to far more people.

SCALE

Of course, you also have the option of expanding or contracting the scale of the Intrusion (and the associated Conflagration and other effects). Perhaps the Intrusion wiped out the entire United States — or all of North America. People on the other side of the world are still not quite sure what happened over here. Conversely, maybe the Intrusion is limited to a single state, county or even city — and only a very, very few people know the danger the world is in.

changed, in body or mind or spirit or all three. Many of those that simply come *close* to the Conflagration are killed or changed.

The Conflagration extends almost to Minneapolis and encompasses the small cities of Sioux Falls, South Dakota, and Fargo, North Dakota.

Hell?

To some, the Intrusion Point seems like a portal to Hell. Some even call it "the Hellchasm," which is clever slang but bears little relation to the reality (or *un*reality, as the case may be). The Intrusion Point is not a "portal," and does not lead to "Hell." It's more like a footprint, or maybe a scar. It is the result of something truly *OTHER* touching our world. Thus, I call it "the Intrusion Point."

I can understand where these other, misguided people get their ideas, though. The reality of the Iconnu, the reality beyond ours, is so completely alien that it *seems* like Hell. So does the portion of our reality that has touched theirs (the Conflagration). There's fire and brimstone (and just about anything else you can imagine). The collision of realities alters people and animals and creates demonic, hellish creatures that one can easily believe crawled from the Netherworld.

In addition, the Iconnu, somehow, tap into the wellspring of dead spirits connected with our world — evil spirits. The Iconnu also draw upon other spirits — spirits bestial, inhuman, and vicious. This ability enhances the feeling that the Iconnu come from Hell in the Judeo-Christian sense, so I can't really blame anyone for making that mistake.

The Nightmare Wave

Above, I mentioned that the Nightmare Wave — a pulse of *something* that altered fundamental laws of reality in isolated locations — spread when the Iconnu intruded on our reality. The wave turns portions of the world into excerpts from horror stories, some of them truly gruesome. Logical thought tells me that human bodies and organs should not — *can*not — accept some of the positions and deformations I've seen.

The Nightmare Wave isn't a weapon or a tactic of the Iconnu. The Nightmare Wave is a side effect. It's the result of our reality

coming into contact with another. This whole deal is all purely metaphysical on a level that our science — even our philosophy — cannot truly describe, explain or contain. One reality is literally bleeding into another. The result isn't *supposed* to be horrific. It isn't *supposed* to be anything. But our minds (and the physical laws of our reality) can't handle the transition. To us, it creates waking nightmares.

I wonder about this. Why nightmares? Why are the things the Nightmare Wave creates frightening, dangerous, even deadly? Granted, some of them fall into the creepy or disturbing category instead, but they are all unpleasant. If the effects were truly random — which, on first hearing that they stem from an alien reality running into ours, seems at least somewhat likely — wouldn't they occasionally create positive events?

Apparently not. A friend of mine thinks that human subconscious minds have something to do with it. Somehow, the Nightmare Wave taps into our fears — both subtle and overt, both primal and modern — and makes them reality. Or maybe we're just hardwired to think of anything strange or unusual as "nightmarish." I don't know.

The Nightmare Wave's Expansion

When the Intrusion occurred, the Nightmare Wave emanated from the site like a single ripple spreading from a stone thrown in a pond — a pulse of energy we cannot possibly define. The Nightmare Wave spread across the Earth, but (thankfully) lost strength as it moved. A hundred and fifty miles from the Intrusion, the Nightmare Wave wiped out everything (or, at least, *something* did). This is the Conflagration, and here the Nightmare Wave was so powerful that it took our laws of reality, twisted them, mangled them, liquefied them and then left the puddles lying on the floor. God only knows the specifics of what goes on here. Matter is in flux. Never before have I seen nice, cool liquid rock. Or gaseous rock. Or *plasma* rock, for Christ's sake.

A hundred and fifty to 250 miles from the Intrusion, the Nightmare Wave wrought widespread havoc. This is the Annihilation Zone, and though the Nightmare Wave came and went, its effects remain. Nightmare Wave effects are common occurrences in the region. The wave's influence works on people, animals and plants as well as locations here, turning them into unholy monstrosities physically or mentally — or both. Whereas elsewhere in the world, Nightmare Wave effects are limited to single locations such as a house or an alley, in the Annihilation Zone large areas — sometimes many square miles — suffer the effects.

Moving out further, 250 to 500 miles from the Intrusion, the Nightmare Wave's influence is less pronounced, but unmistakably present. These are the Haunted Lands, and are aptly named. The Nightmare Wave's effects have created "haunted" places and strange occurrences. Most people have at least heard about these places and events, and many people have encountered them. Unlike the Annihilation Zone, here most of the effects are localized to a single house, a back alleyway, a copse of trees or a single family or small group. Such places are called Nightmare Sites.

Beyond the Haunted Lands, the Nightmare Wave's effects are still present throughout the world, but the events are isolated. Only the occasional room of a house, the area around an old tree or a single animal or person are affected, and usually only in the subtlest of ways. Often one cannot tell whether someone is acting strange due to the Nightmare Wave or (more likely) some natural human weirdness.

Nightmare Wave Effects

Nightmare Wave effects and changes are sometimes permanent, sometimes transitory. Every so often, *new* nightmares manifest — new nightmares that are *not* products of the original Nightmare Wave, which in itself is frightening. Is some drizzle of the Nightmare Wave seeping out of the Intrusion, like a punctured infection that spews pus, then dies down to a slow trickle of blood? I shudder to think of *anything* new coming through that maelstrom.

Despite the occasional new nightmares, the vast majority of these events stem from the original Nightmare Wave. New nightmares are more common in areas close to the Intrusion, and even then, you can usually trace the "seeds" of the nightmare back to the moment of the Intrusion — the original Nightmare Wave — if you look closely enough.

The Nightmare Wave causes *changes*. Changes in just about anything — people, animals, plants, places. And the changes are *bad*, almost universally. (According to some of my buddies, this is because they are born out of human fears and nightmares and are not just random changes.)

They're not just physical changes either, though that would be bad enough. The Nightmare Wave is as much about mental and spiritual transmutation as physical. People think different thoughts, have different desires. Someone's personality changes from good Christian to Satanist. A cute kitten becomes a hyper-intelligent murderer.

Every so often, the changes are merely bizarre or unnerving rather than dangerous or horrifying. Sometimes they are minor, especially far away from the Intrusion Point. The effect might be merely a slight change in color, or a minor alteration of physical form. A car suddenly has animal (or demonic) horns and makes bestial noises when started up, or the leaves of a tree all become copper. Kind of weird, but no big deal. At least those things aren't going to eat you — hopefully.

Lastly, sometimes we see the Nightmare Wave's effects only after the fact. We don't know what happened, but we know it was bad, and we see the results. Once I saw an entire garden inexplicably dried up and dead. More horribly, on another instance I ran across a dozen mutilated corpses on a street, with no explanation of who they were or what killed them. I still wonder about the answer to that mystery, but I haven't found anything so far. I don't suppose I ever will, and one guilty part of me thinks I'm better off for it.

Major Nightmares

I don't like thinking about some of the horrible things that have happened, but I've got no choice. I have to try to understand what's going on, though I'm dubious that there's any reason behind them that I'll be able to even brush with my fingertips. I also can't stop thinking about them; the images and sounds — oh God, the *sounds* — play over and over in my mind.

Below, I've cataloged some of the major Nightmare effects I've experienced or heard about. Effects of this extremity occur close to the Intrusion Point — within the Annihilation Zone, in almost all cases. I've lumped them into categories, such as, "People are altered, physically or mentally," then listed some examples that, for all I know, could be going on right now.

Nightmare Examples

The sections "Major Nightmare Effects" and "Subtler Nightmare Effects" provide a number of sample Nightmare Effects. The purpose of these sections is to provide you with ideas you can use in your own Nightmare Sites. You can use them as presented here, alter them however you wish and, of course, expand upon them.

Animals Transform into Hideous Beasts and Monstrous Creatures

• Dogs become terrible hounds the size of horses that move in and out of shadows.

• Insects become poisonous swarms whose venom causes their victims to swell up and explode.

• A nest of snakes fuses into a single, squirming creature with 100 heads.

• A cute puppy brings terrible calamity to anyone around it — but always remains cute and adorable.

• A cat gains supernatural invulnerability and a relentless need to kill by drawing the breath out of humans.

• A crow becomes super-intelligent and bent on revenge against humans.

• A sheep's entrails show visions of the future when examined, but the visions are only occasionally correct. Each morning, the sheep returns to life.

Plants Transform, Sometimes into Semi-Intelligent Creatures

• A mushroom grows to the size of a house, spreading spores that induce terror in all who come near it.

• A tree can move its branches like arms and seeks to grab and hold creatures that come close.

• A patch of grass becomes as hard as metal and razor sharp.

• A tree transforms into crystal, which shatters. Anyone holding a piece of that crystal is periodically thrust into a mental world where he gains his deepest desire — as the crystal slowly leeches away his life force.

• The leaves of a plant make anyone who eats them beautiful and charismatic, but the leaves (and their short-lived effects) are highly addictive.

People Are Altered, Physically or Mentally

• A young girl gains the power to control the minds of others, but her "puppets" die after she uses them.

• An accountant gains the ability to summon the spirit of his long-dead baby brother to spy on others, steal from others and even murder those who cross him.

• An executive transforms into a serpentine creature that forces others to kill for her and bring back the blood of their victims for her to drink.

• A groundskeeper becomes a rampaging creature made of both flesh and metal, fused with his gardening tools.

• A man's severed hand takes on a life of its own, determined to kill the man and anyone who gets in its way.

• Every time a particular woman looks into a mirror, her image becomes a living duplicate of her, but each duplicate has its own (usually sinister) agenda.

Matter and Inanimate Objects Change

• A patch of sidewalk becomes like quicksand, even though its appearance does not change.

• A delivery truck gains sentience and a desire to crush and destroy.

• A house grows extra-dimensionally large, but the extra rooms form a maze from which escape is nearly impossible.

• A hammer gains the ability to heal those it strikes with great force, although at some random point in the future, the healed individual suddenly reacts as though struck by a hammer — with all the physical complications.

• An old coat possesses the power to raise from the dead anyone who has worn it, but only for a few minutes at a time.

• A street is abruptly paved in gold, but anyone who attempts to take the gold is afflicted with a terrible curse that rots her body, turning it to compost in just a few days.

• A river seems to flow with blood.

The Laws of Physics Change

• Gravity in an area around an old house alters so that all things gravitate toward the house, not toward the ground.

• The wind carries the whispered names of all the people the listener has ever wronged.

• The air becomes a hallucinogen that gives all who breathe it horrific visions of their future deaths.

• Time runs at different speeds in different, closely related spots.

• Doorways become portals from one place to another, but require walking through a terrifying realm of shadows and shrieks.

• Distance between two specific places becomes variable, no matter what mode of travel or route one takes.

• One small area has weather drastically different from the region around it, as if it is an entirely different season and climate.

GM's Note — Using the Nightmare Wave

In addition to playing a central role in the setting, the Nightmare Wave offers you (the GM) a unique tool for use in your campaigns. It is an overarching method of hand-waving — you can do just about anything you like, pull out whatever creepy happenstance or fearsome creature you want and justify it as a Nightmare Effect. Such effects are more likely to happen near the Intrusion Point, of course, but as they could theoretically happen anywhere in the world, you are free to drop strange and/or horrific events wherever you like. The Nightmare Wave also allows you to create specific locations where the rules of the game change, and player characters can interact with their environment in creative ways.

The Nightmare Wave's primary purpose is as a tool and plot device to power your campaign and adventures; make use of it.

Subtler Nightmares

Not every Nightmare Effect is as dramatic, catastrophic or obvious as those above. Some — particularly those occurring far from the Intrusion Point — are subtle, smaller in scope and/or less obvious. Often they are creepy rather than (immediately) horrific. Some could seemingly be explained by normal events.

I was going to call these "minor nightmares," but I don't think that name does them justice. In many cases, they aren't any less frightening or lethal than major nightmares, just not as overt. That makes them worse, in some cases.

These are the sorts of nightmares you might find anywhere in the world. They are most prevalent in the Haunted Lands, but can appear anywhere else. You might find them in the Annihilation Zone, too, but the nightmares there tend to be more extreme.

• The image of the face of a woman's dead husband shows up in a dark and mysterious stain on the wall.

• The cockroaches in an abandoned house work in concert, as if directed by an intelligent leader.

• The gate of an old fence opens under its own power in the presence of anyone who is going to die in the next week.

• A chill wind always blows through a particular window, even when it is closed.

• A kindly old man gains the ability to gain back a few years of youth, but only if he murders someone each full moon — and the victim must be younger each time.

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THE DAILY SUN

IT'S NOT NEWS UNLESS WE SAY IT IS!

"WE ARE SCREWED!"

RON THOMPSON'S EXCLUSIVE INTERVIEW WITH THE PRESIDENT

SEE IT ON PAGE C15

HUNDREDS OF THOUSANDS DEAD

Other names were removed because of insufficient evidence. Many unconfirmed victims were from other countries.

Their names had been supplied by consulates from those nations. Some removed names could return to the official victims' list if DNA or other proof

The American Informer

CENTRAL US IN RUINS

Death toll over a million

Reports remained sketchy because communications were reduced in many cases to scratchy two-way radio lines, but the total of deaths reported so far was over 1,000,000, Mantooth told The Associated Press.

"We have close to 1.2 million deaths reported so far," he said. "I believe we will get some

• One room of a house is sometimes a room of a completely different house.

• Terrible scratching noises with no apparent cause are heard along the walls of a building.

• The letters on the pages of a book occasionally rearrange themselves to spell advice to the reader, sometimes good and sometimes bad.

• A loving husband and father murders his family and, afterward, has no idea why.

• Objects on a table never stay in the same position in which they were left, but no one ever sees them move.

• A woman opens her purse to find it filled with an unidentifiable, mucus-like goo.

Reeling from the Blow

As one might imagine, the human response to the Intrusion is one of shock, horror and misunderstanding. When the Intrusion occurred, we thought it was a natural disaster of incredible magnitude. Some earthquake or volcanic eruption. I hear the area under Yellowstone National Park is a pressurized cauldron ready to blow — maybe it was something like that. A meteor strike was another possibility.

After a couple of hours, though, it stopped seeming like a natural disaster, and started seeming like an attack. (The closest we can come to the truth is probably a combination of those two beliefs.) Terrorists. Enemies: The Chinese or the North Vietnamese or the Cubans hitting us with something.

Yet in the aftermath, that didn't seem right, either. Now, no one is sure what to believe — but everyone's got theories, and all the government hubbub about the Intrusion Point adds to the fear and paranoia going around. (Though if you ask me, with bloodsuckers and demons running around in the basement, paranoia is a *healthy* response.) Every day, people around the world watch the news, and no matter what channel or what country, the top stories are about the Intrusion: events in the surrounding areas or linked to it, sightings of *things* thought to be related to it, the results or ongoing coverage of an investigation as to its cause and/or lasting impact and, of course, theories. Television, radios, newspapers and Internet sites bring in experts of all stripes: scientists, philosophers, theologians, military personnel, political personalities, movie stars, basketball players, dudes-on-the-streets, authors, priests, psychologists, physicists, biologists, talk show hosts — anyone who has a theory gets his time in the spotlight. I know of at least five new television programs that have appeared over the past year that focus on the Intrusion *exclusively*. (*The Day the Sky Rained Fire* and *Disaster Roundtable* being the most legitimate.)

Despite all this discussion, most people remain confused. They think other people out there know more than they do. They're probably right, and the fact that citizens are suspicious of their governments doesn't help matters — though it's also nothing new. That the United

States military takes such an active role in the area and events surrounding the Conflagration — the *Hellchasm*, as some of them call it — doesn't help, either.

Official Response

The president declared the Annihilation Zone a disaster area shortly after the Intrusion. In the days immediately following, fleets of military trucks, Red Cross vans, helicopters and other relief poured in and out of the area — though many of them had difficulty bypassing the rubble, or suffered strange and deadly malfunctions. In the year since then, the efforts have slowed, but they continue.

Supposedly, all the people living in the Annihilation Zone were evacuated months ago. However, everyone knows that plenty of folks — hundreds of thousands — still live in there. Some want desperately to escape, but are trapped by other people or by things more foul. Others remain in the zone of their own free will, which is difficult to believe, but they have their motives. Some find that life in the post-apocalyptic Annihilation Zone is better than the lives they knew before. Others see themselves as chosen to fight against the Conflagration (and for all I know they *are*, though in what way they hope to make any significant headway, I don't know). Still others stay to do research, either professionally or out of simple, amateur curiosity. Their motives are as varied as they are, and they have no intention of coming out.

The U.S. military has done its best to cordon off the Conflagration, though in reality most troops remain just outside the Annihilation Zone. Here, they keep watch in modular sentry towers, patrol the roads and land via Humvees and all-terrain vehicles and helicopters and string up barbed wire and more sophisticated barricades. Officially, the military's primary objective is to keep people from entering the disaster area. Secondary objectives include providing relief to those who run screaming from the zone, and controlling — or, at least, *attempting* to control — the stranger things that emerge from the ruin (though this last mission is classified).

Some units are unfortunate enough to be assigned to operate within the Annihilation Zone, where they attempt to keep order and evacuate the people who remain. Doing so is no easy task, for the rubble of cities and bodies lies in heaps, and the sky and trees and grass are strange. The soldiers' machinery is prone to mysterious — and sometimes lethal — malfunctions. Looters and self-declared warlords snipe at the troops from ruined buildings, while darker things stalk them at night.

Anyone who is dumb enough to want to enter the Annihilation Zone — or, even dumber, the Conflagration — must first bypass military blockades and patrols. Though the troops do their best, sneaking past them is not as difficult as it may sound — especially if you've got skill and guile to make up for your lack of common sense. The area the military protects is far too large. Even with 200,000 troops in the area, the 1,000-mile circumference of the Annihilation Zone is just too much territory to cover.

The demands of the Intrusion Point, Conflagration, Annihilation Zone and related concerns tax the United States' resources. The sheer number of troops alone is massive. To make the numbers, the government has mobilized the National Guard and the military reserves. Worse, three months ago Congress passed an extremely unpopular emergency draft, which grabs men ages 18 to 28. Taking a cue from the Vietnam era, the draft is a birthday lottery. They've used 34 days so far; 331 to go.

The United States and the International Scene

The Intrusion affects the entire world, but not to the same degree as the United States. Outside the United States, indirect fallout from the Intrusion exists in terms of sporadic Nightmare Wave effects and the Iconnu's inhuman agents waging their shadow war across oceans and boundaries. (Canada gets more than its fair share of strife from the Intrusion Point as well.) Other countries don't feel the Haunted Lands, the Annihilation Zone, the Conflagration and the pinprick of colliding realities as the United States does.

Foreign nations are only slightly less concerned, shocked and horrified about the Intrusion. They, individually and through organizations such as the United Nations, have offered aid in various forms — from troops to emergency supplies — but the United States refuses most of these offers and attempts to remain self-reliant. (Congress's reasons are complex; foremost among them is that Congress does not want the United States to become indebted to foreign powers. There's also some misplaced sense of national pride, I imagine. Keeping our allies out also helps maintain operational security.) A number of foreign experts have traveled to the United States to study the phenomenon and lend their own theories to the mix.

The U.S. military has withdrawn from all foreign concerns. All available troops are within American borders now, with only token forces on U.S. bases and posts around the world.

Some paranoid citizens out there watch foreign nations with suspicious eyes. With the U.S. military and political structure occupied with keeping America intact in the face of extra-dimensional horrors, the time might seem right for foreign hostiles to strike. Not to declare war on the United States, perhaps, but to take advantage of our distraction. Communist and socialist governments might expand. Unfriendly countries can stockpile nuclear, chemical and biological weapons. The United Nations attempts to keep an eye on such rogue nations, but America is a big, important pair of eyes that is now looking elsewhere.

Of course, others — primarily those in foreign nations — see it as a good thing that the United States is occupied with other concerns. Finally, the United States can't be the world's police force. In the wake of all that the Intrusion means, sometimes it's easy to overlook the fact that we still live in a global culture, and everything that occurs within our borders has repercussions without.

I hope they aren't too severe. America can't take much more.

What a Typical Person Knows

After a year of speculation, the meteor-strike theory has returned to the fore. Most reputable sources cite an impact with

a medium-sized meteor as the cause of the *event*, and the idea has some points that make it seem valid. Impacts with smaller meteors in the past have leveled forests and created huge craters, so a meteor strike could have created devastation in the large area called the Annihilation Zone. Even a basketball-sized meteor can do serious damage, and would be too small for astronomers to detect until it was too late. Perhaps the meteor released some strange alien radioactivity, which is why the government is so keen to keep people away.

Other theories abound, of course: hundreds, if not thousands. Some of the more popular include the following:

• The event was a terrorist attack, caused by a heretofore unknown weapon.

• The event was caused by a scientific (and likely government-sponsored) experiment, perhaps akin to the Manhattan Project.

• The devastation was caused by an alien starship crash (or possibly an alien attack).

• The event marks the Biblical End Times, as foretold in Revelations, though the exact cause of the event in such a case is cause for much debate.

• The entire thing is a hoax, perhaps to mask something else that's going on in the "Conflagration," or perhaps just to scare people.

These theories all have certain points that make them appealing, but they obviously have problems as well. Even the most "likely" and "reputable" idea — the meteor — has gaping holes, foremost being the decidedly non-impact-site-like images contained in photographic evidence of strange events and places close to the Intrusion Point. Such photographs were leaked onto the Internet shortly after the event.

Other problems with the theories include the military presence in the area. If the event has been simply a meteor impact or terrorist attack, the government is irrationally concerned about keeping people away. (Though the inclusion of such things as radioactivity or chemical/viral agents helps cement this hole.) Also, the number of concurrent events — such as a dramatic increase in *weird things* due to the Nightmare Wave and words such as "vampire" and "werewolf" being thrown around with alarming frequency — is a problem. Some people believe such events and beings exist, while others don't; some people believe the *event* caused both the destruction and the other effects. Some think they are related in other ways (the "monsters" caused the destruction), and other folks think they have separate sources.

Despite all of this uncertainty, your average Joe in the street knows a few things for certain. (Unless it's all a hoax, of course.)

• More than a million people are dead.

• The central United States is laid waste. Major cities, including Minneapolis and Omaha, are in ruins.

• The area surrounding the point where the event occurred is still very dangerous.

• The American government is doing its best to cope with the problem, but at the same time is withholding valuable information from the public. This secrecy includes keeping journalists and others from entering the area.

• Some people have been close to the incident area and report weird things, although their stories are always different, which brings their validity into question.

• Some people claim to have been changed by the event. More often than one might expect, such words as "vampire" and "werewolf" are tossed around. Incidents of general weirdness seem more common now.

• One other bit that everyone in the world knows: The mood in the country is dark. Everyone is afraid. Everyone is worried that things are going to get worse. They think the people in charge don't know what they're doing, or cannot contain whatever is going on. No one knows what's really happening.

What the Experts Know

The government has compartmentalized information related to the event. Everything is on a need-to-know basis, and only the people with the highest level of clearance in the government really know what's going on.

But they do know. The president. Certain high-level military personnel. Some specialized agents, such as me. We've captured the Iconnu's servants and interrogated them. We've studied the Conflagration and the Nightmare Wave's effects. We know, more or less, what's happened, although we of course don't know anything about the true nature of the Iconnu or understand any of the other unknowable information. Many questions continue to baffle us, and I suspect they will remain forever beyond our pitiful human level of comprehension. What is the Iconnu's reality like? Why did they attempt to destroy ours? Can we communicate with them? From where do they draw the souls and spirits they use to create their agents? What does the existence of these things mean about life after death, about the nature of the universe, about religion and philosophy?

All fascinating questions, and we've got people working on them. The important ones, anyway; existentialism takes a backseat to survival, I'm afraid.

The Intrusion Defense Agency

Not long after the Intrusion, the government created a special emergency agency called the Intrusion Defense Agency, or the IDA. While technically a branch of FEMA (the Federal Emergency Management Agency), the IDA works more like the FBI, with agents (usually in pairs or in teams) investigating Nightmare effects and dealing with the Iconnu's various agents. Our agents include even beings that the Iconnu intended to use against us — humans possessed of dead or bestial souls, those with recent access to ancient secrets and those strange beings not of this universe at all, but who clothe themselves in human flesh. Oh, that's right: we've got some on *our* side, bitches.

IDA agents "on the ground" are some of the best-informed and most aware people in the world on the subject of the Intrusion, its genesis and its effects. Information is compartmentalized, and we are in the compartment. The agency includes scientists and strategists as well as experts in sabotage, espionage, assassination and other forms of combat. For our jobs, we need it.

Though the IDA's main, "official" office is of course in Washington, DC, our largest and most active base — and, if you must know, the *real* headquarters — is in Chicago.

The Iconnu's Agents

When the Iconnu intruded their reality into ours, but ours refused to shatter as it should have, the Iconnu used another tactic in an attempt to finish the job. They somehow accessed the souls of dead humans from . . . someplace. They also drew on spirits alien to our world: savage and demonic spirits. These spirits possessed human beings or else formed bodies for themselves through other means, thereby taking physical form so they could work the Iconnu's will. As I mentioned, though, we humans are of tougher minds — *spirit*, you might say, har har — than the Iconnu recognized. Some of these creatures that were supposed to be their agents turned from them. Some even wield their powers against the Iconnu and their servants, clashing with their own kind.

Three types of *beings* now roam the Earth, slinking through the shadows and striking against humans or others similar to themselves. A fourth type — a special type of human, I suppose —also came to be due to the Iconnu's Intrusion.

• The Iconnu summoned the spirits of dead human beings — but not all or just any dead humans, but the souls of *evil* humans. These vile souls then possessed the bodies of living, modern humans, and the two souls merged to form a creature of one body but two souls. These creatures wield great supernatural power, but they have their limitations — they fear the daylight and thirst for human blood. These long-dead, corrupt spirits revel in the flesh they have missed for so long, and yet dutifully carry out the will of their Unbidden masters lest they lose their gifts. They act as spies and saboteurs, undermining the plans of humankind, and as assassins to slay those with enough will to resist the Iconnu.

They are vampires.

• The Iconnu summoned other spirits — spirits that never walked as humans but are savage and ferocious. Where they dwelled I shudder to think; I know some people who use words like "Hell" or "the Pit." These spirits also possessed living humans, again turning them into beings of one flesh with two spirits. They can walk as humans if they choose, but their terrifying strength and abilities come to the fore when their bestial side overwhelms their bodies. Fur sprouts across their skin, their bodies grow huge with muscle and their faces push forward into long, bone-snapping jaws: a monstrous countenance of raw, untamable horror. Similar to vampires, these creatures serve the Iconnu, but as murderers, destroyers and hunters.

They are werewolves.

• Still other creatures serve the Iconnu. These beings come from places unknown, and legend tells us that they have been deceiving and manipulating humans for millennia. They do not possess human bodies to work the Unbidden's will; rather, they clothe their spirits with some earthly material to grant themselves physical form. Though they resemble humans, these creatures certainly are not — and when their bodies twist and melt to reveal their true forms, humans run screaming. Far removed from humanity even compared to vampires and werewolves, these monstrous beings are woven of malice and corruption. They are the soldiers of the Iconnu, not sent to infiltrate and undermine but to attack reality itself and rend it apart.

They are demons.

• Since people began walking the Earth, they believed they could access a mystical power. They had different ways of attaining this power: worship of deities, complex chants and rituals, the brandishing of important objects, study of written works or special symbols. They called this power *magic*. Most who tried their hands at magic ended up jaded and disappointed, though some felt they achieved success on some level. Their peers often jeered their "accomplishments," calling them parlor tricks or happenstance. However, we can now see that these people might have summoned some power, but only a fraction of what is *now* possible. For thousands of years, magic has been trickling into our world from . . . somewhere. Beyond. When the Iconnu arrived, this trickle became a torrent. Now, petty pretenders find that their ancient formulae and lip-twisting phrases and forceful minds cause immediate, direct effects — and others learn this power as well. They take up their mystic implements and, yes, cast *spells* to further their goals. Some work for the Iconnu, others against them and many have their own agendas.

They are mages.

• Finally, I feel I should mention one other group. This group does not work for the Iconnu, and many oppose their agents directly. These are the human beings whose implacable human spirit prevented our reality from crumbling — and who keep it intact while the Conflagration rages and vampires stalk the streets. Many do not know what they are, but those who do learn to embrace it — and to draw power from their abilities.

They are the Awakened.

I apologize. I've been yammering on for a while now without introducing myself. My name's Love — Baxter Love, and I intend to conquer all.

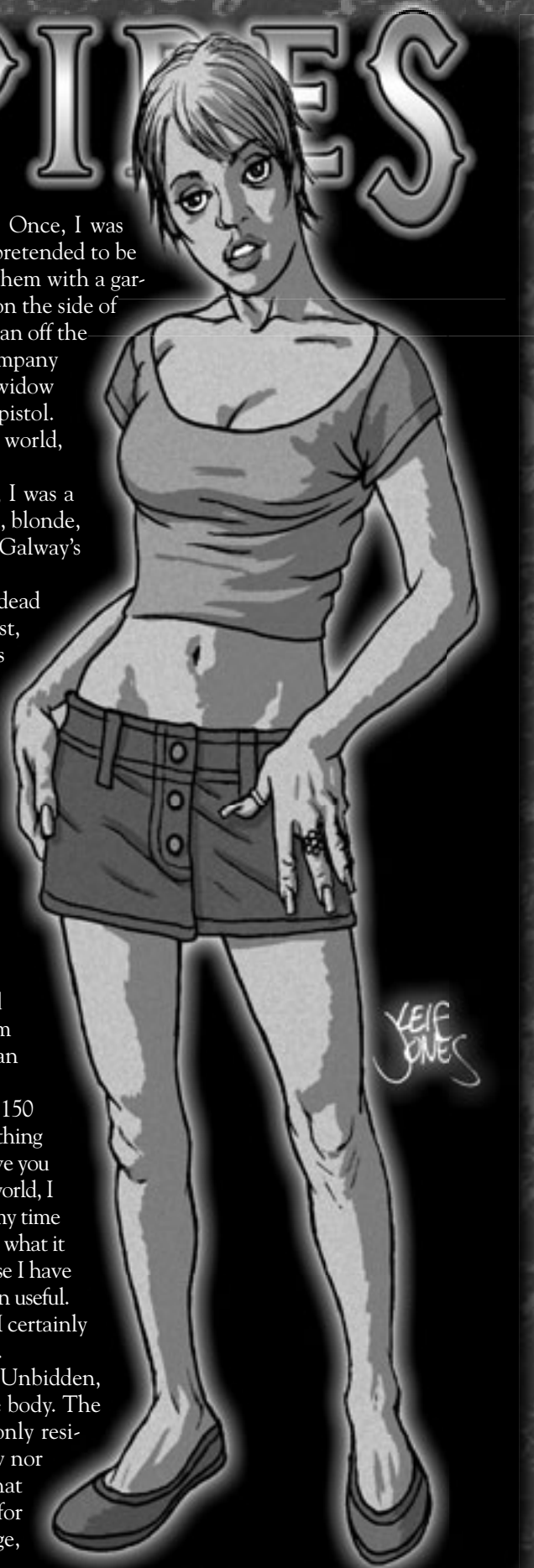
Well, not really. But I think it's cute to say so.

I'm one of the people who prevented our reality from folding into oblivion. "Awakened," they call me; I'll talk a bit more about it later on. Below, you also get to hear from some of my fellow agents; as much as I know about vampires and werewolves and all, obviously they know more.

"Everything is different now. Everything. Isn't it weird that so many people don't know that?"

—Nicole Harris, Minneapolis

VAMPIRES



My name is Sylvia White. I am 200 years old. Once, I was much younger, and during much of that short life, I pretended to be a prostitute. When I took men to my room, I murdered them with a garrote and took their finery. I wasn't one of those strumpets you'd see on the side of the road with too much rouge and plump legs who would take any man off the street — I was made for much finer company, because much finer company carried around more pounds. On November 16, 1854, an enraged widow found me in my room and shot me to death with a laughably small pistol.

Now, through the will of the Unbidden, I am returned to the world, and to flesh.

I am also Rebecca Galway, unfortunately. Up until a year ago, I was a menial clerk at a jewelry store in Orlando, Florida. I was 23 years old, blonde, with a hideous boyfriend and absent parents. One year ago, Rebecca Galway's life ended as Sylvia's began again.

I am a vampire. We vampires are human hosts that the souls of dead "evil" people have invaded. This possession technically slays the host, creating a new creature that is neither fully dead nor fully alive. This new existence grants us many boons: physical strength, resilience and supernatural powers over shadows and minds. Yet this power comes with prices. We cannot abide the sun's light, but our chief weakness is the *hunger:* we must drink human blood to survive.

A Fusion of Souls

I know from Rebecca Galways's memory that horror films and books have been portraying "vampires" for hundreds of years now. However, we, the Iconnu's vampires, are different from the bloodsucking undead monstrosities that fiction depicts. The word "vampire" is simply *good enough* to describe what we are. While we share many characteristics of the classic vampire — we *do* drink blood and *are* undead monstrosities — we differ because we are an amalgam of two souls in one body. We are unique. Only another vampire can understand what it feels like to have two human souls in one body.

The rest of you . . . well. Imagine what it would be like to be dead for 150 years, then suddenly return to life — when you never imagined such a thing were possible. You might have questions about the afterlife, but I can't give you the answers. I have a soul that transcends worlds, but while I am in this world, I know only this world. All that I remember about the other world is that my time there was interminable and unpleasant and bodiless. You cannot imagine what it feels like to be *flesh* again, to have a human *body*. And I am lucky, because I have an athletic, young body that men find desirable — so my old skills remain useful.

Ah, I thank the Iconnu for clothing me again in muscle and skin. I certainly do not obey their "commands," but every day I am grateful to them.

In most cases, the invading spirit — the dead soul sent by the Unbidden, released from the clutches of death — is in complete control of the body. The host's soul is completely subsumed, leaving the invading soul the only resident of a new body. What happens to the host's soul I neither know nor care. I suspect it's still inside somewhere — suffering, I hope, so that it experiences some dim version of the Hell that we experienced for centuries — because other vampires have told me they feel strange,

modern urges at times. Perhaps that buried soul stirs, scratches at its coffin.

In some cases, however, the host's soul retains some control over the body. Such vampires exist as combinations of two personalities. Usually, one or the other soul (and personality) is dominant, but traits, memories, emotions and ideas of the dominated often intrude into the dominator's psyche. I am such a case, I suppose, though I'd like to think Rebecca has no power over me. My soul, Sylvia, is dominant, but flashes of Rebecca come through. I remember incidents at school and at the jewelry store. I have a tendency to twist my hair around my finger, and that is hers, not mine.

In a few vampires — very few — the host's spirit completely subjugates the intruding dead soul. It's hard for me to understand what this must be like. You're a normal person, a husband, an accountant, a tennis player or what-have-you, and then . . . you change. You *die*, but you remain alive. You're still *you*, but you have fearsome supernatural powers and must drink the blood of the living.

No matter which soul is dominant, the vampire has all the strengths and weaknesses of the children of the night: great strength and stamina, resilience to harm, the need for blood and fear of the sun's light.

Souls and Personalities

Spirits that return from the dead to become vampires most often already have predilections toward vampirism. Most are selfish, hungry beings, often depraved and even sadistic. Such traits make them ideal candidates for someone who must prey upon others to survive. I admit that I am in this category. Dying and returning to life offers one a new perspective — and the supernatural powers that come with being a vampire offer temptations difficult to resist even had I wanted to do so. In the 1800s, I used the powers I had as a woman to fight the social system and carve a name for myself — and I enjoyed wielding this power over others and forcing them to do as I wished. Now that I've returned, I plan to do the same, only with greater intensity and greater results.

Though we dead spirits are of a sinister and violent variety, the people who become vampire hosts have no defining characteristics. They were not "chosen" by anyone or anything, the Unbidden or otherwise. The event was, more or less, random. And if you wonder about how new vampires come about, well, honey, I don't know — I don't even know if new vampires *do* come about.

No matter which soul dominates, in most cases the dominating soul can effortlessly use the memories and knowledge of the dominated spirit. My fellow vampire Osaka Rin is the soul of a cutpurse from feudal Japan who inhabits the body of a computer programmer from Berlin. He knows about Japan in the 1200s and modern-day Germany. I know both about Victorian England and the modern-day United States. Osaka knows all the details about the programmer's family secrets, just as I know the details about Rebecca's faulty love life. While Osaka knows these things, he cares nothing for the programmer's family, who anxiously await his homecoming — and I feel no bitterness toward the men who routinely trampled Rebecca's heart. (Rather, I feel vague amusement that the poor girl never learned her lesson. Always a different face, but always the same guy.)

The programmer's soul, however, manages to influence Osaka to a degree. (As I mentioned, such situations happen occasionally in our kind.) Osaka feels a sense of protectiveness toward the programmer's wife and children; indeed, he has gone out of his way to prevent them from coming to harm. I'm happy to say that Rebecca wields no similar influence over me; her contributions to my personality are minor. Inconsequential. I crave certain snacks — Fritos and Dr. Pepper, they're called — and am incongruously proud of this piece of jewelry in my navel.

Player's Note
Roleplaying Vampires

Vampires present unique roleplaying opportunities.

A vampire's nature lends itself to interesting psychological development and character depth. These creatures are still *human* in some way, and yet they must prey on fellow humans to survive. Does this make them monsters? Do they consider themselves evil for doing so, knowing that they *must* because of their natures? Also, they must not see the sun. What would it feel like to know you can never again stand in the sunlight?

Yet the more interesting roleplaying opportunities come from a vampire's two souls. You (the player) can come up with two completely different characters — one a sinister, dark, and/or evil character from some historical time and culture, the other a normal, modern-day person. These two characters likely have different mindsets, backgrounds, motivations, passions and idiosyncrasies.

Then, you can decide how the two characters interact within their shared body. One might completely dominate the other, letting only occasional pieces of the other's personality or memories intrude onto his thoughts. On the other hand, the two souls might struggle against each other, each coming to dominance as they battle. An even rarer possibility is that the souls might cooperate, trading dominancy depending on the situation.

Mechanics for the Soul Conflict

Part of a vampire's inherent nature is for her two souls to be at odds. In some vampires, this conflict is overt, while in most, it is subtle, with only a few minor indications that the second soul influences the first. The dynamic can change, however; the subjugated soul can exert more control, while the dominant soul might weaken.

No game mechanics exist for this spiritual battle; it is primarily a roleplaying tool. It is, however, an important part of the setting and a big part of the reason that vampires in it are different from vampires in other settings. The GM should encourage players to use this opportunity to create interesting characters and memorable roleplaying experiences.

For other vampires, the interactions between their souls run the gamut. Some have two dominant souls that influence each other in powerful ways every day, while in others, the subjugated soul vanishes. In addition, this dynamic can change over time. A dominated soul can slowly exert increasing influence.

For a few vampires, the transition from life to death and the conflict of two souls have cost them much of their memory — sometimes the memory of one soul, and sometimes from both.

Just as normal humans, we vampires surround ourselves with things that are familiar. Perhaps that's because these things are comforting in our strange new lives — and don't let the posturing of other vampires fool you, we're still *human*, in some sense, and we still have human needs. Because the dead soul tends to dominate, we are often oriented toward the past. Vampires are more likely to obtain an old automobile that the dead spirit remembers from his former life, or dress in old clothing from a vintage store. We might have collections of trinkets from our former lives: swords on the walls, period paintings, figurines or furniture. Most of us try to fit in with modern society, however, so we don't take this fixation to the point of ridiculousness.

Vampire Appearance

You can't tell I'm a vampire just by looking at me; I look like Rebecca Galway. Maybe a bit more dead. Vampires always look like the original host. (With the exception of Nosferatu, who often have hideously changed appearances; see below.) However, some vampires gradually take on countenances that are fusions of the host and the invading spirit's original appearance. This change in appearance combined with the likely change in their mode of dress and demeanor mean that even their close friends often have trouble recognizing them.

The Vampires' Mission

In a way, vampires can look directly to the Iconnu to thank for their existence. I certainly think returning me to life was a capital idea. I am much stronger — both physically and willfully — than I was as a murderer in so-called Victorian England. The Iconnu are our creators.

This idea, however, is a bit too simplistic. The Iconnu are alien and unknown, far removed from our comprehension — and we from theirs. The Iconnu do not truly understand our reality well enough to have actually, purposefully created us. Rather, the Iconnu's will set events into motion — changing our reality as they did so — to allow vampires to exist, with the Iconnu's alien will imprinted upon us in a rather crude way. The nature of the Iconnu does not allow for subtlety or precision. These factors explain vampire weaknesses. It also explains why we have such a great deal of leeway in interpreting our mission and purpose, with some — such as myself — ignoring it altogether.

The Iconnu "created" us to discover information, to infiltrate this reality and live among its intelligent creatures. Vampires who work for the Unbidden seek the Awakened: humans who hold this reality together, many without even knowing it. When these vampires find the Awakened, they are destroyed. Thus, in a broad sense, we are spies and assassins.

Within the bounds of this directive — known as the Covenant — vampires are free to do as they wish. We feel the Covenant as a primal urge, or a drive we cannot resist. (Some of us, anyway.) Vampires do not receive commands or specific directions from the Iconnu, but they are cunning enough to carry out their missions on their own.

Of course, some vampires choose *not* to follow the Iconnu's will. We resist their silly Covenant and their urges. Though they created me, I do not owe them loyalty — for if they had their way, I would work to undo this reality, and my soul again would be forfeit.

Vampire Society

The vampiric mission — a need to garner information about the Awakened and slay them if we can — leads most (but not all) vampires to find one another and communicate. Similar to spies for a government, vampires (those who follow the Iconnu's will, anyway) function best when they share information. Our inherent nature also lends itself to working in concert with others to help overcome our weaknesses. Hunting and feeding in pairs or groups is much easier than doing so alone. However, because we are who we are — grasping and avaricious souls, the lot of us — this tendency also leads vampires to establish a hierarchy. In fact, we maintain a number of hierarchies.

Each general region has its own vampiric fiefdom, with a single clear-cut master. These regions are informal and vary greatly in size. One vampire master controls all of Florida while another just a portion of Los Angeles. Conflicts and power struggles arise, but they are less common than you might think.

GM's Note — Vampire Non-Player Characters

Just as vampires' unique natures make them interesting choices for players, you (the GM) can use these characteristics to make intriguing vampire non-player characters. The fusion of souls creates varied and complex motivations. In addition, a vampire with dueling personalities — or simply one in which a subjugated personality's characteristics occasionally come to the fore — makes for memorable roleplaying interactions with the player characters.

Vampires are also interesting non-player characters because of their subtlety. They make excellent masterminds of larger plots, keeping out of the light as their lackeys and allies further their plans. However, vampires usually offer some clues to their existence: the number of light-headed humans wandering around an area might be an important indication.

Also, plenty of vampires kill and torture just because one of their souls is depraved.

All vampires, even the most solitary, belong to one of five clans. Despite the term "clan," these groupings are not familial and have no basis in history. They are ways to categorize the sorts of souls that return and possess bodies. Vampires have different mindsets, but five overarching methods and modes of thinking appear when you look closely. If we know a vampire is a Gangrel, for example, we know certain things about him.

You can be as philosophical about this as you like. I know one man who believes that vampire clans indicate that five overarching sets of psychological disorders are at work in the mentally disturbed. Personally, I simply find the clan categorization convenient.

The clans are as follows.

Daeva

The Daeva are hedonistic spirits who revel in the pleasures of their regained flesh. I belong to this clan, and I and my fellow vampires take great joy in experiencing *bodies* again. We do so in any way we can — we eat, we drink, we dance, we fuck. And people *want* us. There's something alluring about a Daeva vampire, even those who are sadistic and brutal. Prey comes to us.

Daeva are seductive, charming and sensual.

Gangrel

Gangrel vampires are savage spirits that attempt to forsake the former lives of the bodies the spirits now inhabit. These are brutal creatures — the possessing soul is a mass murderer, a butcher, a sadist with little subtlety. Gangrel are the most bestial of vampires, focusing on the animalistic and irrational side of humans. The inhabiting souls are usually powerful, and rare is the host soul that wrests even slight control from the possessing spirit. Many Gangrel ignore their hosts' lives completely, while some delight in destroying those lives. Perhaps the Gangrel soul uses the host's memories of her husband and children to find and butcher them. Then, the Gangrel vampire feels *free*.

Gangrel are brutal, primal and direct.

Mekhet

The Mekhet are secretive creatures that cling to the shadows and keep low profiles. Darkness is their home, and they know that their enemies cannot locate them and their prey cannot protect themselves if the Mekhet remain unknown. Mekhet are some of the best spies among vampires, gripping their secrecy with stealth, guile, multiple identities, front men, middle men, webs of contacts and similar strategies.

Mekhet are secretive, stealthy, patient and cunning.

Nosferatu

Nosferatu are hideous creatures that hardly resemble the people they now inhabit. Unlike other vampires, Nosferatu don't look like the host bodies — Nosferatu hardly look human at all. They are deformed into some monstrous shape, something despicable that makes humans think the Nosferatu are the victims of horrible diseases. Invading Nosferatu souls are true monsters: the child-rapists who hide in closets, the cannibals who serve flesh to their friends, the torturers who play psychological games with their victims by slaying all those close to him. Even other vampires fear Nosferatu.

Nosferatu are monstrous, strong and terrifying.

Ventrue

Ventrue are domineering spirits interested in power. These vampires revel in their supernatural abilities. They flaunt these powers over humans, forcing them to bend knee or be broken. Ventrue have abilities that affect minds, making them more pliable or open to the Ventrue's sometimes unsubtle charms. They have a *presence* that makes all eyes lock to them, and they smile and play this attention to their advantage. Ventrue excel at political power play, and many are more interested in accruing followers and rising in the ranks of vampiric hierarchy than in furthering the Iconnu's goals.

Ventrue are regal, commanding and dominating.

The Broken

Ah. If the Iconnu had feelings, the existence of the Broken would, as Rebecca would say, royally piss them off.

A few among us defy our Iconnu masters. We rebel vampires, sometimes known as the Broken, have the strength of will to deny the Covenant. Some Broken resist the Covenant and fight against the destruction that the rest of our kind attempts, joining with humans or other creatures to do so. Some resist the Covenant for selfish ends, and become embroiled in whatever pursuits they desire. Some, such as me, manage to do both. A Broken can be a member of any clan.

Thanks to our corrupt souls, most vampires are self-serving. I know of at least one of my fellow Broken who spends all her time gathering resources solely for her own needs, without ever thinking about the Awakened or gathering and trading information with other vampires.

The U.S. government has found some of the Broken and recruited them into their Intrusion Defense Agency, their IDA. I am one of these, though I freely admit — to you and to my fellow "agents" — that I do so not for any love of the United States or the rest of the world, but for myself. I wish to continue with this body for as long . . . as long as this new existence allows me to continue. The flesh is a source of infinite pleasure — from the joy of the dance to the pleasure of carnal pursuits to the power I feel when I draw the warm red life out of a victim. If ever the IDA and its allies triumph over the Iconnu's agents — though I cannot foresee that happening — my "friends" know that they and I will likely be at odds.

Other Broken do not join the IDA. Some find each other and organize into small groups called coteries. Many more wander the nights alone, wondering if they are the only such beings to resist the wishes of those that created them.

Nascent Creatures

Despite the powers we wield, we are still young, and not yet fully formed. We have been *vampires* for one year; before that we were normal people living normal lives, and we were the souls of long-dead people in some dark realm. We have had only a single year to learn of our powers and grow comfortable with them. One year to begin to use them — either for the Iconnu's ends or our own — and to vie for power with other vampires. In addition, we must learn about the rest of the world: about werewolves and demons and mages and the Awakened, about the Nightmare Wave and the Intrusion.

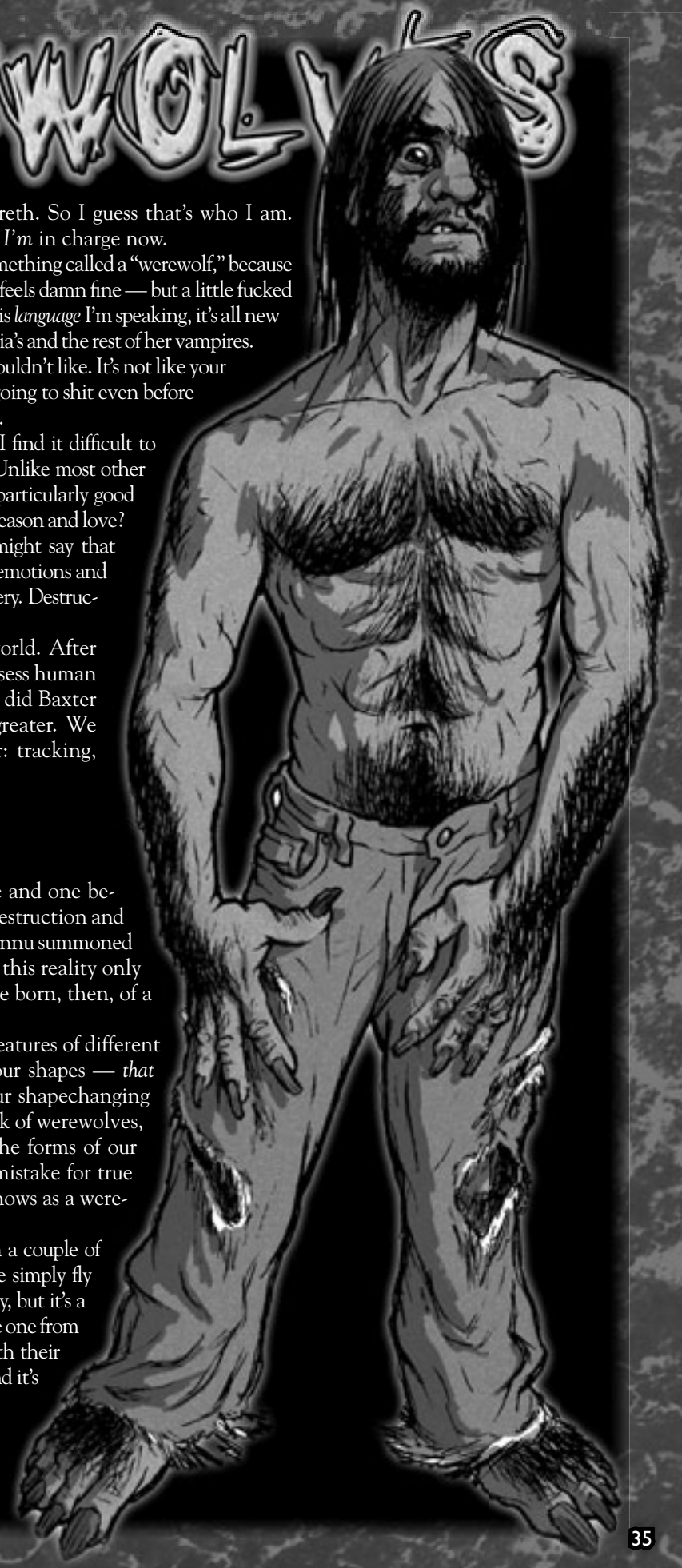
One year is simply not enough time for individuals — especially those with clashing souls — to become comfortable with all of these aspects. We are nascent creatures with inchoate power. Some vampires walk the streets alone, thinking they are the only ones of their kind. A few out there do not yet fully know — or believe — that they are vampires.

Player Character Vampires

Player character vampires are likely to be of the Broken. A player character Broken vampire might be fully aware of what's going on, and of the Iconnu's Covenant, but instead uses his determination to stop other vampires from helping the Unbidden. The player character vampire might prey upon others to feed and commit other less-than-savory acts, but still operates for the good of the world in the larger sense (even if ultimately he does so only to ensure his own continued existence).

"I am, indeed, two people. How many people are you?"
—Marlena Yevan, vampire

WEREWOLVES



All the little bastards in this world call me Gareth. So I guess that's who I am. Maybe this body had a last name, but what the fuck. *I'm* in charge now.

It's a good thing you guys already had a concept of something called a "werewolf," because that gives you something to call us. I'm a werewolf, and it feels damn fine — but a little fucked up, I don't mind telling you. This body, this tongue and this *language* I'm speaking, it's all new to me. My spirit doesn't come from this world, unlike Sylvia's and the rest of her vampires. My spirit comes from somewhere else. Somewhere you wouldn't like. It's not like your reality, and I tell you: your reality is going to shit. It was going to shit even before the Unbidden showed up, but now, you're royally fucked.

Because our spirits come from a place so different, I find it difficult to understand much about this weak little world of yours. Unlike most other werewolves, though, I've actually *tried*. It hasn't been a particularly good time, though. You know concepts like peace, tranquility, reason and love? I don't. Those things — they baffle werewolves. You might say that werewolves are simple creatures. We understand certain emotions and urges — your words for them are things like rage. Savagery. Destruction. Ahhhh — those I understand.

But we've got a little bit of help in this new world. After all, our spirits come from another world, but they possess human bodies. Slapping together a human host and — what did Baxter call me? — an inhuman beast creates something greater. We werewolves are fucking gods at predatory behavior: tracking, hunting and killing.

Man and Beast

Werewolves are a combination of this existence and one beyond. Some humans call our driving force "spirits of destruction and murder," and wouldn't you know, they're right. The Iconnu summoned our spirits to the world, but we could mess around in this reality only if we took physical bodies. So we did. Werewolves are born, then, of a fusion of two universes. Trippy, eh?

So it shouldn't come as much surprise that, as creatures of different realities, we have different forms. We can change our shapes — *that* should prove to you that we're not of this world. Our shapechanging power is what everyone first thinks of when they think of werewolves, and rightly so. It's fucking awesome. We can take the forms of our original (host) bodies, of hulking beasts that idiots mistake for true wolves and as the man-wolf hybrids that everyone knows as a werewolf. We're deadly in any form, my little friend.

No matter what form we take, we are in *control*. In a couple of ways. We have control over our actions — rarely do we simply fly off the handle unless we want to. Yes, we rage, we destroy, but it's a controlled rage (usually). Also, the important spirit — the one from the other world — is in command. Unlike vampires with their confused little minds, the host's soul is in the backseat, and it's the "alien, primal" spirit that runs the show.

However, a werewolf is not just the invading spirit. I already said that a *werewolf* smashes together a bestial spirit and a human soul. So, though Gareth What's-His-Face no longer exists, I, Gareth the werewolf, have the

Player's Note — Roleplaying Werewolves

Similar to vampires, werewolves present unique roleplaying opportunities.

Also similar to vampires, werewolves are really two characters in one — a bestial and primal soul of rage and savagery and a normal human soul that, up until a year ago, led a normal human life. Unlike vampires, though, you know what one soul is all about, so only the human soul requires much thought. What was this person like before he became a werewolf, and in what profound ways did the change affect him?

Inner conflict wracks werewolves, and it's often blatant and obvious. A year ago, they were normal people with normal lives. Now they're monsters. Though the subjugated soul might be inferior, the human soul still influences the primal soul in significant ways. Certainly enough for the werewolf to function in the modern world, and enough to keep the werewolf from preying on former loved ones. Werewolves have a hard time relating to modern Earth and, especially, human beings, but with the human souls within them, werewolves have the capacity.

memories and knowledge of Gareth What's-His-Face. I even — and many werewolves won't admit this, and they're pussies for lying to themselves — have some of his emotions.

Aha! That's important, friends, for, though Gareth's emotions are usually distant and often confusing, I still have access to human feeling. That makes me *different* from just the savage spirit that entered this body. I don't say it makes me *better*, since human emotions are complicated and difficult little bastards. But they give me something to grab as I figure out this world, as I try to understand these things everyone else is always talking about.

I should point out, though, that whatever our human emotions tell us, we have our mission, which manifests through instinct and primal drives. The mission supersedes all human concerns.

Because of these human emotions, I feel a connection to some of Gareth's old things, and people who were, apparently, important to him. A wife. A kid, a couple of elderly parents. Though I freely admit — in fact, I revel in the fact — that I am a being of bloodshed and could rip these people apart just because I feel like it, I don't — and that's not always a good thing. I didn't spend much time with those people. The conflicting feelings were a pain in the ass, and I just couldn't take it — especially with the whole recently-became-a-werewolf bit adding extra drama to the mess. So I split. I left my "family," and I intend to never return. Most werewolves do the same. They leave and wander. Most werewolves are homeless drifters in one sense or another.

This emotional fuck-up makes most werewolves abandon their former, human lives entirely. We don't attempt to retain our professions, family, friends or home. Usually, werewolves run away and hook up with other werewolves for companionship, forming packs. These packs are small, usually three to six werewolves. Together they hunt and fight. The more enlightened talk about what it feels like to be a werewolf. They might also talk about their pasts as humans — though at this point their human pasts are so removed, it's like talking about someone else. "Yeah, I used to be an assistant manager at a 7-11. How about you?"

Spirits and Personalities

The alien spirit inhabiting this body is one of rage and destruction. Yet while werewolves are in human form, the host's soul exerts greater control than in our other forms. We are thus capable of talking to people *before* ripping their heads off. This control is the only reason I'm talking to you now. It's probably also the only reason that werewolves are still around — we can keep a low profile if we need to. We don't automatically become enraged motherfuckers, killing everything in sight. If we did that, we'd be some dead sons-of-bitches. It's probably also the only reason I, and a few other lucks, manage to resist the Iconnu's will. So I feel pretty good about being a creature of two spirits. Thank you, Gareth — I *am* you.

In werewolf form, though — especially in our man-human hybrid form — the beast is king. It tears things to shreds, reveling in the feel of bones snapping between teeth, of flesh parting beneath claws or warm blood splattering the fur and burning on the tongue. It's pretty goddamn nice, if you want to know the truth. The only thing the human host can do at this point is attempt to hold back the waves of rage and destruction.

So, when in beast form, we're beasts. Not much personality there. In human form, though, we might have what you'd call a personality. I like to think I have one.

Our personalities are primal rage infused with . . . certain human qualities that I don't know how to describe. Or maybe they're those human qualities infused with primal rage.

Werewolves are short-tempered. We like direct approaches to problems — especially if those approaches involve pounding something until it stops moving. This doesn't mean we can't be cunning if we want to be, though, and some werewolves are better at that than others. We tend to be harsher than many people, especially vampires. I bet Sylvia didn't have the balls (ovaries?) to call you all the weak little fucklings you are.

Bits of our former human personalities come through. Gareth What's-His-Face was a talker back in the day; I'm sure you know the type. I worked in a research lab back then. If

you wanted to chill out for a while with some relaxing background noise, you'd ask Gareth some little question about immunology or polysaccharides and you wouldn't have to say anything for hours. So I'm a bit of a talker now myself. That's why I'm telling you about werewolves.

But unlike the old Gareth, the new Gareth can rip your fucking face off — and will, if you piss him off.

Werewolf Appearance

In wolf form, we look like wolves. Sort of.

The similarity is purely cosmetic; we have only a slight relationship to the fur-covered, ass-sniffing trackers and hunters that run around in your forests. We share some basic physical features: hair covering our bodies, long snouts, toothy jaws, large ears, beastlike eyes and the like. We also have powerful senses — especially smell — just as your wolves do. That's pretty much it. We can't control wolves. We can't "talk" to them, or any of that bullshit. We don't run in their packs.

In human form, we look pretty much as we did in life. People who knew Gareth What's-His-Face recognize me. However, when old Gareth turned into new Gareth, everyone could tell he was different. The new Gareth — me — is a primitive and primal being, and this influence can affect a new werewolf's appearance in human form. He may get tattoos, body piercings or other fetishes. We're hardcore.

When a person becomes a werewolf, it's not just the behavior that changes, obviously. The personality shift I mentioned above comes into play. A new werewolf may show an abrupt temper. He is gone (usually at night) with no explanation. He has a voracious appetite.

I'll use this dude I know — with the pansy-ass name of Marvin Rogers — as an example. He was a lawyer (so the change to a beast devoted to destruction and misery wasn't much of a change — ha ha!). About a year ago, little Marvin had the great fortune to become a werewolf. His friends and family noticed that he stopped wearing shirts most of the time. When he did wear something, it was a well-worn black leather jacket (and no one knew where he got it) and torn jeans. His diet consisted of only meat. When he got a tattoo of a screaming demonic face on his chest, his wife began to ask a lot of questions, not the least of which had to do with the blood she found on the back porch. Eventually, he left.

Now, the bastard serves the Iconnu, and I'll tear out his intestines if I find him.

The Werewolves' Mission

Werewolves do one thing very, very well: we destroy. Whether you're talking about a living opponent, a minivan or an entire building, we can rip that sucker to bits. Like vampires, we owe our lives to the Iconnu, who set our creation in motion when they loosed spirits from outside your reality into it. I think Sylvia's already yammered on about the vampires' view on that, and ours is similar: thanks for creating us, Iconnu, but fuck off.

GM's Note — Werewolf Non-Player Characters

Werewolf non-player characters tend to be the heavy-hitters, and they function well in this role. They aren't simply "guys who destroy things," though; they have other talents at their disposal. Chief among these is the ability to take alternate forms and track their enemies. If the player characters think they might be safe, a skilled werewolf can probably track them down.

However, the Iconnu created werewolves so that they *would* be fairly straightforward agents of destruction. They are good at sneaking up on people and killing them. Werewolves are also good at dispatching opponents in straight fights. In this regard, player character and non-player character werewolves differ — one of the key aspects that makes werewolves fun to play is that they come into conflict with their own kind, and the Iconnu's werewolves outnumber them. "Stand there and hit them" isn't necessarily going to work from a player character's perspective.

The werewolves are the Unbidden's less subtle fallback solution should the vampires fail. Ultimately, we're here to tear apart this reality, starting with everyone in it. That's what the Iconnu want us to do, anyway.

Our mission is about as straightforward as you can get, which suits us fine: hunt and kill. This "mission" comes to us in primal instincts and urges; it's nowhere close to some sort of sit-down-and-talk-with-the-Iconnu thing. We feel the need to hunt and kill things, and God, does it feel good. We don't have some lame-ass name for it like the vampires do, either. ("Covenant." What a bunch of posers.)

Unlike vampires, we don't look specifically for the Awakened. Instead, we want to hunt and kill everyone. The only things that keep us from becoming mass murderers and attacking anyone and everyone in sight are our canny instincts, which tell us that's not a fight we can win — yet. (The influence from our human sides helps control these urges as well.) Instead, just as a wolf pack, we prey upon the weak. We take the easy kills.

I should tell you, even though *I* know all this junk, most werewolves don't. Werewolves are, in general, less aware than vampires of the true secret of why they're around. Most werewolves just don't care. We're guided by instinct, by drive and by rage, and reason and emotion can suck me.

That's how most werewolves are, anyway. I like to think I strive for something a little higher. But that doesn't mean I don't like tracking old ladies through the streets and twisting their arthritic knees off — I just think about it a little bit first.

Werewolf Society

Werewolves do not have a wide-ranging society, but instead gather in small packs. Three to six werewolves per pack, usually. Some werewolves — especially the Calm (which I talk about more below) — join with non-werewolves to further whatever goals we have (such as sticking it to the Iconnu's lackeys). We call these groups our packs, as well.

Each pack always has an alpha, or a leader. This guy tells the others what to do, and they follow him. He (or she) is probably the biggest and strongest werewolf in the bunch. However, although alphas enjoy their superiority, a wise leader (and a few do indeed exist) listens to the rest of his pack, for everyone has his own knowledge and specialties.

Werewolf packs only rarely have any connection to the lives of the werewolves' original hosts. One pack I know is made up of a (former) janitor, a high school student, a gas station attendant, a marketing executive and a retiree.

The fact that werewolves get together in these packs makes life easier in a lot of ways, and more difficult in a couple. Remember, we have to be a bit canny about what we do. We're not dumb. Those werewolves who didn't realize that they must hide their true natures are already dead. We hunt and slay, but we try not to draw too much attention to ourselves — and doing this is more difficult when you have three other werewolves who also want a piece of the action.

In addition to being organized by pack, we also talk about ourselves as belonging to a particular *auspice*. The auspice is related to the moon — specifically, the moon's phase. Each auspice matches a phase.

This relation to the moon makes us more like the werewolves you blather about in your movies and horror novels. The connection is there, but it's not quite what you've read about. It's not like we go apeshit when the full moon is in the sky — we're already apeshit, all the time.

So, what the deal with the moon? Why do we have this connection? I can tell you, but it's only because I've got a human soul as part of me that I can put it into words.

Our bestial souls come from another reality, remember. That reality is a dark world; it's night all the time. The moon is huge — maybe three times the size of your moon, and it's pretty much the only light we have. And the moon doesn't change its phase as time goes on. Instead, the moon changes as *you* go on. Walk across our reality, and the moon gradually changes: a new moon at the edge of our world, then crescent, half, gibbous, the center of our reality has a bright full moon, and then if you keep going it steps back down to a new moon at the other end.

Talking about it like you're walking around on the ground is just a way to make you understand it. It's only sort of like that.

Over the centuries in which our spirits have lived in that world, the spirits became different. Something akin to your evolution, maybe. Different sorts of spirits arose in those separate "lands." All the spirits were similar in that we were all spirits of pretty much the same type — in the same way that you're all humans — but our native moon phase gave us different . . . personalities . . . abilities . . . shit, I don't know what to call it. The important thing to know is that you can divide werewolves' primal spirits into five auspices. So, you can divide the werewolves into those auspices as well.

I'm so nice, I'll even give you a nickel tour of the auspices.

Irraka — New Moon

You shouldn't be surprised that those born in shadow are adept at using it. Irraka are swift, silent and unseen. They are scouts, the first to catch sight or scent of their prey. They are wolves who hunt without howling and kill without growling. For some reason, the Irraka spirit is also prone to influence from the human host's spirit, and thus Irraka spend more time in human form — and are more adept at dealing with humans — than other werewolves. In this form, Irraka learn trickery and deceit, so they remain stealthy physically, mentally and socially. This human influence doesn't make them more likely to be Calm, however, and the many Irraka who serve the Iconnu often use their human forms to lure prey into secret areas where the Irraka can shred their prey into little chunks.

Bottom line: Irraka are stealthy, cunning and at home in the shadows.

Ithaeur — Crescent Moon

Some werewolves think it was the Ithaeur who first sniffed out this pathetic little world as a new place for prey. These guys have some sort of affinity with other dimensions — and they can exploit the areas in this reality that the Intrusion has weakened. They move between worlds. So look out, little man; these guys can come for you wherever you are.

Bottom line: Ithaeur are subtle and maneuverable, and can rip their way through reality.

Elodoth — Half Moon

Elodoth werewolves have great control — and this control is even more effective now that they've teamed up with human souls. They still rage and destroy just as the rest of us, but they temper their instincts with the wisdom to know when to strike. They are the least likely of werewolves to lose their tempers and reveal their natures to the masses. They are also the most likely to become Calm.

Bottom line: Elodoth are wise and patient, and control their fury like a weapon.

Cahalith — Gibbous Moon

Only after the savage spirits arrived on Earth and took human bodies did the Cahalith's unique nature become apparent. Cahalith werewolves have a secondary drive after the

Player Character Werewolves

A player character werewolf is likely a member of the Calm. He might still commit heinous acts, but uses his supernatural powers to fight against the Iconnu's agents (if not solely against them, then at least in addition to his extracurricular activities). A player character werewolf might even belong to the IDA and work for the government, perhaps alongside humans, vampires, mages and others. In the end, however, even the Calm prefer the company of other werewolves to that of the others.

Werewolves hunt things and kill them. That's cool, but if that's all you're thinking werewolves do, you may think your typical werewolf doesn't have much to do, or at least anything interesting to do. They're just murderers. However, player character werewolves who oppose these murderous werewolves have a much more interesting time of it. That's the point. They have to find the murderers and stop them. The hunters become the hunted.

desire to kick the shit out of things: they desire knowledge. Whether it's actual book learnin' or just the way something smells or how it feels to kill different sorts of people, the Cahalith like to know. They use their knowledge to discover prey and to track prey that proves elusive.

Cahalith also have a deal with their howls. All werewolves howl, of course, but a Cahalith's howl carries *power*. There's something even more supernatural about a Cahalith's howl than the rest of ours, and it can influence the emotions and strum the instincts of both humans and werewolves.

Bottom line: Cahalith are knowledgeable and dangerous, and howl like you would not believe.

Rahu — Full Moon

Remember how I said that werewolves were beings of savagery, fury and physical strength? A Rahu is all of that, times two. He is WEREWOLF on steroids. Bigger and stronger than other werewolves, Rahu are also the least likely to control their rages and the most likely to cause extensive unnecessary destruction when the mood takes them.

While they're all crazy motherfuckers, some Rahu temper their rages, at least a little. All Rahu are of the warrior bent, but some focus on being warriors of the mind, with strategy and tactics and discipline and shit. Good luck to them; they are all fury given form.

Bottom line: Rahu are furious and frightening, and can kick your fucking ass from here to Tuesday.

The Calm

I'm one of the Calm. The Calm are werewolves who turn from their primal drives and instincts. We still feel the inner rage of our werewolf natures, but we have turned from the simple path the Iconnu would have us walk. And it's probably just because of my human soul that I am able to resist those Unbidden instincts — another reason to be thankful I've got old Gareth in me.

"The Calm" is a fucked-up name to describe us. I don't *feel* calm. It's difficult for me to even understand what "calm" is. I guess, though, that we're calmer than the Iconnu's werewolves — who are driven entirely by instinct and primal urges. I warn you bitches, though: we are no less savage or dangerous than any other werewolf — in some cases, we are more dangerous. The Calm do as we wish.

Similar to the vampires' Broken, some of the Calm have their own goals, and they use their werewolf powers to get what they want. Werewolves are strong. We're skillful. There're lots of things we can do. One fellow Calm I know has retreated into the wilderness, his goal to simply be alone. Another still stalks and kills prey, but for his own purposes. (The guy slaughters people who pissed off his host in his previous life — though he could just as easily have hated cops or had a psychosis regarding Asian women, or some other fucked-up shit.) Another one of the Calm is a very specific serial killer: she kills only wealthy, left-handed white men, for some reason.

Members of the Calm sometimes retain their human host's life, which is something I could never do. Some of them pretend to continue living as a doctor, an artist, a plumber or whatever, with a family and friends. They use their human lives to their best advantage. I know members of the Calm who are wealthy executives and politicians — and I tell you, you don't want to piss off these motherfuckers. These guys are smart as well as powerful. As their enemies get their asses canned — in all likelihood, throats ripped out by the light of the moon — none can trace the murders back to the Calm.

A few of the Calm, like me, know at least some of the truth of the Iconnu and the Intrusion and want to fight against those that would ultimately destroy everything. Destruction, while not a bad thing, can be taken too far. I don't want to kill everything on Earth — I want to be around to hunt and kill for decades yet. (Centuries, maybe — God knows how long werewolves can live.) More, the human in me's gotta be pretty strong, because I want to hunt and kill people who *deserve* it — which is a pretty big number these days, and includes my fellow werewolves who work for the Unbidden. The fuckholes.

MAGES

My name is Sadhvi Iyer. I am a mage. I once used ancient traditions in my culture to little effect — but those traditions now create *true* magic. I can read the emotions of people around me, make broken bones knit together and fling blasts of raw, white magic from my hands.

Over all the years of history, magic — the *power* of magic, that which made it real — seeped into our reality. From where it came, I do not know. Outside. Beyond.

People across the world attempted to use this power, and they succeeded in small ways. Sometimes stories exaggerated these small victories and, decades later, people believed that a true *wizard* had walked upon the grass. That is not true, so far as I know. All of the supposed wizards were gifted stage magicians and performers, or else they used their rituals to access that tiny bit of magic power and had good . . . public relations people.

Now, though, things are different. Very, very different. The magic that once trickled into our reality is now a flood, pouring through the Intrusion Site that the Unbidden created. All our rituals — even new rituals that we create now — have potential vaster than the ancient ones could have predicted.

Those who practice these mystic arts usually have knowledge of the Unbidden. We know something of the truth behind the Intrusion and, thus, from where our magic comes. We know about the Unbidden, though obviously not too much, as they are beings that cannot truly be known. What we do with our knowledge, though, varies. Mages feel one of several ways about the Unbidden.

Some think the Unbidden are gods. Perhaps they are actual gods about which we knew; they are Shiva or Odin or Satan, finally come to this world. Some think the Unbidden are gods of some other reality, or if not gods, at least beings far greater than us in power — but yet with understandable motives. These mages believe the Unbidden are worthy of veneration. Worship. *Service*. They follow the will of the Unbidden, which is to annihilate our reality. Thus, these mages are the enemies of the Earth. Some mages follow the Unbidden because they think they will be rewarded; some mages believe that entities of their vast knowledge must know more than humans, and thus if they want to scour reality, it shall be scoured. Others are simple nihilists, wanting to send the world to oblivion and seeing the Unbidden as a means to do so.

These mages are foolish, but perhaps more foolish are the mages who see the Unbidden as a way to power, not by worshipping them, but by *controlling* them. They think a canny mage can manipulate the Unbidden and their servants to his own ends. That mages can outwit beings without wits. Outthink beings without thoughts.

Both these groups are deluded. The Unbidden don't care for human worshippers — the Unbidden do not *care* at all, for that is a human emotion, and we cannot ascribe human qualities to these very inhuman things. They are too far beyond our comprehension to manipulate.

Some mages ignore the Unbidden, using their power for personal purposes. It is difficult to completely neglect a thing that has so great an impact on the world, but these mages are like normal people when they think of the Unbidden: that war is for others to fight.

Only a few mages realize the truth: opposing the Unbidden is the only way to survive. If any humans — mortals — can hope to undertake such a monumental task, mages, with our newfound power, seem the most likely to succeed. Yet the path of the mage is perilous, not the least because of the temptation to turn to evil ways and selfish, arrogant uses of our power.

What Was Once Fantasy

Perhaps the one unique facet that shapes most mages' lives is the sudden realization that what we once dreamed of doing, what we once believed that we could do (but couldn't) and what some of us certainly claimed we could do — we can now do.

Of course, as of a year ago, even the most learned "mage" was forced to start at the bottom to learn how to *really* make spells work. Yet for many well-versed in the eldritch arts, such work was accomplished quickly. Because of the Intrusion, our ancient traditions, the things we learned, we believed in and that we practiced, now suddenly work with only a minor adjustment in paradigm. Our rituals are the same, or similar, and yet now — things *happen* when we do them. We no longer need to rely on penitents' faith, on the deeper *meaning* of the rites or on smoke and mirrors to feel as if we have achieved something. We now have real power. And power — it is a true saying — corrupts.

Sylvia and Gareth have already spoken, so you know that vampires and werewolves have no true history in this world — just the fiction that appears in books and movies and myth, which is no true history of those creatures and just gives humans titles for them. Unlike vampires and werewolves, mages *do* have a long history in this world, though for most of that time, we weren't true mages. Yet people in every culture have their myths of magic in various forms, of wizards and miracle workers and shamans, who caused the impossible to become true.

For thousands of years, people everywhere toiled and sweated to make magic work. They used mystic implements, complicated rites, intensive sexual acts, songs and dances, symbols supposedly pregnant with arcane power. In a few cases, these pretenders did indeed draw power from outside our universe to make the magic work. They broke the laws of physics and science. Though perhaps "broke" is not the proper word, since their accomplishments were minor. They bent the laws. Put tiny dents in them, which quickly corrected themselves. The greatest power that the most learned "mage" wielded before the Intrusion is nothing compared to the accomplishments of even the most mediocre of mages today.

That relative power is difficult to measure, however. Before the Intrusion, when I was newly married, I labored for two years on a spell to make my son — when I gave birth to him at the end of those two years — smarter and stronger. Did it work? I do not know. Certainly he was a smart and strong boy who has grown into a smart and strong man, but how am I to know whether that was my doing or God's?

Yet people — those nascent mages — always knew that greater, more overt spells were possible. A thousand years of tradition has claimed that to be so. However, few of us focused our efforts on bolts of fire or spells of levitation — perhaps because, despite the myths, they *were not* possible. So we contented ourselves with spells we could not see, because then we could pretend that they worked. A rune of protection, so that a loved one did not fall to danger on the road. A word of fortitude, to give us courage against our enemies.

Now, though, those greater spells *are* possible. Magic is more obvious, dramatic and — to some extent — measurable. Now, mages fling bolts of fire and cast spells of levitation. A warlock shatters a wall with a gesture. An enchanter clouds the minds of his foes.

Some mages attempt to use this new power from the Unbidden — which some of the more lighthearted of us call the "Intrusion Infusion" — in attempts to add potency to, or to at long last complete, the old rituals. They draw the

Player's Note — Roleplaying Mages

Mages present interesting roleplaying opportunities because they are (relatively) normal humans who suddenly have more power than they ever thought they'd have. The decision about to use this power is key. Do you use it for selfish ends? For a cause? How do you decide which cause is right? Do you use magic to defeat your enemies — and if so, which enemies? And how far is too far? Mages desire power, certainly, but throughout tradition, the goal of mages has not been simply power — it has been power *tempered with wisdom.*

One way mages are different from vampires and werewolves is that mages *do* have a long history. Every magical tradition in the world is now pregnant with power. The decision as to which one you follow, and in what ways you adhere to the ancient beliefs and grant them credence, is a central aspect of your character. Also, some mages don't follow cultural traditions at all, but instead draw upon fiction — gray-bearded wizards and wand-wielding high schoolers, for example — to inspire their spells.

Intrusion's power to make their newborn sons smarter and stronger. However, the lure of more expedient, vivid and direct spells has drawn magery as a whole away from the old spells. It is a new era for mages. It is a magic revolution. And it all happened in merely a single year.

Despite the new power and obvious nature of magic, some out there remain ignorant of it. Some still practice their routines with their smoke and their mirrors, pretending to work magic and not realizing that, in fact, maybe they *can*. Also, some out there try to tap the power, and pretend to be mages, but lack the aptitude, insight or proper training. In any event, the pretenders, the unwise and the common merely make the labyrinthine landscape of mage society even more difficult to navigate.

I should also mention that we have been mages, *true* mages, for only a single year. It is true that many of us have been studying magical traditions for years or longer, but our new power is still *new*. We have much to learn, and many other concerns weighing on our minds. Many mages devote themselves to practicing and mastering magecraft, but the presence of vampires, werewolves, demons, other mages and the Unbidden demands attention as well.

We may be powerful, but we have not come close to reaching our potential. This fact both inspires and frightens me.

Secrets

Everything about magecraft revolves around secrets. Magic, after all, is secret lore; for centuries, it has been available only to the elite few who knew of its mysteries. The recent revolution has not changed that — perhaps it has underscored it. We are those who can see the larger truth, a truth glimpsed only by vampires and werewolves and humans with their own concerns, and our vision raises us above the others. We understand more than anyone else. We see reality for what it is, and the Intrusion is only just the latest and most dramatic validation of that knowledge.

I do not say these things out of arrogance (though many of my kind would), but rather as a statement of fact. Once you start performing *real* spells, the landscape opens before your eyes, and you realize that many, many things are now possible. And many more *will* be possible, when you unlock the proper secret.

Our lives are filled with secret words, symbols, gestures, actions, practices. Everything has multiple meanings, because reality functions on many levels at once. The arrival of the Unbidden and all the ensuing events certainly prove as much.

Our power comes from what we know and understand; thus, we always strive to know and understand more. Now more than ever, we live our lives to learn mystical secrets. Even a new application of my skill that I develop through experimentation is akin to uncovering an ancient secret, long forgotten.

If you do not understand these things, I do not blame you. You are, after all, not a mage.

Mage Appearance

Few mages significantly alter their appearance in the Intrusion's wake. Thus, unlike as with werewolves, you cannot tell a mage simply by looking closely. You might discern a mage by examining her behavior: she might seem preoccupied, always in thought. When she discovers the power she can now access, she might spend much time doing research at university libraries or on the Internet, or she might devote her evenings and weekends to a new group of friends (fellow mages).

Mages usually belong to some cultural tradition of magic. A majority — though not an overwhelming one — of mages today were "mages" before the Intrusion, using fallible rituals or anything else in which they believed to, they thought, cast spells. Since the Intrusion, most mages focus even more intently on whatever tradition they revered beforehand. Native American medicine men might dress in full ceremonial garb instead of jeans and T-shirts. Followers of the Celtic druid tradition might wear brown robes instead of business suits and carry mistletoe instead of laptops. Astrologers might consult charts and wear clothes depicting the stars.

However, mages are still people, and most do not like to draw attention to the fact that they are mages. Thus, their dress is usually as it was before, with perhaps a few minor alterations. A sprig of holly in a buttonhole, or a sacred symbol tattooed onto the hand or worn on a chain around the neck. Mages who don't belong to a particular tradition, but who instead came to their

GM's Note — Mage Non-Player Characters

A mage is a human with an enormously powerful and versatile tool. The tool is often a weapon, as well. Because mages are human, understandable human motivation drives mages (usually — the occasional insane mage also exists). Few are the mages who resist using their powers to achieve personal goals — few are the mages who even try to resist.

Mages as opponents work well as wild cards. Werewolves are pretty straightforward; vampires are less so, but characters can still anticipate vampires' actions with a degree of precision. Mages have so many tricks in their bags that player characters won't know what's coming and may find an enemy mage difficult to counter. Of course, mage non-player characters might be difficult for you to run, since the magic system is so fluid. You don't want to slow the game *too* much as you determine what spell the enemy mage casts.

power through happenstance or have eschewed tradition, wear their clothes and themselves however they like.

Some mages can use magic to change their appearance, and these people are often skilled at assuming whatever guise is most advantageous.

Mage Society

Mages sometimes gather in small groups that are similar to vampires' coteries or werewolves' packs. These groups call themselves cabals, circles, covens or any number of other names. Mages also attempt to create larger organizations, often called orders or any of the names that smaller groups use. These groups allow mages of like mindset — or even those with unlike mindset but with similar goals — to share knowledge and work together to achieve their ends.

This tendency to organize is no different from that in any other subset of the population, and just as many people do not join groups, many mages are solitary. Indeed, mages have a tradition of and reputation for being reclusive. Some hoard their knowledge and secrets, remaining in the modern equivalent of a wizard's tower: a rent-controlled flat with stale pizza crusts and stains on the carpet. Here, they spend their time researching and experimenting, interacting with others only if it serves their goals — or the goals of their masters.

In addition to these loosely organized groups, each mage belongs to a *Path*. The secrets of magic are so broad and, in some cases, so well hidden, that one cannot attempt to master them all. To do so would be to invite frustration and powerlessness. Mages can tolerate frustration, but impotency is against our natures. So each mage chooses a focus, a Path and concentrates his studies on secrets and spells related to this Path. Our Paths also grant us specific names, such as Warlock or Enchanter.

Some mages are even more elitist or secretive than others and associate only with mages on the same Path. Others tolerate those of other Paths but conduct no magical operations with anyone other than like-minded mages. Most, however, realize that we have more important considerations than our personal areas of devotion.

Despite the relative lack of organization in mage society, each Path has a single mage at its head. Other mages on that Path recognize this mage as the Path's master — she is often more versed in the Path's mysteries and more adept at weaving its spells than any other mage on the Path. (Of course, as modern magic and the Paths have existed for only a year, even these individuals still have a great deal to learn.) These masters are called Hierarchs. They are scattered across the globe and rarely meet. They also rarely wield their influence over other mages. I hope, however, that eventually the Hierarchs will come together and make a decision to oppose the Unbidden collectively, with a unified vision, as our current scattered natures and opposing ideologies are inefficient.

Five Paths exist; they are as follows.

Enchanters

These mages use magic to tap into the power of fortune and intuition, as epitomized by ancient tales of the faerie folk. Enchanters alter chance and "fate," they say. Their magic is some of the most subtle following the Intrusion, but clearly effective.

An Enchanter makes the cards shuffle according to her will; she senses when danger approaches.

Warlocks

Focusing their arcane might on destruction and chaos, these mages value unfettered freedom. Some believe their power comes from demons and the netherworld. Many see Warlocks as evil, though that is not a just categorization: they are individualists and iconoclasts, but they are not necessarily evil.

A Warlock travels great distances at a step; she forces her opponents' brains to hemorrhage.

Necromancers

Death mages focus their power on the realms of ghosts and shades, believing the true nature of things to be a secret that the dead know. The Necromancers' tradition is perhaps more ancient than the rest, as people have been fascinated with death and the realms of the dead since the day we became conscious of our mortality. With the arrival of the Unbidden, and the discovery that dead souls and other spirits do indeed exist, the Necromancers' art is one of great philosophical importance as well as magical power.

A Necromancer draws the life from her opponent's body; she summons ghosts to answer her questions and do her bidding.

Theurgists

Theurgists are mages who deal in physical and spiritual strength that some believe comes from a higher power or angelic spirits. Theurgists tend to be the most straightforward and flashiest of mages. They also often have a moral arrogance that grates on my nerves, as many believe they draw their power from some heavenly realm.

A Theurgist blasts lightning from her fingertips; she destroys buildings with explosions of golden fire.

Shamans

These mages focus on primal, passionate magic as epitomized by beast totems. Shamans also tap into the essence of life. These mages draw upon the traditions of many native cultures, respecting the plants and beasts of the world; Shamans use life power and natural connections to inspire their spells.

A Shaman convinces the trees to capture her foes; she takes the form of a whippoorwill to flit unseen around her enemies' camp.

The Strangers

A number — an unfortunately significant number — of mages revere the Unbidden. These mages call the Unbidden the ungods (or sometimes the Elder Gods or the Ancient Ones, as

Player Character Mages

Player character mages are likely to belong to the Bastion, working in small groups (or with non-mages) to oppose the workings of the Strangers and others who serve the Iconnu's ends. A Bastion mage might even work with the government's IDA, but only because the IDA likely has knowledge and resources that he can use — mages consider themselves above such mundane concepts as governments.

More than any others who struggle against the Iconnu, Bastion mages are likely to know much about the real enemy and the threat's true scope.

they attempt to tie them to myths of Atlantis or other fictional para-historical contexts) and refer to themselves as Strangers. The name reflects that they are strangers to this world, and have rejected all that it has to offer. They have other names for themselves as well, though these are not as prevalent. They might call themselves the Knights of the Cleansing, the Knights of Shadow, the Liberators of the Prison or the Scourge of the Temple.

Foolishness has existed in this world for as long as people have lived. Although the Intrusion occurred only a year ago, the Strangers are not a new development. Rather, they are an old order that has adopted the Unbidden into its already existing belief system. For a long time, the Strangers were a cult that sought to overthrow and cleanse the world, creating a new and superior world after the ash had cooled. The Unbidden's agenda is apparently similar to that of the Strangers, and thus the Strangers see the Unbidden as beings come to fulfill the Strangers' dream. With the arrival of the Unbidden and the increasing potency of magic, the Strangers have gained many new converts and have moved further out of the shadows than at any point in history.

The Strangers are extremely dangerous people. They believe that this reality must crumble away so that a newer, better world can replace it. As mages, they claim, only *they* see the true nature of things, and that true nature is corrupt and befouled, worthy of destruction. Clearly, this is where their ideology clashes with those of other mages (though the number of mages who subscribe to the Strangers sometimes makes me wonder). Thus, the Strangers seek the destruction of everything, out to an ever-widening scope.

At the top of the Strangers' hierarchy — in truth, *above* them all —are the Secret Masters. Do not confuse the Secret Masters with the Hierarchs, for these people share little similarities with the masters of the Paths. The Secret Masters' identities are not known to any except those who reach the Strangers' upper echelons. Many believe that the Secret Masters are not human, but I do not know — neither does anyone else — if that means that they were never human or if they have ascended to a higher — or at least different — level. Transcended their humanity, or denied it.

The Secret Masters send encrypted messages to the Strangers through omens and symbols of many, many kinds. They transmit these messages in the open in newspapers, books, television, radio and websites. The Strangers scour these sources, seeking clues to what their next step should be.

The Strangers sometimes call themselves the Scourge of the Temple, and they say that they will destroy reality "one pillar at a time." This is a metaphor that refers to the world as an ancient temple. This also refers to the idea that certain metaphysical "pillars" exist that, if destroyed, will collapse all of reality. Recent events lead many to believe that the Awakened are these pillars, and their existence draws even more mages to believe in the Strangers' twisted philosophy.

The Bastion

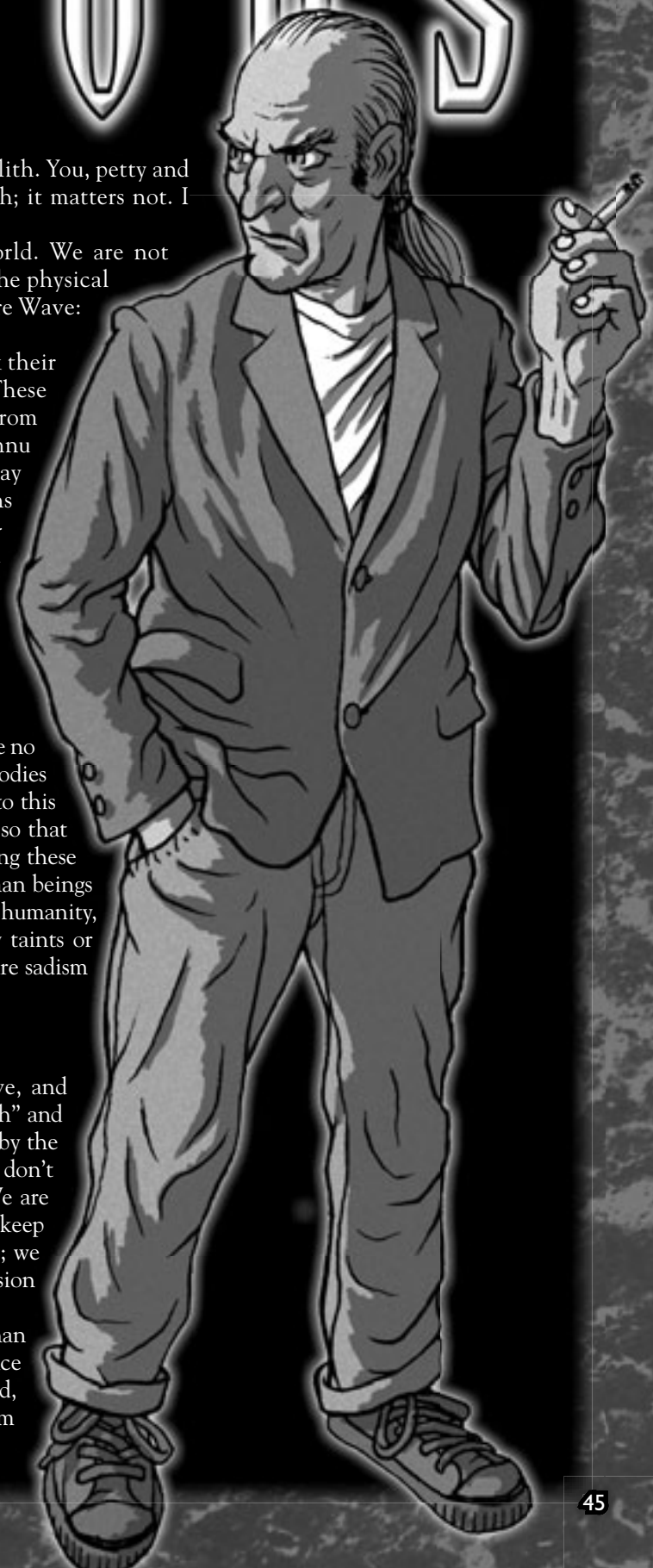
Some mages seek not to use the power from the Intrusion only for their own sakes, but rather hope to use magic to defend this world. I am one of these. We call ourselves the Bastion. We are also the Defenders of True Fate, the Protectors of the Temple, the Sentinels of Atlantis and the Wardens of the Fundament, among other names. The names do not matter; what is important is that we stand to protect the world and oppose those who serve the Unbidden — especially the Strangers.

The Bastion is a secretive order, even by mage standards. Our foes, the Strangers, outnumber us by far, as do unaffiliated mages. (Unaffiliated mages outnumber both groups, proving again that human selfishness takes precedence over shared philosophies.) The Bastion is a reactive order. We seek to learn the plans of the Strangers and stop them from whatever they plan to do. We have many strategies to accomplish our goal, but all are fallible. A few of us with the time and resources — not nearly enough — attempt counter-intelligence, researching likely media through which the Secret Masters send their messages.

Leadership of the Bastion is called the Arcanum, and each member of the Arcanum has a card from the Tarot's major arcana. For example, one of the members holds the Tower, another the Sun, another Death. The Tarot's legacy and mystical connotations are some of the oldest in any culture, given extra potency by the Intrusion, and a fitting symbol for our members and our work.

Similar to the Strangers' Secret Masters, members of the Arcanum do not communicate with the Bastion's membership directly and keep their identities a secret to all but each other. Even I do not know much about them; I assume they are as many as the Tarot's major arcana. (Twenty-two: Chariot, Death, Devil, Emperor, Empress, Fool, Hanged Man, Hermit, Hierophant, High Priestess, Judgment, Justice, Lovers, Magician, Moon, Star, Strength, Sun, Temperance, Tower, Wheel of Fortune and World.)

DEMONS



I am called many things. Mephistopheles. Asmodeus. Lilith. You, petty and transient mortal, can refer to me by whatever title you wish; it matters not. I am a demon.

Yes, insects: demons now stride upon your fragile world. We are not plentiful, but we need not be. Some might say that we are the physical embodiment of what you call the Intrusion and the Nightmare Wave: fear and murder and the unknown given form.

When the Iconnu drew spirits from other worlds to work their will in this one, they summoned the souls of dead humans. These became vampires. The Iconnu summoned also bestial spirits from some brutal realm; these are now werewolves. Yet the Iconnu also summoned spirits even more alien — spirits humanity may have predicted in the past, since your myths and religions speak of "demons" in hushed whispers and damning indictments. And we are your demons. We arrived in your world and molded bodies for ourselves. Our spirits are utterly alien to your world, but terrestrial matter composes our corporeal natures.

Living Lies

We are different from vampires and werewolves, for we have no human souls to befoul our natures. Indeed, we have no human bodies — rather than possess those shivering shells, our spirits came to this world and used earthly elements to clothe our souls in bodies so that we could interact with this world. We are adept at manipulating these bodies. We can work our artifice and appear to be normal human beings — but we are nothing of the kind. We are far removed from humanity, even compared with vampires and werewolves. No humanity taints or mitigates our natures. We are malice. We are corruption. We are sadism and wickedness and sin given form.

The Demons' Mission

We are the living embodiments of the Nightmare Wave, and our existence proves the vacuity of your pathetic human "truth" and "understanding." And yet our primary mission, imparted to us by the Iconnu, is to keep people from recognizing that truth. (Ironic, don't you think?) Lies, deception and misdirection are our tools. We are the ones who draw the cloaks of secrets about the truth: we keep humans ignorant of werewolves, vampires, mages and demons; we keep them from knowing about the Nightmare Wave, the Intrusion and the Iconnu.

Overriding all of these concerns are the Awakened. More than anything else, we prevent humanity from learning the importance of the Awakened. We also bend our will against the Awakened, using our lies and trickery to break them and prevent them from preserving this reality.

Player's Note — Roleplaying Demons

Demons are not nice creatures. The other supernatural beings have at least some humanity to temper their natures, but not so demons. They are malice and deceit given physical form. Thus, a demon's motivation is likely to be as alien as its origin, though player character demons might have more recognizable motivations. You must have a pretty good reason for denying the demons' mission and attempting to preserve the world, though; you're going against your fundamental nature when doing so. Some ideas appear under the "Rogue Demons" section.

Demons care little to nothing for humans. You are likely to be self-serving, but charming. A demon's nature means he knows how humans tick, and knows how to manipulate them to get what he wants. He has no qualms about eliminating those who stand in his way — or just those who aren't helpful.

Demon Shapeshifting and Limitations

Our skill at manipulating the matter that composes our bodies is adroit. We can change our physical forms into whatever we desire — or what someone else desires — though the transformation is limited and transitory. Each of us has a base form, a default, that . . . well, little people, you would not like it. To you it is hideous and inhuman, a form that does little but spread fear. Occasionally that is our goal, but as I mentioned, our tools are secrecy and deception. Few see our true forms unless it is but moments before we destroy them.

Our ability to control our forms, our skill at deception and our charm make some of your human occupations particularly favorable for us. Demons make excellent political pundits, entertainers and televangelists. We cannot keep a chosen form for long, but we can appear in front of a camera or on stage (or on a pulpit), utter our words, laced with trickery and wordplay that tugs on human minds and then leave before we lose our guises.

I believe I should make clear the distinction between werewolves and demons. We share some similarities: we both are born of spirits foreign to your reality, we both enjoy violence and shedding human blood and we can both take human and monstrous form. The primary difference that need concern you is that demons *think*, and that makes us more dangerous. Werewolves are rampaging engines of destruction. Demons are crafty and tricky; we are the ones who set the engines in motion.

In this paltry world of yours, each of us also has a unique aspect that sometimes proves an irritation. A requirement. These requirements vary a good deal. One demon must consume copious amounts of grain alcohol. Another must routinely bathe in the blood of the innocent. Another must spend half of every day underground, while another must never hear a particular word. We don't know why these limitations come about; perhaps through an interaction of two alien natures: our spirits and your world. While these limitations can be aggravating, usually they are not. Usually they are amusing diversions, or an enjoyable secondary goal toward which we can strive while fulfilling our other missions.

Every demon's fundamental appearance and special needs are different. See, we truly are alien: we are not all alike, like you human cattle. We are true individuals.

The Connection to Mythological Demons

"Demon." A convenient name. We would never have called ourselves demons on our own, but it appeals to us to be associated with the classic evil spirits of your myth and legend. And so we adopt the moniker. It proves great fun, like a constant game. It appeals to our sense of deceit. We purposefully adopt the appearance, mannerisms and even names of human-created demons, from both myth and fiction. You've heard some of the names I use. Human creations, but they

GM's Note — Demon Non-Player Characters

Most demons are non-player characters. They make even better behind-the-scenes manipulators than vampires, because demons have more skills to make people do what they want and their primary goal is to remain hidden. The player characters might unravel a plot and slay the vampire at its head, never knowing that a demon organized the entire enterprise. Demons are also interesting non-player characters because their forms and names vary; the player characters may run into the same demon numerous times without realizing it. They may also encounter a demon they *think* they've seen before, but it turns out to be a demon who was simply using the same name.

Demons are rare. This means that few people know much about them. It also means that they shouldn't show up *too* often in your campaign; vampire, werewolf and mage non-player characters should outnumber demons.

sound delightfully alien. *Mephistopheles*. Other demons call themselves by other titles. A demon might call itself a succubus, a shedim, an efrit or a balor. It might adopt different names depending on the circumstance and its physical forms.

We exist to deceive and confuse, but every so often, we are discovered. When this happens, a favorite tactic is to fall back on demonic tropes humans find familiar. Such tactics confuse humans and obfuscate our presence. We'd rather a human believe that she saw a demon from Hell with horns, cloven hooves and red skin than realize the truth.

Demonic Society

Demons are few in number but share a common goal, so we stick together. We don't spend much time with vampires, werewolves or (especially) humans because, though we can pass for humans, we can do so only for a short time. In the company of our fellow demons, we can exist in our "natural" forms without fear that our enemies will discover us.

Though we work in groups, we do not have a hierarchy. Certain aspects of our identities are too fluid to support such a structure. I call myself Mephistopheles, Corrupter of Genius at times; at other times I am Samael, Angel of Death, or Lilith, Queen of the Demons, or a simple mazzikim "harmer." Names and appearance mean little to demons, since we change both with such ease. Though ironically, despite all this, demons are fiercely independent — we are individualists without specific identity.

Two general types of demons exist: tempters and scourges. Each has a slightly different nature.

Tempters

Tempters seek to corrupt and seduce humans, in particular the Awakened. We use lies to fool our victims and misdirect the truth. We get humans to focus their attention on anything — emotion, sex, logic, religion, entertainment, science — except the reality that their world is in danger.

Scourges

Scourges use brutal violence to accomplish their ends. These murderous, sadistic and cruel beings seek to kill and destroy all that they can. This makes them seem like werewolves in some ways, but scourges are still demons, and they use deception and temptation to lure their victims. The difference between tempters and scourges is that scourges kill people — especially the Awakened — to keep them from learning the truth, while tempters use subtler methods.

Player Character Demons

Rogue demons are exceedingly rare, but they do exist. Thus, player character demons should be rare. Those that exist are likely rogue demons, and they might work with others to further selfish goals. More than one demon player character in the same party is unheard of.

Rogue Demons

Demons are extremely rare. Among our ranks, however, a select few turn from their natures and against their creation. I, for example, have the strength of will to overcome the Iconnu's influence and the purpose of my creation. I am the scorpion that does not sting the turtle; the mother bear that lets her cubs die so she can live.

Rogue demons become creatures of this world, and may decide to protect it rather than destroy it. The reason we make this decision varies, and few demons are benevolent. I do not keep my personal goal a secret from those with whom I feel I must consort: I want to protect the world so that I can rule it. (In actuality, I am enough of a realist to realize that ruling the entire world is unlikely — however, I plan to rule some corner of it.) Other rogue demons become so enamored with some aspect of life in this world — the pleasures of sex, food or physical comforts, for example — that they want the world to continue. Some see that their abilities can make them beings of power and influence among the ignorant masses, and decide that such power is their goal.

911 Operator: Chicago 911.
Caller: [Inaudible]
911 Operator: Sir, could you please repeat that?
Caller: [Inaudible]
911 Operator: Okay, sir. I can't make out what you're saying. What's the —
Caller: [Inaudible] goddamn arm!
911 Operator: Sir, you're going to have to calm down and tell me —
Caller: [Inaudible] me! I'm being strangled by my own damn arm! You gotta . . .
[Dial tone]
—911 Dispatch Transcript

AWAKENED

-Hey, it's me again. Baxter Love. Thanks to Sylvia, Gareth, Sadhvi and Scary-Name-of-the-Week for all that info — they know more than I do on their personal subjects, just as I know more than them on mine. I am Awakened, and ever since I discovered what that means, I've been working to understand it. I've been trying to find out what made me Awakened, what I can do with that title and if it's possible to Awaken others.

Millions of us exist. Who decided to call us Awakened I don't know, but it fits. We're also sometimes called Willful Ones. The Awakened are the people — and yes, we are *people*, humans; perhaps *more* human than anyone else — who kept our reality intact in the wake of the Iconnu's Intrusion. We preserved the universe as alien entities sought to rend it asunder. Not too shabby — and we didn't even do it on purpose.

Here's the main deal with the Awakened: most of us don't know what we are. There's just no easy way to tell. We aren't physically different from other humans. We *are* different psychologically, but a casual observer would be hard-pressed to notice the personality differences between me and, say, your everyday embittered jackass. It goes without saying that only people who know what the Awakened are have even a hope of recognizing one. Other Awakened have the best chance of identifying their fellow Awakened, and even for us it's not easy. We've got to get to know someone and understand her outlook — and confirm her sincerity — to figure it out.

The defining aspect that separates us from other humans isn't physical or mental — it's spiritual. That sort of difference is often a quiet one. Awakened have strong wills; that's why we're sometimes called the Willful Ones. Some say that we epitomize humans. Some say we're the next step up on the evolutionary ladder. Others say that Awakened have been around forever, but we didn't know because we didn't need to preserve our reality until now. Whatever the case, the fact is that the Awakened are the metaphysical pillars of our reality: somehow, we, without even knowing it, maintain reality's integrity in the face of the Intrusion.

Player's Note — Roleplaying the Awakened

The Awakened are people, with human motivations and emotions. They likely have families and friends. They probably have careers and passions.

One key aspect to consider is how you adapted — and how you continue to adapt — to the knowledge that you are Awakened. It can be overwhelming for some, rapture to others or inspire any other emotion. You might also think about how much you know about the supernatural happenings in the world. If you have joined forces with others who fight the Iconnu, how did you meet them? Do you feel inferior, if they have an array of supernatural powers? Or do you feel superior, since you help preserve reality?

The Waking World

The Awakened are just people. People who are more aware of themselves, of other people and of the importance and meanings of things and ideas. We lead the self-examined life. We're grounded, and I find that we are usually a bit smarter and more perceptive than other people. (Of course, that's not saying much.) I don't know whether these qualities make us Awakened, or if, as Awakened, we gain these qualities. I also don't know if normal people out there can possess all these qualities and *not* be Awakened.

Most Awakened are driven and ambitious, though our ambitions are often nonconventional. Most Awakened want more than just a corner office and a huge bank balance, so someone who is simply ambitious is not necessarily Awakened. (Many of these people are as asleep as a fast-food employee television zombie.)

Ignorance Is Bliss

Before the Intrusion, the Awakened didn't know they were special. (Well, a few might have thought they were, but odds are slim. *I* certainly considered myself an average schlub.) Even after the Intrusion, the vast majority of Awakened have no idea of their importance. They do not know what they've done — and what they continue to do. "Holding up the roof of reality" (as Sadhvi says) is not something that someone does consciously. It's not an act of intention. Instead, it's something we do merely — and profoundly — by the act of existing.

Wake Up!

Obviously, the Awakened are important. If we all keeled over tomorrow, reality would snap like the end of a film reel. The Iconnu recognize this on some level, and their hands in the world — the vampires, werewolves, demons and misguided mages — know it as well. They hunt the Awakened. When they finally get us all, that's it. Game over, man. Game over.

So we fight them. Yet there's another hope as well. If we want extra pillars to hold up the roof, we don't just have to wait until a new Awakened is born. (And, I believe, is parented and reaches maturity. I have not yet met an Awakened who was younger than 19, so I suspect it's something that comes with a degree of emotional and spiritual development.) A normal human can be enlightened so that she becomes Awakened. We can Awaken her.

Doing so is both a kindness and a sin. Once a person achieves the Awakened outlook and sense of being, and recognizes that these things have determined her nature and made her Awakened, new avenues open to her mind that allow her to expand her consciousness. The same is true for people who have been Awakened for most of their lives but haven't realized it: when they figure it out, new vistas stretch out, ripe for exploration. It's not all peaches, though; you know we have our enemies. Vampires and demons in particular see it as their mission to hunt and destroy — or corrupt — the Awakened. Awakened who are aware of their natures are easier to find.

Awakened who are aware of their natures — and of some of the supernatural goings-on in the world — usually take up the fight against the Iconnu's agents. These forces, after all, seek to destroy *the Awakened* — and all of reality.

GM's Note — Awakened Non-Player Characters

The Awakened is the only supernatural group apt to be mostly helpful to player characters. Awakened also serve as excellent adventure hooks, in a variety of means. Vampires and demons (and werewolves and some mages) hunt the Awakened, so the player characters might have to rescue or protect the Awakened. They may also contact an Awakened to bring him into the fold. They might attempt to Awaken likely candidates from the community — either local or international. A few Awakened might work against the player characters, but these are misguided or manipulated people who do not know the truth.

Awakened Society

Awakened do not have a "society" in the way that vampires and mages and such do. We are humans; we live in human society. We are scattered across the globe and exist in every culture.

When an Awakened gets an inkling of what he is — and maybe has a run-in or two with the supernatural — he usually decides that he must do something about the bad guys. Unfortunately, many Awakened come to this awareness alone. They do not have other Awakened who can help them, or know where to go to find the few vampires, werewolves and mages who share the Awakened's mindset. So, Awakened who oppose the Iconnu are often the least knowledgeable about the truth behind the Intrusion and the Nightmare Wave. Few Awakened even know of the Iconnu's existence, and thus the Awakened don't know what they struggle against. They spend much of their time investigating strange phenomena and reports of out-of-the-ordinary people and events. In this way, the Awakened discover vampires, werewolves, mages and demons (often the hard way) and sometimes find those few who share the Awakened outlook.

Obviously, some Awakened belong to the government's Intrusion Defense Agency. Me, for example. However, it's certainly not true that all human IDA agents and employees are Awakened. Many unenlightened humans are interested in paranormal events, particularly something as dramatic as the Intrusion. Some of us, me included, think we should be doing a better job trying to Awaken these people. Personally, I think we should go around and try to Awaken just about everyone. Sure, it's dangerous, but so is living in a world where vampires and werewolves run around, bent on reality's destruction. Might as well be part of the solution, people.

Awakened Player Characters

Awakened make excellent player characters. They work against the Iconnu's forces by default. Awakened might belong to the IDA, or they might clash with vampires and werewolves on their own. Several early adventures could revolve around a group of Awakened who gradually discover the truth about themselves and the world — then decide what to do with that knowledge.

The Interaction of the Shadow Cultures

Together, vampires, mages, werewolves, demons and even the Awakened are called the Shadow Cultures. We exist among humanity, but most of humanity is not aware of us. We fight our battles in the shadows — both literally and figuratively. People don't realize that clashes that determine whether they live or die — whether this reality survives or crumbles — took place last night, and will the next.

The Shadow Cultures don't trust each other. Sure, a few exceptions exist, but even my cronies in the IDA don't see eye to eye. A lot of them have their own agendas, and we find ourselves on the same side because we all want to be free of the Iconnu so that we can do something else. If this all ever comes to some sort of resolution (and I don't see how that's possible), Sylvia and I will be on opposite sides. I doubt Gareth and I will get along without a common enemy, and I certainly don't trust Mephistopheles — or whatever he wants to call himself — any farther than I can throw him. Yet for now, we need each other.

The fact that the Shadow Cultures don't get along is probably one of the few things that's keeping our world intact. Werewolves, vampires and demons (and those bastard Stranger mages) have similar goals, but they don't work together to achieve them. Thank God. They rarely share resources or information. They work with others of their own kind, but only to a degree.

Let's say a vampire discovers the location of an Awakened. The Awakened is inside a military compound and shows no sign of coming out. The vampire certainly doesn't go tell the werewolves or demons or mages what he knows, even though these guys could help him. He probably talks to his fellow vampires, and they figure out a way to get in there and eighty-six the Awakened. Maybe. They would be better off if they all worked together — but that's something that *humans* do. (Sometimes.) Maybe that's how we'll win this thing.

The Shadow Cultures' distrust stems from certain prejudices they have about each other. These prejudices are based on stereotypes formed in the space of a year, and they often have a degree of truth to them.

Vampires: Vampires see werewolves as simple, animalistic brutes with none of the savvy of their own kind. Vampires see mages as dangerous boys with toys, and demons as utterly untrustworthy. To a vampire, humans of all types are nothing more than cattle. The Awakened are particularly satisfying cattle to slaughter.

Werewolves: Werewolves see everyone else as schemers and liars, using their words and intellect to hide their weakness.

Mages: Mages see demons, werewolves and vampires as creatures of magic. Since mages control magic, they should be able to control these creatures. Most mages — aside from the Strangers — respect an Awakened who is aware of the truth, even if she does not attempt to learn the arts of sorcery.

Demons: Demons see vampires and werewolves as clumsy and reckless, often taking needless risks that could

alert the world to their presence. Humans are tools to be used and manipulated, even if they have the power of a mage or an Awakened.

Awakened: If the Awakened know much of the truth, they know that everyone else is out to get them. The Awakened quickly learn not to trust others, or the Awakened die.

Cross-Pollination

You might be wondering the same thing I am: is it possible to belong to two Shadow Cultures? Can a werewolf study magic and become a mage? Can a recently arriving soul possess an Awakened, turning him into an Awakened vampire?

I don't have the answer, but I don't *think* these things are possible. I haven't seen it, anyway, and I've seen a *lot* in the year I've been doing this. Belonging to one Shadow Culture seems to exclude you from the others, though why, I don't know. It's too bad. I was thinking about learning magic.

I could be wrong, though. One thing I've learned in the last year: now, just about anything is possible.

"The thing is, by all reports the Unbidden aren't making any new bloodsuckers, moonragers or shapechangers. That means, just maybe, this is a war we can win. Imagine: a time when there's only a few of those creepy crawlies scurrying in the darkness and they're all on the run, scared, and we're hunting them down like the vermin they are. Of course, we have to survive through these times now, when they're freakin' everywhere. And right now, that don't seem likely."

—Charles Anderson, IDA agent

SECURI

CHARACTERS

"Out of the ravaged, burning land, they come, the men of shadow," wrote an anonymous graffiti tagger on the side of a building in Minneapolis after the Intrusion stole away a section of the central United States. Did he know how right he was when he wrote that? Did he know indeed that the Iconnu's Intrusion spawned new beings to walk the world, unlike anything seen before?

The characters are the most important part of the game, offering players the opportunity to play beings of great power and complex psyche. This chapter describes the basic abilities of all character types: Awakened, demons, mages, vampires and werewolves.

Ability Scores

Every character and creature has six ability scores that measure how strong, dexterous, hardy, smart, wise and charismatic that character or creature is. For a normal human, these ability scores range from 3 to 18, though paranormal creatures sometimes have superhuman ability scores.

Ability Modifiers

Each ability has a modifier based on its score; these modifiers range from –5 on up. Table 2–1: Ability Modifiers shows the modifier for each score.

The modifier is the number you apply to the die roll when your character tries to do something related to that ability. You also use the modifier with some numbers that aren't die rolls. A positive modifier is called a bonus, and a negative modifier is called a penalty.

TABLE 2–1:
ABILITY MODIFIERS

Score	Modifier	Score	Modifier
1	–5	24–25	+7
2–3	–4	25–26	+8
4–5	–3	27–28	+9
6–7	–2	29–30	+10
8–9	–1	31–32	+11
10–11	+0	33–34	+12
12–13	+1	35–36	+13
14–15	+2	37–38	+14
16–17	+3	39–40	+15
18–19	+4	41–42	+16
20–21	+5	43–44	+17
22–23	+6	etc.	

The Abilities

Each ability partially describes your character ("you" in the descriptions below) and affects some of her actions.

Strength (Str)

Strength measures your muscle and physical power. This ability helps you prevail in combat. Strength also limits the amount of equipment you can carry.

You apply your Strength modifier to the following:

- Melee attack rolls.
- Damage rolls when using a melee weapon, a thrown weapon or a bow. (*Exceptions:* Off-hand attacks receive only one-half your Strength bonus, while two-handed attacks receive one-and-a-half times your Strength bonus.)
- Climb, Jump and Swim checks. These skills have Strength as their key ability.
- Strength checks (for breaking down doors and the like).

Lifting and Dragging: You can lift as much as your maximum load over your head.

You can lift as much as double your maximum load off the ground, but you can only stagger around with it. While overloaded in this way, you lose any Dexterity bonus to Defense and can move only five feet per round (as a full-round action).

Using Strength – Encumbrance

Encumbrance rules determine how much your armor and equipment slow you down.

In Chapter 6: Equipment, "Armor" tells you how much your armor slows you, if you wear armor.

If your character is weak or carrying a lot of gear, then you need to calculate encumbrance by weight. Doing so is most important when you are trying to carry some heavy object.

If you want to determine whether your gear is heavy enough to slow you down, total the weight of all your items, including weapons and gear. Compare this total to your Strength in Table 2–2: Carrying Capacity. Depending on how the weight compares to your carrying capacity, you may be carrying a light, medium or heavy load. As with armor, your load affects your maximum Dexterity bonus to Defense, carries a check penalty (which works similarly to an armor check penalty), reduces your speed and affects how fast you can run, as shown on Table 2–3: Carrying Loads. A medium or heavy load counts as medium or heavy armor for the purpose of abilities, feats or skills that armor restricts. Carrying a light load does not encumber a character.

If you wear armor, use the worse figure (from armor or from load) for each category. Do not stack the penalties.

TABLE 2–2: CARRYING CAPACITY

Strength Score	Light Load	Medium Load	Heavy Load
1	3 lb. or less	4–6 lb.	7–10 lb.
2	6 lb. or less	7–13 lb.	14–20 lb.
3	10 lb. or less	11–20 lb.	21–30 lb.
4	13 lb. or less	14–26 lb.	27–40 lb.
5	16 lb. or less	17–33 lb.	34–50 lb.
6	20 lb. or less	21–40 lb.	41–60 lb.
7	23 lb. or less	24–46 lb.	47–70 lb.
8	26 lb. or less	27–53 lb.	54–80 lb.
9	30 lb. or less	31–60 lb.	61–90 lb.
10	33 lb. or less	34–66 lb.	67–100 lb.
11	38 lb. or less	39–76 lb.	77–115 lb.
12	43 lb. or less	44–86 lb.	87–130 lb.
13	50 lb. or less	51–100 lb.	101–150 lb.
14	58 lb. or less	59–116 lb.	117–175 lb.
15	66 lb. or less	67–133 lb.	134–200 lb.
16	76 lb. or less	77–153 lb.	154–230 lb.
17	86 lb. or less	87–173 lb.	174–260 lb.
18	100 lb. or less	101–200 lb.	201–300 lb.
19	116 lb. or less	117–233 lb.	234–350 lb.
20	133 lb. or less	134–266 lb.	267–400 lb.
21	153 lb. or less	154–306 lb.	307–460 lb.
22	173 lb. or less	174–346 lb.	347–520 lb.
23	200 lb. or less	201–400 lb.	401–600 lb.
24	233 lb. or less	234–466 lb.	467–700 lb.
25	266 lb. or less	267–533 lb.	534–800 lb.
26	306 lb. or less	307–613 lb.	614–920 lb.
27	346 lb. or less	347–693 lb.	694–1,040 lb.
28	400 lb. or less	401–800 lb.	801–1,200 lb.
29	466 lb. or less	467–933 lb.	934–1,400 lb.
+10	x4	x4	x4

TABLE 2–3: CARRYING LOADS

Load	Max Dex	Check Penalty	Speed (30 ft.)	Speed Run
Medium	+3	–3	20 ft.	x4
Heavy	+1	–6	20 ft.	x3

You can generally push or drag along the ground as much as five times your maximum load. Favorable conditions can double these numbers, and bad circumstances can reduce them to one-half or less.

Bigger and Smaller Creatures: The figures in Table 2–2: Carrying Capacity are for Medium bipedal creatures. A larger bipedal creature can carry more weight depending on its Size category, as follows: Large x2, Huge x4, Gargantuan x8, Colossal x16. A smaller creature can carry less weight depending on its Size category, as follows: Small x3/4, Tiny x1/2, Diminutive x1/4, Fine x1/8.

Quadrupeds can carry heavier loads than bipeds. For quadrupeds, multiply the value corresponding to the creature's Strength score from Table 2–2: Carrying Capacity by the appropriate modifier, as follows: Fine x1/4, Diminutive x1/2, Tiny x3/4, Small x1, Medium x1-1/2, Large x3, Huge x6, Gargantuan x12, Colossal x24.

Tremendous Strength: For Strength scores not shown in Table 2–2: Carrying Capacity, find the Strength score between 20 and 29 that has the same number in the "ones" digit as the creature's Strength score does and multiply the numbers in that for by four for every 10 points the creature's strength is above the score for that row.

Dexterity (Dex)

Dexterity measures hand-eye coordination, agility, reflexes and balance. A high Dexterity makes you harder to hit, and it's important for anyone who wants to be a skilled sharpshooter.

You apply your Dexterity modifier to the following:

- Ranged attack rolls, including those for attacks made with firearms.
- Defense (Def), provided you can react to the attack.
- Reflex saving throws, for avoiding blasts of fire and other attacks that you can escape by moving quickly.
- Balance, Drive, Escape Artist, Hide, Move Silently, Open Lock, Pilot, Ride, Sleight of Hand, Tumble and Use Rope checks. These skills have Dexterity as their key ability.

Constitution (Con)

Constitution represents your health and stamina. A Constitution bonus increases a character's hit points, so the ability is important for everyone.

You apply your Constitution modifier to the following:

- Each roll of a Hit Die (though a penalty can never drop a result below 1 — that is, a character always gains at least one hit point each time she advances in level).
- Fortitude saving throws, for resisting poison and similar threats.
- Concentration checks. Concentration is a skill, important to anyone who uses supernatural abilities, that has Constitution as its key ability.

If your Constitution score changes enough to alter your Constitution modifier, your hit points also increase or decrease accordingly.

Intelligence (Int)

Intelligence determines how well you learn and reason. This ability is important for mages because it affects how many spells they can cast, how hard their spells are to resist and how powerful their spells can be. It's also important for any character who wants to have a wide assortment of skills.

You apply your Intelligence modifier to the following:

- The number of skill points you gain at each level. (But you always gets at least one skill point per level.)
- Appraise, Computer Use, Craft, Demolitions, Disable Device, Forgery, Knowledge, Navigate, Repair, Research, Search and Spellcraft checks. These skills have Intelligence as their key ability.

An animal has an Intelligence score of 1 or 2. A creature of humanlike intelligence has a score of at least 3.

Wisdom (Wis)

Wisdom describes your willpower, common sense, perception and intuition. While Intelligence represents your ability

Armor and Encumbrance for Other Base Speeds

The table below provides reduced speed figures for all base speeds from 20 feet to 100 feet (in 10-foot increments).

Base Speed	Reduced Speed	Base Speed	Reduced Speed
20 ft.	15 ft.	70 ft.	50 ft.
30 ft.	20 ft.	80 ft.	55 ft.
40 ft.	30 ft.	90 ft.	60 ft.
50 ft.	35 ft.	100 ft.	70 ft.
60 ft.	40 ft.		

to analyze information, Wisdom represents being in tune with and aware of your surroundings. If you want your character to have acute senses, put a high score in Wisdom.

You apply your Wisdom modifier to the following:

• Will saving throws (for negating the effects of charm, compulsion and other supernatural abilities).

• Heal, Listen, Profession, Sense Motive, Spot and Survival checks. These skills have Wisdom as their key ability.

Charisma (Cha)

Charisma measures your force of personality, persuasiveness, personal magnetism, ability to lead and physical attractiveness. This ability represents actual strength of personality, not merely how others perceive you in a social setting.

You apply your Charisma modifier to the following:

• Bluff, Diplomacy, Disguise, Gather Information, Handle Animal, Intimidate and Perform checks. These skills have Charisma as their key ability.

• Checks that represent attempts to influence others.

Generating Ability Scores

Many methods exist for generating ability scores at character creation. For example, you might roll 4d6 and remove the lowest number, thereby generating a score between 3 and 18. Do this six times, then place the numbers in whichever abilities you like. You end up with six ability scores between 3 and 18.

Changing Ability Scores

When an ability score changes, all attributes associated with that score change accordingly. A character does not retroactively get additional skill points for previous levels if she increases her Intelligence.

Character Type

Your character's type is his true nature: Awakened, demon, mage, vampire or werewolf. Each type comes with its own powers and emotional baggage. However, your character is more than just his type, and two characters of the same type are rarely the same. A vampire may be a doctor, or a soldier or a drifter. A werewolf might know kung fu, or how to pick locks or how to track someone on a cloudy night. Your character's type defines him in broad strokes, but you get to fill in the details.

This game includes five character types. (See Chapter 1: A World in Darkness for more information about them.)

Awakened: Special humans with heightened awareness who instinctively hold the universe together. They have increased skills and a natural ability to counter and survive the supernatural.

Demon: A monstrous shapechanging alien spirit animating nonliving matter. Subtle and crafty, some are corrupters; others are brutish and violent.

Character Types vs. Character Classes

Many other roleplaying games have character *classes*, which represent a character's "career" – wizard, barbarian, soldier, scientist and so on. Characters may have multiple classes over the course of their lifetime: a young barbarian from a primitive tribe may come to the city and learn to become a wizard; a soldier may end her tour of duty and study medicine.

The main difference in this game is that your character type isn't what you *do*, it is what you *are*. A vampire is a vampire whether he fights in the army or works in a civilian hospital; a mage is a mage whether she studies archaeology or theology. Unlike a character class, you don't change types over the course of your lifetime – vampires don't become mages, werewolves don't become demons and so on, any more than the barbarian decides to become a gorilla or the soldier decides to become an infant. Your type remains the same forever.

Mage: A human who manipulates magic. Mages specialize in one Path of magic and often associate with others of that Path.

Vampire: A human possessed by a dead spirit. Vampires are organized into clans, each providing different special abilities.

Werewolf: A human possessed by a feral destructive spirit from another dimension. Each werewolf has a moon-affinity called an auspice, which provides special abilities.

Character Focus

Some people study academic subjects their entire lives. Others spend years learning acrobatics and practicing extreme sports. Still others divide their time between several fields of study. A character's *focus* represents her dedication to a field of interest. Four foci exist: Might, Intellect, Spirit and Stealth.

Your focus has two effects: it gives you a bonus to an ability score relevant to that focus, and it determines which skills are easy for you (meaning which skills you can purchase at a low cost).

You choose a focus for your character at 1st level and gain the benefits of that focus. At each new level, you can change your focus or keep it the same. If you change your focus, you lose the ability bonus of your old focus and gain the ability bonus of your new one. Likewise, the skills of your old focus become cross-focus skills for your new level (though you do not lose the skill points you spent on those skills and their ranks do not decrease; see Chapter 3: Skills for more information), and you gain new focus skills based on your new focus.

Focus	Ability Bonus	Skills
Might	+2 Strength	Balance (Dex), Climb (Str), Demolitions (Int), Escape Artist (Dex), Jump (Str), Navigate (Int), Pilot (Dex), Repair (Int), Swim (Str), Tumble (Dex), and Use Rope (Dex)
Intellect	+2 Intelligence*	Appraise (Int), Computer Use (Int), Concentration (Con), Craft (Int), Drive (Dex), Heal (Wis), Knowledge (Int), Listen (Wis), Pilot (Dex), Repair (Int), Research (Int), Search (Int), Sense Motive (Wis), Speak Language (None), Spellcraft (Int) and Spot (Wis)
Spirit	+2 Wisdom	Bluff (Cha), Diplomacy (Cha), Disguise (Cha), Gather Information (Cha), Handle Animal (Cha), Heal (Wis), Intimidate (Cha), Listen (Wis), Navigate (Int), Perform (Cha), Profession (Wis), Ride (Dex), Search (Int), Sense Motive (Wis), Sleight of Hand (Dex), Spot (Wis) and Survival (Wis)
Stealth	+2 Dexterity	Balance (Dex), Demolitions (Int), Disable Device (Int), Escape Artist (Dex), Forgery (Int), Hide (Dex), Move Silently (Dex), Open Lock (Dex), Sleight of Hand (Dex), Tumble (Dex) and Use Rope (Dex)

*This Intelligence bonus does not grant extra skill points.

Example: Marcus is a first-level vampire, a football player with the dead soul of a 19th-century soldier. His player wants Marcus to be a strong "bruiser" character, so the player selects Might as Marcus's focus, increases Marcus's Strength by +2 and spends skill points on various Might skills. In Marcus's first few adventures, he keeps getting spotted by guards, so when he reaches the second level he decides to change his focus to Stealth to learn how to sneak around better. Marcus's player removes the +2 bonus to Strength from the Might focus and adds the +2 Dexterity bonus from his new focus (he's spending less time working out, and more time learning to be sneaky). He then spends his second-level skill points in Stealth skills. Any points he spent at the first level on the Might skills stay as they are — just because Marcus is trying to be stealthy *now* doesn't mean he forgets his previous training.

Type Descriptions

As you review the character types that follow, you may want to consult other chapters for details concerning each one's special abilities — a quick glance through Chapter 3: Skills, Chapter 4: Feats and Abilities, Chapter 5: Magic and Chapter 7: Playing the Game might be in order.

The descriptions of the types below include the following sections.

Type Table: This table details how a character improves while gaining experience levels. Type tables include the following:

• *Level:* The character's level in that class. Characters grow more powerful as they gain levels; see Chapter 8: Running the Game, "Gaining Levels," for more information.

• *Base Attack Bonus:* The character's base attack bonus and number of attacks. Numbers preceded by a slash indicate additional attacks at a lower base attack bonus. See Chapter 7: Playing the Game, "Combat Sequence," for more information.

• *Defense:* The character's class bonus to Defense, which represents his ability to instinctively move out of the way of attacks. A character retains his class bonus to Defense even when flat-footed (though not if he is helpless). See Chapter 7: Playing the Game, "Combat Sequence," for more information.

• *Fort Save:* The character's base save bonus on Fortitude saving throws. The character's Constitution modifier also applies. See Chapter 7: Playing the Game, "Saving Throws," for more information.

• *Ref Save:* The character's base save bonus on Reflex saving throws. The character's Dexterity modifier also applies. See Chapter 7: Playing the Game, "Saving Throws," for more information.

• *Will Save:* The character's base save bonus on Will saving throws. The character's Wisdom modifier also applies. See Chapter 7: Playing the Game, "Saving Throws," for more information.

• *Special:* Level-dependent abilities; each is explained in the "Type Features" sections that follow the table.

Note that except for the Special category, each level's listing already includes the totals from the previous levels. For example, an Awakened has a base attack bonus of +3 at the first level, and it is still +3 at the second level, *not* +6 (+3 and +3); at the third level, the base attack bonus increases to +4, *not* +10 (+3 and +3 and +4).

Hit Die: The type of Hit Die determines the number of hit points the character gains each level. At the first level, you get four of these Hit Dice, and one additional Hit Die at each level after level 1. Upon gaining each new level, roll this die and add the number (along with any Constitution modifier) to your hit point total.

Skill Points: The number of skill points the character gains at each level (including the first). First-level characters also start with three ranks in all the skills listed in two themes. For more information, and the skill theme groups, see Chapter 3: Skills.

Feats: All characters begin play with two feats.

Ability Increase: All characters gain a +1 bonus to a single ability score.

Movement: All characters have a movement speed of 30 feet.

Core Abilities: Special abilities all characters of that type possess.

Weaknesses: Any special weakness that all characters of that type possess, such as a werewolf's vulnerability to silver.

Type Features: This section explains each of the Special column entries in the type table.

Sample Characters: After the description of each character type are the statistics for a 1st-level character of that type. You can use these statistics if you need a generic (1st-level) creature of that type or if you just want to see what one looks like. These sample characters are also suitable for use as 1st-level player characters. Along with the sample character is a quote from a typical member.

See Chapter 8: Running the Game, "Antagonists and Supporting Characters," for more information on stat blocks.

AWAKENED

The Awakened (also called Willful Ones) are the psychic anchors that kept the Iconnu from destroying our universe outright. Gifted with an intuition about how the world should and does work, most Awakened have no idea what they are. No apparent physical difference separates an Awakened from another human, and an Awakened doesn't always possess a noticeable personality difference. Those who get to know a Willful One usually find a quiet determination, an open sincerity or an ambitious and driven nature.

Of all the character types, the Awakened are the most enigmatic. They don't fit into nice categories as the demons, vampires or werewolves, and the Awakened don't learn their abilities from study or from cabals as mages do. An Awakened learns what he wants to learn, and while he may not be the master at any human skill he is usually competent at many. Beyond this hyper-competence is the Willful One's role as a stabilizing force of the universe. Passively, the Awakened are a shield against the Iconnu; actively, the Awakened can use their wills to shred and negate manifestations of the Iconnu's power.

Play an Awakened if you want a character that feels like a normal human, is a jack-of-all-trades and isn't blunt or flashy in the supernatural things he can do — Awakened may be amazing humans, but they don't fly or turn into beasts.

Hit Die: d8.

Hit Dice at 1st Level: 4d8 (+4 x Con modifier).

Skill Points: 8 + Int modifier.

Feats: An Awakened begins play with two feats.

Ability Increase: You gain a +1 bonus to a single ability score of your choice. If you like, you can choose an ability score that already gains a bonus because you're an Awakened (see below).

Movement: An Awakened has a movement speed of 30 feet.

Awakened Core Abilities

An Awakened gets a +2 bonus to any one ability score (in addition to the +1 ability increase described above). You choose the ability score at character creation and cannot change the ability score thereafter. If you choose Intelligence, you gain additional skill points at all levels.

Extra Focus: Unlike other characters, an Awakened has two character foci rather than one. The Awakened gains the focus skills and the ability bonuses for both of his foci. Every time he raises level, he can change one or both of his foci.

Human Spirit: An Awakened gains a Humanity point at first level and every time he gains a level. (See Chapter 7: Play-

Table 2–4: Awakened

Level	Base Attack Bonus	Defense	Fort Save	Ref Save	Will Save	Special
1	+3	+2	+1	+1	+4	Bonus feat
2	+3	+2	+2	+2	+4	Skill Focus
3	+4	+3	+2	+2	+5	Stalwart dedication
4	+5	+3	+3	+3	+5	Bonus feat
5	+6/+1	+4	+3	+3	+6	Defender's mindset
6	+6/+1	+4	+4	+4	+6	Skill Focus
7	+7/+2	+5	+4	+4	+7	Bonus feat
8	+8/+3	+5	+5	+5	+7	Sense Nightmare Wave
9	+9/+4	+6	+5	+5	+8	Bonus feat
10	+9/+4	+6	+6	+6	+8	Bonus feat
11	+10/+5	+7	+6	+6	+9	Skill Focus
12	+11/+6/+1	+7	+7	+7	+9	Bonus feat
13	+12/+7/+2	+8	+7	+7	+10	Skill mastery
14	+12/+7/+2	+8	+8	+8	+10	Bonus feat
15	+13/+8/+3	+9	+8	+8	+11	Bonus feat
16	+14/+9/+4	+9	+9	+9	+11	Skill Focus
17	+15/+10/+5	+10	+9	+9	+12	Bonus feat
18	+15/+10/+5	+10	+10	+10	+12	Bonus feat
19	+16/+11/+6/+1	+11	+10	+10	+13	Force of will
20	+17/+12/+7/+2	+11	+11	+11	+13	Bonus feat

ing the Game, "Humanity Points," for more information about Humanity points.)

Extra Skills: When an Awakened chooses his two skill themes at the first level, he gains four ranks in each skill rather than three. His maximum skill rank remains the same, however.

Awakened Weaknesses

An Awakened has no special weaknesses except those possessed by a typical human.

Awakened Features

Bonus Feat: The Awakened chooses a bonus feat. This feat is in addition to the feats that a character normally gets from advancing levels and the two feats every character has at level 1. The Awakened must still meet any prerequisites for these bonus feats.

Skill Focus: The Awakened chooses a skill and thereafter gets +3 bonus on checks with that skill, just as if he had taken the Skill Focus feat.

Stalwart Dedication: By focusing his mind (a standard action) and making a DC 15 Concentration check, an Awakened can give himself a +1 morale bonus on attacks, saves and checks for one minute. He can use this ability as often as he likes.

Defender's Mindset: When an Awakened chooses to fight defensively (see Chapter 7: Playing the Game, "Combat Sequence," *Making Attacks*), he gains an additional +2 dodge bonus to Defense and a +2 bonus on all saves. These bonuses last until the Awakened's next turn.

Sense Nightmare Wave: An Awakened can sense the proximity of Nightmare Sites and objects altered by the Nightmare Wave. He doesn't need to actively search for them; an Awakened who passes within 100 feet of such a site or object can make a DC 20 Search check to sense its presence, which manifests as an eerie feeling, a prickling on the neck and so on. He can actively make Search checks at that DC to precisely locate the feeling's source.

Skill Mastery: The Awakened becomes so certain in the use of certain skills that he can use them reliably even under adverse conditions. Upon gaining this ability, he selects a number of skills equal to 3 + his Intelligence modifier. When making a skill check with one of these skills, he may take 10 even if stress and distractions would normally prevent him from doing so.

Force of Will: The Awakened's phenomenal will makes the impossible possible. Once per day he can add +20 on any d20 roll. He must declare he is using this ability before he makes the roll.

Typical Awakened

This character represents someone interested in many kinds of athletics, including unusual ones such as mountain biking, rock climbing and geocaching. She's trained in first aid and CPR, knows her way around a computer and practices martial arts. Her level 1 ability score increase is in Intelligence, and her Awakened ability score increase is in Strength.

Awakened: Init +1, Spd 30 ft.; hp 30, Def 13, touch 13, flat-footed 12; Uncanny Dodge; Atk/Full Atk +4 melee (1d4+1, unarmed strike) or +4 ranged (1d10, zip gun).

Typical Awakened 1: CR 4; Medium humanoid (human); HD 4d8+12, hp 30; Init +1; Spd 30 ft.; Def 13, touch 13, flat-footed 12; Base Atk +3; Grp +4; Atk/Full Atk +4 melee (1d4+1, unarmed strike) or +4 ranged (1d10, zip gun); SV Fort +3, Ref +2, Will +6; Str 12, Dex 13, Con 14, Int 14, Wis 15, Cha 10.

Skills (Might, Intellect) and Feats: Balance +5, Appraise +6, Climb +5, Computer Use +6, Concentration +6, Drive +3, Heal +6, Jump +5, Knowledge (occult) +6, Research +6, Swim +5; Improved Unarmed Strike, Toughness, Uncanny Dodge[B].

Humanity Points: 1

Wake Up!

I've always *thought* a lot about things. You know? Like when everyone else was busy getting a job and figuring out how to make a lot of money, I wondered about the whole concept of money. It's all an artificial construct, you know? I mean, I'm not a communist, I just think that we go after it at the expense of love, happiness, family and things like that, you know? That's just an example. The world's full of stuff like that. Stuff that so many people never think about. There's a bigger picture that no one sees. It's that forest for the trees thing.

My point is, it seems really easy for most people to just go along with the flow. They're told what to like and what to want, and they go after it. They don't ever ask, "Why?" They not only never look at all their options, they don't explore why they're being given options to begin with, who's giving the options and why. Most importantly, why.

"Why" is the big thing. Why are we here? Why does the world work the way it does? Why is any of this happening?

As I got older — which is to say, when I stopped being a rebellious teenager — I realized that there was more to this than just asking questions. It's about empathy. It's not enough to just wonder why you are here, you've also got to wonder about why we're all here. It's not just how things affect you, it's how they affect everyone.

Anyway. That's kinda just me, in a nutshell. I never really *did* anything important. I suppose I wasted all my time thinking. I guess I should have been out there trying harder, I don't know. I moved from job to job. Never got married, not that I didn't want to.

Then, the vampires came. Yeah, I know how that sounds, but it's the God's honest truth. Fangs and all. They came looking for me — me, specifically, I guess. This was after the Intrusion event came, and I guess I realize now that's significant, but at the time I never put two and two together, you know what I mean? I mean, sure, I felt really bad for all the people who were killed in the big whateveritwas, but now I realize that it's all tied together. It's all a part of the big "why," you know? And it's not like I know the answer, but I guess it's important that I was one of the people asking the question.

I never would have got away from those vampires on my own, though. I mean, what do I know about fighting against things like that? I never even really liked horrors movies or Stephen King or whatever. No, some people saved me. People who understood about the vampires, the werewolves, the demons, the mages . . . and the Awakened. They told me that I was one of those last ones. An Awakened. I guess it's a good name. It works.

So now I fight vampires, too. And demons, and the rest. Seriously. Wooden stakes, silver bullets and all that. And we're trying to find other Awakened folks — and trying to wake up those who are still asleep, if you get what I mean. It's not that easy, though. It's not just a matter of telling someone there's weird stuff going on. I dunno. It's hard to describe. It's like you've got to change the way they look at all of reality or something.

Most importantly, we work together, like a team, and I really feel like I'm making a difference. I'm not just standing around asking why, I'm sort of figuring it out. Does that make any sense?

"The math doesn't lie. The statistics are right there for anyone to see. No one matter who you are, or where you live, someone you know — someone close to you, that you've known all your life — is a vampire or a werewolf, and you probably don't even know."
—Charles Anderson, IDA agent

DEMONS

Demons are alien spirits from another dimension. Unlike vampires and werewolves, demons don't live in human bodies — demons' life force animates nonliving matter and shapes it into useable forms. This fact means that demons don't have a filter of humanity from their host body to make them fear, doubt or even sympathize with humans. Humans are prey to be hunted, played with, tortured and sucked dry.

A demon's spirit is so powerful that it can inhabit simple nonliving matter (such as wood, plastic or earth), reconfigure it into a more useful shape and move it around like a thing of flesh and blood. The base material's type doesn't matter, as once a demon inhabits the substance it becomes the demon's body and loses all resemblance to its old self (though a slain demon's body reverts to this material as its spirit dissipates). A demon's natural form is hideous and distorted like a walking nightmare. Demons can take more pleasing forms, but only for a limited time.

Of course, this freakish form isn't the demon's "true" form at all, as in its native dimension the demon doesn't have a body, but this ugly default shape is the demon's normal form in our world. Some scientifically-minded demons claim that they are beings of pure energy, and coming to this world merely translates this energy into something visible that can act on the world, just as a television translates electricity into light and sound.

Every demon also has a weakness, such as a need to soak in antifreeze, or suffers pain when a particular word is spoken and so on; nobody knows if this weakness is some aspect of their alien spirit, a flaw in the process that allows them to walk on Earth or something else entirely. The more chatty demons explain that their bodies are like any other machine — certain things interfere with its function or cause damage, such as putting metal in a microwave, dropping a hair dryer in the bathtub or putting sugar in the gas tank.

Demons exist to corrupt and destroy humanity, particularly the Awakened, so that this universe will crumble. Only a few demons are in the world, especially compared to the numbers of werewolves and vampires, so demons are cautious in their activities, using their natural gifts to corrupt and deceive humans.

Scourges are a type of demon that prefers violence to accomplish their ends, though they still use deception to snare their prey. Tempters are more subtle, using elaborate mind games and lies to taunt and strangle their enemies and pawns — though tempters are not above getting their hands bloody.

Of all the playable characters in this game, demons may be the only ones that are truly immortal. Nobody knows how long

TABLE 2–5: DEMON

Level	Base Attack Bonus	Defense	Fort Save	Ref Save	Will Save	Special
1	+3	+2	+1	+1	+4	Cant, demon ability
2	+3	+2	+2	+2	+4	Cant
3	+4	+3	+2	+2	+5	—
4	+5	+3	+3	+3	+5	Cant
5	+6/+1	+4	+3	+3	+6	Demon ability
6	+6/+1	+4	+4	+4	+6	Cant
7	+7/+2	+5	+4	+4	+7	—
8	+8/+3	+5	+5	+5	+7	Cant
9	+9/+4	+6	+5	+5	+8	—
10	+9/+4	+6	+6	+6	+8	Demon ability
11	+10/+5	+7	+6	+6	+9	—
12	+11/+6/+1	+7	+7	+7	+9	Cant
13	+12/+7/+2	+8	+7	+7	+10	—
14	+12/+7/+2	+8	+8	+8	+10	Cant
15	+13/+8/+3	+9	+8	+8	+11	Demon ability
16	+14/+9/+4	+9	+9	+9	+11	Cant
17	+15/+10/+5	+10	+9	+9	+12	—
18	+15/+10/+5	+10	+10	+10	+12	Cant
19	+16/+11/+6/+1	+11	+10	+10	+13	—
20	+17/+12/+7/+2	+11	+11	+11	+13	Demon ability

vampires and werewolves can live, but a demon is just a spirit borrowing a chunk of nonliving matter and using it like a puppet. This immortality is another reason demons look down on other creatures, and demons tend to call other beings "mortals."

Play a demon if you want a character who is good at manipulating and deceiving others, who possesses strange powers and a cruelly inhuman nature. Demons aren't nice, and even the ones who turn against the Iconnu do it for selfish reasons.

Hit Die (Scourge): d10.
Hit Dice at 1st Level (Scourge): 4d10 (+4 x Con modifier).
Skill Points (Scourge): 4 + Int modifier.
Hit Die (Tempter): d8.
Hit Dice at 1st Level (Tempter): 4d8 (+4 x Con modifier).
Skill Points (Tempter): 6 + Int modifier.
Feats: A demon begins play with two feats.
Ability Increase: You gain a +1 bonus to a single ability score of your choice. If you like, you can choose an ability score that already gains a bonus because you're a demon (see below).
Movement: A demon has a movement speed of 30 feet.

Demon Core Abilities

A demon gets a +2 bonus to any two ability scores, which you choose and can change each day. If you choose Intelligence, it does not affect your skill points.

Horrific Form: A demon is an alien spirit, and when it takes form in our world the spirit naturally reshapes its inanimate host material into the closest Earth-approximation of its energy self. Because the demon is from a distant dimension unlike ours, this "natural form" is invariably hideous to behold. Each demon's natural form is unique, and those humans who know of demons' existence use these shapes to identify demons. Sample demonic true forms (as described by human witnesses and rare surveillance footage) are "aborted dragon fetus," "burning skeleton covered in spiders," "vagina centipede," "fanged octopus thing," "pus blob with bleeding eyes all over" and "flayed skin filled with maggots."

If killed, a demon reverts to whatever inert matter its spirit used to create its body. This matter holds the last shape the dead demon had before it was killed. If you kill a demon, its corpse is a crude statue of glass, earth, wood, plastic or whatever its body was really made of, roughly approximating the demon's shape at the time of death.

Fear: Any creature clearly seeing a demon's true form must make a Will save (DC 10 + the demon's Hit Dice + the demon's Charisma modifier) or become shaken. If the witness rolls a 1 on her save, she instead is frightened and flees for 1d6 rounds. (See Chapter 7: Playing the Game, "Special Abilities," *Fear,* for more information on the shaken and frightened conditions.) Repeat exposure inures a witness to this sight. A character gets a +1 bonus on her saves against this effect for each time she's seen any demon's true form.

Demons normally use their shapechanging ability (see below) to take different forms in the presence of other creatures so they don't cause panic. Panic draws unwanted attention and eventually people with weapons who might actually hurt a demon.

Shapechanging: Demons can change shape, taking on the appearance of any human or humanlike creature (elf, lizard-

man, "little green man" alien, typical devil with horns and a tail and so on) of Small or Medium size (or Large size, if combined with the Great Stature cant). The change is only cosmetic; the demon does not get any special powers of the new form (turning into Dracula doesn't give the demon the powers of a vampire) and retains its own ability scores. The demon can even imitate a specific person (as a disguise or deception), though the change is not detailed enough to duplicate fine details such as fingerprints, voice scans and retina scans; this sort of disguise gives the demon a +10 bonus on Disguise checks to pretend to be that person. Changing shape is a standard action that does not provoke attacks of opportunity.

Although shapechanging is *easy* for a demon, it is taxing. A demon can stay in a form other than its true form for up to one hour, after which the demon reverts to its true form and must remain that way for an hour. Shorter periods of shapechanging require shorter recovery periods (equal to the time spent in another form or 10 minutes, whichever is greater). The demon can change from one human form to another without assuming its true form in between, as long as the total time spent out of its true form is one hour or less.

For example, the demon Mephistopheles spends 10 minutes in the shape of an adult man, followed by five minutes as a little girl and then 20 minutes as an old woman, all without reverting to its true form. As long as Mephistopheles doesn't take its normal form, the demon can remain transformed in various guises for another 25 minutes before being forced into its natural form for an hour. If the demon assumed its normal form in-between each of these transformations, the demon would have to spend time in that form between each change (the greater of 10 minutes or the time spent in human form).

Resistance to Damage: A critical hit against a demon merely stuns it rather than dealing Constitution damage. Demons are hard to kill; you can shoot a demon in the head and the creature collapses — then stands up again moments later, relatively unharmed. Demons *can* be killed, it just takes more work than killing a human.

Demons do not bleed — they don't have blood or internal organs or anything a "real" body has. A demon that takes enough damage to be in a dying state makes checks to recover but never loses hit points from failed checks. Even a severely wounded and unconscious demon will get up and walk away if left alone.

Demons do not need to breathe or to eat. They are immune to normal poisons and disease.

Darkvision: Demons can see in the dark up to 60 feet.

Anima: Demons use an alien energy called Anima to fuel their abilities. See below for more information on Anima and its uses.

Demon Weaknesses

Every demon has a *craving* or *bane* — something the demon craves in order to remain healthy, or something to avoid as if it were deadly poison. A demon with a craving must indulge it every day or the demon will grow weaker; one with a bane takes damage whenever confronted with the bane.

A demon has one craving or one bane, not both. A particular demon's craving or bane has no apparent relation to the demon's powers or the base material the demon uses as a body. (One salt-bane demon decayed into salt when killed, as did a salt-craving demon who took long baths in the sea every day.) The demon's craving or bane never changes.

Knowing a demon's craving is a way to appease the demon; knowing its bane is a way to control the demon. Because demons cannot hide their reactions to banes, mortals who know about demons sometimes use banes to help positively or negatively identify demons they encounter. ("The roses didn't bother it at all; it can't be Aborted Dragon Fetus.")

Craving: Cravings are usually common substances the demon must consume or use in large quantities, though some demons crave rarer materials in smaller quantities. Common substances are things readily available for purchase, even in large quantities. Uncommon substances are available only in moderate quantities or from specialized locations. Rare substances are heavily restricted, available only in tiny quantities or available only from a small group of people.

Sample common substances: Alcohol, ham, horse urine, puppies, antifreeze.

Sample uncommon substances: Expensive wine, human blood, pedigree bulldogs, 19th-century books, gold, cocaine.

Sample rare substances: Virgin's blood, uranium, Vitae (vampire blood), pandas.

A demon that fails to indulge its craving takes a –1 penalty on attacks, saves and checks for each day that passes since the demon last sated its need. These penalties go away once the demon sates its craving. A demon needs a new sample of the craving every time it indulges; a demon that needs antifreeze can't simply keep a bathtub of it in its apartment and soak every day — the demon needs *new* antifreeze every day.

A demon may indulge its craving regardless of its current physical form. Mr. Antifreeze can soak in antifreeze as a human or in his natural form. The act of serving the need makes the demon immune to the substance's harmful effects (if any) for that time; a uranium-craving demon doesn't get radiation burns when feeding his craving, though the demon is as vulnerable to radiation as anyone else at other times.

A craving is always a detriment, though careful management means it can be just an annoyance.

Bane: A bane may be a substance, a condition or even a word. Some demons cannot stand the touch of salt, or rum or silver. Some cannot cross water, or bear the light of the full moon or see their reflections in mirrors. Some grow nauseous at the sound of the word "yellow," or weaken at hearing "molecule" or collapse in pain when someone shouts "Belgium."

Using a bane against a vulnerable demon gives at a penalty on attacks, saves, and checks for 10 minutes. The penalty's severity depends on the bane: a common bane imposes a –1 penalty, uncommon –3 and rare –6.

This penalty stacks with itself, but a creature can use a bane to harm a demon only once per minute. The bane has a visible effect on the demon (though in human guise the demon may blame its reaction on bad food or something similar).

Demon Features

Cant: Cants are special abilities available to demons — traveling through walls, summoning demonic minions, attacking with strange energy and so on. Every cant works like a feat and is described in Chapter 4: Feats and Abilities. Every time "cant" appears on Table 2–5: Demon, a demon of that level can select a new cant.

Demon Ability: The demon gains the appropriate ability from the following table, depending on the demon's classification (scourge or tempter) and level. DCs, where appropriate, are 10 + the demon's Hit Dice + the demon's Charisma modifier.

Scourge

1st Level: +2 bonus to Strength; once per day the demon can change someone's attitude to helpful for one minute (Will resists).

5th Level: +2 bonus to Dexterity.

10th Level: The duration doubles for the demon's Battle Claws, Corrupting Matrix and Great Stature cants.

15th Level: +2 bonus to Constitution.

20th Level: The demon gains fast healing 5.

Tempter

1st Level: +2 bonus to Charisma; once per day the demon can change someone's attitude to Helpful for one minute (Will resists).

5th Level: +2 bonus to Constitution.

10th Level: When the demon uses the Confess, Insinuate, Mindbite, Thrallsight or Torturous Memory cants, the demon can affect two targets instead of one for the same Anima cost.

15th Level: +2 bonus to Charisma. The demon may change shape as a free action.

20th Level: When the demon uses Confess, Insinuate, Mindbite, Thrallsight or Torturous Memory, the demon can affect four targets for the normal cost, plus additional targets for one Anima each.

Anima

Demons require an alien kind of energy called Anima to use some of their special abilities. Their home dimension is rich in this energy, but Earth is a wasteland; humans are the only reliable source. Demons store this Anima within their life force or soul, which they call their "matrix."

Anima cannot be captured with mundane devices (such as batteries) and can't be channeled into physical objects (such as a house's electrical wiring) except under specific circumstances.

Spending Anima, for whatever purpose, does not take an action. Certain cants take a standard action to activate and require the demon to spend Anima, but the expenditure of Anima takes no time in itself and the demon can do it even on someone else's turn.

Maximum Anima: A demon can store Anima equal to 10 plus its Constitution modifier; if the demon gains Anima in excess of this number, the extra Anima is wasted.

Starting Anima: Demons start with their maximum amount of Anima (10 + Con modifier).

Anima per Round: Demons can spend one Anima per round, no matter what effect(s) they want to achieve. A demon can take the Demonic Will cant to improve this rate.

Demons can use Anima for several effects.

Activate Cants

Some cants require Anima; others do not. See each cant's description to see if the cant requires Anima, and how much.

Heal Wounds

A demon can use Anima to heal itself. A demon can spend one Anima to heal 10 hit points or two ability damage from a single ability. A demon can spend two Anima to heal one point of ability drain. A demon can heal itself in this way while unconscious.

Ignore Craving or Bane

A demon can spend one Anima to override the demon's craving for one day. This effect keeps the craving penalty from accruing that day but does not give the demon one Anima (as the demon would get if it actually indulged its craving).

A demon can spend one Anima to ignore the penalties from one exposure to the demon's bane. This effect doesn't prevent additional penalties if the bane confronts the demon again. For example, a demon-hunter douses a salt-bane demon with salt, giving the demon a –1 penalty on its actions. The demon spends one Anima to ignore this penalty. One minute later, the demon-hunter gets in another good shot with the salt and gives the demon another –1 penalty, which the demon actually suffers this time.

Regaining Anima

A demon can linger over a human corpse that has been dead for no more than 10 minutes, psychically prodding its energy field to see if it has any Anima; after 10 minutes, the demon makes a d20 roll, and if the result is a 20, the demon recovers one Anima from the corpse.

A demon automatically regains one Anima once per day if the demon indulges its craving.

Demons can give or trade Anima with each other as standard actions; all they have to do is touch each other for a moment and make the exchange. Some demons can steal Anima from dying mortals (see the Murderous Recharge cant); others learn how to make pacts with mortals to gain Anima in exchange for favors (see the Infernal Pact cant).

Typical Demon

This character represents a persuasive demon that can easily kill a normal person when it's time for the claws to come out. The demon's level 1 ability score increase is in Strength, it gets a +2 bonus to Strength for being a Scourge demon and today its demonic ability score increases are in Dexterity and Charisma.

Demon: Init +0, Spd 30 ft.; hp 30, Def 12, touch 12, flat-footed 12; demon traits; Atk +7 melee (1d8+4, claw), Full Atk +7 melee (1d8+4, 2 claws); scourge demon traits (attitude change DC 15, fear DC 15); cants (Battle Claws); 12 max Anima, 1 Anima/round; Improved Sunder, Power Attack.

Typical Demon (Scourge) 1: CR 4; Medium demon; HD 4d10+8, hp 30; Init +0; Spd 30 ft.; Def 12, touch 12, flat-footed 12; Base Atk +3; Grp +7; Atk +7 melee (1d8+4, claw), Full Atk +7 melee (1d8+4, 2 claws); SA cants, scourge demon traits (attitude change DC 15, fear DC 15); SQ demon traits; SV Fort +3, Ref +1, Will +6; Str 18, Dex 10, Con 14, Int 13, Wis 14, Cha 12.

"Silly little man, you spent your life praying to all the wrong gods."
—Shax, demon

Skills (Spirit) and Feats: Bluff +5, Diplomacy +5, Gather Information +4, Listen +5, Intimidate +5, Search +4, Sense Motive +6, Spot +6; Improved Sunder, Power Attack.

Cants: Battle Claws.

Anima: 12 max; 1/round.

You Asked for It

Well, hello. How kind. No, no, I'd rather hear about you. Tell me all about yourself. You seem delightfully interesting.

Well, all right. But you see, if you truly want me to be honest — *truly* honest — well, I'm afraid you might not like it. I really should start at the beginning.

Fine then. I'm . . . not from around here.

Are you certain you want to hear this? Can't we just go somewhere quiet? I'll buy you a drink and we can —

Okay. Well, just remember: you asked for it.

I am from a place you cannot imagine with your tiny mortal brain, the limitations of which I can't even begin to enumerate. Not some other planet, you fucking imbecile, an entire different existence. Too weird? Too bad. I haven't even warmed up yet. I'm here to see all of you die the most horrible deaths of which I can conceive, and good golly gosh you don't even want me to begin to describe of what *I* can conceive, sister.

But here's the best part. My absolute favorite — the very tastiest part. I get to use your own moronic, childish foibles against you, you pathetic little mewling infants. It's so delightfully easy. The right word here, the right look (using the right face) there, and you'll all do whatever I want you to, dancing like marionettes on strings. Man, woman, old, young — it doesn't matter. You'll all kill yourselves, sometimes quite literally, to please me because I know how to deceive you. I am deception on two legs. Except no, these aren't my actual legs. Let's just say my actual form is not something you would like. Frankly, I am quite certain that it is not something you could even cope with.

Contempt? Oh yes. I live and breathe contempt every moment I am here. Does that mean I'm unhappy, though? No. Not at all, in fact. It just empowers me to see each and every one of you to an unhappy end. A screaming, whimpering sobbing end. *That* brings me joy.

And it's not enough for you to suffer physical pain. No, physical pain is for amateurs. Even you mortals are fairly skilled in meting it out. I enjoy mental anguish so much better. I would rather torture your children than torture you, but even more than that what I would really like is to convince, cajole or corrupt *you* into torturing your own children. Now that's entertainment.

I do not care how I came to be here. That does not matter. What matters is that I am here, and I am empowered to do what I do best — deceive and corrupt, manipulate and seduce. This world, with its billions of targets, is certain to keep me busy for a very long time.

MAGES

Mages are students of mystery, delving into the newly found secret paths of energy in the universe that make miracles happen. Some mages are self-taught, some are trained by other mages, but all still reel from the possibilities now that *magic really works*. No matter what their age or professed experience in ancient lore, all mages are still amazed and delighted with the power at their disposal; they may pretend to be jaded, but deep down they know the world is like Christmas morning.

No physical difference separates mages from other humans, and mages don't have noticeably different personalities — a mage may be lazy or driven, generous or greedy, corrupt or honorable. Some join cabals of other mages who share their goals and attitudes; others avoid others of their kind, disliking politics and back-stabbing.

All mages choose one path of magic for their main focus. This path doesn't prevent a mage from learning other kinds of magic; it makes it easier to practice magic within her path. The five types of mages and their specialties are the following:

Enchanters: Fortune and intuition.

Necromancers: Ghosts, shades and death.

Theurgists: Mental and physical strength, possibly from higher beings.

Shamans: Primal magic based on beast totems.

Warlocks: Destruction, demons and chaos.

The mage is possibly the most difficult kind of character to play because the spell-building system is complex (but versatile).

Play a mage if you want a character who is on the cutting edge of the next big thing, someone who knows secrets others can never understand and who has the potential to learn or create almost any supernatural power.

Hit Die: d6.

Hit Dice at 1st Level: 4d6 (+4 x Con modifier).

Skill Points: 4 + Int modifier.

Feats: A mage begins play with two feats.

Ability Increase: You gain a +1 bonus to a single ability score of your choice. If you like, you can choose an ability score that already gains a bonus because you're a mage (see below).

Movement: A mage has a movement speed of 30 feet.

Mage Core Abilities

A mage gets a +2 bonus to Intelligence. This bonus grants additional skill points at all levels.

TABLE 2–6: MAGE

Level	Base Attack Bonus	Defense	Fort Save	Ref Save	Will Save	Special	Components
1	+2	+1	+1	+1	+4	Gnosis	60*
2	+2	+1	+1	+2	+4	Gnosis	75*
3	+3	+2	+2	+2	+5	—	90*
4	+3	+2	+2	+3	+5	Gnosis	105*
5	+4	+2	+2	+3	+6	—	120*
6	+4	+3	+3	+4	+6	Gnosis	135*
7	+5	+3	+3	+4	+7	—	150*
8	+5	+3	+3	+5	+7	Gnosis	165*
9	+6/+1	+4	+4	+5	+8	—	180*
10	+6/+1	+4	+4	+6	+8	Gnosis	195*
11	+7/+2	+4	+4	+6	+9	—	210*
12	+7/+2	+5	+5	+7	+9	Gnosis	225*
13	+8/+3	+5	+5	+7	+10	—	240*
14	+8/+3	+5	+5	+8	+10	Gnosis	255*
15	+9/+4	+6	+6	+8	+11	—	270*
16	+9/+4	+6	+6	+9	+11	Gnosis	285*
17	+10/+5	+6	+6	+9	+12	—	300*
18	+10/+5	+7	+7	+10	+12	Gnosis	315*
19	+11/+6/+1	+7	+7	+10	+13	—	330*
20	+11/+6/+1	+7	+7	+11	+13	Gnosis	345*

* Plus the mage's level x Intelligence modifier.

Spells: Spells are mages' weapons, armor and universal tools. Mages build spells as a mason builds walls out of bricks: piece by piece, with units called components. At low levels, a mage has few components at his disposal, but at higher levels, he can cast dozens of weak spells or several great spells in the course of a day. Components are divided into categories such as Range, Heal and Illusion. For more information on building and casting spells, see Chapter 5: Magic.

Rotes: A rote is a codified spell; mages have cast it many times and know how to do so for the best possible effect. A starting mage knows all the rotes in this book (see Chapter 5: Magic, "Rote Spells") and gains a bonus on Spellcraft checks to cast certain rotes for which his path has affinity.

Spell Affinity: Mages are skilled practitioners of magic; they can tap their power to enhance their ability to concentrate or understand magic.

A mage can spend components to modify Concentration or Spellcraft checks; each component adds a +1 bonus on one check. Components spent this way do not add to the spell's exhaustion rating. A mage does not need to choose a component category from which to spend these components. You don't need to specify that these are Range or Heal components; just mark them off from your daily total. These components are used up whether or not the roll succeeds. Using this ability does not require an action; it is just a natural part of using the skill, and you can even use it when it is not your turn.

You must decide whether to spend components, and how many to spend, before you make the Concentration or Spellcraft check.

Mental Ability Adjustment: Most mages' spellcasting ability stems from research and knowledge of occult principles. Some however, rely instead on their senses of intuition, casting spells almost by instinct. (These are sometimes called "intuition mages.") Others rely on their force of personality and mental strength rather than knowledge, mentally forcing or cajoling magic to do their will. (These are sometimes called "personality mages.") At character creation, if you prefer, you can be one of these types of mages.

If you are an intuition mage, anytime you would normally use your Intelligence modifier to determine your magical ability, use your Wisdom modifier. This includes determining components per day, Spellcraft checks to cast spells and spell DCs. All other normal uses of your Wisdom modifier apply (such as to Spot checks, Will saving throws and so on).

If you are a personality mage, anytime you would normally use your Intelligence modifier to determine your magical ability, use your Charisma modifier.

Instead of a +2 bonus to Intelligence at character creation, you get a +2 bonus to Wisdom or Charisma (as appropriate).

Mage Weaknesses

A mage has no special weaknesses except those possessed by a typical human.

Mage Features

Components: Components are the building blocks of spells. A mage must spend components to build spells; more powerful

spells cost more than weak spells. The listed number indicates how many components per day the mage can use to build spells. The mage also adds her Intelligence modifier multiplied by her level to this value.

A mage recovers components by resting or sleeping. Every hour of rest or sleep restores 5% of the mage's maximum number of components.

Gnosis: A gnosis is a special ability available only to mages. Most gnosis affect the component costs for a mage's spells (making certain kinds of spells easier or cheaper to cast), but some grant new abilities. Every gnosis works like a feat and is described in Chapter 4: Feats and Abilities. Every time "gnosis" appears in Table 2–6: Mage, a mage of that level can select a new gnosis.

Typical Mage

This character represents a bookish antisocial mage who is more comfortable dealing with dead bodies and summoned minions than real people. Her level 1 ability score increase is in Wisdom, and she gets a +2 bonus to Intelligence for being a mage.

Mage*: Init +2, Spd 30 ft.; hp 22, Def 13, touch 13, flat-footed 11; Diehard; Atk/Full Atk +2 melee (1d3 nonlethal, unarmed strike); gnosis (Summoner (zombie)), spells (76 components).

Typical Mage (Necromancer) 1: CR 4; Medium humanoid (human); HD 4d6+8, hp 22; Init +2; Spd 30 ft.; Def 13, touch 13, flat-footed 11; Base Atk +2; Grp +2; Atk/Full Atk +2 melee (1d3 nonlethal, unarmed strike); SA spells; SQ ongoing spells; SV Fort +2, Ref +3, Will +6; Str 10, Dex 14, Con 12, Int 19, Wis 14, Cha 8.

Skills (Intellect) and Feats: Concentration +5, Knowledge (occult) +8, Listen +6, Research +6, Spellcraft +6, Search +8, Sense Motive +5, Spot +6; Diehard, Toughness.

Gnosis: Summoner (zombie).

Components: 76.

*These statistics represent the mage without bonuses from spells; she usually has an ongoing *armor* spell (giving her a +4 natural bonus to Defense).

Finally

I knew it all along. Really, I did. Ever since I was a child, I knew that there was more to life than what we saw. There were mysteries that most people did not understand. I read every book I could get my hands on, first in the tiny library we had in my small town, and eventually in the larger cities I moved to and at college (which I never finished, not that it really matters now). I scoured the Internet for information. I was looking for the secrets behind it all. I was trying to peek behind the veil.

Some call it magic, while others specify "magick," with a "k." Some call it the occult, supernatural, the true religion, mysticism, Wicca, vodoun . . . there are a lot of names, and even more people claiming to have the truth. I tried them all, but it never quite clicked. It never came together.

Other people continually told me that it was not real. That I was a fool, wasting my time. A weirdo. That is why I gave up on other people a long time ago. They didn't understand. They couldn't comprehend the intricacies. But I could, if I practiced long enough. Studied hard enough. I knew that I had it in me.

And then, one day, it happened. I mastered the secrets. What I could accomplish was small at first, but it was undeniable. I could do things that no one else could do. I could harness powers to which others were blind. I'm not exactly certain what it was that triggered the change. It was almost as if one day magic really didn't work, and then the next day it did. But I believe that the change was in me. I think that magic was there all along. I had always felt it.

My mastery of the *gnosis*, as I call it, opened up doors of perception. Suddenly, I was aware of others who, like me, could weave the fabric of time and space. They were just there, where I had never seen them before. This is what I call the *lifting of the veil*. Now I can see the truth.

Now I devote all my time and energy to greater mastery. Nothing else matters. Job, family, friends — these are meaningless time wasters. I devote myself fully to my art, as they say, although my art does not reflect reality, it changes it.

"Your money won't save you now, my friend. The days of Mammon are over. There is a new dark god in the world."
—Karl Mira, mage

VAMPIRES

A vampire is a human who has been possessed by the soul of a dead person, creating an unliving monster with strange powers and a hunger for blood.

Normally the dead soul is dominant, but some vampires act primarily as their (formerly) living selves or are an amalgam of both personalities. Nonetheless, vampires' supernatural state is creepy at best, and when coupled with the personality changes, most vampires leave their old lives behind.

Vampires belong to one of five clans, and each clan tends to be better at one or more kinds of vampire powers. Regardless of their clan, all vampires were created by the Iconnu with the purpose of studying and destroying the Awakened — though many vampires ignore their distant and alien creators to pursue their own interests.

Play a vampire if you want a somewhat-human character with a dark side, remarkable powers and a horrid will to survive. Vampires are versatile supernatural beings carrying a lot of mythological archetypes.

Hit Die: d8.

Hit Dice at 1st Level: 4d8 (+4 x Con modifier).

Skill Points: 4 + Int modifier.

Feats: A vampire begins play with two feats.

Ability Increase: You gain a +1 bonus to a single ability score of your choice. If you like, you can choose an ability score that already gains a bonus because you're a vampire (see below).

Movement: A vampire has a movement speed of 30 feet.

Vampire Core Abilities

A vampire gets a +2 bonus to Strength, Constitution and Charisma.

Bite: A vampire has a bite attack. It is a natural weapon and deals 1d4 points of piercing damage plus one and a half times the vampire's Strength bonus.

Predator's Taint: Vampires recognize other vampires. They do not automatically know the other vampire's clan or abilities, but the undead spirits recognize their kindred death and hunger for the living. A vampire knows if another vampire is weaker than herself (two or more levels below), stronger (two or more levels above) or about at about the same level of power.

TABLE 2–7: VAMPIRE

Level	Base Attack Bonus	Defense	Fort Save	Ref Save	Will Save	Special
1	+3	+3	+4	+4	+4	Discipline
2	+3	+3	+4	+4	+4	Discipline
3	+4	+4	+5	+5	+5	—
4	+5	+5	+5	+5	+5	Discipline
5	+6/+1	+6	+6	+6	+6	—
6	+6/+1	+6	+6	+6	+6	Discipline
7	+7/+2	+7	+7	+7	+7	—
8	+8/+3	+8	+7	+7	+7	Discipline
9	+9/+4	+9	+8	+8	+8	—
10	+9/+4	+9	+8	+8	+8	Discipline
11	+10/+5	+10	+9	+9	+9	—
12	+11/+6/+1	+11	+9	+9	+9	Discipline
13	+12/+7/+2	+12	+10	+10	+10	—
14	+12/+7/+2	+12	+10	+10	+10	Discipline
15	+13/+8/+3	+13	+11	+11	+11	—
16	+14/+9/+4	+14	+11	+11	+11	Discipline
17	+15/+10/+5	+15	+12	+12	+12	—
18	+15/+10/+5	+15	+12	+12	+12	Discipline
19	+16/+11/+6/+1	+16	+13	+13	+13	—
20	+17/+12/+7/+2	+17	+13	+13	+13	Discipline

Some vampires learn how to hide from this sense. Most vampires are uneasy around unfamiliar vampires, not sure if the other one is a rival for food or might reveal his secret vampiric nature. Normally, this ability works on sight, but in some circumstances a vampire may detect the scent of another or sense her by touch in the darkness.

Resistance to Damage: A critical hit against a vampire merely stuns him rather than dealing Constitution damage. Vampires are hard to kill; you can stab a knife through a vampire's heart and the vampire falls over — but he stands up again moments later, relatively unharmed.

Vampires do not bleed. A vampire who takes enough damage to be in a dying state makes checks to recover but never loses hit points from failed checks. Even a severely wounded and unconscious vampire will get up and walk away if left alone.

Vampires do not need to breathe, and they are immune to normal poisons and disease.

Low-Light Vision: Vampires can see twice as well as a normal human in conditions of poor light. Thus, if the lighting is such that one can see only 30 feet, a vampire can see 60 feet.

Clan Ability: A vampire gains a benefit and drawback based on her clan, as follows:

Daeva: +2 Charisma, –2 penalty on Will saves.

Gangrel: +2 Constitution, –2 Intelligence (which affects the vampire's skill points).

Mekhet: +2 Dexterity, –2 Charisma.

Nosferatu: +2 Strength, –2 Charisma.

Ventrue: +2 Intelligence (which affects the vampire's skill points), –2 Wisdom.

Vitae: Vampires use the power of blood, Vitae, to fuel their abilities. See below for more information on Vitae and its uses.

Vampire Weaknesses

Deathsleep: Every day at dawn, a vampire feels an urge to rest in a sleep indistinguishable from death. She may spend one Vitae to resist this urge and remain awake through the day. A sleeping vampire can still spend Vitae to heal herself.

To awaken at sundown, a vampire spends one Vitae. A sleeping vampire with no Vitae to spend remains trapped in sleep until someone feeds her or several months pass and she spontaneously awakens, wasted away to nearly nothing (10 hit points) and ravenous with hunger. Some vampires believe that more powerful vampires trapped this way take longer to awaken.

Sunlight Vulnerability: A vampire fully exposed to sunlight takes four points of Constitution damage on his turn each round of exposure. Partial exposure does proportionately less damage. Certain Disciplines may reduce or increase this damage.

Undead: Vampires are unliving bodies powered by Vitae. While this state has its advantages, unlike living things, vampires do not heal from rest and time, and they do not benefit from standard medical attention (such as the Heal skill). To heal, a vampire must spend Vitae (see below).

Vitae: Though Vitae fuels a vampire's supernatural powers, Vitae also carries weaknesses. See "Vitae," below, for more information.

Vampire Features

Discipline: Disciplines are special abilities available to vampires. Most Disciplines grant abilities such as controlling minds,

growing claws or blending with the night. Some Disciplines are not available to all vampires. (See Chapter 4: Feats and Abilities for more information.) Some Disciplines, called devotions, combine the powers of two disciplines for a greater effect. Other Disciplines do not relate to clans or standard Disciplines, such as being able to store more Vitae.

Every Discipline works similar to a feat and is described in Chapter 4: Feats and Abilities. Every time "Discipline" appears in Table 2–7: Vampire, a vampire of that level can select a new Discipline.

Vitae

When a vampire feeds on blood, within seconds it transforms into a supernatural substance called Vitae. Vitae looks, smells and flows like natural blood, but is charged with supernatural power. If Vitae leaves a vampire's body and is exposed to air, the Vitae reverts to normal blood within a few minutes. (Scientific analysis on reverted Vitae reveals it to be a mixture of blood from many sources, with some of the cells broken down.) Some vampires and mages know how to preserve Vitae outside the body, and even reverted Vitae retains a mystical connection to its vampire.

Vampires use Vitae to maintain their altered existence and to fuel their supernatural powers. When a vampire uses Vitae, it physically affects him in a slight way — he grows paler, his skin tightens or he seems to shrink or wither, looking less alive. Feeding on the blood of others allows a vampire to maintain a normal appearance, though "normal" varies from vampire to vampire.

Spending Vitae, for whatever purpose, does not take an action. Certain Disciplines take a standard action to activate and require the vampire to spend a point of Vitae, but the expenditure of Vitae takes no time in itself and the vampire can do it even on someone else's turn.

Maximum Vitae: A vampire can store Vitae in her body equal to 10 plus her Constitution modifier; if she gains excess Vitae, it is wasted.

Starting Vitae: Vampires start with their maximum amount of Vitae (10 + Con modifier).

Vitae per Round: Vampires can spend one Vitae per round, no matter what effect(s) they want to achieve. A vampire can take the Blood Potency Discipline to improve this rate.

Vampires can use Vitae for several effects. (Information on blood addiction and Vinculums appears first, as the other Vitae effects rely on it; other effects appear in alphabetical order.)

Blood Addiction

Vitae may look and smell like blood, but Vitae certainly doesn't taste like blood — stolen life is the ultimate forbidden fruit, the sweetest taste that any human or vampire has ever experienced. It is also incredibly addictive.

Every time a creature drinks a vampire's blood, the drinker must make a Will save (DC 10 + the vampire's Constitution modifier). If he fails, he is one step closer to blood addiction and takes a –4 penalty on future saves against this addiction. When the penalty reaches –20, the drinker is addicted and no longer wants to resist the thirst for Vitae.

Addicted humans often become obsessed with drinking normal blood, though it gives them no benefit and does not slake the thirst. They often grow obsessively dependent on the vampire who supplies their addiction, willing to do anything for another fix. Addicted vampires may become so desperate as to wound themselves and lick their own Vitae (this act does not diminish their supply, and it only reinforces the addiction). Some turn to preying on other vampires.

A creature who makes his Will save resists the temptation and reduces his penalty by 4 (from –16 to –12, for example). If an addicted creature reduces his penalty to 0 in this way, he is no longer addicted. Likewise, each month in which the creature does not taste Vitae reduces the penalty by 4.

Some extremely powerful vampires can gain sustenance only by drinking the blood of other vampires, but they do not become addicted to it like lesser creatures.

Establish Vinculum

Drinking a particular vampire's blood three times creates an emotional bond between the drinker and the vampire. This bond, called the Vinculum, which means "blood bond" or "blood oath," gives the vampire power over the drinker. The vampire who creates the bond is called the regnant, and the drinker is the thrall. The thrall cannot make a save to avoid this bond. Each drink requires the vampire to spend at least one Vitae.

The Vinculum is an emotional devotion; it is like love but mechanical and hollow, yet stronger than any bond created with Dominate or Majesty Disciplines — neither sorts of disciplines can overpower the regnant's power over his thrall. Likewise, a creature can be thrall to only one vampire at a time; the blood bond prevents any others from forming.

Normally vampires use this bond on humans or animals, but vampires can also bond other vampires and some other supernatural creatures. Most vampires refuse to become thralls to each other, as they fear this kind of slavery, but especially close vampires may form a blood bond with each other as a sign of friendship or to prevent others from enthralling them.

Commanding your thrall is easy; you gain a +4 bonus on all social skills (such as Diplomacy or Intimidate) to influence or manipulate your thrall, and the thrall takes a –4 penalty on saves to resist your commands — including those from supernatural abilities. The thrall gains a +4 bonus on saves to resist commands from others if those commands would cause you direct or indirect harm (including harm through inaction on the thrall's part), and opponents take a –4 penalty on social skills to encourage the thrall to perform such actions. If you are thrall to another creature, your thrall's behavior extends toward your regnant to a lesser extent (+2 and –2 instead of +4 and –4).

If one year passes from the last time a non-vampire thrall drank his regnant's Vitae, the bond ends. The blood bond probably lasts longer for vampires, though not enough time has passed since the Nightmare Wave to test the length. Heavy abuse and mistreatment can turn a thrall against his regnant, which usually results in the thrall performing a murderous assault and then going mad.

Killing a regnant ends his Vinculums immediately.

Demons, mages and werewolves cannot become thralls. Awakened can become thralls, but they must drink Vitae six times instead of three.

Activate Disciplines

Some Disciplines require Vitae; others do not. See each Discipline's description to see if it requires Vitae, and if so how much.

Augment Physical Abilities

A vampire can use Vitae to temporarily boost her Strength, Dexterity or Constitution. Each point of Vitae grants her a +4 enhancement bonus to one of these abilities for one minute. This use causes no apparent physical change in the vampire's body, and is therefore handy when she wants to conceal her supernatural nature — a vampire with the body of an old woman can boost her Strength to Herculean levels and still appear puny.

Unlike most enhancement bonuses, this bonus stacks with itself as long as you spend all the Vitae in the same round. Multiple uses on the same ability over the course of multiple rounds have no effect, but if you spend three Vitae in one round, you can gain a +12 enhancement bonus to Strength (for example).

Increasing your Constitution increases your hit points; these extra hit points go away when the ability expires, which may cause you to drop to 0 hit points or below (you do not lose them first like temporary hit points).

Counterfeit Life

A vampire's metabolic nature is different from that of a normal human. A vampire vomits up human food and drink. A vampire can spend one Vitae to consume normal food and drink without this response, which lasts for one meal; afterward the vampire still regurgitates the food, so she probably wants to get out of sight of normal people.

A vampire has only a semblance of life — vampires are sometimes pallid, with no heartbeat and no need to breathe unless they wish to speak. A vampire can spend one Vitae to give herself the full appearance of a human — a rosy flush in the cheeks no matter how low her current Vitae, a regular heartbeat, a normal breathing rhythm, even the ability to have sex. This effect lasts at most an hour. Note that if your form is normally monstrous (as most Nosferatu are), this ability just means you appear *living* and monstrous rather than somewhat dead and monstrous.

A vampire can use both of these abilities at the same time, spending one Vitae for each effect (food ingestion and lifelike appearance).

Create Ghouls

A vampire can feed a human or animal her Vitae to create a servant with limited vampiric powers. This creature is called a ghoul. The act of creating a ghoul is intentional (it never happens by accident). Though a ghoul feeds on Vitae, a ghoul is not necessarily a thrall, nor are all thralls automatically ghouls.

To create a ghoul, a vampire must deliberately feed the target one Vitae and expend one additional Vitae to channel supernatural energy into her new ghoul. The target immediately becomes a ghoul with one Vitae of his own. A vampire can feed a ghoul more Vitae, up to half the ghoul's Constitution score.

Upon becoming a ghoul, a creature immediately gains the Celerity, Resilience or Vigor Discipline. The vampire chooses the Discipline. Once the ghoul gains this Discipline, he can take it again as a feat to improve it. If a ghoul has an available feat slot, he can study for one day with a vampire to learn any ghoul Discipline (Celerity, Resilience or Vigor), allowing him to spend his available feat on that Discipline (and then spend subsequent feats to improve that Discipline). Since ghouls do not belong to clans, they never gain a clan bonus for these Disciplines.

Ghouls do not age. Just as vampires, ghouls can use their stored Vitae to augment themselves physically, to heal themselves or to activate Disciplines. A ghoul can spend only one Vitae per round and can never learn to spend Vitae faster (ghouls cannot take the Blood Potency Discipline). Unlike vampires, ghouls digest Vitae. To use it, they tap into stored supernatural power, rather than redirect the actual liquid within themselves.

As long as any vampire repeats the ghoul ritual (feeding one Vitae and spending one more) every month, the ghoul remains a ghoul, even if he currently has no stored Vitae. If a month passes since the last ritual, he is no longer a ghoul. His apparent age catches up to his true age at a rate of one year per day beyond the missed ritual. (In theory, a mortal whose lifespan has been unnaturally extended with ghouldom would rapidly age and die if deprived in this way.) A reverted ghoul loses all stored Vitae.

A ghoul can spend two Vitae on his own (one each round for two successive rounds) to extend his ghoul state another month, but the ghoul does not automatically know this. Some vampires prefer their ghouls to return to them in order to keep their servants on a short leash, while other vampires recognize the need for extended missions away from home.

Animals can become ghouls, but their intelligence limits their effectiveness. Animal ghouls can use Vitae only on Disciplines, not to heal themselves or perform other physical augmentations. They usually never progress beyond the Discipline they gain when they become ghouls, though vampires may be able to teach animals others with careful use of Animalism Disciplines. Animal ghouls tend to use their Vitae immediately in combat, spending one Vitae in the first round and spending more only if they know a second Discipline. Because of these limitations, animal ghouls are rare, and vampires who want animal guardians usually create thralls.

Demons, mages and werewolves cannot become ghouls. Awakened can become ghouls, but all Vitae costs are doubled for their creation and maintenance. Awakened must spend double the normal Vitae to accomplish anything requiring Vitae.

Detect Blood Tie

A vampire can recognize another vampire's clan if she tastes the stranger's Vitae; the nature of the dead soul flavors the vampire's supernatural blood. A vampire can always recognize the taste of blood or Vitae she has tasted before, and even recognize the taste of someone who has drank the blood or Vitae of someone she has tasted. (This ability allows her to recognize other thralls of her regnant.)

Recognizing a clan's or a specific vampire's Vitae by taste requires a DC 20 Search check. If the Vitae is from your regnant or someone who has tasted your regnant's Vitae, the DC is 15. You automatically detect the taste of your own Vitae, whether in another vampire's Vitae or in a non-vampire who has drunk it.

Heal Wounds

Spending Vitae is the only way a vampire can heal wounds on her own; simple rest accomplishes nothing. Spending one Vitae heals 10 hit points of damage or two points of ability damage from a single ability. Spending two Vitae heals one point of ability drain. A severely injured vampire may have to feed several times in order to generate enough Vitae to heal herself. A vampire can heal herself in this way while unconscious.

Wake Up

A vampire is an unnatural fusion of a living person and a dead soul. This combination causes lethargy and fatigue in the body during daylight hours, and most vampires sleep this time away in a state resembling death. Overcoming this supernatural sleep requires the expenditure of one Vitae, regardless of what time the vampire fell asleep or wants to wake. Morning, noon, sundown or midnight, waking always costs one Vitae.

Regaining Vitae — Feeding

Vampires must feed on blood; otherwise, they cannot rouse themselves from sleep. They may drink stored blood (such as from a hospital or blood bank), but stored blood doesn't taste as good or is as sustaining as hot, fresh blood from the source. Weaker vampires can sustain themselves on animal blood, but it is not as effective as human blood.

Feeding on an unwilling target requires the vampire to grapple the victim; once the grapple is established, the vampire can feed each round as a standard action by making a successful grapple check. Feeding on a live creature is called the Kiss, and it is an ecstatic experience for both vampire and victim. Once the Kiss begins, a non-vampire target must make a Will save (DC 10 + the vampire's Hit Dice + the vampire's Charisma modifier) or succumb to the ecstasy and stop resisting. If the vampire is in combat and feeds on his opponent, the victim never needs to make this Will save and can resist the vampire's attack every round — no matter how good the Kiss feels, your mortal enemy won't sit back and let you do it.

Feeding on a willing target (whether a volunteer or one who has succumbed to the Kiss) is a standard action and requires no grapple check. Each round of feeding on a human subject gives a vampire one Vitae.

A Medium humanoid creature contains enough blood to generate one Vitae per two points of Constitution, and each Vitae a vampire takes from the creature deals two points of Constitution damage. Because Constitution damage heals at a rate of one point per day, and a vampire must expend at least one Vitae each night he rises, a vampire cannot rely on a single humanoid creature for feeding; the creature gets depleted over several days. Vampires usually rely on more than one source of blood; otherwise, they leave behind a string of bodies that others can trace to them.

Medium or larger Animals are worth one Vitae for every four points of Constitution, though each Vitae taken from them still deals only two points of Constitution damage.

A Small creature is worth half as much Vitae as a Medium creature of its type. A Tiny creature is worth one-quarter as much Vitae as a Medium creature of its type; smaller creatures cannot give vampires Vitae.

Stored blood has only a fraction of the potency of fresh human blood; a vampire must consume eight pints of human blood to gain one Vitae.

A dead human body can provide a single Vitae, and is available as Vitae only within 24 hours of the host's death.

A vampire may feed on another vampire, directly draining Vitae from her target and adding it to her total. However, feeding this way risks blood addiction and a blood bond.

Mage blood is laced with magic, but is as effective as human blood for a vampire's purposes. However, a vampire who feeds on mage blood suffers mild hallucinations (–1 on all attacks, saves and checks) for one day per Vitae taken — a side effect of the mage's supernatural awareness.

Werewolf blood is more potent than human blood; a werewolf is worth one Vitae for every one point of the werewolf's Constitution. However, due to werewolves' savage alien natures, a vampire who drinks werewolf blood may enter a frenzied state in combat or when aggravated, similar to a werewolf. This rage-prone state lasts one day per werewolf Vitae taken.

A vampire in this sort of rage can barely manage the clarity to speak (DC 20 Will save to bark out a few words). She cannot use Charisma-, Dexterity- or Intelligence-based skills (except for Balance, Escape Artist, Intimidate and Ride), the Concentration skill, any abilities that require patience or concentration or Disciplines (unless they specify they are useable in a rage). She can use any feat she has except Combat Expertise. The frequency and duration of these episodes is at the GM's discretion.

Awakened blood is just as potent as human blood, but because their nature is counter to that of vampires, Vitae from an Awakened hinders a vampire's ability to use Vitae-based abilities. Any Vitae expenditure other than waking up requires twice as much Vitae to function. This hampered state lasts one day per Awakened Vitae taken.

Vampires cannot feed on demons; their bodies are made of animated inert matter that is as unsuitable for feeding as a pile of earth or a stone. Vampires cannot feed on plants.

Vampires have a psychological dependence on fresh blood. Even if the vampire is fully sated on animal or preserved blood, feeding on a live person is thrilling. Every time a vampire feeds on a live human, the vampire must make a Will save to resist draining that person completely dry (DC 10 + 1 for every day that has passed since she last tasted fresh human blood). Most vampires try to feed regularly to stave off this impulse, as a trail of dead bodies draws attention; a rare few avoid feeding on humans entirely.

Typical Vampire

This character represents a creepy stalker vampire easily capable of breaking into homes or offices to prey on sleepers or isolated employees. He also makes a decent burglar or assassin. His level 1 ability score increase is in Dexterity, he gets a +2 bonus to Strength, Constitution, and Charisma for being a vampire and +2 to Strength and –2 to Charisma for being a Nosferatu.

"Come to me. You know you must. You know you long to share in what I can provide."
—Stephan Willow, vampire

Vampire: Init +4, Spd 30 ft.; hp 26, Def 17, touch 17, flat-footed 13; vampire traits; Atk/Full Atk +7 melee (1d4+4, bite) or +7 ranged (1d10, zip gun); sneak attack +1d6; disciplines (Celerity); 12 max Vitae, 1 Vitae/round.

Typical Vampire (Nosferatu) 1: CR 4; Medium humanoid (vampire); HD 4d8+8, hp 26; Init +4; Spd 30 ft.; Def 17, touch 17, flat-footed 13; Base Atk +3; Grp +7; Atk/Full Atk +7 melee (1d4+4, bite) or +7 ranged (1d10, zip gun); SA disciplines; SQ vampire traits; SV Fort +6, Ref +8, Will +5; Str 18, Dex 18, Con 15, Int 10, Wis 12, Cha 8.

Skills (Stealth) and Feats: Demolitions +3, Disable Device +3, Forgery +3, Hide +12, Move Silently +12, Open Lock +7, Sleight of Hand +7; Skilled (Hide and Move Silently), Sneak Attack.

Disciplines: Celerity.

Vitae: 12 max; 1/round.

An Unhappy Union

Yes, that is correct. I am a vampire. I have not always been so, of course. My life began in Africa in what was then called the Belgian Congo. I helped in the liberation of my country and saw the Republic of the Congo, and eventually the great nation of Zaire, take shape. I served Lieutenant General Mobutu himself. It was my life's work to contend with the enemies of our nation's revered leader, and I took great pleasure in that duty, developing great skill and not a little renown.

But eventually, I died.

I'm also a lawyer living in Indianapolis. I'm married and have two children. I like fishing and reading mysteries. Or I guess I did. My life was entirely normal, until some months ago, when the Intrusion happened. "Intrusion." They certainly got that name right. I haven't seen Cindy or the kids since then. I couldn't expose them to this horror — this thing I've become. I've been on the move ever since.

I'm — I am both men, you see.

And yet I am also neither of them. I am a thing unlike any man who has walked the earth. My strength and my stamina seem virtually without measure, and yet I cannot abide even something as simple as the rays of the sun. As I said, I am a vampire.

But since I am two men, not one, I am possessed of two hearts as well. One heart bids me to perform the tasks that my new body compels of me. You see, I need the blood of others to survive. Not air, not food, not even water — just blood. I am well equipped to stalk and kill my prey, and take from them what I require. These are deeds to which I am well accustomed, believe me. And yet, the other heart has no stamina for bloodshed and death. It causes me pain — literal pain in my soul — to see such horrors committed upon the innocent.

Every day, then, is conflict. Every day, I am faced with a struggle between what I need and what I want. I would do well to reach some kind of accord between my warring hearts, but that is much easier said than done. I feel that I must look beyond my hunger, and find something else to focus my energy toward. Something that both of me can agree upon. I need a goal past just simple survival. I need a purpose. I need to use the power I have been granted to accomplish something.

But what?

WEREWOLVES

Take a half-crazy wild intelligent beast and cram its soul into a human body — that's a werewolf. Though the human spirit of their shared body sometimes tugs on the leash, most werewolves are simply agents of destruction in human form, happy to tear this world apart, starting with the soft meaty bits . . . and then they break their human shapes and become physical embodiments of rage, claw and hunger.

Because all werewolves come from the same dimension, they recognize a kinship with each other. Similar to Earth wolves, werewolves have a pack mentality and prefer their own company to the company of others, especially if a clear hierarchy of dominance exists. Every werewolf belongs to one of five auspices that reflect his origin in his home dimension (perhaps a racial distinction, perhaps regional . . . it's not clear to Earth-natives, and werewolves don't care enough to explain it well). The auspices and their associated characteristics are as follows:

Rahu: The full moon; the warriors.

Cahalith: The gibbous moon; the visionaries.

Elodoth: The half moon; the judges and mediators.

Ithaeur: The crescent moon; the mystics.

Irraka: The new moon; the stalkers.

Werewolves are straightforward: they like to break things, they turn into monsters, they run in packs, they howl a lot and so on. Play a werewolf if you want a barely human character with a bad temper, amazing physical abilities and a slight mystical side.

Hit Die: d12.

Hit Dice at 1st Level: 4d12 (+4 x Con modifier).

Skill Points: 2 + Int modifier.

Feats: A werewolf begins play with two feats.

Ability Increase: You gain a +1 bonus to a single ability score of your choice. If you like, you can choose an ability score that already gains a bonus because you're a werewolf (see below).

Movement: A werewolf has a movement speed of 30 feet.

Werewolf Core Abilities

A werewolf gets a +2 bonus to Strength and Constitution.

Shapechanging: A werewolf can channel his alien spirit into his flesh, reshaping meat and bone. A werewolf has two nonhuman forms: a completely bestial form and a hybrid form that mixes its human and bestial shapes.

Changing form is a full-round action, though a werewolf can change as a free action if he makes a DC 15 Will save, or he can spend one Essence to do it without a roll

TABLE 2–8: WEREWOLF

Level	Base Attack Bonus	Defense	Fort Save	Ref Save	Will Save	Special
1	+4	+2	+4	+1	+1	Rite
2	+5	+2	+4	+2	+1	Rite
3	+6/+1	+3	+5	+2	+2	—
4	+7/+2	+3	+5	+3	+2	Rite
5	+8/+3	+4	+6	+3	+2	—
6	+9/+4	+4	+6	+4	+3	Rite
7	+10/+5	+5	+7	+4	+3	—
8	+11/+6/+1	+5	+7	+5	+3	Rite
9	+12/+7/+2	+6	+8	+5	+4	—
10	+13/+8/+3	+6	+8	+6	+4	Rite
11	+14/+9/+4	+7	+9	+6	+4	—
12	+15/+10/+5	+7	+9	+7	+5	Rite
13	+16/+11/+6/+1	+8	+10	+7	+5	—
14	+17/+12/+7/+2	+8	+10	+8	+5	Rite
15	+18/+13/+8/+3	+9	+11	+8	+6	—
16	+19/+14/+9/+4	+9	+11	+9	+6	Rite
17	+20/+15/+9/+5	+10	+12	+9	+6	—
18	+21/+16/+10/+6	+10	+12	+10	+7	Rite
19	+22/+17/+11/+7	+11	+13	+10	+7	—
20	+23/+18/+12/+8	+11	+13	+11	+7	Rite

(see below for more information on Essence). If the moon's phase matches the werewolf's auspice, he can change form as a free action without making a roll or spending Essence. Returning to human form is always a free action and doesn't require a roll or Essence. A werewolf automatically reverts to human form if he's knocked unconscious or killed.

Beast Form: The bestial form more closely resembles the werewolf's alien form rather than an Earth wolf or dog (only an idiot would mistake a beast form werewolf as a real wolf in anything but dim light). In beast form, the werewolf's Dexterity and Constitution increase by +2, his speed increases to 40 feet, he gains a bite attack that deals 1d8 points of damage plus one and a half times his Strength bonus, gains a +8 bonus on Listen and Spot checks and gains the scent ability (see Chapter 7: Playing the Game, "Special Abilities," *Scent*). While in beast form, a werewolf cannot speak human languages, but he can communicate with other werewolves in beast form or hybrid form. (Even a werewolf's human ears cannot make out werewolf speech.) A werewolf in beast form cannot use the Diplomacy or Gather Information skills except on other werewolves. The beast form cannot see color. While in beast form, a werewolf has low-light vision, and can see twice as far as a normal human in conditions of low light.

Hybrid Form: The hybrid form is powerful but unstable, both physically and mentally. The hybrid form is bipedal and tall, covered in hair the color of the human form's, has opposable thumbs and can speak human languages and the werewolf language. The hybrid form has a bite attack as a primary attack that deals 1d6 points of damage (plus one and a half times the werewolf's Strength bonus) and two claw attacks as secondary attacks that deal 1d6 points of damage (plus half the werewolf's Strength bonus) each. The hybrid form has good hearing (+4 bonus on Listen checks) and sight but limited color vision (+4 bonus on Spot checks except when color vision is important). The werewolf's Strength and Dexterity increase by +4 and Constitution increases by +2. While in hybrid form, a werewolf has low-light vision, and can see twice as far as a normal human in conditions of low light.

The hybrid form is a being of pure rage; the werewolf can barely manage the clarity to speak (DC 20 Will save to bark out a few words). The werewolf cannot use Charisma-, Dexterity- or Intelligence-based skills (except for Balance, Escape Artist, Intimidate and Ride), the Concentration skill or any abilities that require patience or concentration or rites (unless the rite specifies otherwise). He can use any feat he has except Combat Expertise.

Every round on his turn, a hybrid-form werewolf must attack or move toward an enemy; if the werewolf can't see a living foe, he has to strike out at something nearby (a car, fallen foe and so on). He can still discern friend from foe, fallen foes from living ones, and can decide between multiple available foes. To do anything other than move, attack or activate an allowed rite (even to exit hybrid form), the werewolf must make a DC 20 Will save.

A werewolf can remain in hybrid form for a number of rounds equal to his (current) Constitution bonus (minimum 1) plus 1 round for each Primal Urge rite; when this time is up, he must change to either beast form or human form. Once a werewolf leaves hybrid form, he cannot return to it for at least 10 minutes.

Pack Mentality: Werewolves feel most comfortable in groups, whether this group is composed of werewolves or other powerful creatures. Werewolves have the mystical ability to forge a special bond with up to four other creatures, which the werewolf calls his "pack." Inviting someone into a pack takes a full-round action and must be done in the presence of the potential packmate. A werewolf with four packmates who wants to add another must first release one (a free action) before inviting a replacement. A creature (werewolf or otherwise) can be in only one pack at a time. A packmate is a trusted kin; forcing a packmate to harm another is nearly impossible (doing so is like trying to force someone to harm himself). Some werewolves learn supernatural powers (called rites) that work only on packmates.

Hardiness: A werewolf's alien soul enhances the werewolf's human metabolism, making it immune to normal sickness and disease. The werewolf is still vulnerable to magical diseases and poison.

Sprint Healing: A werewolf has sprint healing 5/20 (see Chapter 7: Playing the Game, "Special Abilities," *Sprint Healing*). This ability works in any form (human, hybrid or beast).

Auspice Ability: A werewolf gains a benefit based on his auspice:

Rahu: +2 Strength.

Cahalith: +2 Intelligence (which affects the werewolf's skill points).

Elodoth: +2 Charisma.

Ithaeur: +2 Wisdom.

Irraka: +2 Dexterity.

Essence: Werewolves use a mystic, internal energy called Essence to fuel their abilities. See below for more information on Essence and its uses.

Werewolf Weaknesses

Silver Vulnerability: A werewolf in hybrid or beast form is vulnerable to silver — it somehow interferes with the manifestation of the werewolf's alien spirit. A werewolf takes double damage from silver-based attacks (to a maximum of five points of extra damage). For example, if someone shoots a werewolf with a silver bullet for eight points of damage, he takes an additional five points of damage on top of the eight from the bullet. If the bullet dealt only three points of damage, the werewolf takes only an extra three points of damage.

This weakness applies only to pure silver — electroplating and silver nitrate are painful but no more damaging than their steel equivalents. Simply touching a werewolf with a silver item is not harmful.

A werewolf's sprint healing ability cannot heal the extra damage from silver attacks.

Werewolf Features

Rite: Rites are special abilities available to werewolves, such as striking fear into the heart of an enemy, increasing the werewolf's speed or attuning the werewolf for battle. Some rites are available only to werewolves of a particular auspice.

All rites work as feats and are described in Chapter 4: Feats and Abilities. Every time "rite" appears on Table 2–8: Werewolf, a werewolf of that level can select a new rite.

Essence

Many of a werewolf's supernatural powers rely on an innate supernatural power called Essence. Spending Essence, for whatever purpose, does not take an action. Certain rites take a standard action to activate and require the werewolf to spend a point of Essence, but the expenditure of Essence takes no time in itself and the werewolf can do it even on someone else's turn.

Maximum Essence: A werewolf can store Essence equal to 10 plus his Constitution modifier; if he gains excess Essence, it is wasted.

Starting Essence: Werewolves start with their maximum amount of Essence (10 + Con modifier).

Essence per Round: Werewolves can spend one Essence per round, no matter what effect(s) they want to achieve. A werewolf can take the Primal Urge rite to improve this rate.

Werewolves can use Essence for several effects.

Activate Rites

Some rites require Essence; others do not. See each rite's description to see if the rite requires Essence, and how much.

Heal Wounds

Spending one Essence heals the werewolf 10 hit points of damage or two points of ability damage from a single ability. (Essence can heal even damage from silver weapons.) Spending two Essence heals one point of ability drain. A werewolf can heal himself in this way while unconscious.

Regaining Essence

The first time a werewolf sees the moon at night, he regains one Essence, or two Essence if its phase matches his auspice. Eating a freshly killed human's heart (Awakened, mages and ghouls count as humans) gives a werewolf one Essence. Some Nightmare Sites with powers relating to the moon or dimensional instability may also provide Essence, though the amount and frequency of this supply is at the GM's discretion.

Typical Werewolf

This character represents a strong, bruiser werewolf who's really good at breaking and destroying. Her level 1 ability score increase is in Dexterity, and she gets a +2 bonus to Strength for being a werewolf and another +2 to Strength for being a Rahu.

Werewolf: Init +2, Spd 30 ft.; hp 38, Def 14, touch 14, flat-footed 12; werewolf traits; Atk/Full Atk +9 melee (1d6+5, club); Combat Reflexes (+2 attacks); rites (Crushing Blow); 13 max Essence, 1 Essence/round.

- **Werewolf, Hybrid Form:** Init +4, Spd 30 ft.; hp 42, Def 16, touch 16, flat-footed 12; Fort +8, Ref +5; werewolf traits; Atk/Full Atk +11 melee (1d6+10, bite) and +6 melee (1d6+3, 2 claws); Combat Reflexes (+4 attacks); rites (Crushing Blow); 13 max Essence, 1 Essence/round.
- **Werewolf, Beast Form:** Init +3, Spd 40 ft.; hp 42, Def 15, touch 15, flat-footed 12; Fort +8, Ref +4; werewolf traits; Atk/Full Atk +9 melee (1d8+7, bite); Combat Reflexes (+3 attacks); rites (Crushing Blow); 13 max Essence, 1 Essence/round.

Typical Werewolf (Rahu) 1: CR 4; Medium humanoid (werewolf); HD 4d12+12, hp 38; Init +2; Spd 30 ft.; Def 14, touch 14, flat-footed 12; Base Atk +4; Grp +9; Atk/Full Atk +9 melee (1d6+5, club); SA rites; SV Fort +7, Ref +3; Str 21, Dex 14, Con 16, Int 12, Wis 10, Cha 8.

Skills (Might) and Feats: Climb +9, Jump+9, Listen +3, Search +4, Sense Motive +3, Spot +3, Swim +9; Combat Reflexes, Power Attack.

Rites: Crushing Blow.

Essence: 13 max; 1/round.

My Own, Only Master

Blood.

The stench of flesh.

The taste of flesh.

It calls to me.

Slowly, dispassionately, I stand watching strangers climb aboard a bus. They have no idea who I am. What I am. Because I look like them.

Until tonight, when I will change.

My true self will emerge, and I will be free of the bonds this body places upon me. The limitations of its form, and the weakness of its flesh. Then I will destroy. I will not stop until everything in this world is torn asunder.

I am destruction personified, and this world is a sumptuous banquet laid before me.

But it is not truly so simple. It should be. It should. I am not a complicated creature, and I dislike obstacles. I destroy obstacles. But this impediment is not made of wood, or stone or steel. It is one of thought and feeling.

"Oh yeah, that thing about silver bullets? Turns out — works real nice."
Calvin Thomas, werewolf-hunter

I hate thoughts and feelings. My rage — my lovely, lovely rage — swallows such things. It devours them. It drowns them in its own red beauty.

But still, it is one I must consider. For when I give in to my own true self, I put myself deeper in the bonds of another. It is like a trap. The more I struggle, the more I am caught.

I did not come here on my own. I was sent. Torn from my previous existence, I was placed here by forces beyond . . . just beyond. To rage and destroy is their will for me. It is their command.

I am no thrall. I take no commands. I slay any who would try to be my master. But these things that have brought me here, and compel me, they have no hearts to feast upon, no throats to tear out, no skulls to split asunder and no entrails to spill steaming upon the ground.

To do as I must, I serve them. To deny them, I deny my own needs.

I hate anything that makes me hesitate. That makes me consider. Hesitation and consideration are weakness.

But I will not blindly serve, like a dog. Like the dogs — the wolves — that fools in this new life think my true form resembles. They wish to equate me with an animal, but I am not. I am an engine of destruction. Nothing can put a leash upon me. Nothing.

So I turn the tables upon those that think to command me. To use me. I will focus myself, as difficult as that is. I will channel my fury toward only those who do serve the ones that the weak call Iconnu. In that way, I will show that I am greater. Stronger than the weak, and more free than those who submit.

It is pain not to just crush everything I see. Each time I deny myself, it is like a stab of silver. But when I deny myself, I deny them. And when I strike out against those that serve, I strike out at them.

I shall always be my own master.

My only master.

SKILLS

No one will survive long in the ruins or the shadows without skills. Skills (coupled with feats) are a measure of what training and experience your character has had, and in what areas. Whenever you attempt something in the game with a chance of failure, more than likely there will be a skill check involved (when no skill is appropriate, or when you have no training in the required skill, an ability check is in order — see below).

At first level, all characters choose two themes, and gain three skill ranks in all skills in each theme. Also at first level, and every time thereafter when you gain a level, you gain a certain number of skill points to purchase additional skill ranks. Your character type determines how many skill points you get. (Vampires, for example, gain four skill points + their Intelligence modifier at each level.)

You can spend skill points on skills that fall within your focus or on other skills. If you spend one skill point on a skill in your focus, you gain one rank in that skill. If you spend skill points on a skill outside your focus, two skill points buy one rank in that skill.

Your maximum rank in a skill is your Hit Dice + 3.

Using Skills: To make a skill check, roll 1d20 + skill modifier (skill modifier = skill rank + ability modifier + miscellaneous modifiers).

This roll works just as an attack roll or a saving throw — the higher the roll, the better. Either you're trying to match or exceed a certain Difficulty Class (DC), or you're trying to beat another character's check result.

Skill Ranks: Your number of ranks in a skill is based on how many skill points you have invested in that skill. Many skills can be used even if you have no ranks in them; doing so is called making an untrained skill check.

Ability Modifier: The ability modifier used in a skill check is the modifier for the skill's key ability (the ability associated with the skill's use), such as Dexterity or Intelligence. The key ability of each skill is noted in its description.

Miscellaneous Modifiers: Miscellaneous modifiers include armor check penalties and bonuses provided by feats and special abilities, among others.

Skill Themes

When you create a character at first level, you choose two themes and start with three skill ranks in each of the skills listed as a part of that theme. These themes have no meaning after character creation, although you may want to consult them when you gain a level if you are attempting to keep to a particular character concept. The themes (and their associated skills and the focus under which the skills fall) appear below.

Academia (Intellect): Drawing on skills that focus on applied knowledge and a mastery of obscure lore, academia skills are useful boons for characters with a high Intelligence.

Skills: Appraise (Int), Concentration (Con), Heal (Wis), Knowledge (Int), Research (Int) and Speak Language (none)

Agility (Might, Stealth): Agility skills represent training in flexibility and acrobatics. Characters who rely on speed and maneuverability usually take them.

Skills: Balance (Dex), Escape Artist (Dex) and Tumble (Dex)

Athletics (Might): This theme includes Strength-based skills. It reflects a focus on physical fitness and strength.

Skills: Climb (Str), Jump (Str) and Swim (Str)

Criminal (Stealth): Criminal skills require a fine hand for detailed work and a penchant for larceny.

Skills: Demolitions (Int), Disable Device (Int), Forgery (Int), Open Lock (Dex) and Sleight of Hand (Dex)

Magic (Intellect): While academia skills focus on readily available knowledge, magic skills focus on rare lore and the study and use of magic.

Skills: Concentration (Con), Knowledge (Occult), Research (Int) and Spellcraft (Int)

Military (Might): Characters with a military background or focus appreciate this broad group of skills.

Skills: Demolitions (Int), Navigate (Int), Pilot (Dex), Repair (Int) and Use Rope (Dex)

Natural Lore (Spirit): Many characters have experience in the forbidding wilds, where one's knowledge of the land draws the line between survival and death.

Skills: Handle Animal (Cha), Navigate (Int), Ride (Dex) and Survival (Wis)

Perception (Intellect, Spirit): A sharp eye can spot trouble before it befalls you, while a keen ear lets you sneak up on a concealed enemy. Characters who emphasize smart tactics and awareness grant find perception skills invaluable.

Skills: Listen (Wis), Search (Int), Sense Motive (Wis) and Spot (Wis)

Social (Spirit): Social skills focus on your ability to charm others, whether you wish to extract rumors from them, trick them or just strike up a friendship

Skills: Bluff (Cha), Diplomacy (Cha), Gather Information (Cha) and Intimidate (Cha)

Stealth (Stealth): Characters who value hiding from enemies, whether to flee or ambush, desire access to stealth skills.

Skills: Hide (Dex) and Move Silently (Dex)

Technology (Intellect): Characters using machines and various modern devices find technology skills important.

Skills: Computer Use (Int), Drive (Dex), Pilot (Dex) and Repair (Int)

Theatrics (Spirit): The art of entertaining others not only can earn you a passable living; it also helps develop a variety of useful skills.

Skills: Bluff (Cha), Disguise (Cha), Perform (Cha) and Sleight of Hand (Dex)

Skills and Focus

Your focus represents your overall training and exposure to different abilities. Your focus determines which skills are cheap for you: spending one skill point in a focus skill buys one rank in that skill. Spending skill points in other skills (sometimes called cross-focus skills) is more expensive: two skill points buys you a single rank (or one point buys you half a rank; half-ranks in skills don't add to your die rolls, but if you later spend another point, the half-rank becomes a full rank). In either case, your maximum rank in a skill is your Hit Dice +3.

While you are under no compulsion to invest in your focus skills, doing so generally is a wise choice. The more skills you can use, the better your chances of surviving and flourishing in a variety of situations.

The foci and their associated skills appear below.

Might: Balance (Dex), Climb (Str), Demolitions (Int), Escape Artist (Dex), Jump (Str), Navigate (Int), Pilot (Dex), Repair (Int), Swim (Str), Tumble (Dex) and Use Rope (Dex)

Intellect: Appraise (Int), Computer Use (Int), Concentration (Con), Craft (Int), Drive (Dex), Heal (Wis), Knowledge (Int), Listen (Wis), Pilot (Dex), Repair (Int), Research (Int), Search (Int), Sense Motive (Wis), Speak Language (none), Spellcraft (Int) and Spot (Wis)

Spirit: Bluff (Cha), Diplomacy (Cha), Disguise (Cha), Gather Information (Cha), Handle Animal (Cha), Heal (Wis), Intimidate (Cha), Listen (Wis), Navigate (Int), Perform (Cha), Profession (Wis), Ride (Dex), Search (Int), Sense Motive (Wis), Sleight of Hand (Dex), Spellcraft (Wis), Spot (Wis) and Survival (Wis)

Stealth: Balance (Dex), Demolitions (Int), Disable Device (Int), Escape Artist (Dex), Forgery (Int), Hide (Dex), Move Silently (Dex), Open Lock (Dex), Sleight of Hand (Dex), Tumble (Dex) and Use Rope (Dex)

Using Skills

When you use a skill, you make a skill check to see how well you do. The higher the result of the skill check, the better. Based on the circumstances, your result must match or beat a particular number (a DC or the result of an opposed skill check) for the check to be successful. The harder the task, the higher the number you need to roll.

Circumstances can affect your check. If you are free to work without distractions, you can make a careful attempt and avoid simple mistakes. If you have lots of time, you can try over and over again, thereby assuring the best outcome. If others help, you may succeed where otherwise you would fail.

Skill Checks

A skill check takes into account a character's training (skill rank), natural talent (ability modifier) and luck (the die roll). It may also take into account what armor she is wearing (armor check penalty) or a certain special ability she possesses, among other things.

To make a skill check, roll 1d20 and add your character's skill modifier for that skill. The skill modifier incorporates your ranks in that skill and the ability modifier for that skill's key ability, plus any miscellaneous modifiers that may apply, including special abilities and armor check penalties. The higher the result, the better. Unlike with attack rolls and saving throws, a natural roll of 20 on the d20 is not an automatic success, and a natural roll of 1 is not an automatic failure.

For example, a character making a Computer Use check to hack into a demon's secure files rolls 1d20 and adds his ranks in Computer Use (say, 4) and his Intelligence modifier (since Intelligence is Computer Use's key ability; say, +2). The roll is 1d20+6, in this case, unless miscellaneous modifiers apply.

TABLE 3–1: DIFFICULTY CLASS EXAMPLES

Difficulty (DC)	Example (Skill Used)
Very easy (0)	Notice something large in plain sight. (Spot)
Easy (5)	Climb a knotted rope. (Climb)
Average (10)	Hear an approaching security guard. (Listen)
Tough (15)	Disarm an explosive. (Demolitions)
Challenging (20)	Swim against a strong current. (Swim)
Formidable (25)	Break into a secure computer system. (Computer Use)
Heroic (30)	Leap across a 30-foot chasm. (Jump)
Superheroic (35)	Convince the vampires that even though they've never even heard of you, they should let you into their master's penthouse. (Bluff)
Nearly impossible (40)	Track a werewolf commando through the forests of Brazil on a moonless night after 12 days of rainfall. (Survival)

Difficulty Class

Some checks are made against a Difficulty Class (DC). The DC is a number (set using the skill rules as a guideline) that you must score as a result on your skill check in order to succeed.

Opposed Checks

An opposed check is a check in which the GM determines success or failure by comparing your check result to another character's check result. In an opposed check, the higher result succeeds, while the lower result fails. In case of a tie, the higher skill modifier wins. If these scores are the same, roll again to break the tie.

TABLE 3–2: EXAMPLE OPPOSED CHECKS

Task	Skill	Opposing Skill
Sneak up on someone	Move Silently	Listen
Con someone	Bluff	Sense Motive
Hide from someone	Hide	Spot
Win a car race	Drive	Drive
Pretend to be someone else	Disguise	Spot
Steal a key chain	Sleight of Hand	Spot
Create a false ID	Forgery	Forgery

Trying Again

In general, you can try a skill check again if you fail, and you can keep trying indefinitely. Some skills, however, have consequences of failure that must be taken into account. A few skills are virtually useless once a check has failed on an attempt to accomplish a particular task. For most skills, when a character has succeeded once at a given task, additional successes are meaningless.

Untrained Skill Checks

Generally, if you attempt to use a skill you do not possess, you make a skill check as normal. The skill modifier doesn't have a skill rank added in because you have no ranks in the skill. Any other applicable modifiers, such as the modifier for the skill's key ability, apply to the check.

Many skills can be used only by someone who is trained in them. A skill's description specifies whether or not you can use it untrained.

Favorable and Unfavorable Conditions

Some situations may make a skill easier or harder to use, resulting in a bonus or penalty to the skill modifier for a skill check or a change to the skill check's DC.

GMs can alter the chance of success in four ways to take into account exceptional circumstances.

1. Give the skill user a +2 circumstance bonus to represent conditions that improve performance, such as having the perfect tool for the job, getting help from another character (see "Combining Skill Attempts," below) or possessing unusually accurate information.

2. Give the skill user a –2 circumstance penalty to represent conditions that hamper performance, such as being forced to use improvised tools or having misleading information.

3. Reduce the DC by 2 to represent circumstances that make the task easier, such as having a friendly audience or doing work that can be subpar.

4. Increase the DC by 2 to represent circumstances that make the task harder, such as having an uncooperative audience or doing work that must be flawless.

Conditions that affect a character's ability to perform the skill change the skill modifier. Conditions that modify how well a character must perform the skill to succeed change the DC. A bonus to the skill modifier and a reduction in the check's DC have the same result: they create a better chance of success. But they represent different circumstances, and sometimes that difference is important.

Time and Skill Checks

Using a skill might take a round, take no time or take several rounds or even longer. Most skill uses are standard actions, move actions or full-round actions (see Chapter 7: Playing the Game). Types of actions define how long activities take to perform within the framework of a combat round (six seconds) and how movement is treated with respect to the activity.

Some skill checks are instant and represent reactions to an event, or are included as part of an action. These skill checks are not actions. Other skill checks represent *part* of movement.

Checks Without Rolls

A skill check represents an attempt to accomplish some goal, usually while under some sort of time pressure or distraction. Sometimes, though, a character can use a skill under more favorable conditions and eliminate the luck factor.

Taking 10: When you are not being threatened or distracted, you may choose to take 10. Instead of rolling 1d20 for the skill check, calculate your result as if you had rolled a 10. For many routine tasks, taking 10 makes them automatically successful. Distractions or threats (such as combat) make it impossible for a character to take 10. In most cases, taking 10 is purely a safety measure — you know (or expect) that an average roll will succeed but fear that a poor roll might fail, so you elect to settle for the average roll (a 10). Taking 10 is especially useful in situations in which a particularly high roll wouldn't help.

Taking 20: When you have plenty of time (generally two minutes for a skill that you normally check in one round, one full-round action or one standard action), you are faced with no threats or distractions and the skill being attempted carries no penalties for failure, you can take 20. In other words, eventually you will get a 20 on 1d20 if you roll enough times. Instead of rolling 1d20 for the skill check, just calculate your result as if you had rolled a 20.

Taking 20 means you are trying until you get it right, and it assumes that you fail many times before succeeding. Taking 20 takes 20 times as long as making a single check would take.

Since taking 20 assumes that you will fail many times before succeeding, if you did attempt to take 20 on a skill that carries penalties for failure, you would automatically incur those penalties before you could complete the task. Common "take 20" skills include Escape Artist, Open Lock and Search.

Ability Checks: The normal take 10 and take 20 rules apply for ability checks.

Combining Skill Attempts

When more than one character tries the same skill at the same time and for the same purpose, their efforts may overlap.

Individual Events

Often, several characters attempt some action, and each succeeds or fails independently. The result of one character's Climb check does not influence the results of another character's Climb check.

Aid Another

You can help another character achieve success on her skill check by making the same kind of skill check in a cooperative effort. If you roll a 10 or higher on your check, the character you are helping gets a +2 bonus on her check, per the rule for favorable conditions. (You can't take 10 on a skill check to aid another.) In many cases, a character's help won't be beneficial, or only a limited number of characters can help at once.

In cases where the skill restricts who can achieve certain results, you can't aid another to grant a bonus to a task that you couldn't achieve alone.

Skill Synergy

It's possible for you to have two skills that work well together. In general, having five or more ranks in one skill gives you a +2 synergy bonus on skill checks with each of its synergistic skills, as noted in the skill description. In some cases, this bonus applies only to specific uses of the skill in question, and not to all checks.

Synergy bonuses appear on the table below.

Ability Checks

Sometimes a character tries to do something to which no specific skill really applies. In these cases, you make an ability check. An ability check is a roll of 1d20 plus the appropriate ability modifier. Essentially, you're making an untrained skill check.

In some cases, an action is a straight test of one's ability with no luck involved. Just as you wouldn't make a height check to see who is taller, you don't make a Strength check to see who is stronger. In an arm wrestling contest, for example, the stronger character simply wins.

Skill Descriptions

This section describes each skill, including common uses and typical modifiers. Characters can sometimes use skills for purposes other than those noted here.

Skill descriptions appear in the following format.

Skill Name

The skill name line includes (in addition to the name of the skill) the following information.

Key Ability: The abbreviation of the ability whose modifier applies to the skill check. *Exception:* Speak Language has "None" as its key ability because this skill does not require a check.

Trained Only: If this notation is included in the skill name line, you must have at least one rank in the skill to use it. If this entry is omitted, you can use the skill untrained (with a rank of 0). If any special notes apply to trained or untrained use, they are covered in the Untrained section (see below).

Armor Check Penalty: If this notation is included in the skill name line, an armor check penalty applies (when appropriate) to checks using this skill. If this entry is absent, an armor check penalty does not apply.

Focus: Following the skill name line is the focus or foci in which the skill appear.

After this are a few other types of information:

Check: What a character ("you" in the skill description) can do with a successful skill check and the check's DC.

Action: The type of action using the skill requires, or the amount of time required for a check.

Try Again: Any conditions that apply to successive attempts to use the skill successfully. If the skill doesn't allow

TABLE 3–3: SKILL SYNERGY

5 Ranks in . . .	Provides a +2 Synergy Bonus on Checks with this Skill:
Bluff	Diplomacy; Intimidate; Sleight of Hand; Disguise, when you know you're observed
Computer Use	Research, when searching computer records
Craft	Appraise, with similar items
Craft (electronic, mechanical)	Repair, with electronic or mechanical devices
Escape Artist	Use Rope, to bind someone
Handle Animal	Ride
Jump	Tumble
Knowledge	Specific use of a skill (GM's judgment)
Knowledge (occult)	Spellcraft
Search	Survival, to find or follow tracks
Sense Motive	Diplomacy
Tumble	Balance; Jump
Use Rope	Climb, with ropes; Escape Artist, with ropes

you to attempt the same task more than once, or if failure carries an inherent penalty (as with the Climb skill), you can't take 20. If this paragraph is omitted, the skill can be retried without any inherent penalty, other than the additional time required.

Special: Any extra facts that apply to the skill, such as special effects deriving from its use.

Synergy: Some skills grant a bonus to the use of one or more other skills because of a synergistic effect. This entry, when present, indicates what bonuses this skill may grant or receive because of such synergies. See Table 3–3, above, for a complete list of bonuses granted by synergy between skills.

Untrained: This entry indicates what a character without at least one rank in the skill can do with it. If this entry doesn't appear, it means that the skill functions normally for untrained characters (if it can be used untrained) or that an untrained character can't attempt checks with this skill (for skills that are designated as "Trained Only").

TABLE 3–4: SKILLS

Skill	Focus	Key Ability
Appraise	Intellect	Int
Balance[a]	Might, Stealth	Dex
Bluff	Spirit	Cha
Climb[a]	Might	Str
Computer Use	Intellect	Int
Concentration	Intellect	Con
Craft*	Intellect	Int
Demolitions[t]	Might, Stealth	Int
Diplomacy	Spirit	Cha
Disable Device[t]	Stealth	Int
Disguise	Spirit	Cha
Drive	Intellect	Dex
Escape Artist[a]	Might, Stealth	Dex
Forgery	Stealth	Int
Gather Information	Spirit	Cha
Handle Animal[t]	Spirit	Cha
Heal	Intellect, Spirit	Wis
Hide[a]	Stealth	Dex
Intimidate	Spirit	Cha
Jump[a]	Might	Str
Knowledge	Intellect	Int
Listen	Intellect, Spirit	Wis
Move Silently[a]	Stealth	Dex
Open Lock[t]	Stealth	Dex
Navigate	Might, Spirit	Int
Perform	Spirit	Cha
Pilot[t]	Might, Intellect	Dex
Profession[t]	Spirit	Wis
Repair[t]	Might, Intellect	Int
Research	Intellect	Int
Ride	Spirit	Dex
Search	Intellect, Spirit	Int
Sense Motive	Intellect, Spirit	Wis
Sleight of Hand[a, t]	Spirit, Stealth	Dex
Speak Language	Intellect	—
Spellcraft[t]	Intellect, Spirit	Int
Spot	Intellect, Spirit	Wis
Survival	Spirit	Wis
Swim[a]	Might	Str
Tumble[a, t]	Might, Stealth	Dex
Use Rope	Might, Stealth	Dex

[a] Your armor check penalty applies to checks with this skill.
[t] You must be trained in this skill — must possess at least one rank in it — to use it effectively.
* The Craft skill varies on whether or not you can use it untrained.

Appraise (Int)

Intellect.

Check: You can appraise common or well-known objects with a DC 12 Appraise check. Failure means that you estimate the value at 50% to 150% (2d6+3 times 10%) of its actual value.

Appraising a rare or exotic item requires a successful check against DC 15, 20 or higher. If the check is successful, you estimate the value correctly; failure means you cannot estimate the item's value.

A magnifying glass gives you a +2 circumstance bonus on Appraise checks involving any item that is small or highly detailed, such as a gem. A jeweler's scale gives you a +2 circumstance bonus on Appraise checks involving any items that are valued by weight, including anything made of precious metals.

These bonuses stack.

Action: Appraising an item takes one minute (10 consecutive full-round actions).

Try Again: No. You cannot try again on the same object, regardless of success.

Synergy: If you have five ranks in any Craft skill, you gain a +2 bonus on Appraise checks related to items made with that Craft skill.

Untrained: For common items, failure on an untrained check means no estimate. For rare items, success means an estimate of 50% to 150% (2d6+3 times 10%).

Balance (Dex; armor check penalty)

Might, Stealth.

Check: You can walk on a precarious surface. A successful check lets you move at half your speed along the surface for one round. A failure by 4 or less means you can't move for one round. A failure by 5 or more means you fall. The difficulty varies with the surface, as shown on the chart on the next page.

Being Attacked while Balancing: You are considered flat-footed while balancing, since you can't move to avoid a blow, and thus you lose your Dexterity bonus to Defense (if any). If you have five or more ranks in Balance, you aren't considered flat-footed while balancing. If you take damage while balancing, you must make another Balance check against the same DC to remain standing.

Accelerated Movement: You can try to walk across a precarious surface more quickly than normal. If you accept a –5 penalty, you can move your full speed as a move action. (Moving twice your speed in a round requires two Balance checks, one for each move action used.) You may also accept this penalty in order to charge across a precarious surface; charging requires one Balance check for each multiple of your speed (or fraction thereof) that you charge.

Action: None. A Balance check doesn't require an action; this check is made as part of another action or as a reaction to a situation.

Narrow Surface	Balance DC*	Difficult Surface	Balance DC*
7–12 inches wide	10	Uneven flagstone	10†
2–6 inches wide	15	Concrete	10†
Less than 2 inches wide	20	Sloped or angled floor	10†

* Add modifiers from Narrow Surface Modifiers, below, as appropriate.
† Only if running or charging. Failure by 4 or less means you can't run or charge, but may otherwise act normally.

NARROW SURFACE MODIFIERS

Surface	DC Modifier*
Lightly obstructed	+2
Severely obstructed	+5
Lightly slippery	+2
Severely slippery	+5
Sloped or angled	+2

* Add the appropriate modifier to the Balance DC of a narrow surface. These modifiers stack.

Synergy: If you have five or more ranks in Tumble, you get a +2 bonus on Balance checks.

Bluff (Cha)

Spirit.

Check: A Bluff check is opposed by the target's Sense Motive check. See the accompanying table for examples of different kinds of bluffs and the modifier to the target's Sense Motive check for each one.

Favorable and unfavorable circumstances weigh heavily on the outcome of a bluff. Two circumstances can weigh against you: the bluff is hard to believe, or the action that the target is asked to take goes against his self-interest, nature, personality, orders or the like. If it's important, you can distinguish between a bluff that fails because the target doesn't believe it and one that fails because it just asks too much of the target. For instance, if the target gets a +10 bonus on its Sense Motive check because the bluff demands something risky, and the Sense Motive check succeeds by 10 or less, then the target didn't so much see through the bluff as prove reluctant to go along with it. If the target succeeds by 11 or more, he sees through the bluff.

A successful Bluff check indicates that the target reacts as you wish, at least for a short time (usually one round or less) or believes something that you want him to believe.

A bluff requires interaction between you and the target. Creatures unaware of you cannot be bluffed.

Feinting in Combat: You can also use Bluff to mislead an opponent in melee combat (so that he can't dodge your next attack effectively). To feint, make a Bluff check opposed by your target's Sense Motive check, but in this case, the target adds his base attack bonus to the roll along with any other applicable modifiers.

If your Bluff check result exceeds this special Sense Motive check result, your target is denied his Dexterity bonus to Defense (if any) for the next melee attack you make against him as long as that attack is on or before your next turn.

Feinting in this way against a strange creature (something that isn't humanoid, for example) is difficult because it's harder to read its body language; you take a –4 penalty on your Bluff check. Against a creature of animal Intelligence (1 or 2) it's even harder; you take a –8 penalty. Against a non-intelligent creature, it's impossible.

Feinting in combat does not provoke attacks of opportunity.

Creating a Diversion to Hide: You can use the Bluff skill to help you hide. A successful Bluff check gives you the momentary diversion you need to attempt a Hide check while people are aware of you. This usage does not provoke an attack of opportunity.

Delivering a Secret Message: You can use Bluff to get a message across to another character without others understanding it. The DC is 15 for simple messages, or 20 for complex messages,

BLUFF EXAMPLES

Example Circumstances	Sense Motive Modifier
The target wants to believe you. ("Your brother died a brave man.")	–5
The bluff is believable and doesn't affect the target much. ("Just looking for a book, Ma'am.")	+0
The bluff is a little hard to believe or puts the target at some risk. ("Hey, you can believe me. I'm a government agent. Well, a secretary, really, but I still hear things.")	+5
The bluff is hard to believe or puts the target at significant risk. ("Go take a break, dude; I'll take over at the console for a while. It's okay, I was hired yesterday.")	+10
The bluff is way out there, almost too incredible to consider. ("I have a note from the president demanding that you let me through here. Yes, I know it's scrawled on a cocktail napkin. And he didn't have time to sign it. But — the president!")	+20

especially those that rely on getting across new information. Failure by 4 or less means you can't get the message across. Failure by 5 or more means that some false information has been implied or inferred. Anyone listening to the exchange can make a Sense Motive check opposed by the Bluff check you made to transmit in order to intercept your message (see "Sense Motive," below).

Action: Varies. A Bluff check made as part of general interaction always takes at least one round (and is at least a full-round action), but it can take much longer if you try something elaborate. A Bluff check made to feint in combat or create a diversion to hide is a standard action. A Bluff check made to deliver a secret message doesn't take an action; it is part of normal communication.

Try Again: Varies. Generally, a failed Bluff check in social interaction makes the target too suspicious for you to try again in the same circumstances, but you may retry freely on Bluff checks made to feint in combat. Retries are also allowed when you are trying to send a message, but you may attempt such a retry only once per round.

Each retry carries the same chance of miscommunication.

Synergy: If you have five or more ranks in Bluff, you get a +2 bonus on Diplomacy, Intimidate and Sleight of Hand checks, as well as on Disguise checks made when you know you're being observed and you try to act in character.

Climb
(Str; armor check penalty)

Might.

Check: With a successful Climb check, you can advance up, down or across a slope, a wall, or some other steep incline (or even a ceiling with handholds) at one-quarter your normal speed. A slope is any incline at an angle measuring less than 60 degrees; a wall is any incline at an angle measuring 60 degrees or more. The ruins of Minneapolis, and other cities near the Conflagration, are full of broken rubble and walls that fall into these categories.

A Climb check that fails by 4 or less means that you make no progress, and one that fails by 5 or more means that you fall from whatever height you have already attained.

A climbing toolkit gives you a +2 circumstance bonus on Climb checks.

The DC of the check depends on the conditions of the climb. Compare the task with those on the following table to determine an appropriate DC.

You need both hands free to climb, but you may cling to a wall with one hand while you cast a spell, fire a handgun or take some other action that requires only one hand. While climbing, you can't move to avoid a blow, so you lose your Dexterity bonus to Defense (if any).

Any time you take damage while climbing, make a Climb check against the DC of the slope or wall. Failure means you fall from your current height and sustain the appropriate falling damage.

Accelerated Climbing: You try to climb more quickly than normal. By accepting a –5 penalty, you can move half your speed (instead of one-quarter your speed).

Making Your Own Handholds and Footholds: You can make your own handholds and footholds by pounding pitons into a wall. Doing so takes one minute per piton, and one piton is needed per three feet of distance. As with any surface that offers handholds and footholds, a wall with pitons in it has a DC of 15. In the same way, a climber with an ice axe or similar implement can cut handholds in an ice wall.

Catching Yourself When Falling: It's practically impossible to catch yourself on a wall while falling. Make a Climb check (DC = wall's DC + 20) to do so. It's much easier to catch yourself on a slope (DC = slope's DC + 10).

Catching a Falling Character While Climbing: If someone climbing above you or adjacent to you falls, you can attempt to catch the falling character if he or she is within your reach.

Climb DC	Example Surface or Activity
0	A slope too steep to walk up, a pile of rubble or a knotted rope with a wall to brace against.
5	A rope with a wall to brace against or a knotted rope.
10	A surface with ledges to hold on to and stand on, such as a very rough wall or a ship's rigging.
15	Any surface with adequate handholds and footholds (natural or artificial), such as a very rough natural rock surface or a tree, or an unknotted rope or pulling yourself up when dangling by your hands.
20	An uneven surface with just a few narrow handholds and footholds, such as a coarse masonry wall or a sheer cliff face with a few crevices and small toeholds.
25	A rough surface, such as a natural rock wall or a brick wall.
25	An overhang or ceiling with handholds but no footholds.
—	A perfectly smooth, flat, vertical surface cannot be climbed.

Climb DC Modifier*	Example Surface or Activity
–10	Climbing a chimney (artificial or natural) or other location where you can brace against two opposite walls (reduces DC by 10).
–5	Climbing a corner where you can brace against perpendicular walls (reduces DC by 5).
+5	Surface is slippery (increases DC by 5).

*These modifiers are cumulative; use any that apply.

Doing so requires a successful melee touch attack against the falling character (though he or she can voluntarily forego any Dexterity and class bonus to Defense if desired). If you hit, you must immediately attempt a Climb check (DC = wall's DC + 10). Success indicates that you catch the falling character, but his or her total weight, including equipment, cannot exceed your heavy load limit or you automatically fall. If you fail your Climb check by 4 or less, you fail to stop the character's fall but don't lose your grip on the wall. If you fail by 5 or more, you fail to stop the character's fall and fall as well.

Action: Climbing is part of movement, so it's generally part of a move action (and may be combined with other types of movement in a move action). Each move action that includes any climbing requires a separate Climb check. Catching yourself or another falling character doesn't take an action.

Special: You can use a rope to haul a character upward (or lower a character) through sheer strength. You can lift double your maximum load in this manner.

A creature with a climb speed has a +8 racial bonus on all Climb checks. The creature must make a Climb check to climb any wall or slope with a DC higher than 0, but the creature always can choose to take 10, even if rushed or threatened while climbing. If a creature with a climb speed chooses an accelerated climb (see above), it moves at double its climb speed (or at its land speed, whichever is slower) and makes a single Climb check at a –5 penalty. Such a creature retains its Dexterity bonus to Defense (if any) while climbing, and opponents get no special bonus to their attacks against the creature. It cannot, however, use the run action while climbing.

Synergy: If you have five or more ranks in Use Rope, you get a +2 bonus on Climb checks made to climb a rope, a knotted rope or a rope-and-wall combination.

Computer Use (Int)

Intellect.

Check: Most normal computer operations don't require a Computer Use check (though you might have to make a Research check; see "Research," below). However, searching an unfamiliar network for a particular file, writing computer programs, altering existing programs to perform differently (better or worse) and breaking through computer security are all relatively difficult and require skill checks.

Find File: You can use this skill for finding files or data on an unfamiliar system. The size of the site on which you search determines the check's DC and the time required.

Size of Site	DC	Time
Personal computer	10	1 round
Small office network	15	2 rounds
Large office network	20	1 minute
Massive corporate network	25	10 minutes

Finding public information on the Internet does not fall under this category; usually, such a task requires a Research check. This application of the Computer Use skill only pertains to finding files on private systems with which you are unfamiliar.

Defeat Computer Security: This application of Computer Use can't be used untrained. The quality of the security program installed to defend the system determines the DC. If the check fails by 5 or more, the security system immediately alerts its administrator of the unauthorized entry. An alerted administrator may attempt to identify you or cut off your access to the system.

Sometimes, when accessing a difficult site, you must defeat security at more than one stage of the operation. If you beat the DC by 10 or more when attempting to defeat computer security, you automatically succeed at all subsequent security checks at that site until the end of your session (see the "Computer Hacking" sidebar).

Level of Security	DC
Minimum	20
Average	25
Exceptional	35
Maximum	40

Degrade Programming: You can destroy or alter applications on a computer to make use of that computer harder or impossible. The DC for the attempt depends on what you try to do.

- Crashing a computer simply shuts it down. Its user can restart it without making a skill check (though restarting takes one minute).
- Destroying programming makes the computer unusable until the programming is repaired.
- Damaging programming imposes a –4 penalty on all Computer Use checks made with the computer. (Sometimes this is preferable to destroying the programming, since the user might not know that anything is wrong, and won't simply decide to use a different computer.)

You can degrade the programming of multiple computers at a single site; doing so adds +2 to the DC for each additional computer.

Scope of Alteration	DC	Time
Crash computer	10	1 minute
Destroy programming	15	10 minutes
Damage programming	20	10 minutes

Fixing the degraded programming requires one hour and a Computer Use check against a DC equal to the DC for degrading it +5.

Write Program: You can create a program to help with a specific task. Doing so grants you a +2 circumstance bonus on the task.

A specific task, in this case, is one type of operation with one target.

The DC to write a program is 20; the time required is one hour.

Operate Remote Device: Many devices are computer-operated via remote links. If you have access to the computer that controls such systems, you can either shut them off or change

Computer Hacking

Breaking into a secure computer or network is often called hacking.

When you hack, you attempt to invade a site. A site is a virtual location containing files, data, or applications. A site can be as small as a single computer, or as large as a corporate network connecting computers and data archives all over the world — the important thing is that access to the site connects the user to everything within it. Some sites can be accessed via the Internet; others are not connected to any outside network, and only a user who physically accesses a computer connected to the site can tap into it.

Every site is overseen by a system administrator — the person in charge of the site, and who maintains its security. Often, the system administrator is the only person with access to all of a site's functions and data. A site can have more than one system administrator; large sites have a system administrator on duty at all times. You are the system administrator of your personal computer.

When you hack into a site, the visit is called a session. Once you stop accessing the site, the session is over. You can go back to the site in the future; when you do, it's a new session.

Several steps are required to hack into a site:

Covering Tracks: This step is optional. By making a DC 20 Computer Use check, you can alter your identifying information. Doing so imposes a –5 penalty on any attempt made to identify you if your activity is detected.

Access the Site: Two ways exist to do this: physically or over the Internet.

Physical Access: You gain physical access to the computer, or a computer connected to the site. If the site you hack is not connected to the Internet, this is probably the only way you can access the site. A variety of skill checks may be required, depending on the method used to gain access.

Internet Access: Reaching a site over the Net requires two Computer Use checks. The first check (DC 10) locates the site on the Net. The second is a check to defeat computer security (see "Computer Use"). Once you succeed at both checks, you access the site.

Locate What You're Looking For: To find the data (or application, or remote device) you want, make a Computer Use check. See *Find File* under the skill description.

Defeat File Security: Many networks have additional file security. If that's the case, you must make another check to defeat computer security.

Do Your Stuff: Finally, you can actually do what you came to do. If you just want to look at records, no additional check is needed. (You can also download data, although that often takes several rounds — or even several minutes, for especially large amounts of information — to complete.) Altering or deleting records sometimes requires yet another check to defeat computer security. Other operations can be carried out according to the Computer Use skill description.

Defend Security

If you are the system administrator for a site (which may be as simple as being the owner of a laptop), you can defend the site against intruders. If the site alerts you to an intruder, you can attempt to cut off the intruder's access (end the intruder's session), or even to identify the intruder.

To cut off access, make an opposed Computer Use check against the intruder. If you succeed, the intruder's session ends. The intruder might be able to defeat your security and access your site again, but the intruder must start the hacking process all over. Attempting to cut off access takes a full round.

One surefire way to prevent further access is to simply shut down the site. With a single computer, that's often no big deal — but on a large site with many computers (or computers controlling functions that can't be interrupted), doing so may be time-consuming or even impossible.

To *identify* the intruder, make an opposed Computer Use check against the intruder. If you succeed, you learn the site from which the intruder operates (if it's a single computer, you learn the name of the computer's owner). Identifying the intruder requires one minute and is a separate check from cutting off access. This check can be made only if the intruder is accessing your site for the entire length of the check — if the intruder's session ends before you finish the check, you fail.

Type of Operation	DC	Time
Shut down passive remote (including cameras and door locks)	20	1 round per remote
Shut down active remote (including motion detectors and alarms)	25	1 round per remote
Reset parameters	30	1 minute per remote
Change passcodes	25	1 minute
Hide evidence of alteration	+10	1 minute
Minimum security	–5	—
Exceptional security	+10	—
Maximum security	+15	—

their operating parameters. The DC depends on the nature of the operation. If you fail the check by 5 or more, the system immediately alerts its administrator of the unauthorized use of the equipment. An alerted administrator may attempt to identify you or cut off your access to the system.

Action: Computer Use requires at least a full-round action. The GM may determine that some tasks require several rounds, a few minutes or longer, as described above.

Try Again: Usually; depends on the specific usage. You can take 20 in some cases, but not in those that involve a penalty for failure. (You cannot take 20 to defeat computer security or defend security.)

Concentration (Con)

Intellect.

Check: You must make a Concentration check whenever you might potentially be distracted (by taking damage, harsh weather and so on) while engaged in some action that requires your full attention — and the World of Darkness is replete with dangerous distractions. Such actions include casting a spell, concentrating on an active spell, using a supernatural ability (such as a Discipline or Gift) or using a skill that would provoke an attack of opportunity. In general, if an action wouldn't normally provoke an attack of opportunity, you need not make a Concentration check to avoid being distracted.

If the Concentration check succeeds, you may continue with the action as normal. If the check fails, the action automatically fails and is wasted. If you were in the process of casting a spell, the spell fails, but you do not lose components. If you were concentrating on an active spell, the spell ends as if you had ceased concentrating on it. If you were using a supernatural ability, the ability fails (and you lose any Anima, Vitae or Essence you spent to activate it). A skill use also fails, and in some cases, a failed skill check may have other ramifications as well. If you were using a spell-like ability, that use of the ability is lost.

The table below summarizes various types of distractions that cause you to make a Concentration check. If the distraction occurs while you are trying to cast a spell, you must add a number to the Concentration DC; the number depends on the spell's component cost, as shown on the chart below. If more than one type of distraction is present, make a check for each one; any failed Concentration check indicates that the task is not completed.

Note that you cannot concentrate on more than one action at a time. If you take an action that requires concentration, you cannot take another action that also requires concentration — unless you break your concentration on the first action, of course.

Action: None. Making a Concentration check doesn't take an action; it is either a free action (when attempted reactively) or part of another action (when attempted actively).

Try Again: Yes, though a success doesn't cancel the effect of a previous failure, such as the disruption of a spell you were concentrating on.

Distraction	Concentration DC
Casting on the defensive.	Opponent's base attack bonus (or 10, whichever is higher) + a value dependent on the spell's component cost, as listed below
Damaged during the action.*	10 + damage dealt
Taking continuous damage during the action.†	10 + half of continuous damage last dealt
Vigorous motion (bouncy vehicle ride, small boat in rough water, below decks in a storm-tossed ship, riding a horse).	10
Violent motion (very rough vehicle ride, small boat in rapids, on deck of storm-tossed ship, galloping horse).	15
Extraordinarily violent motion (earthquake).	20
Entangled in net or snare.	15
Grappling or pinned.	20
Weather is a high wind carrying blinding rain or sleet.	5
Weather is wind-driven hail, dust or debris.	10

Spell Component Cost	DC Modifier
0–5	+0
6–10	+1
11–15	+2
16–20	+3
Etc.	Etc.

* Such as an activity that requires more than a single full-round action. Also from an attack of opportunity or readied attack made in response to you taking the action (for activities requiring no more than a full-round action).

† Such as from catching on fire.

Special: As indicated on the table, you can use Concentration to cast a spell, use a supernatural ability or use a skill defensively, so as to avoid attacks of opportunity altogether. This use doesn't apply to other actions that might provoke attacks of opportunity.

The DC of the check is 10 or the attacker's base attack bonus, whichever is higher (plus the number indicated by the spell's component cost, if you're casting a spell or using a spell-like ability defensively). If the Concentration check succeeds, you may attempt the action normally without provoking any attacks of opportunity. A successful Concentration check still doesn't allow you to take 10 on another check if you are in a stressful situation; you must make the check normally. If the Concentration check fails, the related action also automatically fails (with any appropriate ramifications), and the action is wasted, just as if your concentration had been disrupted by a distraction.

Craft (Int)

Intellect.

This skill encompasses several categories, each of them treated as a separate skill: Craft (Chemical), Craft (Electronic), Craft (Mechanical), Craft (Pharmaceutical), Craft (Structural), Craft (Visual Arts) and Craft (Writing).

Craft skills are specifically focused on creating objects. To use a Craft skill effectively, you must have a toolkit or some other set of basic tools.

To use Craft, first decide what you are trying to make and consult the category descriptions below. First you must acquire the raw materials, which can be as easy as taking a trip to the store or rummaging in the basement or as difficult as chasing a trail through the black market (GM's discretion). After you have the materials, make a Craft check against the given DC for the object in question. If you fail the check, you do not make the object, and the raw materials are wasted (unless otherwise noted).

Generally, you can take 10 when using a Craft skill to construct an object, but can't take 20 (since doing so represents multiple attempts, and you use up the raw materials after the first attempt). The exception is Craft (Writing); you can take 20 because you do not use up any raw materials.

Craft (Chemical) (Int, trained only)

Check: This skill allows you to mix chemicals to create acids, bases, explosives and poisonous substances.

Acids and Bases: Acids are corrosive substances. Bases neutralize acids but do not deal damage. A base of a certain type counteracts an acid of the same type or a less potent type.

Type of Acid	Acid Craft DC	Base Craft DC	Time
Mild (1d6/1d10)*	15	10	1 min.
Potent (2d6/2d10)	20	15	30 min.
Concentrated (3d6/3d10)	30	20	1 hr.

*The dice rolls in parentheses are typical contact damage/immersion damage caused per round of immersion.

Type of Scratch-Built Explosive	Craft DC	Reflex DC (save for half damage)	Time
Improvised (1d6/5 feet)*	10	10	1 round
Simple (2d6/5 feet)	15	12	10 min.
Moderate (4d6/10 feet)	20	12	1 hr.
Complex (6d6/15 feet)	25	15	3 hr.
Powerful (8d6/20 feet)	30	15	12 hr.
Devastating (10d6/25 feet)	35	18	24 hr.

*The figures in parentheses are typical damage/burst radius for each type of explosive.

Poisonous Substances

You can use the Craft (Chemical) skill to create poisons. You can also buy them, either via standard channels or on the black market. You generally acquire a poison in a bottle of four doses or a high-pressure cylinder of gas, which holds enough to fill a 10-foot-radius area. Remember, though, that vampires, werewolves and demons are immune to normal poison, so even the most virulent toxin is useless against these creatures.

Solid poisons are usually ingested. Liquid poisons are most effective when injected directly into the bloodstream. Gaseous poisons must be inhaled to be effective. The table below summarizes the characteristics of various poisons.

Save DC: The Difficulty Class of the Fortitude save to negate the effects of the poison.

Initial Damage: The damage a character takes immediately upon failing his Fortitude save.

Secondary Damage: The damage a character takes after one minute of exposure to the poison if he fails a second saving throw. Ability score damage is temporary, unless marked with an asterisk, in which case the damage is permanent ability drain. Unconsciousness lasts for 1d3 hours, and paralysis lasts 2d6 minutes.

Restriction: This column is mainly for the GM's information, though players may find it useful as well. It indicates whether the poison is restricted to those with a specific license, which you may or may not have (denoted by "Lic"), or is flat-out illegal, except possibly for military personnel (denoted by "Ill").

Craft DC: The DC of the Craft (chemical) check to create a quantity of the poison.

Time: The amount of time required for the Craft check.

If the Craft check succeeds, the final product is a synthesized solid or liquid poison stored in a bottle (containing four doses) or a gas stored in a pressurized cylinder. When released, the gas is sufficient to fill a 10-foot-radius area and takes one round to fill the area.

TABLE 3–5: POISONS

Poison	Type	Save DC	Initial Damage	Secondary Damage	Restriction	Craft DC	Time
Arsenic	Ingested	15	1d4 Str	2d4 Con	Lic	24	4 hr.
Atropine	Injury	13	1d6 Dex	1d6 Str	Lic	14	1 hr.
Belladonna (plant)	Injury	18	1d6 Str	2d6 Str	Lic	n/a	n/a
Blue vitriol	Injury	12	1d2 Con	1d2 Con	Lic	9	1 hr.
Blue-ringed octopus venom	Injury	15	1d4 Con	1d4 Con	Lic	n/a	n/a
Chloral hydrate	Ingested	18	1d6 Dex	Unconsciousness 1d3 hours	Lic	28	8 hr.
Chloroform*	Inhaled	17	Unconsciousness 1d3 hours	—	Lic	24	4 hr.
Curare (plant)	Injury	18	2d4 Dex	2d4 Wis	Lic	n/a	n/a
Cyanide	Injury	16	1d6 Con	2d6 Con	III	31	15 hr.
Cyanogen	Inhaled	19	1d4 Dex	2d4 Con	III	28	8 hr.
DDT	Inhaled	17	1d2 Str	1d4 Str	Lic	20	4 hr.
Knockout gas	Inhaled	18	1d3 Dex	Unconsciousness 1d3 hours	Lic	26	8 hr.
Lead arsenate (gas)	Inhaled	12	1d2 Str	1d4 Con	Lic	17	2 hr.
Lead arsenate (solid)	Ingested	12	1d2 Con	1d4 Con	Lic	18	2 hr.
Mustard gas	Inhaled	17	1d4 Con	2d4 Con	III	26	8 hr.
Paris green (gas)	Inhaled	14	1d2 Con	1d4 Con	Lic	20	4 hr.
Paris green (solid)	Ingested	14	1d4 Con	1d4 Con	Lic	24	4 hr.
Puffer poison (fish)	Injury	13	1d6 Str	Paralysis 2d6 minutes	Lic	n/a	n/a
Rattlesnake venom	Injury	12	1d6 Con	1d6 Con	Lic	n/a	n/a
Sarin nerve gas	Inhaled	18	1d4 Con	2d4 Con	III	30	15 hr.
Scorpion/tarantula venom	Injury	11	1d2 Str	1d2 Str	Lic	n/a	n/a
Strychnine	Injury	19	1d3 Dex	2d4 Con	Lic	23	4 hr.
Tear gas	Inhaled	15	Nauseated 1d6 rounds	—	Lic	21	4 hr.
VX nerve gas	Inhaled	22	1d6 Con	2d6 Con	III	42	48 hr.

* Chloroform gives off vapor that causes unconsciousness. Applying chloroform to an unwilling subject requires a successful grapple check and pin.

Explosives: Building an explosive from scratch is dangerous. If the Craft (chemical) check fails, the raw materials are wasted. If the check fails by 5 or more, the explosive compound detonates as you are making it, dealing half of its intended damage to you and anyone else inside the burst radius.

If the check succeeds, the final product is a solid material, about the size of a brick. An explosive compound does not include a fuse or detonator. Connecting a fuse or detonator requires a Demolitions check.

Scratch-built explosives deal fire and bludgeoning damage.

Special: If you do not have a chemical toolkit, you take a –4 penalty on checks to craft explosives.

Craft (Electronic) (Int, trained only)

Check: With this skill, you can build electronic equipment from scratch, such as audio and video equipment, timers and listening devices or radios and communication devices.

When building an electronic device from scratch, you describe the kind of device you want to construct; then the GM decides whether the device is simple, moderate, complex or advanced compared to current technology.

Type of Scratch-Built Electronics (Examples)	Craft DC	Time
Simple (timer or detonator)	15	1 hr.
Moderate (radio direction finder, electronic lock)	20	12 hr.
Complex (cell phone)	25	24 hr.
Advanced (computer)	30	60 hr.

Special: If you do not have an electrical toolkit, you take a –4 penalty on Craft (electronics) checks.

Craft (Mechanical) (Int, trained only)

Check: With this skill, you can build mechanical devices from scratch, including engines and engine parts, weapons, armor and other gadgets. When building a mechanical device from scratch, you describe the kind of device you want to construct; then the GM decides

if the device is simple, moderate, complex or advanced compared to current technology.

Type of Scratch-Built Mechanical Device (Examples)	Craft DC	Time
Simple (tripwire trap)	15	1 hr.
Moderate (engine component, light armor)	20	12 hr.
Complex (automobile engine, auto pistol)	25	24 hr.
Advanced (jet engine)	30	60 hr.

Special: If you do not have a mechanical toolkit, you take a –4 penalty on Craft (Mechanical) checks.

Craft (Pharmaceutical) (Int, trained only)

Check: This skill allows you to compound medicinal drugs to aid in recovery from treatable illnesses. A medicinal drug gives a +2 circumstance bonus on Fortitude saves made to resist the effects of a disease.

The Craft (Pharmaceutical) check is based on the severity of the disease to be countered as measured by the DC of the Fortitude save needed to resist it.

Disease Save	Fort DC	Purchase DC	Craft Time
14 or lower	5	15	1 hr.
15–18	10	20	3 hr.
19–22	15	25	6 hr.
23 or higher	20	30	12 hr.

Special: If you do not have a pharmacist toolkit, you take a –4 penalty on Craft (Pharmaceutical) checks.

Craft (Structural) (Int)

Check: With this skill, you can build wooden, concrete or metal structures from scratch, including bookcases, desks, walls, houses and so forth, and it includes such handyman skills as plumbing, house painting, drywall, laying cement and building cabinets.

When building a structure from scratch, you describe the kind of structure you want to construct; then the GM decides if the structure is simple, moderate, complex or advanced in scope and difficulty.

Type of Structure	Craft DC	Time
Simple (bookcase, false wall)	15	12 hr.
Moderate (catapult, shed, house deck)	20	24 hr.
Complex (bunker, domed ceiling)	25	60 hr.
Advanced (house)	30	600 hr.

Special: If you do not have a mechanical toolkit, you take a –4 penalty on Craft (Structural) checks.

Craft (Visual Art) (Int)

Check: This skill allows you to create paintings or drawings, take photographs, use a video camera or in some other way create a work of visual art.

When attempting to create a work of visual art, you simply make a Craft (Visual Art) check, the result of which determines the quality of the work.

Skill Check Result	Effort Achieved
9 or lower	Untalented amateur
10–19	Talented amateur
20–24	Professional
25–30	Expert
31 or higher	Master

Action: Creating a work of visual art requires at least a full-round action, but usually takes an hour, a day or more, depending on the project's scope.

Craft (Writing) (Int)

Check: With this skill, you can create short stories, novels, scripts and screenplays, newspaper articles and columns and similar works of writing.

When creating a work of writing, you simply make a Craft (Writing) check, the result of which determines the quality of the work.

Skill Check Result	Effort Achieved
9 or lower	Untalented amateur
10–19	Talented amateur
20–24	Professional
25–30	Expert
31 or higher	Master

Action: Creating a work of writing requires at least one hour, but usually takes a day, a week or more, depending on the project's scope.

Demolitions (Int; trained only)

Might, Stealth.

Check: Setting a simple explosive to blow up at a certain spot doesn't require a check, but connecting and setting a detonator does. Also, placing an explosive for maximum effect against a structure calls for a check, as does disarming an explosive device.

Set Detonator: Most explosives require a detonator to go off. Connecting a detonator to an explosive requires a DC 10 Demolitions check. Failure means that the explosive fails to go off as planned. Failure by 10 or more means the explosive goes off as you install the detonator.

You can make an explosive difficult to disarm. To do so, choose the disarm DC before making your check to set the detonator (it must be higher than 10). Your DC to set the detonator is equal to the disarm DC.

Place Explosive Device: Carefully placing an explosive against a fixed structure (a stationary, unattended inanimate object) can maximize the damage dealt by exploiting vulnerabilities in the structure's construction.

The GM makes the check (so that you don't know exactly how well you have done). On a result of 15 or higher, the ex-

plosive deals double damage to the structure against which it is placed. On a result of 25 or higher, it deals triple damage to the structure. In all cases, it deals normal damage to all other targets within its burst radius.

Disarm Explosive Device: Disarming an explosive that has been set to go off requires a Demolitions check. The DC is usually 10, unless the person who set the detonator chose a higher disarm DC. If you fail the check, you do not disarm the explosive. If you fail by more than 5, the explosive goes off.

Action: Setting a detonator is usually a full-round action. Placing an explosive device takes one minute or more, depending on the scope of the job.

Try Again?: Yes, though you probably won't know how well you did the first time and won't know whether or not doing so would be a good idea. When disarming an explosive, you can keep trying until it explodes.

You can take 10 when using the Demolitions skill, but can't take 20.

Special: If you do not have a demolitions toolkit, you take a –4 penalty on Demolitions checks.

Making an explosive requires the Craft (Chemical) skill. See that skill description for details.

Diplomacy

Spirit.

Check: Some beings in the World of Darkness are too powerful to take down with bullets and weapons; you may find yourself negotiating the terms of your survival. You can change the attitudes of others (non-player characters) with a successful Diplomacy check; the tables below give the basic DCs.

In negotiations, participants roll opposed Diplomacy checks, and the winner gains the advantage. Opposed checks also resolve situations when two advocates or diplomats plead opposite cases in a hearing before a third party.

Action: Changing others' attitudes with Diplomacy generally takes at least one full minute (10 consecutive full-round actions). In some situations, this time requirement may greatly increase. A rushed Diplomacy check can be made as a full-round action, but you take a –10 penalty on the check.

Try Again: Optional, but not recommended because retries usually do not work. Even if the initial Diplomacy check succeeds, the other character can be persuaded only so far, and a retry may do more harm than good. If the initial check fails, the other character has probably become more firmly committed to his position, and a retry is futile.

Synergy: If you have five or more ranks in Bluff or Sense Motive, you get a +2 bonus on Diplomacy checks.

Disable Device (Int; trained only)

Stealth.

Check: The Disable Device check is made secretly, so that you don't necessarily know whether you've succeeded.

The DC depends on how tricky the device is. Disabling (or rigging or jamming) a fairly simple device has a DC of 10; more intricate and complex devices have higher DCs.

If the check succeeds, you disable the device. If it fails by 4 or less, you have failed but can try again. If you fail by 5 or more, something goes wrong. If the device is a trap, you spring it. If you're attempting some sort of sabotage, you think the device is disabled, but it still works normally.

You also can rig simple devices such as chairs or bicycle wheels to work normally for a while and then fail or fall off some time later (usually after 1d4 rounds or minutes of use).

Device	Time	Disable Device*	Example
Simple	1 round	10	Jam a lock
Tricky	1d4 rounds	15	Sabotage a bicycle wheel
Difficult	2d4 rounds	20	Disarm a standard mechanical trap; reset a trap
Wicked	2d4 rounds	25	Disarm a complex mechanical trap; cleverly sabotage a mechanical device

* If you attempt to leave behind no trace of your tampering, add 5 to the DC.

Disable Security Device: You can also use this skill to disable a security device, such as an electric fence, motion sensor or security camera. You must be able to reach the actual device. If

Initial Attitude	New Attitude (DC to achieve)				
	Hostile	Unfriendly	Indifferent	Friendly	Helpful
Hostile	Less than 20	20	25	35	50
Unfriendly	Less than 5	5	15	25	40
Indifferent	—	Less than 1	1	15	30
Friendly	—	—	Less than 1	1	20
Helpful	—	—	—	Less than 1	1

Attitude	Means	Possible Actions
Hostile	Will take risks to hurt you	Attack, interfere, berate, flee
Unfriendly	Wishes you ill	Mislead, gossip, avoid, watch suspiciously, insult
Indifferent	Doesn't much care	Socially expected interaction
Friendly	Wishes you well	Chat, advise, offer limited help, advocate
Helpful	Will take risks to help you	Protect, back up, heal, aid

the device is monitored, the fact that you attempted to disable it will probably be noticed.

When disabling a monitored device, you can prevent your tampering from being noticed. Doing so requires 10 minutes and an electrical toolkit, and increases the DC of the check by +10.

Device Type (Example)	DC
Cheap (home door alarm)	20
Average (store security camera)	25
High quality (art museum motion detector)	30
High security (bank vault alarm)	35
Ultrahigh security (motion detector at a secret government installation)	40

Action: The amount of time needed to make a Disable Device check depends on the task, as noted above. Disabling a simple device takes one round and is a full-round action. An intricate or complex device requires 1d4 or 2d4 rounds.

Try Again: Varies. You can retry if you have missed the check by 4 or less, though you must be aware that you have failed in order to try again.

Disguise (Cha)

Spirit.

Check: Your Disguise check result determines how good your disguise is, and it is opposed by others' Spot check results. If you don't draw any attention to yourself, others do not get to make Spot checks. If you come to the attention of people who are suspicious (such as a guard who is watching people in a ruined trading post), it can be assumed that such observers are taking 10 on their Spot checks.

You get only one Disguise check per use of the skill, even if several people are making Spot checks against it. The GM makes your Disguise check secretly, so that you can't be sure how good the result is.

The effectiveness of your disguise depends in part on how much you're attempting to change your appearance.

Disguise	Disguise Check Modifier
Minor details only	+5
Disguised as different gender*	–2
Disguised as different skin color*	–2
Disguised as different age category*	–2†

* These modifiers stack; use any that apply.

† Per step of difference between your actual age category and your disguised age category. The categories are young (younger than adulthood), adulthood, middle age, old and venerable.

If you are impersonating a particular individual, those who know what that person looks like get a bonus on their Spot checks according to the table below. Furthermore, they are automatically considered to be suspicious of you, so opposed checks are always called for.

Familiarity	Viewer's Spot Check Bonus
Recognizes on sight	+4
Friends or associates	+6
Close friends	+8

Usually, an individual makes a Spot check to see through your disguise immediately upon meeting you and each hour thereafter. If you casually meet many different people, each for a short time, check once per day or hour, using an average Spot modifier for the group.

Action: Creating a disguise requires 1d3×10 minutes of work.

Try Again: Yes. You may try to redo a failed disguise, but once others know that a disguise was attempted, they'll be more suspicious.

Special: Supernatural abilities that alter your form usually grant you a +10 bonus on Disguise checks. Abilities that allow people to see through illusions do not penetrate a mundane disguise, but they can negate the supernatural component of a supernaturally enhanced one.

Synergy: If you have five or more ranks in Bluff, you get a +2 bonus on Disguise checks when you know that you're being observed and you try to act in character.

Drive (Dex)

Intellect.

Check: Routine tasks, such as ordinary driving, don't require a skill check. Make a check only when some unusual circumstance exists (such as inclement weather or an icy surface), or when you drive during a dramatic situation (you are being chased or attacked, for example, or are trying to reach a destination in a limited amount of time). When driving, you can attempt simple maneuvers or stunts. See Chapter 7: Playing the Game, "Vehicle Movement and Combat," *Driving a Vehicle*, for more information.

Action: A Drive check is a move action.

Try Again: Most driving checks have consequences for failure that make trying again impossible. You can take 10 when driving, but can't take 20.

Escape Artist (Dex; armor check penalty)

Might, Stealth.

Check: The table below gives the DCs to escape various forms of restraints.

Restraint	Escape Artist DC
Ropes	Binder's Use Rope check at +10
Net	20
Tight space	30
Handcuffs	35
Grappler	Grappler's grapple check result

Ropes: Your Escape Artist check is opposed by the binder's Use Rope check. Since it's easier to tie someone

up than to escape from being tied up, the binder gets a +10 bonus on her check.

Handcuffs: The DC for handcuffs is set by their construction.

Tight Space: The DC noted on the table is for getting through a space where your head fits, but your shoulders don't. If the space is long, you may need to make multiple checks. You can't get through a space that your head does not fit through.

Grappler: You can make an Escape Artist check opposed by your enemy's grapple check to get out of a grapple or out of a pinned condition (so that you're only grappling).

Action: Making an Escape Artist check to escape from rope bindings, handcuffs or other restraints (except a grappler) requires one minute of work. Escaping from a grapple or pin is a standard action. Squeezing through a tight space takes at least one minute, maybe longer, depending on how long the space is.

Try Again: Varies. You can make another check after a failed check if you're squeezing your way through a tight space, making multiple checks. If the situation permits, you can make additional checks, or even take 20, as long as you're not being actively opposed.

Synergy: If you have five or more ranks in Escape Artist, you get a +2 bonus on Use Rope checks to bind someone.

If you have five or more ranks in Use Rope, you get a +2 bonus on Escape Artist checks when escaping from rope bonds.

Forgery (Int)

Stealth.

Check: Forgery requires materials appropriate to the document being forged, and some time. To forge a document, you need to have seen a similar document before. The complexity of the document, your degree of familiarity with it and whether you need to reproduce the signature or handwriting of a specific individual, provide modifiers to the Forgery check, as shown below.

Factor	Check Modifier	Time
Document Type		
Simple (typed letter, business card)	+0	10 min.
Moderate (letterhead, business form)	–2	20 min.
Complex (stock certificate, driver's license)	–4	1 hr.
Difficult (passport)	–8	4 hr.
Extreme (military/law enforcement ID)	–16	24 hr.
Familiarity		
Unfamiliar (seen once for less than a minute)	–4	
Fairly familiar (seen for several minutes)	+0	
Quite familiar (on hand, or studied at leisure)	+4	
Forger has produced other documents of same type	+4	
Document includes specific signature	–4	

Some documents require security or authorization codes, whether authentic ones or additional forgeries.

The GM makes your check secretly so you are not sure how good your forgery is.

The Forgery skill is also used to detect someone else's forgery. The result of the original Forgery check

that created the document is opposed by a Forgery check by the person who examines the document to check its authenticity. If the examiner's check result is equal to or higher than the original Forgery check, he determines that the document is fraudulent. The examiner gains bonuses or penalties on his check as given in the table below.

Condition	Examiner's Check Modifier
Type of document unknown to examiner	–4
Type of document somewhat known to examiner	–2
Type of document well known to examiner	+0
Document is put through additional tests*	+4
Examiner only casually reviews the document*	–2

* Cumulative with any of the first three conditions on the table. Apply this modifier along with one of the other three whenever appropriate.

A document that contradicts procedure, orders or previous knowledge, or one that requires the examiner to relinquish a possession or a piece of information, can increase the examiner's suspicion (and thus create favorable circumstances for the examiner's opposed Forgery check). You can take 10 when making a Forgery check, but can't take 20.

Action: Forging a short, simple document takes about one minute (10 rounds). Longer or more complex documents take 1d4 minutes per page or longer.

Try Again: No, since the forger isn't sure of the quality of the original forgery.

Special: To forge documents and detect forgeries, one must be able to read and write the language in question. (The skill is language-dependent.)

If you do not have a forgery toolkit, you take a –4 penalty on Forgery checks.

Gather Information (Cha)

Spirit.

Check: Even though people are frightened and paranoid these days, an evening's time, a few dollars for buying drinks and making friends and a DC 10 Gather Information check get you a general idea of a city's major news items, assuming no obvious reasons exist why the information would be withheld. The higher your check result, the better the information.

If you want to find out about a specific rumor, or a specific item, or obtain a map or do something else along those lines, the DC for the check is 15 to 25, or even higher.

Action: A typical Gather Information check takes 1d4+1 hours.

Try Again: Yes, but it takes time for each check. Furthermore, you may draw attention to yourself if you repeatedly pursue a certain type of information.

Handle Animal (Cha; trained only)

Spirit.

Check: The DC depends on what you are trying to do.

Task	Handle Animal DC
Handle an animal	10
"Push" an animal	25
Teach an animal a trick	15 or 20*
Train an animal for a general purpose	15 or 20*
Rear a wild animal	15 + HD of animal

* See the specific trick or purpose below.

General Purpose	DC	General Purpose	DC
Combat riding	20	Hunting	20
Fighting	20	Performance	15
Guarding	20	Riding	15
Heavy labor	15		

Handle an Animal: This task involves commanding an animal to perform a task or trick that the animal knows. If the animal is wounded or has taken any nonlethal damage or ability score damage, the DC increases by two. If your check succeeds, the animal performs the task or trick on its next action.

"Push" an Animal: To push an animal means to get it to perform a task or trick that the animal doesn't know but is physically capable of performing. This category also covers making an animal perform a forced march or forcing the animal to hustle (see Chapter 7: Playing the Game, "Movement," *Modes of Movement*) for more than one hour between sleep cycles. If the animal is wounded or has taken any nonlethal damage or ability score damage, the DC increases by 2. If your check succeeds, the animal performs the task or trick on its next action.

Teach an Animal a Trick: You can teach an animal a specific trick with one week of work and a successful Handle Animal check against the indicated DC. An animal with an Intelligence score of 1 can learn a maximum of three tricks, while an animal with an Intelligence score of 2 can learn a maximum of six tricks. Possible tricks (and their associated DCs) include, but are not necessarily limited to, the following.

- Attack (DC 20): The animal attacks apparent enemies. You may point to a particular creature that you wish the animal to attack, and it complies. Normally, an animal attacks humans (or creatures that look human) or other animals. Teaching an animal to attack all creatures counts as two tricks.
- Come (DC 15): The animal comes to you, even if it normally would not do so.
- Defend (DC 20): The animal defends you (or is ready to defend you if no threat is present), even without any command being given. Alternatively, you can command the animal to defend a specific other character.
- Down (DC 15): The animal breaks off from combat or otherwise backs down. An animal that doesn't know this trick continues to fight until it must flee (due to injury, fear or the like) or its opponent is defeated.
- Fetch (DC 15): The animal goes and gets something. If you do not point out a specific item, the animal fetches some random object.
- Guard (DC 20): The animal stays in place and prevents others from approaching.
- Heel (DC 15): The animal follows you closely, even to places where it normally wouldn't go.
- Perform (DC 15): The animal performs a variety of simple tricks, such as sitting up, rolling over, roaring or barking and so on.

• Seek (DC 15): The animal moves into an area and looks around for anything that is obviously alive or animate.

• Stay (DC 15): The animal stays in place, waiting for you to return. The animal does not challenge other creatures that come by, though it still defends itself if it needs to.

• Track (DC 20): The animal tracks the scent presented to it. (The animal must have the scent ability.)

• Work (DC 15): The animal pulls or pushes a medium or heavy load.

Train an Animal for a Purpose: Rather than teaching an animal individual tricks, you can simply train it for a general purpose. Essentially, an animal's purpose represents a preselected set of known tricks that fit into a common scheme, such as guarding or heavy labor. The animal must meet all the normal prerequisites for all tricks included in the training package. If the package includes more than three tricks, the animal must have an Intelligence score of 2.

An animal can be trained for only one general purpose, though if the creature is capable of learning additional tricks (above and beyond those included in its general purpose), it may do so. Training an animal for a purpose requires fewer checks than teaching individual tricks, but no less time.

• Combat Riding (DC 20): An animal trained to bear a rider into combat knows the tricks attack, come, defend, down, guard and heel. Training an animal for combat riding takes six weeks. You may also "upgrade" an animal trained for riding to one trained for combat riding by spending three weeks and making a successful DC 20 Handle Animal check. The new general purpose and tricks completely replace the animal's previous purpose and any tricks the animal once knew.

• Fighting (DC 20): An animal trained to engage in combat knows the tricks attack, down and stay. Training an animal for fighting takes three weeks.

• Guarding (DC 20): An animal trained to guard knows the tricks attack, defend, down and guard. Training an animal for guarding takes four weeks.

• Heavy Labor (DC 15): An animal trained for heavy labor knows the tricks come and work. Training an animal for heavy labor takes two weeks.

• Hunting (DC 20): An animal trained for hunting knows the tricks attack, down, fetch, heel, seek and track. Training an animal for hunting takes six weeks.

• Performance (DC 15): An animal trained for performance knows the tricks come, fetch, heel, perform and stay. Training an animal for performance takes five weeks.

• Riding (DC 15): An animal trained to bear a rider knows the tricks come, heel and stay. Training an animal for riding takes three weeks.

Rear a Wild Animal: To rear an animal means to raise a wild creature from infancy so that the animal becomes domesticated. A handler can rear as many as three creatures of the same kind at once.

A successfully domesticated animal can be taught tricks at the same time it's being raised, or it can be taught as a domesticated animal later.

Action: Varies. Handling an animal is a move action, while pushing an animal is a full-round action. For tasks with specific time frames noted above, you must spend half this time (at the rate of three hours per day per animal being handled) working toward completion of the task before you attempt the Handle Animal check. If the check fails, your attempt to teach, rear or train the animal fails, and you need not complete the teaching, rearing or training time. If the check succeeds, you must invest the remainder of the time to complete the teaching, rearing or training. If the time is interrupted or the task is not followed through to completion, the attempt to teach, rear or train the animal automatically fails.

Try Again: Yes, except for rearing an animal.

Special: You can use this skill on a creature that is not an animal and has an Intelligence score of 1 or 2, but the DC of any such check increases by 5. Such creatures have the same limit on tricks known as animals do.

Synergy: If you have five or more ranks in Handle Animal, you get a +2 bonus on Ride checks.

Untrained: If you have no ranks in Handle Animal, you can use a Charisma check to handle and push domestic animals, but you can't teach, rear or train animals.

Heal (Wis)

Intellect, Spirit.

Check: The DC and effect depend on the task you attempt.

Task Heal	DC
First aid	10+ the dying character's number of negative hit points
Long-term care	15
Revive dazed, stunned or unconscious character	15
Treat wound from caltrop	15
Surgery	20
Treat poison	Poison's save DC
Treat disease	Disease's save DC

First Aid: You usually use first aid to save a dying character. If a character has negative hit points and is losing hit points (at the rate of one per round, one per hour or one per day), you can make her stable. A stable character regains no hit points but stops losing them.

Long-Term Care: Providing long-term care means treating a wounded person for a day or more. If your Heal check is successful, the patient recovers hit points or ability score points (lost to ability damage) at twice the normal rate: two hit points per level for a full eight hours of rest in a day, or four hit points per level for each full day of complete rest; two ability score points for a full eight hours of rest in a day, or four ability score points for each full day of complete rest.

You can tend as many as six patients at a time. You need a few items and supplies (bandages, salves and so on) that are easy to come by in civilization. Giving long-term care counts as light activity for the healer. You cannot give long-term care to yourself.

Revive Dazed, Stunned or Unconscious Character: With a first aid kit, you can remove the dazed, stunned or unconscious condition from a character.

A successful check removes the dazed, stunned or unconscious condition from an affected character. You can't revive an unconscious character who is at –1 hit points or lower without first stabilizing the character.

Treat Wound from Caltrop: A creature wounded by stepping on a caltrop moves at one-half normal speed. A successful Heal check removes this movement penalty.

Surgery: With a surgery toolkit, you can conduct field surgery. Doing so carries a –4 penalty. An advanced toolkit reduces the penalty to –2, while a workshop eliminates the penalty (and the surgery is no longer *field* surgery).

Surgery restores 1d6 hit points for every character level of the patient (up to the patient's full normal total of hit points) with a successful skill check. Surgery can be used successfully on a character only once in a 24-hour period.

A character who undergoes surgery is fatigued for 24 hours, minus two hours for every point above the DC the surgeon achieves. The period of fatigue can never be reduced below six hours in this fashion.

Treat Poison: To treat poison means to tend a single character who has been poisoned and who is going to take more damage from the poison (or suffer some other effect). Every time the poisoned character makes a saving throw against the poison, you make a Heal check. The poisoned character uses your check result or his or her saving throw, whichever is higher.

Treat Disease: To treat a disease means to tend a single diseased character. Every time she makes a saving throw against disease effects, you make a Heal check. The diseased character uses your check result or her saving throw, whichever is higher.

Action: Providing first aid, treating a wound, reviving a character or treating poison is a standard action. Treating a disease takes 10 minutes of work. Surgery requires 1d4 hours; if the patient is at negative hit points, add an additional hour for every point below 0 the patient has fallen. Providing long-term care requires eight hours of light activity.

Try Again: Varies. Generally speaking, you can't try a Heal check again without proof of the original check's failure. You can always retry a check to provide first aid, assuming the target of the previous attempt is still alive. You cannot try surgery again.

Special: Long-term care, restoring hit points, treating disease, treating poison or stabilizing a dying character requires a medical toolkit, as does reviving a dazed, stunned or unconscious character. Surgery requires a surgery toolkit. If you do not have the appropriate kit, you take a –4 penalty on the check.

Note that vampires do not benefit from standard medical care.

Hide
(Dex; armor check penalty)

Stealth.

Check: Your Hide check is opposed by the Spot check of anyone who might see you. You can move up to one-half your

normal speed and hide at no penalty. When moving at a speed greater than one-half but less than your normal speed, you take a –5 penalty. It's practically impossible (–20 penalty) to hide while attacking, running or charging.

A creature larger or smaller than Medium takes a size bonus or penalty on Hide checks depending on its size category: Fine +16, Diminutive +12, Tiny +8, Small +4, Large –4, Huge –8, Gargantuan –12, Colossal –16.

You need cover or concealment in order to attempt a Hide check. Paranormal creatures are engaged in a shadow war to destroy or save the world, and the shadows provide ample places to hide. Total cover or total concealment usually (but not always; see "Special," below) obviates the need for a Hide check, since nothing can see you anyway.

If people are observing you, even casually, you can't hide. You can run around a corner or behind cover so that you're out of sight and then hide, but the others then know at least where you went.

If your observers are momentarily distracted (such as by a Bluff check; see below), though, you can attempt to hide. While the others turn their attention from you, you can attempt a Hide check if you can get to a hiding place of some kind. (As a general guideline, the hiding place has to be within one foot per rank you have in Hide.) This check, however, is made at a –10 penalty because you have to move fast.

Sniping: If you've already successfully hidden at least 10 feet from your target, you can make one ranged attack, then immediately hide again. You take a –20 penalty on your Hide check to conceal yourself after the shot.

Creating a Diversion to Hide: You can use Bluff to help you hide. A successful Bluff check can give you the momentary diversion you need to attempt a Hide check while people are aware of you.

Action: Usually none. Normally, you make a Hide check as part of movement, so hiding doesn't take a separate action. However, hiding immediately after a ranged attack (see "Sniping," above) is a move action.

Special: If you are invisible, you gain a +40 bonus on Hide checks if you are immobile, or a +20 bonus on Hide checks if you're moving.

Intimidate (Cha)

Spirit.

Check: You can change another's behavior with a successful check. Your Intimidate check is opposed by the target's modified Hit Dice check (1d20 + Hit Dice + target's Wisdom bonus [if any] + target's modifiers on saves against fear). If you beat your target's check result, you may treat the target as friendly, but only for the purpose of actions taken while the target remains intimidated. (That is, the target retains its normal attitude, but will chat, advise, offer limited help or advocate on your behalf while intimidated. See "Diplomacy," above, for additional details.) The effect lasts as long as the target remains in your presence, and for 1d6x10 minutes afterward. After this time, the target's default attitude toward you shifts to unfriendly (or, if normally unfriendly, to hostile).

If you fail the check by 5 or more, the target provides you with incorrect or useless information, or otherwise frustrates your efforts.

Demoralize Opponent: You can also use Intimidate to weaken an opponent's resolve in combat. To do so, make an Intimidate check opposed by the target's Hit Dice (see above). If you win, the target becomes shaken for one round. A shaken character takes a –2 penalty on attack rolls, ability checks and saving throws. You can intimidate only an opponent that you threaten in melee combat and that can see you.

Action: Varies. Changing another's behavior requires one minute of interaction. Intimidating an opponent in combat is a standard action.

Try Again: Optional, but retries usually do not work. Even if the initial check succeeds, the other character can be intimidated only so far, and a retry doesn't help. If the initial check fails, the other character has probably become more firmly resolved to resist the intimidator, and a retry is futile.

Special: You gain a +4 bonus on your Intimidate check for every size category that you are larger than your target. Conversely, you take a –4 penalty on your Intimidate check for every size category that you are smaller than your target.

A character immune to fear and non-intelligent creatures can't be intimidated.

Synergy: If you have five or more ranks in Bluff, you get a +2 bonus on Intimidate checks.

Jump (Str; armor check penalty)

Might.

Check: The DC and the distance you can cover vary according to the type of jump you are attempting (see below).

Your Jump check is modified by your speed. If your speed is 30 feet, then no modifier based on speed applies to the check. If your speed is less than 30 feet, you take a –6 penalty for every 10 feet of speed less than 30 feet. If your speed is greater than 30 feet, you gain a +4 bonus for every 10 feet beyond 30 feet.

All Jump DCs given here assume that you get a running start, which requires that you move at least 20 feet in a straight line before attempting the jump. If you do not get a running start, the jump's DC doubles.

Distance moved by jumping counts against your normal maximum movement in a round.

If you have ranks in Jump and you succeed on a Jump check, you land on your feet (when appropriate). If you attempt a Jump check untrained, you land prone unless you beat the DC by 5 or more.

Long Jump: A long jump is a horizontal jump, made across a gap such as a chasm or stream. At the midpoint of the jump, you attain a vertical height equal to one-quarter of the horizontal distance. The DC for the jump is equal to the distance jumped (in feet).

If your check succeeds, you land on your feet at the far end. If you fail the check by less than 5, you don't clear the distance, but you can make a DC 15 Reflex save to grab the far edge of the gap. You end your movement grasping the far edge. If that leaves you dangling over a chasm or gap, getting up requires a move action and a DC 15 Climb check.

Long Jump Distance	Jump DC*
5 feet	5
10 feet	10
15 feet	15
20 feet	20
25 feet	25
30 feet	30

* Requires a 20-foot running start. Without a running start, double the DC.

High Jump: A high jump is a vertical leap made to reach a ledge high above or to grasp something overhead. The DC is equal to four times the distance to be cleared.

If you jumped up to grab something, a successful check indicates that you reached the desired height. If you wish to pull yourself up, you can do so with a move action and a DC 15 Climb check. If you fail the Jump check, you do not reach the height, and you land on your feet in the same spot from which you jumped. As with a long jump, the DC is doubled if you do not get a running start of at least 20 feet.

Obviously, the difficulty of reaching a given height varies according to the size of the character or creature. The maximum vertical reach (height the creature can reach without jumping) for an average creature of a given size is shown on the table below. (As a Medium creature, a typical human — or vampire, werewolf, mage, demon or Awakened — can reach eight feet without jumping.)

Quadrupedal creatures don't have the same vertical reach as a bipedal creature; treat quadrupedal creatures as being one size category smaller.

Creature Size	Vertical Reach
Colossal	128 ft.
Gargantuan	64 ft.
Huge	32 ft.
Large	16 ft.
Medium	8 ft.
Small	4 ft.
Tiny	2 ft.
Diminutive	1 ft.
Fine	1/2 ft.

High Jump Distance*	Jump DC†	High Jump Distance*	Jump DC†
1 foot	4	5 feet	20
2 feet	8	6 feet	24
3 feet	12	7 feet	28
4 feet	16	8 feet	32

* Not including vertical reach; see below.

† Requires a 20-foot running start. Without a running start, double the DC.

Hop Up: You can jump up onto an object as tall as your waist, such as a table or pile of rubble, with a DC 10 Jump check. Doing so counts as 10 feet of movement, so if your speed is 30 feet, you could move 20 feet, then hop up onto a counter. You do not need to get a running start to hop up, so the DC is not doubled if you do not get a running start.

Jumping Down: If you intentionally jump from a height, you take less damage than you would if you just fell. The DC to jump down from a height is 15. You do not have to get a running start to jump down, so the DC is not doubled if you do not get a running start.

If you succeed on the check, you take falling damage as if you had dropped 10 fewer feet than you actually did.

Action: None. A Jump check is included in your movement, so it is part of a move action. If you run out of movement mid-jump, your next action (either on this turn or, if necessary, on your next turn) must be a move action to complete the jump.

Special: Effects that increase your movement also increase your jumping distance, since your speed modifies your check.

Synergy: If you have five or more ranks in Tumble, you get a +2 bonus on Jump checks.

If you have five or more ranks in Jump, you get a +2 bonus on Tumble checks.

Knowledge (Int, trained only)

Intellect.

This skill encompasses several categories, each of them treated as a separate skill. These categories are identified and defined below.

The number of Knowledge categories is kept purposely finite. When trying to determine what Knowledge skill a particular question or field of expertise falls under, use a broad interpretation of the existing categories. Do not arbitrarily make up new categories.

Check: Make a Knowledge check to see if you know something.

The DC for answering a question within your field of study is 10 for easy questions, 15 for basic questions and 20 to 30 for tough questions.

The 14 Knowledge categories, and the topics each one encompasses, are as follows.

- *Art:* Fine arts and graphic arts, including art history and artistic techniques. Antiques, modern art, photography and performance art forms such as music and dance, among others.
- *Behavioral Sciences:* Psychology, sociology and criminology.
- *Business:* Business procedures, investment strategies and corporate structures. Bureaucratic procedures and how to navigate them.
- *Civics:* Law, legislation, litigation and legal rights and obligations. Political and government institutions and processes.
- *Current Events:* Recent happenings in the news, sports, politics, entertainment and foreign affairs.
- *Earth and Life Sciences:* Biology, botany, genetics, geology and paleontology. Medicine and forensics.
- *History:* Events, personalities and cultures of the past. Archaeology and antiquities.

Knowledge (Occult)

Knowledge (Occult) covers a lot of ground: occult traditions that have existed for centuries as well as the new supernatural happenings the Iconnu brought to pass.

Most player characters know about the five supernatural creatures types that walk in the cities' shadows: Awakened, demons, mages, vampires and werewolves. Their particular abilities are another matter. Because the Intrusion occurred only a year ago, even vampires are surprised by the specific abilities of other vampires.

A DC 20 Knowledge (Occult) check allows a character to know about and identify a particular supernatural power (cant, gnosis, Discipline or rite). A character gets a +5 bonus on this check if he is a member of the appropriate character type (vampires get a +5 bonus on checks to know about Disciplines, for example). The GM can increase or decrease the DC (generally up to +/– 10) for particularly common (vampires can become extremely strong) or obscure (vampiric devotions) powers.

- *Occult:* Supernatural creatures, the Iconnu, the Intrusion, the Nightmare Wave, supernatural abilities, ancient mysteries, magic traditions, arcane symbols and cryptic phrases.
- *Physical Sciences:* Astronomy, chemistry, mathematics, physics and engineering.
- *Popular Culture:* Popular music and personalities, genre films and books, urban legends, comics, science fiction and gaming, among others.
- *Streetwise:* Street and urban culture, local underworld personalities and events.
- *Tactics:* Techniques and strategies for disposing and maneuvering forces in combat.
- *Technology:* Current developments in cutting-edge devices, as well as the background necessary to identify various technological devices.
- *Theology and Philosophy:* Liberal arts, ethics, philosophical concepts and the study of religious faith, practice and experience.

Action: A Knowledge check can be a reaction, but otherwise requires a full-round action.

Try Again: No. The check represents what you know, and thinking about a topic a second time doesn't let you know something you never knew in the first place.

You can take 10 when making a Knowledge check but can't take 20.

Special: An untrained Knowledge check is simply an Intelligence check. Without actual training, you know only common knowledge about a given subject.

The GM may decide that having five or more ranks in a specific Knowledge skill provides a character with a +2 synergy bonus when making a related skill check.

Listen (Wis)

Intellect, Spirit.

Check: Your Listen check is either made against a DC that reflects how quiet the noise is that you might hear, or your Listen check is opposed by your target's Move Silently check.

Listen DC	Sound
–10	A battle
0	People talking*
5	A person in medium armor walking at a slow pace (10 ft./round) trying not to make any noise.
10	An unarmored person walking at a slow pace (15 ft./round) trying not to make any noise.
15	A first-level Mekhet vampire using Move Silently to sneak past you.
15	People whispering.*
20	A cat stalking.
30	An owl gliding in for a kill.

* If you beat the DC by 10 or more, you can make out what's being said, assuming that you understand the language.

Listen DC Modifier	Condition
+5	Through a door
+15	Through a stone wall
+1	Per 10 feet of distance
+5	Listener distracted

In the case of people trying to be quiet, the DCs given on the table could be replaced by Move Silently checks, in which case the indicated DC would be their average check result.

Action: Varies. Every time you have a chance to hear something in a reactive manner (such as when someone makes a noise or you move into a new area), you can make a Listen check without using an action. Trying to hear something you failed to hear previously is a move action.

Try Again: Yes. You can try to hear something that you failed to hear previously with no penalty.

Special: When several characters are listening to the same thing, a single d20 roll can be used for all the individuals' Listen checks.

A fascinated creature takes a –4 penalty on Listen checks made as reactions.

A sleeping character may make Listen checks at a –10 penalty. A successful check awakens the sleeper.

"Learn the basics, kid. They're going to save your life someday."
—Tyler Stane, demon-hunter

Move Silently (Dex; armor check penalty)

Stealth.

Check: Your Move Silently check is opposed by the Listen check of anyone who might hear you. You can move up to one-half your normal speed at no penalty. When moving at a speed greater than one-half but less than your full speed, you take a –5 penalty. It's practically impossible (–20 penalty) to move silently while running or charging.

Noisy surfaces, such as bogs or undergrowth, are tough to move silently across. When you try to sneak across such a surface, you take a penalty on your Move Silently check as indicated below.

Surface	Check Modifier
Noisy (scree, shallow or deep bog, undergrowth, dense rubble)	–2
Very noisy (dense undergrowth, deep snow)	–5

Action: None. A Move Silently check is included in your movement or other activity, so it is part of another action.

Navigate (Int)

Might, Spirit.

Check: Make a Navigate check when trying to find your way to a distant location without directions or other specific guidance. Generally, you do not need to make a check to find a local street or other common urban site or to follow an accurate map. However, you might make a check to wend your way through a dense forest or a labyrinth of underground storm drains.

For movement over a great distance, make a Navigate check. The DC depends on the length of the trip. If you succeed, you move via the best reasonable course toward your goal. If you fail, you still reaches the goal, but it takes twice as long (you lose time backtracking and correcting your path). If you fail by more than 5, you travel the expected time, but get only halfway to your destination, at which point you become lost.

You may make a second Navigate check (DC 20) to regain your path. If you succeed, you continue on to your destination; the total time for the trip is twice the normal time. If you fail, you lose half a day before you can try again. You keep trying until you succeed, losing half a day for each failure.

Length of Trip	DC
Short (a few hours)	20
Moderate (a day or two)	22
Long (up to a week)	25
Extreme (more than a week)	28

When faced with multiple choices, such as at a branch in a tunnel, you can make a DC 20 Navigate check to intuit the choice that takes you toward a known destination. If unsuccessful, you choose the wrong path, but at the next juncture, with a successful check, you realize your mistake.

You cannot use this function of Navigate to find a path to a site if you have no idea where the site is located. The GM may choose to make the Navigate check for you in secret, so you don't know whether you follow the right or wrong path.

You can make a DC 15 Navigate check to determine your position on Earth without the use of any high-tech equipment by checking the constellations or other natural landmarks. You must have a clear view of the night sky to make this check. Note, though, that in some locations, the sky doesn't look *right*, and you might not be able to determine where you are after all.

Action: A Navigate check is a full-round action.

Try Again: Yes, though you lose time as described above. You can take 10 when making a Navigate check. You can take 20 only when determining your location, not when traveling.

Open Lock (Dex; trained only)

Stealth.

Check: The DC for opening a lock varies from 20 to 40, depending on the quality of the lock, as given on the table below.

Lock	DC	Lock	DC
Simple lock	20	Good lock	30
Average lock	25	Amazing lock	40

Note that you use this skill to open mechanical locks, such as padlocks and combination locks. Electronic locks require the Disable Device skill.

Action: Opening a lock is a full-round action.

Special: Attempting an Open Lock check without a lock-picking toolkit imposes a –4 circumstance penalty on the check, or –2 if you use a tool.

Untrained: You cannot pick locks untrained, but you might force them open.

Perform (Cha)

Spirit.

Similar to Craft, Knowledge and Profession, Perform is actually a number of separate skills.

You can have several Perform skills, each with its own ranks, and each purchased as a separate skill.

Each of the nine categories of the Perform skill includes a variety of methods, instruments or techniques, a small list of which is provided for each category below.

- *Act:* Comedy, drama and mime.
- *Comedy:* Buffoonery, limericks and joke-telling.
- *Dance:* Ballet, waltz and jig.
- *Keyboard instruments:* Harpsichord, piano and synthesizer.
- *Oratory:* Epic, ode and storytelling.
- *Percussion instruments:* Drums, cymbals, xylophone, triangle and tambourine.
- *String instruments:* Fiddle, harp, guitar and violin.
- *Wind instruments:* Flute, bugle, trumpet, tuba, bag pipes and trombone.
- *Sing:* Ballad, chant and melody.

Check: You can impress audiences with your talent and skill.

Perform DC	Performance
10	Amateur performance. The audience may appreciate your performance but isn't impressed.
15	Routine performance. The audience enjoys your performance, but it isn't exceptional.
20	Great performance. The audience is highly impressed.
25	Memorable performance. The audience is enthusiastic.
30	Masterful performance. The audience is awed.

Action: Varies.

Try Again: Yes. Retries are allowed, but they don't negate previous failures, and an audience that has been unimpressed in the past is likely to be prejudiced against future performances. (Increase the DC by 2 for each previous failure.)

Special: In addition to using the Perform skill, you can entertain people with sleight of hand, tumbling, tightrope walking and supernatural abilities. Though if someone is entertaining you with his supernatural abilities, odds are his buddy is sneaking up behind you to knife-hand you through the back of your neck.

Pilot (Dex; trained only)

Might, Intellect.

Check: Typical piloting tasks don't require checks. Checks are required during combat, for special maneuvers or in other extreme circumstances, or when the pilot wants to attempt something outside the normal parameters of the vehicle. When flying, you can attempt simple maneuvers and stunts (actions in which you attempt to do something complex very quickly or in a limited space). See Chapter 7: Playing the Game, "Vehicle Movement and Combat," *Driving a Vehicle*, for more information.

Each vehicle's description includes a maneuver modifier that applies to Pilot checks made by the operator of the vehicle.

Action: A Pilot check is a move action. You can take 10 when making a Pilot check, but can't take 20.

Profession (Wis; trained only)

Spirit.

Similar to Craft, Knowledge and Perform, Profession is actually a number of separate skills. You can have several Profession skills, each with its own ranks, each purchased as a separate skill. While a Craft skill represents ability in creating or making an item, a Profession skill represents an aptitude in a vocation requiring a broader range of less specific knowledge.

Check: You can practice your trade and make a decent living. You know how to use the tools of your trade, how to perform the profession's daily tasks, how to supervise helpers and how to handle common problems.

Action: Not applicable. A single check generally represents a week of work.

Try Again: Varies. An attempt to accomplish some specific task can usually be retried.

Repair (Int; trained only)

Might, Intellect.

Check: Most Repair checks are made to fix complex electronic or mechanical devices. The GM sets the DC. In general, simple repairs have a DC of 10 to 15 and require no more than a few minutes to accomplish. More complex repair work has a DC of 20 or higher and can require an hour or more to complete. Most uses of repair require you to have some tools (at least a toolkit) and some spare parts.

Repair Task	Repair DC	Time
Simple (tool, simple weapon)	10	1 min.
Moderate (mechanical or electronic component)	15	10 min.
Complex (mechanical or electronic device)	20	1 hr.
Advanced (cutting-edge mechanical or electronic device)	25	10 hr.

Jury-Rig: You can choose to attempt jury-rigged, or temporary, repairs. Doing so allows you to attempt repairs even when you don't have necessary equipment lying around, reduces the Repair check DC by 5 and allows you to make the checks in as little as a full-round action. However, a jury-rigged repair can fix only a single problem with a check, and the temporary repair lasts only until the end of the current scene or encounter. The jury-rigged object must be fully repaired thereafter.

You can also use jury-rig to hot-wire a car or jump-start an engine or electronic device. The DC for this is at least 15, and it can be higher depending on the presence of security devices.

The jury-rig application of the Repair skill can be used untrained.

Action: See the table for guidelines. You can make a jury-rig repair as a full-round action, but the work lasts only until the end of the current encounter.

Try Again: Yes, though in some specific cases, the GM may decide that a failed Repair check has negative ramifications that prevent repeated checks. You can take 10 or take 20 on a Repair check. When making a Repair check to accomplish a jury-rig repair, you can't take 20.

Special: Repair requires a mechanical or electronic toolkit or a tool, depending on the task. If you do not have the appropriate toolkit, you take a –4 penalty on the check.

Craft (Mechanical) or Craft (Electronic) can provide a +2 synergy bonus on Repair checks made for mechanical or electronic devices (see "Skill Synergy," above).

Research (Int)

Intellect.

Check: Researching a topic takes time, skill and some luck. The GM determines how obscure a particular topic is (the more obscure, the higher the DC) and what kind of information might be available depending on where you conduct your research.

Information ranges from general to protected. Given enough time (usually 1d4 hours) and a successful skill check, you get a general idea about a given topic. This assumes that no obvious reasons exist why such information would be unavailable, and that you have a way to acquire restricted or protected information.

The higher the check result, the better and more complete the information. If you want to discover a specific fact, date, map or similar bit of information, add +5 to +15 to the DC.

Action: A Research check takes 1d4 hours.

Try Again: Yes.

Special: Computer Use can provide a +2 synergy bonus on a Research check when searching computer records for data (see "Skill Synergy," above).

Ride (Dex)

Spirit.

If you attempt to ride a creature that is ill suited as a mount, you take a –5 penalty on your Ride checks.

Check: Typical riding actions don't require checks. You can saddle, mount, ride and dismount from a mount without a problem. Though few people ride horses (and other mounts) these days for anything but recreation, in some areas in the Annihilation Zone they may be the only viable option.

The following tasks do require checks.

Task	Ride	Task	Ride
Guide with knees	5	Leap	15
Stay in saddle	5	Spur mount	15
Cover	15	Control mount in battle	20
Soft fall	15	Fast mount or dismount	20*

*Armor check penalty applies.

Guide with Knees: You can react instantly to guide your mount with your knees so that you can use both hands in combat. Make your Ride check at the start of your turn. If you fail, you can use only one hand this round because you need to use the other to control your mount.

Stay in Saddle: You can react instantly to try to avoid falling when your mount rears or bolts unexpectedly or when you take damage. This usage does not take an action.

Cover: You can react instantly to drop down and hang alongside your mount, using it as cover. You can't attack or cast spells (except for still spells) while using your mount as cover. If you fail your Ride check, you don't get the cover benefit. This usage does not take an action.

Soft Fall: You can react instantly to try to take no damage when you fall off a mount — when it is killed or when it falls, for example. If you fail your Ride check, you take 1d6 points of falling damage. This usage does not take an action.

Leap: You can get your mount to leap obstacles as part of its movement. Use your Ride modifier or the mount's Jump modifier, whichever is lower, to see how far the creature can jump. If you fail your Ride check, you fall off the mount when it leaps and take the appropriate falling damage (at least 1d6 points). This usage does not take an action, but is part of the mount's movement.

Spur Mount: You can spur your mount to greater speed with a move action. A successful Ride check increases the mount's speed by 10 feet for one round but deals one point of damage to the creature. You can use this ability every round, but each consecutive round of additional speed deals twice as much damage to the mount as the previous round (two points, four points, eight points and so on).

Control Mount in Battle: While in combat, you can attempt to control a mount that is not trained in combat riding (see "Handle Animal," above). If you succeed, you use only a move action. If you fail, you can do nothing else that round. If you fail by more than 5, you lose control of the animal.

For animals trained in combat riding, you do not need to make this check. Instead, you can use your move action to have the animal perform a trick (commonly, to attack).

Fast Mount or Dismount: You can attempt to mount or dismount from a mount of up to one size category larger than yourself as a free action, provided that you still have a move action available that round. If you fail the Ride check, mounting or dismounting is a move action. You can't use fast mount or dismount on a mount more than one size category larger than yourself.

Action: Varies. Mounting or dismounting normally is a move action. Other checks are a move action, a free action or no action at all, as noted above.

Special: If you are riding bareback, you take a –5 penalty on Ride checks.

Synergy: If you have five or more ranks in Handle Animal, you get a +2 bonus on Ride checks.

Search (Int)

Intellect, Spirit.

Check: You generally must be within 10 feet of the object or surface to be searched. The table below gives DCs for typical tasks involving the Search skill.

DC	Task
10	Ransack an area to find a certain object
20	Notice a typical secret compartment, a simple trap or an obscure clue
25+	Find a complex or well-hidden secret compartment or trap; notice an extremely obscure clue
Varies	Find a footprint*

*A successful Search check can find a footprint or similar sign of a creature's passage, but it won't let you find or follow a trail. See the Track feat for the appropriate DC.

Action: Searching a five-foot-by-five-foot area or a volume of goods five feet on a side is a full-round action.

Synergy: If you have five or more ranks in Search, you get a +2 bonus on Survival checks to find or follow tracks.

Sense Motive (Wis)

Intellect, Spirit.

Check: A successful check lets you avoid being bluffed (see "Bluff," above). You can also use this skill to determine when

"something is up" (that is, something odd is going on) or to assess someone's trustworthiness.

Task	Sense Motive DC
Hunch	20
Sense compulsion	25 or 15
Discern secret message	Varies

Hunch: This use of the skill involves making a gut assessment of the social situation. You can get the feeling from another's behavior that something is wrong, such as when you're talking to an impostor. Alternatively, you can get the feeling that someone is trustworthy.

Sense Compulsion: You can tell that someone's behavior is being influenced by a mind-affecting supernatural effect (including possession), even if that person isn't aware of it. The usual DC is 25, but if the target is enslaved (as with the Control spell component), the DC is only 15 because of the limited range of the target's activities.

Discern Secret Message: You may use Sense Motive to detect that a hidden message is being transmitted via the Bluff skill. In this case, your Sense Motive check is opposed by the Bluff check of the character transmitting the message. For each piece of information relating to the message that you are missing, you take a –2 penalty on your Sense Motive check. If you succeed by 4 or less, you know that something hidden is being communicated, but you can't learn anything specific about its content. If you beat the DC by 5 or more, you intercept and understand the message. If you fail by 4 or less, you don't detect any hidden communication. If you fail by 5 or more, you infer some false information.

Action: Trying to gain information with Sense Motive generally takes at least one minute, and you could spend a whole evening trying to get a sense of the people around you.

Try Again: No, though you may make a Sense Motive check for each Bluff check made against you.

Synergy: If you have five or more ranks in Sense Motive, you get a +2 bonus on Diplomacy checks.

Sleight of Hand (Dex; trained only; armor check penalty)

Spirit, Stealth.

Check: A DC 10 Sleight of Hand check lets you palm a coin-sized, unattended object. Performing a minor feat of legerdemain, such as making a coin disappear, also has a DC of 10 unless an observer is determined to note where the item went.

When you use this skill under close observation, your skill check is opposed by the observer's Spot check. The observer's success doesn't prevent you from performing the action, just from doing it unnoticed.

Sleight of Hand	Task
10	Palm a coin-sized object, make a coin disappear
20	Lift a small object from a person

Concealing an Object: You can hide a small object (including a light weapon or an easily concealed ranged weapon, such as a pistol) on your body. Your Sleight of Hand check is opposed by the Spot check of anyone observing you or the Search check of anyone frisking you. In the latter case, the searcher gains a +4 bonus on the Search check, since it's generally easier to find such an object than to hide it. A knife is easier to hide than most light weapons, and grants you a +2 bonus on your Sleight of Hand check to conceal it. An extraordinarily small object, such as a coin, shuriken or ring, grants you a +4 bonus on your Sleight of Hand check to conceal it, and heavy or baggy clothing grants you a +2 bonus on the check.

Drawing a hidden weapon is a standard action and doesn't provoke an attack of opportunity.

Picking Pockets: If you try to take something from another creature, you must make a DC 20 Sleight of Hand check to obtain it. The opponent makes a Spot check to detect the attempt, opposed by the same Sleight of Hand check result you achieved when you tried to grab the item. An opponent who succeeds on this check notices the attempt, regardless of whether you got the item.

Entertainment: You can also use Sleight of Hand to entertain an audience as though you were using the Perform skill. In such a case, your "act" encompasses elements of legerdemain, juggling and the like.

Action: Any Sleight of Hand check normally is a standard action. However, you may perform a Sleight of Hand check as a free action by taking a –20 penalty on the check.

Try Again: Yes, but after an initial failure, a second Sleight of Hand attempt against the same target (or while you are being watched by the same observer who noticed your previous attempt) increases the DC for the task by 10.

Synergy: If you have five or more ranks in Bluff, you get a +2 bonus on Sleight of Hand checks.

"We're just here to keep people from going any closer. These idiots actually want to be here. They want to mess around with the Intrusion. Me? I'd rather be almost anyplace else."
—Corporal Bryan Page

Untrained: An untrained Sleight of Hand check is simply a Dexterity check. Without actual training, you can't succeed on any Sleight of Hand check with a DC higher than 10, except for hiding an object on your body.

Speak Language (None, trained only)

Intellect.

The Speak Language skill doesn't work like a standard skill.

• You automatically know how to speak your native language; you do not need ranks to do so.

• Each additional language costs one rank. When you add a rank to Speak Language, you choose a new language that you can speak.

• You don't make Speak Language checks. You either know a language or you don't.

• You can read and write any language you speak. Each language has an alphabet, though sometimes several spoken languages share a single alphabet.

• You can choose any language, modern or ancient. (See the "Language Groups" sidebar for suggestions.) The GM might determine that you can't learn a specific language due to the campaign's circumstances.

Action: Not applicable.

Language Groups

You have thousands of languages to choose from when you buy ranks in Speak Language. A few are listed here, sorted into their general language groups.

A language's group doesn't matter when you are buying ranks in Speak Language. Language groups are provided for simplicity.

This list is by no means exhaustive — many more language groups exist, and most groups contain more languages than those listed here.

Algic: Algonkian, Arapaho, Blackfoot, Cheyenne, Shawnee

Armenian: Armenian

Athabascan: Apache, Chipewyan, Navaho

Attic: Ancient Greek*, Greek

Baltic: Latvian, Lithuanian

Celtic: Gaelic (Irish), Gaelic (Scots), Welsh

Chinese: Cantonese, Mandarin

Finno-Lappic: Estonian, Finnish, Lapp

Germanic: Afrikaans, Danish, Dutch, English, Flemish, German, Icelandic, Norwegian, Swedish, Yiddish

Hamo-Semitic: Coptic*, Middle Egyptian*

Indic: Hindi, Punjabi, Sanskrit*, Urdu

Iranian: Farsi, Pashto

Japanese: Japanese

Korean: Korean

Romance: French, Italian, Latin*, Portuguese, Romanian, Spanish

Semitic: Akkadian (a.k.a. Babylonian)*, Ancient Hebrew*, Arabic, Aramaic*, Hebrew

Slavic: Belorussian, Bulgarian, Czech, Polish, Russian, Serbo-Croatian, Slovak, Ukrainian

Tibeto-Burman: Burmese, Sherpa, Tibetan

Turkic: Azerbaijani, Turkish, Uzbek

Ugric: Hungarian (aka Magyar)

* This is an ancient language. In the modern world, this language is spoken only by scholars, or in some cases by small populations in isolated corners of the world.

Spellcraft DC	Task
0 + component cost + exhaustion rating	Cast a spell. See Chapter 5: Magic for more details.
10	Identify a single component in a spell being cast. For every 5 points by which you exceed the DC, you identify another component, and for every 10 points by which you exceed the DC, you identify the specific effect of a component. For example, if you get a 25 on your Spellcraft check, you identify up to four components (such as Control, Metaspell and two Damage components), and one specific effect for one of these (such as knowing that the Illusion component is creating a creature of up to Large size). The specific components and effects you identify are random. Note that Area, Duration and Range do not account as components for this use of Spellcraft. No action required. No retry.
10 + component cost	After rolling a saving throw against a spell targeted on you, determine every component in that spell (but not their specific effects). No action required. No retry.
20	Locate and recognize a sympathetic conduit for spellcasting. See Chapter 5: Magic, "Spells," *Spell Range,* for more information.
20	Identify a single component in a spell already in place. For every 5 points by which you exceed the DC you identify another component, and by every 10 points, you identify a specific effect, just as with identifying a spell as it is being cast. You must be able to see or detect the spell's effects. No action required. No retry.
25	Identify materials created or shaped by magic. No action required. No retry.
25	Identify a person, item, place or anything else as being infused with magic, such as a mage, enchanted wand and so forth.

Try Again: Not applicable. There are no Speak Language checks to fail.

Spellcraft (Int, trained only)

Intellect, Spirit.

Check: Use this skill to cast spells, identify spells as they are cast or identify spells already in place. The DCs for Spellcraft checks relating to various tasks are summarized on the table below.

Action: Varies, as noted above.

Try Again: See above.

Synergy: If you have five or more ranks in Knowledge (occult), you get a +2 bonus on Spellcraft checks.

In addition, certain spells allow you to gain information about magic, provided that you make a successful Spellcraft check as detailed in the spell description.

Spot (Wis)

Intellect, Spirit.

Check: You use the Spot skill primarily to detect characters or creatures who are hiding — and since many such creatures will be eyeing you with hungry and knifelike eyes, Spot is a valuable skill. Typically, your Spot check is opposed by the Hide check of the creature trying not to be seen. Sometimes a creature isn't intentionally hiding but is still difficult to see, so a successful Spot check is necessary to notice the creature.

A Spot check result higher than 20 generally lets you become aware of an invisible creature near you, though you can't actually see it.

You also use Spot to detect someone in disguise (see "Disguise," above), and to read lips when you can't hear or understand what someone is saying.

Spot checks may be called for to determine the distance at which an encounter begins. A penalty applies on such checks, depending on the distance between the two individuals or groups, and an additional penalty may apply if the character making the Spot check is distracted (not concentrating on being observant).

Condition	Penalty
Per 10 feet of distance	–1
Spotter distracted	–5

Read Lips: To understand what someone is saying by reading lips, you must be within 30 feet of the speaker, be able to see her speak and understand her language. (This use of the skill is language-dependent.) The base DC is 15, but it increases for complex speech or an inarticulate speaker. You must maintain a line of sight to the lips being read.

If your Spot check succeeds, you can understand the general content of a minute's worth of speaking, but you usually still miss certain details. If the check fails by 4 or less, you can't read the speaker's lips. If the check fails by 5 or more, you draw some incorrect conclusion about the speech. The GM makes the check secretly in this case, so that you don't know whether you succeeded or missed by 5.

Detect Sympathetic Conduit: You can also use Spot to detect and recognize a sympathetic conduit for spellcasting. See Chapter 5: Magic, "Spells," *Spell Range* for more information.

Action: Varies. Every time you have a chance to spot something in a reactive manner you can make a Spot check without using an action. Trying to spot something you failed to see previously is a move action. To read lips, you must concentrate for a full minute before making a Spot check, and you can't perform any other action (other than moving at up to half speed) during this minute.

Try Again: Yes. You can try to spot something that you failed to see previously at no penalty. You can attempt to read lips once per minute.

Special: A fascinated creature takes a –4 penalty on Spot checks made as reactions.

Survival (Wis)

Spirit.

Check: You can keep yourself and others safe and fed in the wild (at least, safe from mundane threats). The table below gives the DCs for various tasks that require Survival checks.

Survival does not allow you to follow difficult tracks unless you have the Track feat (see "Special," below).

Survival DC	Task
10	Get along in the wild. Move up to one-half your overland speed while hunting and foraging (no food or water supplies needed). You can provide food and water for one other person for every 2 points by which your check result exceeds 10.
15	Gain a +2 bonus on all Fortitude saves against severe weather while moving up to one-half your overland speed, or gain a +4 bonus if you remain stationary. You may grant the same bonus to one other character for every one point by which your Survival check result exceeds 15.
15	Keep from getting lost or avoid natural hazards, such as quicksand.
15	Predict the weather up to 24 hours in advance. For every 5 points by which your Survival check result exceeds 15, you can predict the weather for one additional day in advance. Note that much of the weather in the western hemisphere is no longer predictable in this way.
Varies	Follow tracks (see the Track feat).

Action: Varies. A single Survival check may represent activity over the course of hours or a full day. A Survival check made to find tracks is at least a full-round action, and it may take even longer.

Try Again: Varies. For getting along in the wild or for gaining the Fortitude save bonus noted in the table above, you make a Survival check once every 24 hours. The result of that check applies until the next check is made. To avoid getting lost or avoid natural hazards, you make a Survival check whenever the situation calls for one. Retries to avoid getting lost in a specific situation or to avoid a specific natural hazard are not allowed. For finding tracks, you can retry a failed check after one hour (outdoors) or 10 minutes (indoors) of searching.

Special: While anyone can use Survival to find tracks (regardless of the DC), or to follow tracks when the DC for the

task is 10 or lower, only a character with the Track feat can use Survival to follow tracks when the task has a higher DC.

If you have five or more ranks in Survival, you can automatically determine where true north lies in relation to yourself.

Synergy: If you have five or more ranks in Search, you get a +2 bonus on Survival checks to find or follow tracks.

Swim (Str; armor check penalty)

Might.

Check: Make a Swim check once per round while you are in the water. Success means you may swim at up to one-half your speed (as a full-round action) or at one-quarter your speed (as a move action). If you fail by 4 or less, you make no progress through the water. If you fail by 5 or more, you go underwater.

If you are underwater, either because you failed a Swim check or because you are swimming underwater intentionally, you must hold your breath. You can hold your breath for a number of rounds equal to your Constitution score, but only if you do nothing other than take move actions or free actions. If you take a standard action or a full-round action (such as making an attack), the remainder of the duration for which you can hold your breath is reduced by one round. (Effectively, a character in combat can hold his or her breath only half as long as normal.) After that period of time, you must make a DC 10 Constitution check every round to continue holding your breath. Each round, the DC for that check increases by 1. If you fail the Constitution check, you begin to drown.

The DC for the Swim check depends on the water, as given on the table below.

Water	Swim DC
Calm water	10
Rough water	15
Stormy water	20*

*You can't take 10 on a Swim check in stormy water, even if you aren't otherwise being threatened or distracted.

Each hour that you swim, you must make a DC 20 Swim check or take 1d6 points of nonlethal damage from fatigue.

Action: A successful Swim check allows you to swim one-quarter of your speed as a move action or one-half your speed as a full-round action.

Special: Swim checks are subject to double the normal armor check penalty and encumbrance penalty.

If you have the Endurance feat, you get a +4 bonus on Swim checks made to avoid taking nonlethal damage from fatigue.

A creature with a swim speed can move through water at its indicated speed without making Swim checks. The creature gains a +8 racial bonus on any Swim check to perform a special action or avoid a hazard. The creature always can choose to take 10 on a Swim check, even if the creature is distracted or endangered when swimming. Such a creature can use the run action while swimming, provided that the creature swims in a straight line.

"The coming of the Iconnu may have invigorated the magical sphere, but the key to mastering it is still in the study of the ancient arts. The Egyptians, the Babylonians . . . they knew more of the secrets of the universe than any modern scientist."

—Nathan Gross, mage

Tumble (Dex; trained only; armor check penalty)

Might, Stealth.

You can't use this skill if your speed has been reduced by armor or excess equipment.

Check: You can land softly when you fall; you can tumble past opponents. You can also tumble to entertain an audience (as though using the Perform skill). The DCs for various tasks involving the Tumble skill are given on the table below.

Tumble DC	Task
15	Treat a fall as if it were 10 feet shorter than it really is when determining damage.
15	Tumble at one-half speed as part of normal movement, provoking no attacks of opportunity while doing so. Failure means you provoke attacks of opportunity normally. Check separately for each opponent you move past, in the order in which you pass them (player's choice of order in case of a tie).
Each additional enemy after the first adds +2 to the Tumble DC.	
25	Tumble at one-half speed through an area occupied by an enemy (over, under or around the opponent) as part of normal movement, provoking no attacks of opportunity while doing so. Failure means you stop before entering the enemy-occupied area and provoke an attack of opportunity from that enemy.
Check separately for each opponent. Each additional enemy after the first adds +2 to the Tumble DC.	

Obstructed or otherwise treacherous surfaces, such as blasted concrete or undergrowth, are tough to tumble through. The DC for any Tumble check made to tumble into such a square is modified as indicated below.

Surface Is . . .	DC Modifier
Lightly obstructed (scree, light rubble, shallow bog*, undergrowth)	+2
Severely obstructed (natural cavern floor, dense rubble, dense undergrowth)	+5
Lightly slippery (wet floor)	+2
Severely slippery (ice sheet)	+5
Sloped or angled	+2

*Tumbling is impossible in a deep bog.

Accelerated Tumbling: You try to tumble past or through enemies more quickly than normal. By accepting a –10 penalty on your Tumble checks, you can move at your full speed instead of one-half your speed.

Action: Not applicable. Tumbling is part of movement, so a Tumble check is part of a move action.

Try Again: Usually no. An audience, once it has judged a tumbler as an uninteresting performer, is not receptive to repeat performances.

You can try to reduce damage from a fall as an instant reaction only once per fall.

Special: If you have five or more ranks in Tumble, you gain a +3 dodge bonus to Defense when fighting defensively instead of the usual +2 dodge bonus to Defense.

If you have five or more ranks in Tumble, you gain a +6 dodge bonus to Defense when executing the total defense standard action instead of the usual +4 dodge bonus to Defense.

Synergy: If you have five or more ranks in Tumble, you get a +2 bonus on Balance and Jump checks.

If you have five or more ranks in Jump, you get a +2 bonus on Tumble checks.

Use Rope (Dex)

Might, Stealth.

Check: Most tasks with a rope are relatively simple. The DCs for various tasks using this skill are summarized on the table below.

Use Rope DC	Task
10	Tie a firm knot
10*	Secure a grappling hook
15	Tie a special knot, such as one that slips, slides slowly, or loosens with a tug
15	Tie a rope around yourself one-handed
15	Splice two ropes together
Varies	Bind a character

*Add 2 to the DC for every 10 feet the hook is thrown; see below.

Secure a Grappling Hook: Securing a grappling hook requires a Use Rope check (DC 10, +2 for every 10 feet of distance the grappling hook is thrown, to a maximum DC of 20 at 50 feet). Failure by 4 or less indicates that the hook fails to catch and falls, allowing you to try again. Failure by 5 or more indicates that the grappling hook initially holds, but comes loose after 1d4 rounds of supporting weight. The GM makes this check secretly, so that you don't know whether the rope will hold your weight.

Bind a Character: When you bind another character with a rope, any Escape Artist check that the bound character makes is opposed by your Use Rope check.

You get a +10 bonus on this check because it is easier to bind someone than to escape from bonds. You don't even make your Use Rope check until someone tries to escape.

Action: Varies. Throwing a grappling hook is a standard action that provokes attacks of opportunity. Tying a knot, tying a special knot or tying a rope around yourself one-handed is a full-round action that provokes attacks of opportunity. Splicing two ropes together takes five minutes. Binding a character takes one minute.

Synergy: If you have five or more ranks in Use Rope, you get a +2 bonus on Climb checks made to climb a rope, a knotted rope or a rope-and-wall combination.

If you have five or more ranks in Use Rope, you get a +2 bonus on Escape Artist checks when escaping from rope bonds.

If you have five or more ranks in Escape Artist, you get a +2 bonus on Use Rope checks made to bind someone.

FEATS & ABILITIES

Characters in this game wield amazing powers and command great might — they must, for the world is arrayed against them. An expression of this comes in the form of feats and special abilities unique to the various character types. This chapter describes many different capabilities that characters possess.

Feats

Feats are special characteristics, talents or abilities that all characters possess. Feats allow you to do things you ordinarily could not do, or improve abilities you already possess. Feats represent the extra training and knowledge that you acquire before the campaign begins, and your continued improvement as you gain experience. Every character begins with one or more feats, and gains an additional feat at her third character level and every three character levels thereafter, as shown on Table 8–1: Experience and Level-Dependent Benefits. Your character type also grants you bonus feats at certain levels.

Unlike skills, you do not buy feats with points. Each time your character gains a feat, you simply choose one for which your character meets the prerequisites. You cannot change your choice thereafter.

Prerequisites

Some feats have prerequisites. Your character must have the indicated ability score, class feature, feat, skill, base attack bonus or other quality designated in order to select or use that feat. A character can gain a feat at the same level at which she gains the prerequisite.

A character can't use a feat if she has lost a prerequisite.

Feat Descriptions

Feats are presented in the following format.

Feat Name

Prerequisite(s): A minimum ability score, another feat or feats, a minimum base attack bonus, a base save bonus, a minimum number of ranks in one or more skills or a class level that a character must have in order to acquire this feat. This entry is absent if a feat has no prerequisite. A feat may have more than one prerequisite.

Any numbers given here are minimum values; thus, a feat with a prerequisite of "Str 13" means that a character must have a Strength score of 13 or more to acquire the feat.

Some feats have "proficiency with a weapon" as a prerequisite. All characters are proficient with all weapons except for exotic weapons. Thus, if you want to take one of these feats with an exotic weapon, you must first take the Exotic Weapon Proficiency feat.

Benefit: What the feat enables the character ("you" in the feat description) to do. If a character has the same feat more than once, its benefits do not stack unless indicated otherwise in the description. In general, having a feat twice is the same as having it once.

Normal: What a character who does not have this feat is limited to or restricted from doing. If not having the feat causes no particular drawback, this entry is absent.

Special: Additional facts about the feat that may be helpful when you decide whether to acquire the feat.

Armor Proficiency

You can use armor effectively.

Benefit: When you wear a type of armor with which you are proficient, the armor check penalty for that armor applies only on Balance, Climb, Escape Artist, Hide, Jump, Move Silently, Sleight of Hand, Swim and Tumble checks.

Normal: Characters who wear armor with which they are not proficient apply its armor check penalty on attack rolls and on all skill checks that involve moving.

Automatic Weapon Proficiency

You are skilled at using automatic firearms in combat.

Prerequisite: Semiautomatic Weapon Proficiency

TABLE 4–1: FEATS

Feat	Prerequisites	Benefit
Armor Proficiency	—	Wear armor with no non-proficient penalty.
Automatic Weapon Proficiency	Semiautomatic Weapon Proficiency, base attack bonus +1	Negate some penalties for burst fire and strafe with automatic weapons.
Cleave	Str 13, Power Attack	Additional attack when you drop a melee opponent.
Cleave, Improved	Str 13, Cleave, Power Attack, base attack bonus +4	As Cleave, but more than once per round.
Combat Expertise	Int 13	Trade –1 to hit for +1 Def, up to +5.
Combat Reflexes	—	Gain additional attacks of opportunity equal to your Dex bonus.
Crippling Strike	Int 17, Sneak Attack	Sneak attacks also deal one point of Str damage.
Damage Reduction	Con 19	Gain damage reduction 1/–.
Defensive Move	Dex 13	+4 dodge bonus to Def against ranged attacks.
Defensive Roll	Wis 13	Once per day avoid death or unconsciousness.
Defensive Stance	Dex 13	+1 dodge bonus to Def against melee attacks.
Diehard	Endurance	You stabilize automatically; you may act as if disabled when dying.
Endurance	—	+4 on checks and saves related to physical endurance.
Evasion	Dex 15, base Ref save +2	Take no damage on successful Ref saves.
Exotic Weapon Proficiency	Base attack bonus +1	Wield an exotic weapon with no non-proficient penalty.
Far Shot	Point Blank Shot	Increase weapons' range 150% (200% with thrown weapons).
First Strike	Dex 13	Deal additional damage at the beginning of the round.
Fleet of Foot	—	+10 feet to ground speed.
Focused Healing	Wis 11, stalwart dedication	Once per day, heal two points of damage/level.
Great Fortitude	—	+2 on Fort saves.
Improved Bull Rush	Str 13, Power Attack	Bull rush without provoking attacks; +4 on bull rush attempts.
Improved Critical	Proficient with weapon, base attack bonus +8	Double weapon's threat range.
Improved Disarm	Int 13, Combat Expertise	Disarm without provoking attacks; opponent can't react to disarm you; +4 on disarm attempts.
Improved Evasion	Dex 17, base Ref save +4, Evasion	Take half damage even on failed Ref saves.
Improved Initiative	—	+4 on initiative checks.
Improved Natural Attack	Natural weapon, base attack bonus +4	Natural weapon's damage die increases.
Improved Trip	Int 13, Combat Expertise	Trip without provoking attacks; +4 on trip attempts; free melee attack on tripped opponents.
Improved Two-Weapon Fighting	Dex 17, Two-Weapon Fighting, base attack bonus +6	Additional attack with off-hand weapon, at –5.
Improved Unarmed Strike	—	You are considered armed with unarmed strikes and they deal 1d4 points of lethal damage.
Improved Uncanny Dodge	Dex 17, Uncanny Dodge, base Ref save +3	Cannot be flanked.
Intuitive Sense	—	Keep Dex bonus to Def when flat-footed.
Iron Will	—	+2 on Will saves.
Lightning Reflexes	—	+2 on Ref saves.
Low Blow	Base attack bonus +3	Attack dazes foe for 1 round.
Mobility	Dex 13, Defensive Stance	+4 Def against attacks of opportunity provoked by moving.
Nightmare Affinity	Wis 13, Sense Nightmare Wave	+1 Def or +1 attack rolls, saves and checks while in a Nightmare Site.
Opportunist	Int 15	Make additional attack against foe struck by other.
Paralyzing Blow	Base attack bonus +15	Attack paralyzes foe for 1 round.
Point Blank Shot	—	+1 to hit and damage with ranged weapons within 30 feet.
Power Attack	Str 13	Trade –1 to hit for +1 to damage in melee, up to your BAB.
Power Charge	Str 13, Power Attack	Deal double weapon damage when charging.
Precise Shot	Point Blank Shot	No penalty on ranged attacks against opponents in melee.
Quick Draw	Base attack bonus +1	Draw a weapon as a free action.
Rapid Strike	Dex 15, Weapon Focus, base attack bonus +3	Gain additional attack with weapon once per day per level.

TABLE 4–1: FEATS (CONTINUED)

Feat	Prerequisites	Benefit
Resistance to Disease	—	+4 on saves against disease.
Resistance to Magic	—	+1 on saves against spells and supernatural effects.
Resistance to Poison	—	+4 on saves against poison.
Semiautomatic Weapon Proficiency	Base attack bonus +1	You are not flat-footed using the double tap action.
Sensitive	Wis 15	Sense the presence of the supernatural.
Shot on the Run	Dex 13, Defensive Stance, Mobility, Point Blank Shot, base attack bonus +4	Move before and after a ranged attack.
Skill Focus	—	+3 on checks with selected skill.
Skilled	—	+2 on checks with two skills.
Sneak Attack	Dex 13	+1d6 damage when flanking or when opponent loses Dex bonus to Def.
Speed Burst	—	Take an extra move action once per day per two levels.
Sunder	Str 13, Power Attack	Sunder without provoking attacks; +4 on sunder attempts.
Supernatural Toughness	Awakened level 4 or werewolf level 2	Critical hits don't deal Con damage to you.
The Voice	—	+1 bonus on Bluff, Diplomacy and Gather Information; +2 to Perform (oratory)
Toughness	—	Gain +1 hit point/HD.
Track	—	Use the Survival skill to track creatures.
Two-Weapon Defense	Dex 15, Two-Weapon Fighting	+1 to Def with two weapons.
Two-Weapon Fighting	Dex 15	Penalties for fighting with two weapons reduced by –2 (primary hand) and –6 (off hand).
Uncanny Dodge	Dex 15	Retain Dex bonus when flat-footed.
Way with Animals	Cha 13	Use Diplomacy and other skills on animals.
Weapon Finesse	Base attack bonus +1	Use Dex instead of Str on melee attacks with light weapons.
Weapon Focus	Proficiency with selected weapon, base attack bonus +1	+1 to hit with selected weapon.
Weapon Specialization	Proficiency with selected weapon, Weapon Focus with selected weapon, base attack bonus +4	+2 damage with selected weapon.

Benefit: When you use the burst fire action (see Chapter 7: Playing the Game, "Actions in the Round," *Action Descriptions*) with an automatic weapon, you are not flat-footed for one round. When you use the strafe action (see Chapter 7: Playing the Game, "Actions in the Round," *Action Descriptions*) with an automatic weapon, you do not take a –4 penalty on your attack roll and are not flat-footed for one round. In addition, the Reflex save to avoid taking damage from the weapon increases by +2 (to 15).

Cleave

You can cut through one foe to attack another foe.

Prerequisites: Str 13, Power Attack

Benefit: If you deal a creature enough damage to make it drop (typically by dropping the creature to –1 hit points, or by killing it), you get an immediate, extra melee attack against another creature within reach. You cannot take a five-foot step before making this extra attack. The extra attack is with the same weapon and at the same bonus as the attack that dropped the previous creature. You can use this ability once per round.

Cleave, Improved

You can make multiple attacks when you down your opponents.

Prerequisites: Str 13, Cleave, Power Attack, base attack bonus +4

Benefit: This feat works as Cleave, except that there is no limit to the number of times you can use it per round.

Combat Expertise

You can use your combat skill for defense as well as offense.

Prerequisite: Int 13

Benefit: When you use the attack or full-attack action in melee, you can take a penalty of as much as –5 on your attack roll and add the same number (+5 or less) as a dodge bonus to your Defense. This number may not exceed your base attack bonus. The changes to attack rolls and Defense last until your next action.

Normal: Characters without Combat Expertise can fight defensively while using the attack or full attack action to take a –4 penalty on attack rolls and gain a +2 dodge bonus to Defense.

Combat Reflexes

You can make several rapid attacks against opponents who let down their defenses.

Benefit: You may make a number of additional attacks of opportunity equal to your Dexterity bonus. You may also make attacks of opportunity while flat-footed (see Chapter 7: Playing the Game, "Staging Encounters," *Attacks of Opportunity*).

Normal: Characters without this feat can make only one attack of opportunity per round and can't make attacks of opportunity while flat-footed.

Crippling Strike

Your attacks slice through muscle and tendons.

Prerequisites: Int 17, Sneak Attack

Benefit: When you damage an opponent with a sneak attack (or using First Strike), the target also takes one point of Strength damage.

Damage Reduction

You are so tough you can ignore blows.

Prerequisite: Con 19

Benefit: You gain damage reduction 1/–.

Special: You can take this feat multiple times. Each time you do, your damage reduction increases by 1.

Defensive Move

You are trained at avoiding ranged attacks by moving or ducking.

Prerequisite: Dex 13

Benefit: You gain a +4 dodge bonus to Defense against all ranged attacks in a round in which you move at least 10 feet, or in any circumstance when you have cover.

The Precise Shot feat can negate this Defense bonus, but that feat cannot negate both this bonus and the –4 penalty for firing into melee in a single attack. Thus, a character with this feat fighting in melee against an attacker with Precise Shot forces the opponent to cope with the +4 dodge bonus but not the –4 penalty.

Special: A condition that makes you lose your Dexterity modifier to Defense (if any) also makes you lose dodge bonuses.

You must be aware of the attack to gain this bonus.

Dodge bonuses stack with each other, unlike most other types of bonuses.

Defensive Roll

You have a special quickness that sometimes allows you to avoid dangerous blows.

Prerequisite: Wis 13

Benefit: Once per day, when you would be reduced in hit points in combat (from a weapon or other blow, not a spell or special ability) so that you would be staggered, unconscious or dead, you can attempt to roll with the damage. If you make a Reflex save (DC = damage dealt), you take only half the damage from the blow. You must be aware of the attack and able to react to it in order to execute the Defensive Roll — if your Dexterity modifier to Defense is denied, you can't roll. Since this effect normally would not allow you to make a Reflex save for half damage, the Evasion feat does not apply to the Defensive Roll.

Defensive Stance

You are trained at avoiding and blocking blows.

Prerequisite: Dex 13

Benefit: You gain a +1 dodge bonus to Defense against all melee attacks.

Special: A condition that makes you lose your Dexterity modifier to Defense (if any) also makes you lose dodge bonuses.

You must be aware of the attack to gain this bonus.

Dodge bonuses stack with each other, unlike most other types of bonuses.

Diehard

You can remain conscious and continue to act when you are dying.

Prerequisite: Endurance

Benefit: When you are reduced to negative hit points (but not dead), you automatically become stable.

When you are reduced to negative hit points, you may choose to act as if you were disabled, rather than dying. You must make this decision as soon as you are reduced to negative hit points (even if it isn't your turn). If you do not choose to act as if you were disabled, you immediately fall unconscious.

When using this feat, you can take either a single move or standard action each turn, but not both, and you cannot take a full-round action. You can take a move action without further injuring yourself, but if you perform any standard action (or any other action the GM deems strenuous, including some free actions, such as casting a quickened spell), you take one point of damage after completing the act. You immediately die when you reach negative hit points equal to your Constitution score.

Normal: A character without this feat who is reduced to negative hit points is unconscious and dying (or dead, if his negative hit points equal his Constitution score).

Endurance

You have great physical endurance.

Benefit: You gain a +4 bonus on the following checks and saves: Swim checks made to resist nonlethal damage, Constitution checks made to continue running, Constitution checks made to avoid nonlethal damage from a forced march, Constitution checks made to hold your breath, Constitution checks made to avoid nonlethal damage from starvation or thirst, Fortitude saves made to avoid nonlethal damage from hot or cold environments and Fortitude saves made to resist damage from suffocation.

Evasion

You can avoid even magical and supernatural attacks with great agility.

Prerequisites: Dex 15, base Ref save +3

Benefit: If you make a successful Reflex saving throw against an attack that normally deals half damage on a successful save, you instead take no damage. You can use this feat only if you wear light armor or no armor. You do not gain the benefits of this feat if you are helpless.

Exotic Weapon Proficiency

You understand how to use a specific exotic weapon, such as a grenade launcher or a chainsaw, in combat.

Benefit: You make attack rolls with the selected exotic weapon normally.

Normal: Characters who use an exotic weapon with which they are not proficient take a –4 penalty on attack rolls.

Far Shot

You can make ranged attacks at a great distance.

Prerequisite: Point Blank Shot

Benefit: When you use a projectile weapon, such as a pistol, its range increment increases by half (multiply by one and a half times). When you use a thrown weapon, its range increment doubles.

First Strike

You are skilled at making attacks that take out opponents quickly.

Prerequisite: Dex 13

Benefit: When you strike a foe who is flat-footed at the beginning of a combat, the attack deals +1d6 points of damage. This damage bonus stacks with Sneak Attack damage and faces the same limitations as Sneak Attack (creatures immune to critical hits and sneak attacks are immune to this ability). You can make ranged attacks using this ability, but only when within 30 feet of the target.

Special: You can take this feat up to three times. Each time, your First Strike damage increases by +1d6 points.

Fleet of Foot

You are faster than you look.

Benefit: You add +10 feet to your ground speed.

Focused Healing

You can use your powers of concentration for better healing.

Prerequisites: Wis 11, stalwart dedication (Awakened type feature)

Benefit: Once per day, you can concentrate for a full minute and heal yourself of up to two hit points of damage per character level. In order to succeed, you must make a Concentration check with a Difficulty Class equal to 10 + the amount of damage to be healed. Thus, a fifth-level character with this power can heal up to 10 points of damage, but the Difficulty Class is 20. If she needed to heal only eight hit points, she could choose to heal only eight hit points and thus make the DC 18.

Special: Characters of 16th level or higher can take this feat a second time and reduce the Concentration check DC by 20.

Great Fortitude

You resist danger with your incredible toughness.

Benefit: You receive a +2 bonus on all Fortitude saving throws.

Improved Bull Rush

You are skilled at pushing opponents back.

Prerequisites: Str 13, Power Attack

Benefit: When you perform a bull rush, you do not provoke an attack of opportunity from the defender. You also gain a +4 bonus on the opposed Strength check you make to push back the defender.

Normal: See the normal bull rush rules (Chapter 7: Playing the Game, "Actions in the Round," *Action Descriptions*).

Improved Critical

Choose one type of weapon. You make critical hits with that weapon more often.

Prerequisites: Proficient with weapon, base attack bonus +8

Benefit: When using the selected weapon, your critical threat range doubles.

Special: You can take Improved Critical multiple times. Its effects do not stack. Each time, this feat applies to a new type of weapon.

This effect doesn't stack with any other effect that increases a weapon's threat range.

Improved Disarm

You are skilled at disarming your foes.

Prerequisites: Int 13, Combat Expertise

Benefit: You do not provoke attacks of opportunity when you attempt to disarm opponents, and opponents don't have a chance to disarm you. You also gain a +4 bonus on the opposed attack roll you make to disarm opponents.

Normal: See the normal disarm rules (Chapter 7: Playing the Game, "Actions in the Round," *Action Descriptions*).

Improved Evasion

You are remarkably adept at dodging attacks.

Prerequisites: Dex 17, Evasion, base Ref save +6

Benefit: This feat works similar to Evasion, except you take only half damage on a failed Reflex save. You do not gain the benefits of this feat if you are helpless.

Improved Initiative

You react faster than normal in combat.

Benefit: You gain a +4 bonus on Initiative checks.

Improved Natural Attack

One of your natural attacks deals more damage than normal.

Prerequisites: Natural weapon, base attack bonus +4

Benefit: Choose one of your natural attack forms, such as claw or bite. The damage for this natural weapon increases by one step, as if your size had increased by one category: 1d2, 1d3, 1d4, 1d6, 1d8, 2d6, 3d6, 4d6, 6d6, 8d6, 12d6.

A weapon or attack that deals 1d10 points of damage increases as follows: 1d10, 2d8, 3d8, 4d8, 6d8, 8d8, 12d8.

Improved Trip

You excel at making trip attacks.

Prerequisites: Int 13, Combat Expertise

Benefit: You do not provoke an attack of opportunity when you attempt to trip an opponent while you are unarmed. You also receive a +4 bonus on your Strength check to trip your opponent.

If you trip an opponent in melee combat, you immediately get a melee attack against that opponent as if you had not used your attack for the trip attempt.

Normal: See the normal trip rules (Chapter 7: Playing the Game, "Actions in the Round," *Action Descriptions*).

Improved Two-Weapon Fighting

You excel at fighting with two weapons.

Prerequisites: Dex 17, Two-Weapon Fighting, base attack bonus +6

Benefit: In addition to the standard single attack you get with an off-hand weapon, you get a second attack with that weapon, but at a –5 penalty.

Normal: Without this feat, you get only a single extra attack with an off-hand weapon.

Improved Unarmed Strike

You are skilled at fighting unarmed.

Benefit: You are considered armed even when unarmed; thus, you do not provoke attacks of opportunity from armed opponents when you attack them while unarmed. You do, though, get attacks of opportunity against opponents who make unarmed attacks on you. In addition, your unarmed strikes deal damage as if you were one size category larger than you are, and they deal lethal damage. (Since most characters are Medium, this means that you deal 1d4 points of lethal damage with an unarmed strike.) You can instead deal nonlethal damage with an attack, if you like.

Normal: Without this feat, you are considered unarmed when attacking with an unarmed strike, and you deal nonlethal damage with such an attack.

Improved Uncanny Dodge

You can react to opponents on all sides just as easily as to a single opponent.

Prerequisites: Dex 17, Uncanny Dodge, base Ref save +5

Benefit: You can no longer be flanked. This feat denies characters with Sneak Attack the ability to use that feat on you unless they have at least four more Hit Dice than you.

Intuitive Sense

You are difficult to surprise.

Benefit: Thanks to your uncanny sense of danger, you do not lose your Dexterity bonus to Defense when you are flat-footed or attacked by an invisible or unknown opponent. You are always considered "aware" of all incoming attacks for purposes of Dexterity and dodge bonuses to Defense.

Special: You can take this feat a second time. If you do, you cannot be flanked.

Iron Will

Your incredible will saves you from danger.

Benefit: You receive a +2 bonus on all Will saves.

Lightning Reflexes

Your incredible reflexes allow you to avoid danger.

Benefit: You receive a +2 bonus on all Reflex saves.

Low Blow

You are skilled at striking vital, debilitating areas.

Prerequisite: Base attack bonus +3

Benefit: As a full-attack action, you can make a single attack roll that deals normal damage. If you damage a humanoid or monstrous humanoid opponent with this attack, the foe must attempt a Fortitude save (DC 10 + half your Hit Dice + your Wisdom bonus). If the save fails, the opponent is dazed for one round. (A dazed creature can take no actions but has no penalty to Defense.)

Mobility

You are difficult to hit while moving.

Prerequisites: Dex 13, Defensive Stance

Benefit: You receive a +4 dodge bonus to Defense against attacks of opportunity caused when you move out of or within a threatened area.

Special: Conditions that make you lose your Dexterity bonus to Defense also make you lose dodge bonuses.

Dodge bonuses stack with each other, unlike most other types of bonuses.

Nightmare Affinity

You can adapt to areas or creatures affected by the Nightmare Wave.

Prerequisites: Wis 13, Sense Nightmare Wave

Benefit: You gain a +1 insight bonus on attack rolls, saves and checks while in areas affected by the Nightmare Wave, or a +1 bonus to Defense against foes affected by the Nightmare Wave (but not both at the same time).

Opportunist

You excel at taking advantage of your foes' weaknesses.

Prerequisite: Int 15

Benefit: Once per round, you can make an immediate attack of opportunity against an opponent whom another character has just damaged with a melee attack. You get this attack regardless of whether the foe has taken an action that normally would provoke an attack of opportunity. This attack counts as your attack of opportunity for that round. Even a character with Combat Reflexes can't use Opportunist more than once per round, however.

Paralyzing Blow

You can temporarily paralyze an opponent with a hit.

Prerequisite: Base attack bonus +15

Benefit: You must use a bludgeoning weapon to take advantage of this feat. As a full-attack action, you can make a single attack roll that deals normal damage. If you damage your opponent, he must make a Fortitude saving throw (DC 10 + half your Hit Dice + your Wisdom bonus). Opponents who fail the save become paralyzed and helpless for one round.

Point Blank Shot

You excel at making ranged attacks at close range.

Benefit: You receive a +1 bonus on attack and damage rolls with ranged weapons at ranges of up to 30 feet.

Power Attack

You can make severely damaging melee attacks.

Prerequisite: Str 13

Benefit: On your action, before making attack rolls for the round, you can choose to subtract a number from all melee attack rolls and add it on all melee damage rolls. This number may not exceed your base attack bonus. The penalty on attacks and bonus on damage apply until your next turn.

Special: If you attack with a two-handed weapon, or with a one-handed weapon wielded in two hands, add twice the number subtracted from your attack rolls instead. The bonus from Power Attack cannot be added to the damage dealt with a light weapon (except with unarmed strikes or natural weapon attacks), even though the penalty on all attack rolls still applies.

(Normally, a double weapon is treated as a one-handed weapon and a light weapon. If you choose to use a double weapon as a two-handed weapon, attacking with only one end of it in a round, you treat the double weapon as a two-handed weapon.)

Power Charge

Once you start a charge, you become extremely dangerous.

Prerequisites: Str 13, Power Attack

Benefit: When using the charge action, you deal double damage with a melee weapon (including a natural weapon). Only the weapon's damage doubles, not the bonuses from Strength, magic or other factors.

Special: Characters with a base attack bonus of +20 or higher can take this feat a second time and gain an additional +10 bonus on damage rolls when charging (this bonus is not doubled).

Precise Shot

You can fire into melee with exceptional accuracy.

Prerequisite: Point Blank Shot

Benefit: You can shoot or throw ranged weapons at an opponent engaged in melee without taking the standard –4 penalty on your attack roll.

Quick Draw

You can draw your weapon or other object with incredible speed.

Prerequisite: Base attack bonus +1

Benefit: You can draw a weapon as a free action instead of as a move action. You can draw a hidden weapon (see Chapter 3: Skills, "Sleight of Hand") as a move action.

Characters with this feat may throw weapons at their full normal rate of attacks (similar to a character with a semiautomatic or automatic firearm).

Normal: Without this feat, you may draw a weapon as a move action or (if your base attack bonus is +1 or higher) as a free action as part of movement; you can draw a hidden weapon as a standard action.

Rapid Strike

Choose one type of weapon for which you have already taken the Weapon Focus feat. You can make extra, blindingly fast melee strikes with this weapon.

Prerequisites: Dex 15, Weapon Focus, base attack bonus +3

Benefit: Once per day per level, as part of a full-attack action, you can use the chosen weapon to make an additional attack, with a base attack bonus of half your highest normal base attack bonus. Even if you wield more than one weapon, however, no more than one Rapid Strike is possible in a round.

Special: You can take this feat multiple times. Its effects do not stack. Each time, it applies to a new type of weapon.

Resistance to Disease

You have an innate resistance to illness.

Benefit: You gain a +4 bonus on saves against diseases, including supernatural diseases.

Resistance to Magic

You have an innate resistance to magic.

Benefit: You gain a +1 bonus on saves against spells, spell-like abilities, supernatural abilities, magic items and so on.

Resistance to Poison

You have an innate resistance to toxins.

Benefit: You gain a +4 bonus on saves against poisons, including supernatural poisons.

Semiautomatic Weapon Proficiency

You are skilled at using semiautomatic firearms in combat.

Benefit: When you use the double tap action (see Chapter 7: Playing the Game, "Actions in the Round," *Action Descriptions*) with a semiautomatic weapon, you are not flat-footed for one round.

Normal: Characters who use the double tap action are flat-footed for one round.

Sensitive

You are sensitive to supernatural happenings and magic in general.

Prerequisite: Wis 15

Benefit: You can sense the presence of the supernatural (a currently active spell on a person, a Nightmare Site, the aura of a newly encountered supernatural item and so on), within five feet with a 50% chance of success. If you fail, there is no second try. Usually, the sense comes as a prickling on the skin or a feeling deep down in your gut.

Special: The GM should feel free, when he wishes, to make the roll secretly when you encounter something supernatural, so that you might sense it even when you are not trying.

Further, the GM should feel free to give you a sense of foreboding when some major supernatural event occurs nearby, such as a special ceremony, the casting of a powerful spell, the presence of a major Nightmare Site, and so on.

Shot on the Run

You can attack with ranged weapons while you move.

Prerequisites: Dex 13, Defensive Stance, Mobility, Point Blank Shot, base attack bonus +4

Benefit: When using the attack action with a ranged weapon, you can move both before and after the attack, provided that the total distance moved is not greater than your speed.

Skill Focus

Choose a skill. You are gifted with that skill.

Benefit: You get a +3 bonus on all checks involving the selected skill.

Special: You can take this feat multiple times. Its effects do not stack. Each time you take the feat, it applies to a new skill.

Skilled

You have devoted a great deal of energy to developing your skills.

Benefit: Choose two skills in which you have at least one rank. You gain a +2 bonus on checks with those skills.

Special: You can take this feat multiple times. Each time, it applies to two different skills.

Sneak Attack

You can make damaging strikes on an unprepared opponent.

Prerequisite: Dex 13

Benefit: If you can catch an opponent when he is unable to defend himself effectively from your attack, you can strike a vital spot for extra damage.

Your attack deals extra damage any time your target would be denied a Dexterity modifier to Defense (whether the target actually has a Dexterity bonus or not), or when you flank your target. This extra damage is +1d6. Should you score a critical hit with a sneak attack, this extra damage is not multiplied. This damage stacks with damage bonuses gained from First Strike.

Ranged attacks can count as sneak attacks only if the target is within 30 feet.

With a sap (blackjack) or an unarmed strike, you can make a sneak attack that deals nonlethal damage instead of lethal damage. You cannot use a weapon that deals lethal damage to deal nonlethal damage in a sneak attack, not even with the usual –4 penalty.

You can sneak attack only living creatures with discernible anatomies — the GM may rule that some bizarre creatures altered by the Nightmare Wave are not subject to sneak attacks. Any creature that is immune to critical hits is not vulnerable to sneak attacks. You must be able to see the target well enough to pick out a vital spot and must be able to reach such a spot. You cannot sneak attack while striking a creature with concealment or striking the limbs of a creature whose vitals are beyond reach.

Special: You can take this feat multiple times. Each time, your sneak attacks deal an additional +1d6 points of damage, but never more than +1d6/two character levels.

Speed Burst

You can move very fast in short bursts.

Benefit: Once per day per two levels, you can take an extra move action in a single round.

Sunder

You excel at attacking opponents' weapons, as well as other objects.

Prerequisites: Str 13, Power Attack

Benefit: When you strike at an object held or carried by an opponent (such as a weapon), you do not provoke an attack of opportunity. You also receive a +4 bonus on any attack roll made to attack an object held or carried by another character.

Normal: See the normal rules (Chapter 7: Playing the Game, "Actions," *Strike a Weapon*).

Supernatural Toughness

You are more than human, able to shrug off lethal blows.

Prerequisites: Awakened level 5 or werewolf level 2

Benefit: Critical hits do not deal Constitution damage to you; if someone scores a critical hit against you, you take normal damage and are stunned for one round. Just as any stunned creature, you drop everything you hold, can't take actions, take a –2 penalty to Defense and lose your Dexterity bonus to Defense (if any).

Normal: Critical hits deal Constitution damage; see Chapter 7: Playing the Game, "Combat Sequence," *Dealing Damage*.

The Voice

You have not only a way with words but an almost supernaturally compelling voice.

Benefit: You gain a +1 competence bonus on Bluff, Diplomacy and Gather Information checks, and a +2 competence bonus on all Perform (oratory) checks.

"Are you insane? Get closer? I have nightmares living this close to that . . . whatever it is. I mean, I'm sorry that Minnesota is gone and everything, but I don't need to see it firsthand."

—Carla Masterson, Chicago

Toughness

You are tougher than normal.

Benefit: You gain +1 hit point per Hit Die. Whenever you gain a Hit Die (from gaining a level, for example), you gain an additional hit point.

Special: You may take this feat multiple times. Its effects stack.

Track

You can find, identify and follow the trails of creatures.

Benefit: Finding tracks or following them for one mile requires a Survival check. You must make another Survival check every time the tracks become difficult to follow.

You move at half your normal speed (or at your normal speed with a –5 penalty on the check, or up to twice your normal speed with a –20 penalty). The DC depends on the surface and the prevailing conditions, as given in the following table.

Surface	Survival DC
Very soft ground	5
Soft ground	10
Firm ground	15
Hard ground	20

Very Soft Ground: Any surface (fresh snow, thick dust, wet mud) that holds deep, clear impressions of footprints.

Soft Ground: Any surface soft enough to yield to pressure, but firmer than wet mud or fresh snow, in which a creature leaves frequent but shallow footprints.

Firm Ground: Most normal outdoor surfaces (such as lawns, woods and the like) or exceptionally soft or dirty indoor surfaces (such as thick rugs and very dirty or dusty floors) are considered firm ground. Creatures might leave some traces (broken branches or tufts of hair), but they leave only occasional or partial footprints.

Hard Ground: Any surface that doesn't hold footprints at all (such as bare rock or an indoor floor) is considered hard ground. Most streambeds fall into this category, since any footprints left behind are obscured or washed away. Creatures leave only traces (scuff marks or displaced pebbles) of their passing.

Several modifiers may apply to the Survival check, as given in the following table.

Tracking Modifiers

Condition	Survival DC Modifier
Every three creatures in the group being tracked	–1
Size of creature or creatures being tracked	Variable*
Every 24 hours since the trail was made	+1
Every hour of rain since the trail was made	+1
Fresh snow cover since the trail was made	+10
Poor visibility	Variable**
Tracked party hides trail (and moves at half speed)	+5

* Fine +8, Diminutive +4, Tiny +2, Small +1, Medium +0, Large –1, Huge –2, Gargantuan –4, Colossal –8. For a group of mixed sizes, apply only the modifier for the largest size category.

** Overcast or moonless night +6; moonlight +3; fog or precipitation +3. Apply only the largest modifier from this category.

If you fail a Survival check, you can retry after one hour (outdoors) or 10 minutes (indoors) of searching.

Normal: Without this feat, characters can use the Survival skill to find tracks, but they can follow the tracks only if the DC for the task is 10 or lower. Alternatively, characters can use Search to find a footprint or similar sign of a creature's passage, using the DCs given in the table above, but the characters can't use Search to follow tracks, even if someone else has already found them.

Two-Weapon Defense

Your two-weapon fighting style provides defense as well as offense.

Prerequisites: Dex 15, Two-Weapon Fighting

Benefit: You gain a +1 dodge bonus to your Defense when wielding a double weapon or two weapons (not including natural weapons or unarmed strikes).

When you fight defensively or take the total defense action, this bonus increases to +2.

Two-Weapon Fighting

You can fight with a weapon in each hand. You can make one extra attack each round with the second weapon.

Prerequisite: Dex 15

Benefit: Your penalties on attack rolls for fighting with two weapons are reduced. The penalty for your primary weapon decreases by –2; the penalty for your off hand decreases by –6 (see Table 7–8: Two-Weapon Fighting Penalties).

Normal: If you wield a second weapon in your off hand, you can make one extra attack per round with that weapon. When fighting in this way, you take a –6 penalty with your regular attack or attacks with your primary hand and a –10 penalty on your off-hand attack. If your off-hand weapon is light, the penalties are reduced by 2 each. (An unarmed strike or natural weapon always is always considered light.)

Uncanny Dodge

You can react to danger before your senses would normally allow you to do so.

Prerequisite: Dex 15

Benefit: You retain your Dexterity bonus to Defense (if any) even if you are caught flat-footed or struck by an invisible attacker. However, you still lose your Dexterity bonus to Defense if you are immobilized.

Way with Animals

Animals seem drawn to you, and you can sense things from them that others cannot.

Prerequisite: Cha 13

Benefit: You can apply your Bluff, Diplomacy and even Gather Information skills to animals, including animals changed by the Nightmare Wave. You cannot use this feat with fish, unless you are a native water-breather. To use the feat, you and the animal must be able to study each other, noting each other's body language, vocalizations and general demeanor. This means that you must be within 30 feet of each other, under normal conditions.

You can improve an animal's attitude with a Diplomacy check. Generally, influencing an animal in this way takes one minute, but, as with influencing people, it might take more or less time. (See the Diplomacy skill in Chapter 3.) Similarly, you can Bluff an animal, tricking it into believing something untrue. Obviously, the concept must be simple, such as: "There's something dangerous behind you," "I mean you no harm" or "I would make a terrible meal." You don't really speak to the animal; you simply convey the idea through movement, vocalizations and general demeanor. Bluffing an animal is usually a standard action.

You can even use Gather Information among animals, but again, the concepts must be simple and reflect something an animal would know, such as: "Has a dangerous predator been in the area?," "Is there water nearby?" or "What's the general threat level in the area?" You accomplish this task by observing animal actions, their environment, and general demeanor. This use of the feat takes at least an hour.

Weapon Finesse

You are especially skilled at using light weapons.

Prerequisite: Base attack bonus +1

Benefit: With a light weapon, you can use your Dexterity modifier instead of your Strength modifier on attack rolls.

Special: Natural weapons are always considered light weapons.

Weapon Focus

Choose one type of weapon, such as auto pistol. You can also choose unarmed strike or grapple (or an appropriate rote, such as kinetic blow, if you are a mage) as your weapon for purposes of this feat. You are particularly adept with this weapon.

Prerequisites: Proficiency with selected weapon, base attack bonus +1

Benefit: You gain a +1 bonus on all attack rolls you make using the selected weapon.

Special: You can take this feat multiple times. Its effects do not stack. Each time, this feat applies to a new type of weapon.

Weapon Specialization

Choose one type of weapon for which you have already taken the Weapon Focus feat. You can also choose unarmed strike or grapple as your weapon for purposes of this feat. You deal extra damage when using this weapon.

Prerequisites: Proficiency with selected weapon, Weapon Focus with selected weapon, base attack bonus +4

Benefit: You gain a +2 bonus on all damage rolls made using the selected weapon.

Special: You can take this feat multiple times. Its effects do not stack. Each time, this feat applies to a new type of weapon.

Demon Cants

Cants are special powers that demons possess; cants are the supernatural things that demons can do, akin to a vampire hypnotizing someone with an intense gaze or a mage creating a defensive ward. Using a cant is a supernatural ability (as opposed to an extraordinary or spell-like ability; see the "Types of Special Abilities" sidebar in Chapter 7: Playing the Game, "Actions in the Round," *Action Types*), and so does not provoke attacks of opportunity.

Cant descriptions are similar to feat descriptions, except cant descriptions include the following information.

Action: What type of action (such as free, move or standard) the cant constitutes.

Cost: How much Anima the cant costs.

Duration: How long the cant lasts.

"Demon" does not appear as a prerequisite in the descriptions, but only demons can take cants.

In addition, some cants have a bold entry referring to one of the demon types (scourge or tempter). A demon of that type gains the listed benefit. This benefit may be a decreased cost, increased effect or some other advantage. The two kinds of demons have different affinities for certain cants, and this benefit represents that affinity.

Several cants refer to demonic energy damage. This energy is the demon's otherworldly animating force (the demon's equivalent of a soul) that lets the demon imbue nonliving matter with a semblance of life and walk among humankind. Though this energy may look similar to fire, electricity or other earthly types of energy (and leave similar wounds), this energy is not native to this dimension and no native creature has any resistance to this force (and sometimes the target simply ages and withers). Even spells and supernatural effects that protect against electricity, fire or radiation have no effect on this energy — Earth has no equivalent to this energy and no way to counter its effects.

Unless otherwise specified, a demon can use any of its cants regardless of its current shape.

Battle Claws

You create powerful claws.

Benefit: You grow strong claws on your hands (and feet, if you so choose). These claws are natural weapons that each deal 1d8 points of slashing damage. When the claws are out, you gain a +8 equipment bonus on Climb checks. You can retract or extend the claws as a free action. If you are in your true form and it does not have hands, an appropriate part of your body grows claws or spines or some other natural weapon you can use; if your true form doesn't have limbs, you temporarily grow simple limbs or pseudopods ending in sharp blades for this purpose.

The claws look strange and unearthly, unlike any normal animal.

Scourge: When you score a critical hit with a claw, the target must make a Fortitude save (DC 10 + your Hit Dice + your Constitution modifier) or be dazed for one round because of the pain of your attack.

Action: Free

Cost: 1 Anima

Duration: 1 minute

Breach Barrier

You can pass through solid objects as a ghost does.

Prerequisite: Int 13, level 6

Benefit: You alter your molecular structure to pass through solid objects. You can penetrate wood, plaster or stone to a depth of five feet but cannot enter metal unless you spend an additional one Anima. You can pass through thicker materials by spending one Anima per five feet of distance (plus one additional Anima if metal blocks that distance). You cannot pass through supernatural barriers or force fields (if such things exist).

While in this ghostly state, you are invulnerable to physical attacks (including nonmagical energy) and unable to affect anything (even yourself) physically or supernaturally.

Action: Free

Cost: 1 Anima or more

Duration: 1 round

Breach Space

You can teleport, instantaneously moving long distances without passing through the intervening space.

Prerequisite: Int 13, level 8

Benefit: You travel instantly to another location. You can bring along objects as long as their weight doesn't exceed your maximum load. If you are not very familiar with the location (it is not a place you have been often), you must make a Will save to successfully teleport. Your level of familiarity determines the save DC, as shown in the following chart.

DC	Familiarity
20	*Studied carefully:* A place you know well, either because you can currently see it, you've been there often or you have used other means (such as scrying, a surveillance feed or the eyes of a thrall) to study the place for at least one hour.
25	*Seen casually:* A place that you have seen more than once but with which you are not familiar, or the current location of a thrall.
30	*Viewed once:* A place that you have seen once, possibly using means other than visiting it directly.

If you fail the save, you fail to teleport. If you roll a 1 on the save, you appear (safely) a random distance away from the destination in a random direction (both determined by the GM — distance off target is 1d10 x d% of the distance that you were to travel).

Action: Standard

Cost: 1 Anima

Duration: 1 round

Confess

You can convince mortals to cough up their secrets.

Prerequisites: Cha 13, level 4

TABLE 4–2: DEMON CANTS

Cants	Prerequisites	Benefit
Battle Claws	—	You can grow claws that deal 1d8 damage.
Breach Barrier	Int 13, level 6	Pass through solid objects.
Breach Space	Int 13, level 8	Teleport anywhere in the world.
Confess	Cha 13, level 4	Target reveals secrets.
Conjure Demonic Minion	Level 4	Conjure a demonic minion.
Corrupting Lash	Level 6	Make a touch attack for 2d6 demonic energy damage.
Corrupting Matrix	Level 6	Radiate 1d6 demonic energy damage within five feet.
Demonic Will	—	+10 maximum Anima, +1 Anima spent/round; –5 minutes in alternate forms.
Extend Disguise	Level 4	Remain in an alternate form longer.
Flesh Transparency	—	Momentarily reveal your true form to frighten witnesses.
Flight	Manipulate Attraction	Fly at speed 60.
Great Stature	Level 4	Grow one size larger for one minute.
Husk Minion	Level 4	Conjure zombie minion from dead body.
Imbue Object	Int 13, level 4	Imbue an object so anyone carrying it is enhanced.
Infernal Pact	Cha 13	Enhance a mortal in exchange for one Anima/day.
Insinuate	—	Target becomes friendlier toward you.
Manipulate Attraction	—	Make yourself slippery or sticky.
Manipulate Cohesion	Level 6	Increase or decrease an object's hardness.
Manipulate Earth	Level 2	Manipulate the ground to attack or hinder opponents.
Mindbite	—	Attack deals 1d6 demonic energy damage and possibly two Wisdom damage.
Murderous Recharge	Corrupting Lash or Corrupting Matrix	Gain one Anima when you use one of the prerequisite cants to kill someone.
Speed Surge	Level 4	Gain an extra standard or move action this turn.
Thrallsight	Infernal Pact, level 4	See or speak through someone with whom you have a demonic pact.
Thrallsave	Infernal Pact, level 6	Possess someone with whom you have a demonic pact.
Torturous Memory	Level 6	Pull a memory from the target and twist the memory against him.

Benefit: This cant functions as the vampire Discipline Revelation (see below). The target takes a –5 penalty on his save if he is currently subject to your Insinuate or Torturous Memory cant.

Tempter: The target has a –4 penalty to resist this cant.

Action: Free

Cost: 1 Anima

Duration: 1 minute

Conjure Demonic Minion

You can create a demonic minion out of your substance.

Prerequisite: Level 4

Benefit: You conjure a minor minion with the demonic template (see Chapter 8: Running the Game, "Antagonists and Supporting Characters," *Minions*).

Special: You can select this feat up to four times. Its effects do not stack. Every time beyond the first you select this feat, the type of demon minion you can conjure is improved by one step (to lesser, greater and superior). You cannot conjure a minion with more Hit Dice than you.

Action: Standard

Cost: 1 Anima per rank of the minion (1 for minor, 2 for lesser, 3 for greater, 4 for superior)

Duration: 1 minute

Corrupting Lash

You strike out with a blast of alien energy.

Prerequisite: Level 6

Benefit: Make a melee touch attack. If you hit, for every Anima you spend on the attack, you deal 2d6 points of demonic energy damage to the target (Fortitude half, DC 10 + your Hit Dice + your Constitution modifier). You must decide how much Anima to spend before you make the attack roll.

Action: Standard

Cost: 1 Anima or more

Duration: Instantaneous

Corrupting Matrix

Your matrix is harmful to living things.

Prerequisite: Level 6

Benefit: You amplify your matrix so you leak harmful energy. Any creature within five feet of you takes 1d6 points of demonic energy damage every round on your turn. If a creature within five feet harms you, feedback from your matrix deals 1d6 points of demonic energy damage to it, though this result can be no more than the damage you took from the attack. For example, if a human stabs you for three points of damage, the feedback can deal only up to three points of

damage to the human; if you roll a 4, 5 or 6 on the feedback damage die, treat the result as a 3.

Scourge: Your aura deals 2d6 points of damage instead of 1d6.

Action: Free
Cost: 1 Anima
Duration: 1 minute

Demonic Will

Your matrix is powerful, allowing you to use and store more Anima.

Benefit: Your maximum Anima increases by 10 and the number of Anima you can spend per round increases by one. The maximum amount of time you can spend in an alternate form before needing to return to your true form decreases by five minutes.

Special: You may take this cant up to five times. Its effects (positive and negative) stack.

Extend Disguise

You can remain in a disguise form for longer than normal.

Prerequisite: Level 4

Benefit: You may stay in an alternate form for an additional 10 minutes before reverting to your true form. You can use this ability multiple times to further extend your time in another form. If you switch to a different form (even another alternate form), you lose the benefits of this cant.

Action: Free
Cost: 1 Anima
Duration: Instantaneous

Flesh Transparency

You momentarily reveal your true form through your disguise.

Benefit: You allow your true form to show through your mortal disguise for just a moment. Any creature that sees you clearly must make a Will save (DC 10 + your Hit Dice + your Charisma modifier) or become frightened and flee for 2d6 rounds. A creature that rolls a 1 on its save is panicked rather than frightened. (See Chapter 7: Playing the Game, "Special Abilities," *Fear*.)

The viewers must have line of sight to you; seeing you in a mirror, photo or television is no more frightening than any other special effect.

This transformation does not affect your remaining time transformed or the recovery period after shapechanging.

Action: Standard
Cost: 1 Anima
Duration: Instantaneous

Flight

You can fly.

Prerequisite: Manipulate Attraction

Benefit: You can fly at a speed of 60 feet (good maneuverability). You can ascend at half speed and descend at double speed. Flying requires only as much concentration as walking, so you can take actions normally.

You can charge while flying, but you cannot run and cannot carry aloft more weight than your maximum load.

Action: Free
Cost: 1 Anima
Duration: 1 minute

Great Stature

You can grow in size, increasing your strength and hardiness.

Prerequisite: Level 4

Benefit: You grow larger, increasing in size by one size category. When you grow, adjust your abilities scores follows: Strength +4, Dexterity –2, Constitution +4. Your natural bonus to Defense (if any) increases by +2 but you take a –1 size penalty to Defense and attack rolls. Your space becomes 10 feet, and your reach increases to 10 feet. The damage dice of your natural attacks (if any) increase by one step (see the Improved Natural Attack feat for the progression).

These changes go away when you return to your normal size (a free action). Objects in your possession do not change size. You cannot use this cant while it is already active (i.e., you cannot increase your size by more than one category).

You may also increase your size without changing your size category; this does not affect your abilities but does make you taller.

Scourge: Your Strength increases by +8 rather than +4.
Action: Free
Cost: 1 Anima
Duration: 1 minute

Husk Minion

You can create a zombie minion from a dead body.

Prerequisite: Level 4

Benefit: You conjure a minor minion with the zombie template (see Chapter 8: Running the Game, "Antagonists and Supporting Characters," *Minions*), using a dead human body as the substrate. If the body is one of your thralls or someone you killed with Corrupting Lash or Corrupting Matrix, the duration is 10 minutes.

Special: You can select this feat up to four times. Its effects do not stack. Every time beyond the first you select this feat, the type of zombie minion you can conjure is improved by one step (to lesser, greater and superior). You cannot conjure a minion with more Hit Dice than you.

Action: Standard
Cost: 1 Anima per rank of the minion (1 for minor, 2 for lesser, 3 for grater, 4 for superior)
Duration: 1 minute

Imbue Object

You can focus your matrix on an object to temporarily imbue it with power.

Prerequisite: Int 13, level 4

Benefit: You can imbue an object with energy so that any creature wearing or carrying it gains a supernatural power. You can give an object any one of the following powers: +4 to one ability score, +10 on checks with one skill, +10 hit points or darkvision. The item functions

automatically when touched — the bearer does not need to activate it.

Your alien energy weakens the object, reducing its hardness and hit points by 1.

Action: Standard
Cost: 5 Anima
Duration: 1 day

Infernal Pact

You forge an agreement with a mortal, exchanging something he wants for a ration of Anima.

Prerequisite: Cha 13

Benefit: As a being born of energy, you understand exchanges of power. By giving a mortal something he wants (money, superhuman strength, an enemy's death and so on), he must balance the equation by giving you something you want (typically Anima, though you may desire a service instead).

Unfortunately for mortals, pacts with demons don't work like in the movies. Demons are not omnipotent, so you have limits as to what you can give a mortal — if you aren't wealthy, you can't give a mortal a million dollars, if you don't control a small country you can't make him a king, and so on. Part of the trick to making a pact is finding a mortal who wants something within your power to grant: sex, comfort, knowledge, vengeance and so on. Not including any roleplaying or monetary resources at your disposal, you can create any one of the following supernatural gifts for a mortal as part of a pact: +4 to one ability score, +10 on checks with one skill, +10 hit points, darkvision, temporarily cure a disease or suspend a physical drawback (such as making a crippled leg fully functional).

Though these gifts aren't on par with granting wishes, a feeble old man can feel better with an improved Constitution, a paralyzed football player can walk if you suspend his broken back, a gambler can be lucky with a Profession skill bonus and so on. A clever demon can promise almost anything within the scope of these powers — a man who wants to seduce a coworker needs a Charisma boost, a researcher who wants to make a scientific breakthrough needs a Knowledge (earth and life sciences) boost and so on.

In most cases, what you want from a mortal is Anima, though he sees it in terms of his "soul." From your point of view, your pact creates a trickle of energy from him to you, giving you one Anima every day as long as he is alive and one additional Anima if he dies while the pact is in effect. From his point of view, he owes you his soul, which you will claim when he dies. Unlike a pact with a mythical demon, you both want him to hold off dying as long as possible — you because you don't want the influx of Anima to end, he because he doesn't want to be dead and especially doesn't want to give up his soul. It is a win-win situation — especially, because if you get bored with the agreement, you can just kill him.

Altering the mortal to grant his gift requires momentary physical contact, though some demons enjoy theatrics such as swearing in blood, signing contracts and so on. The mortal

must be a willing participant and able to make decisions for himself — any resistance or supernatural interference (such as mind control) prevents the pact from taking effect. The act of altering the mortal also establishes the Anima link, if that is your payment. Every day afterward, you automatically drain one Anima from him (typically at sundown). A mortal in a pact with a demon is called a thrall.

Accepting a demonic pact automatically reduces a mortal's Wisdom by two points; interfacing with your matrix is traumatic and fundamentally damaging to mortals despite any gifts you grant them. This reduction is permanent; neither magic, rest nor any other force can repair it.

You can end a pact as a standard action (the mortal doesn't need to be present), which immediately causes the mortal to lose his pact-granted gift and severs the link that provides you Anima. You or another demon can forge another pact with the mortal (though by all rights he should be suspicious of such a contract, having had it unilaterally broken once before). The only way a mortal can end a pact unilaterally is to die, though he can have you end it for him. (Most demons require a suitable mortal replacement before they agree to do this.)

A mortal can have only one pact at a time. (Trying to forge a second one automatically fails.) You can maintain one pact per point of your Charisma bonus. An unbroken pact counts as an acquaintance-level sympathetic connection between the mortal and you (see Chapter 5: Magic, "Spells," *Spell Range*.) You cannot forge a pact with an animal or another demon, but you can form them with humans, Awakened, mages, vampires and werewolves.

You can forge a pact on behalf of another demon (building a link between it and the mortal), but doing so costs 10 Anima instead of the normal five. The other demon normally provides the Anima to create the pact and some additional payment (Anima, a service, information and so on). Once you create the pact, you are no longer involved and the other demon is considered the pact's creator.

Action: Standard
Cost: 5 Anima
Duration: Instantaneous

Insinuate

You can make someone become friendlier to you.

Benefit: You improve the target's attitude toward you by one category (see the Diplomacy skill in Chapter 3). You must talk to your target, and he must be able to hear you speak. You cannot improve someone's attitude above friendly with this cant. The target gets a Will save to resist (DC 10 + your Hit Dice + your Charisma modifier).

This cant does not affect anyone in combat, expecting combat or in fear of serious or mortal harm. You can use this cant on a particular creature no more than once per minute (success or failure).

Tempter: You can use this cant when the target is in combat, expecting combat or in fear of harm.

Action: Standard
Cost: 0 Anima
Duration: 1 minute

Manipulate Attraction

You can alter how strongly things stick to you.

Benefit: You increase or decrease the affinity your body's molecules have toward other things, which increases or decreases how "sticky" you are. Increasing your affinity gives you a +10 bonus on Climb checks, checks to resist being disarmed, grapple checks (on any grappling action except trying to escape a grapple) and similar checks when having a strong grip is an advantage. You can even climb a perfectly smooth, flat, vertical surface (Climb DC 30) or stick things to your body to leave your hands free.

Decreasing your affinity gives you a +10 bonus on Escape Artist checks, Swim checks, grapple checks to escape a grapple and similar checks when being more slippery is an advantage. This slipperiness means debris such as dirt and sand is less likely to stick to you; even minute particles such as gunpowder residue and blood spatters tend to slide off.

Use of this ability does not change your appearance or texture, and does not cover you in any kind of film or residue; this is an instant alteration in local physics. Ending the ability is a free action. You may increase or decrease your affinity as often as you like on your turn; for example, you can reduce your affinity to escape a grapple, increase it to climb a wall to safety, then reduce it again to slide down a garbage chute. This cant affects your entire body — you cannot make part of yourself sticky and another part slippery.

Action: Free
Cost: 0 Anima
Duration: Until you end it

Manipulate Cohesion

You can alter an object's durability.

Prerequisite: Level 6

Benefit: You increase or decrease a touched object's hardness by 8. This cant cannot reduce an item's hardness to less than 0; if it would do so, the object instead reduces its hardness to 0 and deals 1d6 points of demonic energy damage for each remaining point of hardness reduction. For example, a piece of wood with hardness 5 becomes hardness 0 and takes (8 – 5 =) 3d6 points of demonic energy damage.

You can use this cant on a liquid, temporarily hardening it enough to support a human's weight. This application converts one five-foot square per your Hit Die. You can alter air this way, though the cant affects only one-fourth of the area.

You may use this cant once per round. An attended object gets a save (DC 10 + your Hit Dice + your Charisma modifier).

Scourge: Decreasing an object's hardness costs 0 Anima.
Action: Free
Cost: 1 Anima
Duration: 1 round

Manipulate Earth

You can reshape earth as if it were water bending to your will.

Prerequisite: Level 2

Benefit: You can extend your will into the earth, reshaping it as you desire. You can affect a surface area about 10 feet

square (to a depth of a few inches) or a volume of about 40 cubic feet. The earth does not gain any special ability to hold its shape against gravity (for example, a narrow arch of earth immediately collapses). The earth does not revert to its original shape on its own, though weather, time and other creatures may affect the earth.

The material doesn't have to be topsoil — you can manipulate rocky soil or clay as long as the material is mostly earth and the stones are no larger than a human head. You cannot trap, bury or cover an unwilling creature in earth unless the creature is helpless.

You can use this cant to perform certain special attacks.

Blind: You can scatter fine earth in a 10-foot cube, blinding creatures in the area for 1d4 rounds if they fail a Fortitude save (DC 10 + your Charisma modifier).

Pummel: You form a sledge or ram out of the earth, which strikes up to four targets in the area. You make a ranged touch attack against each target. If the attack hits, the target takes bludgeoning damage equal to 1d8 + your Charisma bonus.

Slow: You can form the area into irregular shapes, slowing movement as appropriate for rough terrain (moving out of a square costs two squares of movement).

Trip: Make a Strength or Charisma check opposed by the target's Strength or Dexterity check (whichever has the highest ability modifier). All factors that affect a trip attack (target's size, stability, extra legs and so on) apply to this check. If you win, you trip the target. If you lose, the target cannot attempt to trip you in response. You can affect all creatures standing within a 10-foot-square area. You make only one Strength or Charisma check; each target makes an individual check to resist.

Action: Standard
Cost: 0 Anima
Duration: Instantaneous

Mindbite

You shred the target's mind, inflicting pain and injuring his will.

Benefit: Make a ranged touch attack against a target within 10 feet. If you hit, you deal 1d6 points of demonic energy damage. The target must make a Will save (DC 10 + your Hit Dice + your Charisma modifier) or also take two points of Wisdom damage. If you have Corrupting Lash, you may use it and Mindbite as part of the same attack.

Scourge: You heal five hit points every time the target takes Wisdom damage from this attack.

Action: Attack
Cost: 0 Anima
Duration: Instantaneous

Murderous Recharge

You gain Anima when using your matrix to kill.

Prerequisites: Corrupting Lash or Corrupting Matrix

Benefit: You gain one Anima when you kill a mortal (including humans, Awakened, mages, vampires and werewolves, but not animals) using Corrupting Lash or Corrupting Matrix.

Scourge: You may immediately spend this one Anima to turn the corpse into a zombie minor minion (as if using the Husk Minion cant). You can do this even if you have already reached your limit for spending Anima this round.

Action: Not an action (you can use it even on someone else's turn)
Cost: 0 Anima
Duration: —

Speed Surge

You can take an extra action on your turn.

Prerequisite: Level 4

Benefit: You gain an extra standard or move action in addition to your normal available actions this turn. You can use this cant no more than once per round.

Action: Free
Cost: 2 Anima
Duration: Instantaneous

Thrallsight

You can see through the eyes of your thrall.

Prerequisite: Infernal Pact, level 4

Benefit: You can project your senses to any one of your thralls, experiencing what he experiences with all five of his senses. Distance is not a factor. The thrall cannot resist this intrusion, though effects that block scrying block your ability to use this cant. The thrall is not aware of this intrusion.

You can speak through the thrall for up to one minute (though not otherwise control his actions) by spending one Anima; the thrall can resist with a Will save (DC 10 + your Hit Dice + your Charisma modifier). The thrall knows when you speak through him and can hear what you say with his mouth.

When your senses are projected into your thrall, you are unable to perceive what happens near your body, though you are aware if you are attacked.

Tempter: You may whisper into your thrall's mind while using his senses. Though he cannot telepathically respond, he may speak, and you will hear it with his ears. This effect costs 0 Anima.

Action: Standard
Cost: 0 Anima
Duration: Concentration

Thrallslave

You can control your thrall like a puppet.

Prerequisite: Infernal Pact, level 6

Benefit: You can possess any one of your thralls, at any distance, subsuming his will to your own. The thrall's mind is a prisoner during this time, perceiving everything that you do but unable to act. Your body assumes your true form but reverts to its base materials, inert and lifeless.

You keep your Intelligence, Wisdom, Charisma, level, base attack bonus, base save bonuses, skill ranks and other abilities that are purely mental (such as resistance to mind-affecting abilities). The body retains its Strength, Dexterity, Constitution, hit points and natural abilities (natural weapons, modes of breathing and movement and so forth). You can't activate the body's extraordinary or supernatural abilities and cannot use any of your demonic powers or cants.

The thrall gets a Will save to resist this ability (DC 10 + your Hit Dice + your Charisma modifier). A mage, werewolf, vampire or Awakened gets a +4 bonus on his save.

Damage to the host also affects your body; you take the same amount of hit point damage, ability damage and ability drain as the host. If the host dies, you return to your body, reduced to –1 hit point and unconscious.

You may end the possession at any time, returning to your body instantly, but can continue the possession indefinitely.

Action: Standard

Cost: 1 Anima

Duration: Until you end it

Torturous Memory

You steal a thought from someone's mind and use the thought against her.

Prerequisite: Level 6

Benefit: You pull a memory from your target's mind and use this knowledge against her. You must specify an emotional association for the memory: fear, guilt, despair, anger and so on. The target can resist this attack with a Will save (DC 10 + your Hit Dice + your Charisma modifier); success means you cannot learn anything from her mind (but you can try using this cant again on your next turn).

If the target fails her save, you read her mind and learn about someone significant to her that is relevant to the emotion you specified. For example, for "fear" you might learn she had an alcoholic abusive father, for "despair" you might learn her husband died in a horrible car accident or for "guilt" you may learn she blames herself for her brother's meth addiction. You learn enough relative details (the person's name, relationship to your target, what happened to him, a few snippets of conversation with the target and so on) to let you speak about this person as if you knew him at least casually. For the next hour, this knowledge gives you a +4 bonus on Diplomacy, Intimidate and Charisma checks to influence the target.

You may use your knowledge of this memory and your shapechanging powers (if available) to take that person's form, voice and mannerisms (no Disguise roll is needed, as you are using your target's memories as your guide). Upon seeing you in this form, the target must make another Will save or actually believe that you are the person from her memory, no matter how unlikely that is (for example, if the person is dead, you might convince the target that the person is in Hell and therefore under your power), though the target's allies can help convince her otherwise. If the target rolls a 1 on this save, she is absolutely convinced that you are the person from her memory, and she takes a –4 penalty on saves to resist the third part of this cant.

In the guise of the memory (whether or not the target believes you), you can try to manipulate the target's emotions. The target resists with a Will save. If the target fails, you can target her with one of the following effects.

Despair/Guilt/Sorrow: The target takes a –2 penalty on attack rolls, saves, ability checks, skill checks and weapon damage rolls.

Fear: The target is panicked for a number of rounds equal to your Hit Dice. If cornered, she cowers.

Suggestion: You can implant a suggestion in the target's mind to perform an action or actions that can be completed within the hour. The actions must be plausible from the memory-identity's perspective; the abusive alcoholic father isn't going to tell his daughter to pick flowers for an hour, and the addict brother isn't going to tell his sister to blow up a bus full of nuns. Wracked by emotion from her past, no appropriate action is too extreme for the target — even suicide is possible if you can make it a plausible suggestion from the memory-identity. (For example, if her dead husband tells her there is nothing to live for, but if she kills herself at least they'll be together in death.)

You can stop the progress of this cant at any point; for example, you could decide to only violate the target's memory and save the other tricks for later, or take the shape of the memory-identity to lure your target into an alley but not otherwise try to influence her. If you stop the cant and decide to resume later, you must pay the Anima cost to reactivate the cant. You retain the knowledge of the target's memory; if you use the cant again, you can learn a new memory-identity or proceed with the one you already know.

Activating this cant is a standard action, though talking with the target to influence her and finally seal the deal may take several minutes.

Action: Standard
Cost: 1 Anima
Duration: 1 hour or until you end it

Mage Gnosis

Gnosis (singular and plural) are special abilities that mages gain; most gnosis assist mages' spellcasting in some regard. (See Chapter 5: Magic, "Spells" for an explanation of how spellcasting works.) Other gnosis are minor, raw magical effects in and of themselves. These latter gnosis are called shakti, and are special, as they cost the mage not only components, similar to spells, but his own life force (in the form of hit points). Shakti are similar to spells in that shakti can be interrupted, countered and the like.

Gnosis descriptions are similar to feat descriptions. Shakti also include the following information.

Action: What type of action (such as free, move, or standard) the shakti gnosis constitutes.

Cost: How much (in components and hit points) the shakti gnosis costs.

Duration: How long the shakti gnosis lasts.

Gnosis are not restricted by path — in theory, any mage can learn any gnosis. In practice, some gnosis are more suited to certain Paths than others; few Theurgists take Lich Transformation, Necromancers see little use in Curse Magic and so on. Conversely, some gnosis are especially suited for some Paths, and most practitioners of that Path eventually learn that gnosis. Theurgists and Shamans are fond of Component Focus (Heal), Necromancers look to lichdom for greater power and Warlocks gravitate to Summoner (Demon).

"Mage" does not appear as a prerequisite in the descriptions, but only mages can take gnosis.

Bane Casting

Choose one type of creature (animal, Awakened, demon, human, mage, vampire or werewolf). Your attack spells are stronger against creatures of this type.

Prerequisite: Level 4

Benefit: Increase your spell DCs against creatures of the chosen type by +2.

Special: You can select this gnosis multiple times. Its effects do not stack. Each time you take the gnosis, it applies to a new type of creature.

Bolt (Shakti)

You use your own life energy to fire a blast of magical force at a range.

Prerequisites: Jolt

Benefit: You draw forth raw magical (force) energy that you then project from your hand. You deal 1d6 points of damage for every two levels you possess to a single target up to 50 feet away if you succeed in making a ranged touch attack. The magical force is invisible.

Action: Standard (including the touch attack attempt)
Cost: 2 components and 2 hit points per 1d6 damage
Duration: Instantaneous

Blood Magic

You have unlocked the secret power in blood.

Prerequisites: Level 4

Benefit: You may use human blood as part of your spells to reduce their overall cost. For each pint of fresh human blood you use in casting a spell, you reduce the overall component cost by five (to a minimum of one). You cannot reduce the component cost by more than five times your own level, no matter how much blood you have access to.

Preserved blood (such as from a blood bank) is less potent than fresh blood. You need to use eight times the volume of preserved blood to get the same effect as fresh blood. Animal blood is similarly weak compared to human blood. Blood from an Awakened has the same effect on your spells as human blood.

A vampire's Vitae is twice as potent as normal blood. (Vitae reduces the spell's overall component cost by 10 rather than five.)

Werewolf blood has the same potency as human blood, though the GM may allow werewolf blood to be as effective as Vitae when used in some spells (particularly form-changing, strength and healing spells). Demons have no blood.

If the blood is already outside a body (such as in a bowl or flask), you can incorporate the blood into the spell without increasing the casting time, though you must be able to touch the blood (even momentarily) while casting.

If the blood is within a body (your own or another's), either living or recently slain, you must perform a small bloodletting ritual as part of the spellcasting; this ritual increases the casting time by one full round for every pint of blood you need. (Blood Magic is a precise ritual, and you can't stab the creature just anywhere and hope for the ritual to work.) If the creature supplying the blood is not a willing participant, it must be helpless or otherwise its struggles prevent you from completing the bloodletting ritual.

TABLE 4–3: MAGE GNOSIS

Gnosis	Prerequisites	Benefit
Bane Casting	Level 4	+2 spell DC against one type of creature.
Blood Magic	Level 4	Sacrifice blood to reduce the component costs of your spells.
Bolt[S]	Jolt	Deal 1d6 damage/two levels at range.
Component Focus	—	Reduce the component cost of one component by –2.
Curse Magic	—	Increase the spell DCs of your nonlethal attack spells.
Dutiful Attention	Level 10	You can maintain one additional ongoing spell.
Energy Focus	—	Reduce the Damage and Energy component costs of one kind of energy spells by one each; add thematic effects to your spells for free.
Extra Components	—	Your total components per day increases by 10%.
Familiar	—	Gain animal minion who helps you cast spells.
Hold[S]	Push	Hold a target in place with telekinesis.
Jolt[S]	—	Touch deals 1d6 damage/two levels.
Lich Transformation	Level 12	Increased Def and resistance to critical hits, but you must consume human souls.
Magical Comportment	—	Magically change your appearance.
New Rote Spell	—	You create a new rote spell.
Occultation	Level 6	Using sympathetic magic against you is difficult.
Practiced Quickening	Level 8	+5 to cast quickened spells.
Push[S]	—	You push an object with telekinesis.
Rote Crutch	—	+5 to cast rote spells;–5 to cast improvised spells.
Rune Scribe	—	You can use magical runes to make your spells last longer.
Summoner	—	You can add a particular minion template to a summoned minion at no cost.
Sympathist	—	Reduce the component cost of sympathetic spells by –5.
Talismanic Magic	—	+5 to cast spells with a talisman, –5 to cast without.
Transformative Aspect	Level 12	Gain abilities related to your path; gain physical alterations that make you look less human.
Warding[S]	—	+1 Defense/2 levels.

[S] Shakti gnosis.

Sacrificing blood from yourself or another creature deals one point of Constitution damage per pint taken. (A vampire loses Vitae instead.) A typical Medium creature contains about 10 pints of blood, a Small creature about five, a Tiny creature one and smaller creatures an insignificant amount. A Large creature such as a horse contains about 80 pints of blood.

Fresh blood quickly loses its potency, especially when exposed to air (donated blood is normally put directly into sealed bags to prevent contact with air). If exposed to air for more than a few minutes, fresh blood is no longer fresh and is useless for Blood Magic. As a temporary measure, you can preserve blood (or Vitae) for one hour by casting a spell that costs one component per pint. (Blood preserved in this way is still considered fresh.) You can repeat this process every hour as often as you like.

Component Focus

Choose one type of component (such as Range, Heal or Control). You are skilled at using spells with that component.

Benefit: When you cast a spell with the selected component, reduce that component's cost by –2 (minimum 0). For example, if you select Control, you can create a 4-component charm effect for a cost of only two component points. (You gain the benefit only once, no matter how many Control components you incorporate into the spell.)

Special: You can select this gnosis multiple times. Its effects do not stack. Each time you take the gnosis, it applies to a new component type. If you have selected this gnosis multiple times and cast a spell with multiple affected component types, each gnosis's benefit applies to the spell's cost.

Curse Magic

You can cast potent curse spells that debilitate and hamper without killing or injuring your target.

Benefit: You may increase your spell DCs for nonlethal curse spells by +5.

A nonlethal curse is a harmful spell that does not deal hit point damage, Constitution damage, cause death or encourage the target to try to harm others — curses of this type are meant to warn or punish, not kill.

Examples of suitable nonlethal curses are bad breath, diarrhea, limp, nausea, crippled limb, impotence, phobia, boils, extreme hunger or thirst, loss of a sense, infertility, chronic pain, chills, minor illnesses and clumsiness.

If you cast a spell to which you apply this gnosis, the spell ends if you attack the target with the intent to harm (dealing hit point damage or death), whether with a weapon, spell or supernatural ability. If one of your allies attacks the cursed target, he may make another save (without the +5 DC increase) to throw off the curse, at which point it rebounds to his attacker or back

to you (50% chance of either outcome). The rebound target gets a save to resist the curse (against the increased DC).

Dutiful Attention

You know how to keep more spells running at once.

Prerequisites: Level 10.

Benefit: Increase the number of ongoing (non-instantaneous) spells you can maintain at once by one.

Normal: You can maintain a number of non-instantaneous spells equal to your Intelligence modifier.

Energy Focus

Choose one common energy type (acid, cold, electricity, fire or sonic). You have an advantage when casting spells using this type of energy.

Benefit: The Damage and Energy components of any spell you cast using your chosen energy cost one less than normal.

You may add (purely cosmetic) thematic effects appropriate to your chosen energy type to other spells at no cost. A fire mage's flying spell may look like fiery wings (though they do not burn anything they touch). A cold mage's armor spell may look like a floating shield of transparent ice (though it does not feel cold). An electricity mage's mind-control spell may look like arcs of lightning shooting from his eyes to the target's forehead. An acid mage's wall-breaching spell may look like it burns through with concentrated acid.

Mages with this gnosis sometimes use a title appropriate to their energy choice (acidomancer, cryomancer, electromancer, pyromancer or sonomancer).

Special: You can select this gnosis multiple times. Its effects do not stack. Each time you take it, it applies to a new type of energy. If you have selected this gnosis multiple times and cast a spell with multiple energy types, each gnosis's benefit applies to the spell's cost.

Extra Components

You have more available components per day than normal.

Benefit: Your total components per day increase by 10%.

Special: You can select this gnosis up to five times. Its effects stack (20%, 30% and so forth).

Familiar

You have a familiar: a magical creature in the shape of an animal that helps you with magic.

Benefit: You have a magical helper in the shape of a Tiny animal (typically a cat, snake, bird, rat or toad). A familiar gives you several benefits.

Empathy: You have an empathic link to your familiar at all times. You know if it is healthy, hurt, frightened and so. This connection counts as a sympathetic conduit from you to the familiar; casting sympathetic magic on your familiar does not require any extra Range components — it's as easy as casting a spell on yourself, regardless of its distance from you. (A familiar is an excellent spy.) Unfortunately, rivals may use this connection to strike at you with sympathetic magic; any mage who holds your familiar can cast sympathetic spells on you without spending extra Range components.

Spellcasting: A familiar gives you a +2 bonus on Spellcraft checks to cast spells. Your familiar must be within five feet of you to give you this benefit.

Regardless of its shape, a familiar is just a minion with the harmless template (see Chapter 8: Running the Game, "Antagonists and Supporting Characters," *Minions*). Familiars are loyal and always obey your commands — though they may be stubborn, aloof, needy or have some other quirk, you two are linked.

At level 1, your familiar is a minor minion, but as you grow in power, your familiar becomes more resilient (becoming a lesser minion at level 5, a greater minion at level 10 and a superior minion at level 15 — but your familiar retains the harmless template). If you select this gnosis after level 1, your familiar is of the appropriate type for your level.

If your familiar dies, you can call another one with a 24-hour ritual that expends all of your components for the day.

If you have the Transformative Aspect gnosis, you decide if your familiar gains Path-appropriate cosmetic changes (these traits vanish and reappear when your own do); for example, a Necromancer's cat familiar may look like a skeleton, a Warlock's bat familiar may look like a gargoyle and an Enchanter's monkey familiar may look like a goblin.

Hold (Shakti)

You use your own life energy to exert blunt, magical force against an object.

Prerequisite: Push

Benefit: You use telekinetic force to keep an object or creature in place. The affected object or creature's weight cannot exceed an amount equal to five times your level in pounds. A Strength check (DC 10 + your level + your Intelligence modifier) is needed to move the object. A creature to be affected gains a Will saving throw (DC 10 + your level + your Intelligence modifier) to resist the effect and can attempt a new saving throw once per round as a standard action to break the hold. A held creature is not motionless, just fixed in place — the creature can still take actions that do not involve moving from its location.

You cannot affect multiple targets. You must have line of sight on the object or creature being held, and it must be within 100 feet of you.

Action: Standard

Cost: 2 components and 1d6 hit points

Duration: 1 round per level

Jolt (Shakti)

You use your own life energy to harm another with magical power.

Benefit: With a touch, you discharge raw magical (force) energy that disrupts creatures and objects. Your touch deals 1d6 points of damage for every two levels you possess to a single target. There is no visible discharge of power.

Action: Standard (including the touch attack attempt)

Cost: 1 component and 1 hit point per 1d6 damage

Duration: Instantaneous (thus, if you miss with the touch, you do not "hold the charge" — it is lost).

Lich Transformation

By corrupting your soul, you become something similar to a vampire, staving off death by feeding on living souls.

Prerequisite: Level 12

Benefit: By performing a corrupt ritual, you balance your soul in a state between life and death. This makes you much harder to kill, as if you are constantly protected by an "Unliving Vigor" spell (see Chapter 5: Magic, "Rote Spells"), and you get a +4 natural bonus to Defense.

As a lich, your soul is tainted and cannot maintain itself. Every week your Constitution decreases by two points unless you consume someone's soul and use it to repair your degrading life force. This Constitution reduction is permanent — you cannot cure it with rest, magic or medicine. You may use the "Devour the Living" spell to repair two points of this Constitution damage (instead of the normal use for healing hit point damage). When you cast Devour the Living on a dying creature, reduce the spell's cost by –4.

As your Constitution fails, your body looks increasingly morbid, gaining necrotic traits until you look like a corpse or mummy; although this change has no affect on your other abilities, it unnerves people around you and you take a –2 penalty on social skills (such as Diplomacy and Gather Information) to influence people if your Constitution has dropped at all due to this gnosis.

If your Constitution reaches 0, you die and crumble into dust.

The soul of an Awakened or werewolf is just as effective as a human soul. A mage's soul is worth twice the normal Constitution if the mage is at least the same level as you. A demon's soul is only worth one Constitution. You cannot feed on vampire or animal souls in this way.

Magical Comportment

The magic within you is so potent that it manifests in physical ways.

Benefit: You can choose one minor magical change that affects your appearance, such as a light chill breeze that blows around you at all times, your eyes glowing with a strange silvery radiance, your skin taking on a reddish, scaly appearance and so on. You can alter or dismiss the effect using a full-round action. The change is always wholly unnatural in appearance.

The effect is purely cosmetic. You cannot use it to disguise yourself as another creature, natural or unnatural. This effect cannot alter your size, your weight, your ability scores or any physical or mental capabilities. It cannot physically affect another creature in any way. It can affect only objects in your possession, and then only in appearance. It cannot affect the environment around you (the chill wind that blows your hair and coat does not blow out the candles you stand near). It can certainly make you appear more distinctive. In certain cases, as decided by the GM, this effect can aid in your ability to intimidate, usually adding no more than +2 on your Intimidate check.

New Rote Spell

You discover a new rote spell.

Benefit: Build a spell that you are able to cast. This spell is now a rote spell for you. Anyone who wants to cast this spell as a rote spell must learn it from you or spend a gnosis to develop it on his own.

A rote spell is easier to cast than an improvised spell (see Chapter 5: Magic, "Spells," *Improvised and Rote Magic*).

Special: You may select this gnosis multiple times. Its effects do not stack. Each time you select it, you designate another spell as a rote spell.

Occultation

You are resistant to sympathetic magic.

Prerequisite: Level 6

Benefit: Anyone trying to use sympathetic magic on you must spend an additional 10 Range components on the spell. Enemies using Divination magic on you also pay this cost. The increased cost applies whether the spell is opening a new conduit or using an existing one. This gnosis doesn't affect your own sympathetic spells.

Special: You can select this gnosis up to five times. Its effects stack.

Practiced Quickening

You can cast quickened spells almost effortlessly.

Prerequisite: Level 8

Benefit: You get a +5 bonus on Spellcraft checks to cast quickened spells (spells quickened with a Metaspell component). You are still limited to one quickened spell or effect per round.

Push (Shakti)

You use your own life energy to exert blunt, magical force against an object.

Benefit: You exert telekinetic force with a pressure equal to five times your level in pounds of force. Thus, at the sixth level, you exert 30 pounds of force. Thirty pounds of force is enough to move an object of up to 30 pounds (through the air or along the ground) up to 10 feet in one direction. There is no fine manipulation involved, and the pressure can come from only one direction, chosen by you. You can affect multiple objects, but they must be adjacent to each other, and the total weight cannot exceed the amount of force applied. The force exerted is never enough to damage an object or a creature in and of itself, although pushing something heavy off a shelf might damage the object from the fall (or might damage what the object falls upon). You must have line of sight on the object(s) being pushed, and they must be within 100 feet of you. You can use this gnosis as a bull rush attempt; the gnosis's Strength is equal to twice your level.

Action: Standard

Cost: 2 components and 1d6 hit points

Duration: Instantaneous

Rote Crutch

You easily cast rote spells but have a harder time with improvised magic.

Benefit: You gain a +5 bonus on Spellcraft checks to cast rote spells but take a –5 penalty on Spellcraft checks to cast improvised spells.

Rune Scribe

You know symbols of power that can make spells last longer.

Benefit: As part of casting a spell, you may draw or paint runes on a target or area to reduce the spell's Duration component cost by five (to a minimum of 0).

Drawing runes on a creature or object takes one full round for a Medium or smaller creature or twice that long for each size category above Medium. Applying runes to an area takes one full round for every five-foot length of its perimeter (four full rounds for a five-foot square, eight full rounds for a 10-foot square and so on).

The runes are fragile. On a creature, normal activity has a 5% chance per minute of damaging a rune; combat has a 10% chance per round of doing so. On an area, any creature passing over the runes has a 5% chance of scuffing one. Deliberately trying to smear, erase or obscure a rune on a creature or object automatically ruins the rune.

Damaging a rune ends its associated spell. You can spend one full round to repair the rune and reinstate the spell. Any time that passes while a rune is damaged counts against the duration of the spell.

Because of this fragility, mages normally use runes only on objects or areas that are likely to remain undisturbed.

Summoner

Choose a summoned minion template (demon, elemental, skeleton and so on). You can easily create minions of this type.

Benefit: When you create or summon a minion, you can add the chosen template to the minion at no cost. (See Chapter 8: Running the Game, "Antagonists and Supporting Characters," *Minions*, for more information on templates.)

Mages with this ability sometimes use special titles ("demonologist" for demon-summoners, "necromancer" or "necromonger" for skeletons or zombies and so on). However, these titles are self-appointed and do not require knowing this gnosis — a mage calling himself a demonologist might do so because he prefers studying demons rather than conjuring them; a necromancer might be a mage on the Necromancer Path and so on.

Special: You may select this gnosis multiple times. Its effects do not stack. Each time you select it, it applies to a new minion template.

Sympathist

You are comfortable using sympathetic magic.

Benefit: Reduce the overall component cost of all sympathetic spells you cast by –5 (to a minimum of 1).

Mage practitioners of the magic commonly known as "voodoo" (actually a religion called vodoun) often have this gnosis.

Special: You can select this gnosis up to five times. Its effects stack.

"I am a first degree magus in the Illuminates of Thanateros. You will treat me with the respect I am due."
—Carter Dulles, mage

Talismanic Magic

You use a magical talisman to focus your magical energies.

Benefit: You specify a specific talisman: an amulet, a knife, a wand, a bracelet, a ring or something similar. The talisman is specific: you cannot choose all knives, you must choose a specific knife. The talisman must be something you wear or can easily lift with one hand. You can have only one talisman at a time.

You gain a +5 bonus on Spellcraft checks to cast spells when you hold or brandish your talisman but take a –5 penalty on Spellcraft checks when you do not have it. It is not enough to merely have the talisman in your possession — you must hold it, touch it with your hand or otherwise make obvious gestures with it or toward it. For example, if your talisman is a bracelet, you would have to pull up your sleeve to fully expose the bracelet and hold out your forearm in front of you.

If your talisman is taken from you or destroyed, you can invest yourself with a new one, but this requires meditation and contemplation involving a full week.

Transformative Aspect

Your mastery of one of the five Paths of magic has changed your body.

Prerequisite: Level 12

Benefit: Your body and spirit reflect the power of your Path. You gain certain abilities but cannot blend in with normal humans as easily. The benefits and changes associated with this gnosis depend on your Path.

Enchanter: You gain a +2 bonus on Will saves and a +2 bonus to Dexterity, and reduce the Divination component cost of all spells by –1 (to a minimum of 1). You gain fey-like traits, such as small horns on your head, patches of green or bark-like skin, fur, an animal tail or large elf-like ears or eyes.

Necromancer: You gain a +2 bonus on Fortitude saves and a +2 bonus to Intelligence, and your maximum hit points increase by 10. You gain undead-like traits such as a corpse-like smell, sunken eyes and cheeks, pallid skin, hands that are nothing but bone, foul breath or vampire fangs. Some Necromancers with this gnosis are mistaken for vampires.

Shaman: You gain a +2 bonus on Fortitude saves and a +2 bonus to Wisdom, and reduce the Enhance, Heal and Protection component costs of all spells by –1 (to a minimum of 1). You gain feral traits such as an animal-like nose, fur, claws, elongated teeth, feathers or an animal tail. Some Shamans with this gnosis are mistaken for werewolves.

Theurgist: You gain a +2 bonus on Will saves and a +2 bonus to Charisma, and reduce the Enhance, Heal and Protection component costs of all spells by –1 (to a minimum of 1). You gain traits associated with angels, djinn and other benign otherworldly entities of your faith, such as a faintly visible aura or halo, small feathered wings, metallic or colored skin, stigmata or the smell of strange herbs.

Warlock: You gain a +2 bonus on Reflex saves and a +2 bonus to Constitution, and reduce the Damage and Summon component costs of all spells by –1 (to a minimum of 1). You gain infernal traits such as goat horns, goat legs, red skin, unusual body hair, extra fingers, bat wings, a reptilian tongue or scaly skin. Many Warlocks with this gnosis are mistaken for demons (though those in the know understand that actual demons only look that way for show).

Once per round, you may suppress or reactivate the effects of this gnosis (benefits and drawbacks) as a free action. Suppressing the effects counts as maintaining an ongoing spell (see Chapter 5: Magic, "Spells," *Spell Duration*); your altered form is now your natural form and hiding it is a demand on your attention.

Regardless of the exact nature of the physical transformation, it is obvious, and a casual observer easily notices it. The change never consists of minor differences (such as a strange eye color or an extra nipple) that can easily be concealed — a "disguise" consisting of a T-shirt and a pair of sunglasses cannot hide the fact that you are no longer fully human. However, you can hide these traits if you are careful. For example, a Warlock might wear layered skirts to hide her satyr legs, a large hat to cover her horns and gloves to conceal her curved talons.

Warding (Shakti)

You use your own life energy to set up quick but effective magical defenses.

Benefit: You gain a deflection bonus to Defense equal to half your level.

Action: Free

Cost: 2 components and 1d4 hit points per Defense bonus gained

Duration: 1 round per level

Vampire Disciplines

Disciplines are the strange, supernatural powers that vampires possess. Using a Discipline is a supernatural ability (as opposed to an extraordinary or spell-like ability; see the "Types of Special Abilities" sidebar in Chapter 7: Playing the Game, "Actions in the Round," *Action Types*), and so does not provoke attacks of opportunity.

Discipline descriptions are similar to feat descriptions, except Discipline descriptions include the following information.

Action: What type of action (such as free, move or standard) the Discipline constitutes.

Cost: How much Vitae the Discipline costs.

Duration: How long the Discipline lasts.

"Vampire" does not appear as a prerequisite in the descriptions, but only vampires can take Disciplines.

In addition, each Discipline (except Blood Potency) has a bold entry referring to one or more clans, such as "Gangrel or Ventrue." A vampire of that clan gains the listed benefit. This benefit may be a decreased cost, increased effect or some other advantage. Each clan has a natural affinity for three Discipline groups, and this benefit represents that affinity.

Devotions

This section also describes devotions, which appear after the Discipline descriptions. Some skilled vampires have found ways to combine Disciplines, creating new abilities that augment or complement other vampire abilities. Called devotions, they are not part of any of the known Discipline groups — devotions bridge the gaps among the Disciplines. Unlike Disciplines, devotions do not give extra benefits to vampires from certain clans.

Discipline Groups

Disciplines are organized into a number of broad groups, as described below. The group to which a Discipline belongs appears after its name, such as Feral Whispers [Animalism].

Animalism

These Disciplines allow you to converse with, command and summon animals. This group includes Call of the Wild, Feral Whispers, Leashing the Beast, Obedience and Subsume the Lesser Spirit. Gangrel and Ventrue vampires have an affinity for these Disciplines.

Auspex

These Disciplines involve improving your senses and perceiving what others cannot. This group includes Aura Perception, Heightened Senses, The Spirit's Touch, Telepathy and Twilight Projection. Mekhet vampires have an affinity for these Disciplines.

Celerity

This group includes only a single Discipline, Celerity, which you can take multiple times. It makes you faster and more agile. Daeva and Mekhet vampires have an affinity for this Discipline.

Dominate

Dominate Disciplines allow you control over other intelligent beings. The group includes Command, Conditioning, The Forgetful Mind, Mesmerize and Possession. Ventrue vampires have an affinity for these Disciplines.

Where appropriate, the save DC against Dominate Disciplines is 10 + your Hit Dice + your Charisma modifier.

All Dominate Disciplines work only on creatures with sentient minds, not on animals.

Dominate Disciplines cannot make a target directly harm himself, so obviously suicidal orders have no effect.

A Dominated creature (dominated with any Dominate Discipline) may later realize what happened to her; while she may not realize she was under mental control, she may wonder why she performed that activity. Creatures aware of the supernatural, and vampires in particular, likely determine that they were forced to obey against their will.

Majesty

Majesty Disciplines allow you great charisma and power over intelligent beings without needing to directly command them. This group includes Awe, Entrancement, Revelation, Sovereignty and Summoning. Daeva vampires have an affinity for these Disciplines.

Nightmare

These Disciplines cause fear and insanity in intelligent creatures. The group includes Dread, Eye of the Beast, Monstrous Countenance and Shatter the Mind. Nosferatu vampires have an affinity for these Disciplines.

Where appropriate, the save DC against Nightmare Disciplines is 10 + your Hit Dice + your Charisma modifier.

See Chapter 7: Playing the Game, "Special Abilities," *Fear,* for more information about the effects of fear.

Obfuscate

This group clouds the minds of others, making them overlook objects and people as if they were invisible. This group includes Cloak of the Gathering, Cloak of Night, The Familiar Stranger, Mask of Tranquility, and Touch of Shadow. Mekhet and Nosferatu vampires have an affinity for these Disciplines.

Protean

These Disciplines allow you to change your shape. They include Aspect of the Predator, Body of Spirit, Claws of the Wild and Haven of Soil. Gangrel vampires have an affinity for these Disciplines.

Resilience

This group includes only a single Discipline, Resilience, which you can take multiple times. It makes you tougher, difficult to kill. Gangrel and Ventrue vampires have an affinity for this Discipline.

TABLE 4–4: VAMPIRE DISCIPLINES

Disciplines	Prerequisites	Group	Benefit
Aspect of the Predator	—	Protean	Other vampires think you are strong; +4 on Intimidate.
Aura Perception	Heightened Senses	Auspex	Identify a creature's emotions and personality, and if it is supernatural.
Awe	—	Majesty	+5 on social skills.
Blood Potency	—	—	+10 maximum Vitae, +1 Vitae spent/round.
Body of Spirit	Aspect of the Predator, Claws of the Wild level 10	Protean	Take the form of mist.
Call of the Wild	Level 4	Animalism	Summon animals.
Celerity*	—	Celerity	One Vitae for +30 feet to speed, +4 Defense, and +4 on Reflex saves.
Claws of the Wild	Level 6	Protean	Grow claws that deal 1d8 points of damage.
Cloak of Night	Touch of Shadow, level 4	Obfuscate	Become invisible.
Cloak of the Gathering	Cloak of Night, Touch of Shadow, level 8	Obfuscate	You and up to five others become invisible.
Command	—	Dominate	Target must obey one-word command.
Conditioning	Command, Mesmerize, level 10	Dominate	Over weeks, give target penalties to resist your Dominate Disciplines.
Dread	Level 4	Nightmare	Aura makes creatures shake; they make Will saves or are frightened.
Entrancement	Awe, level 6	Majesty	Target feels strong positive feelings toward you.
Eye of the Beast	Dread, Monstrous Countenance, level 6	Nightmare	Target makes a Will save or cowers in place.
The Familiar Stranger	Mask of Tranquility, Touch of Shadow, level 6	Obfuscate	Appear as someone the target expects.
Feral Whispers	—	Animalism	Converse with animals.
The Forgetful Mind	Command, Mesmerize	Dominate	Add, alter or delete target's memories.
Haven of Soil*	Level 2	Protean	Merge into soil for protection.
Heightened Senses	—	Auspex	Gain +5 on Listen, Search, and Spot; darkvision 60 feet and double low-light vision.
Leashing the Beast	Level 10	Animalism	Rage for one minute, gaining +4 Str, +4 Con and +2 on Will saves.
Mask of Tranquility	Level 2	Obfuscate	Others cannot detect that you are a vampire.
Mesmerize	Command	Dominate	Target must obey suggestion.
Monstrous Countenance	—	Nightmare	Viewers must make Will saves or be frightened.
Mortal Fear	Dread, Eye of the Beast, Monstrous Countenance, level 12	Nightmare	Deals 5d6 damage; free action.
Obedience	Feral Whispers	Animalism	Compel an animal.
Possession	Command, level 12	Dominate	Take control of target.
Resilience*	—	Resilience	+4 Con, and Diehard and Endurance feats for one minute.
Revelation	Awe	Majesty	Target reveals secrets.
Shatter the Mind	Dread, Eye of the Beast, Monstrous Countenance, level 10	Nightmare	Target gains a mild psychological disorder for weeks.
Sovereignty	Awe, Entrancement, level 12	Majesty	No one defies or criticizes you; targets must make Will saves to attack you.
The Spirit's Touch	Aura Perception, Heightened Senses	Auspex	Perceive psychic impressions on an object.
Subsume the Lesser Spirit	Feral Whispers, Obedience, level 8	Animalism	Take control of an animal's body.
Summoning	Awe, level 10	Majesty	Command target to come to you from anywhere in the world.
Telepathy	Level 6	Auspex	Communicate mind-to-mind and read surface thoughts.
Touch of Shadow	—	Obfuscate	Make object invisible on your person.
Twilight Projection	Heightened Senses, level 12	Auspex	Project your senses from your body.
Vigor*	—	Vigor	+4 Str and +5 on Jump checks for one minute.

*You can take this Discipline multiple times. See the Discipline description for details.

Vigor

This group includes only a single Discipline, Vigor, which you can take multiple times. It makes you superhumanly strong. Daeva and Nosferatu vampires have an affinity for this Discipline.

Discipline Descriptions

Vampire Disciplines appear below.

Aspect of the Predator (Protean)

You project a supernatural aura of ferocity that is intimidating and conceals your weaknesses from other vampires.

Benefit: This ability affects the Predator's Taint that all vampires share (see Chapter 2: Character, "Vampire"). Other vampires perceive you as being at least as powerful as they are, even if you are actually weaker (though they may know otherwise from other sources).

You gain a +4 bonus on Intimidate checks.

Aspect of the Predator is always active, though you can suppress or reactivate it as a free action once per round.

Gangrel: While this Discipline is active, you may use the Intimidate skill to demoralize an opponent as a free action (instead of a standard action) once per round.

Action: None (always active)
Cost: 0 Vitae
Duration: Instantaneous (always active)

Aura Perception (Auspex)

You perceive a creature's aura, discerning his emotions and aspects of his personality.

Prerequisite: Heightened Senses

Benefit: You open your perceptions to the psychic auras that surround all sentient creatures (those with Intelligence 3 or higher). Auras are multicolored, each color signifying an emotion or personality aspect; powerful colors tend to drown out weaker ones, but you can still identify multiple colors in any aura.

Typical emotions are aggression, anger, bitterness, calm, compassion, confusion, depression, desire, distrust, envy, excitement, fear, happiness, love, lust, obsession, rage, sadness and suspicion. Personality aspects include conservative, generous, idealistic, innocent, psychotic, spiritual or even under the mental control of another (in which case the target's aura is muted). The GM determines what factors are predominant in the target's aura.

Supernatural creatures have auras that are different from those of humans. Vampire auras are pale, werewolves' are bright, mages' sparkle with power, demonic auras churn madly and Awakened have sharply defined auras. Thus, this ability allows you to recognize these creatures.

Studying a creature's aura requires two full rounds of undisturbed scrutiny. You must be able to see a creature to study its aura.

Mekhet: Studying an aura requires only one full round.
Action: Free
Cost: 0 Vitae
Duration: Concentration

Awe (Majesty)

You become more charismatic and magnetic.

Benefit: You amplify your personality to more easily influence other people. You gain a +5 bonus on social skills (such as most uses of Diplomacy and Gather Information) made to influence or deter others. This Discipline affects everyone who can see you. It does not work through photos, video or other artificial visual means.

Even after the effect ends, targets remember their enhanced feelings toward you and are inclined to tailor their future reactions accordingly. (You don't get additional bonuses, but someone who liked you previously doesn't turn against you when you're not around.)

Local disturbances and concerns of safety end the effect for nearby targets. (They may be listening with rapt attention but someone drawing a gun on them has a higher priority.)

Targets get a Will save to resist this ability (DC 10 + your Hit Dice + your Charisma modifier). When dealing with large numbers of normal humans, make one skill roll with a penalty (–4 for 10, –8 for 20, –12 for 50, –16 for 100 or more) rather than individual rolls.

Daeva: Targets take a –4 penalty to resist this Discipline.
Action: Free
Cost: 0 Vitae
Duration: 1 minute

Blood Potency (None)

Your Vitae is especially potent and concentrated, and you are skilled at using it.

Benefit: Your maximum Vitae increases by 10, and the number of Vitae you can spend per round increases by 1. Animal blood is no longer sufficient to provide you Vitae (you must feed on human blood or other vampires).

Special: You may take this Discipline up to five times. Its effects stack. If you take this Discipline three times, human blood is no longer sufficient to provide you Vitae (you must feed on Awakened, mages, werewolves or other vampires). If you take this Discipline five times, only vampires with the Blood Potency Discipline provide you Vitae when you feed on them. If you take the Discipline three times, you are no longer subject to Vitae's addictive qualities (as described in Chapter 2: Character, "Vampire," *Vitae*).

Body of Spirit (Protean)

You can turn into a chill mist that is nearly invulnerable.

Prerequisites: Aspect of the Predator, Claws of the Wild, level 10

Benefit: You transform yourself, your clothing and small items you carry into a cold mist that moves through force of will. As a mist, you fill a volume equal to a 10-foot-cube and can move along the ground at a speed of 20 feet. You gain cold and fire resistance 5. You are invulnerable to physical attacks, but supernatural attacks may still affect you if they do not rely on a physical form or mundane means. (For example, a spell that

makes a blade of hard air cannot harm you, nor do Disciplines that require eye contact, because you have no eyes.) Sunlight deals half damage to you. You cannot physically attack anyone (even another vampire using this ability) or manipulate any physical object, though you may use Disciplines that do not require a body. (Most Dominate Disciplines are useless because you cannot make eye contact.) Your senses are normal despite your lack of eyes and ears. You cannot speak, as you have no mouth. Your mist form is not thick enough to obscure vision.

Portions of your misty form cannot be separated from you, and attempts to do so do not harm you. (An enemy cannot bottle a portion of your substance to make you miss a piece when you return to your normal form.) Strong winds can move you against your will if they exceed your movement speed, but they cannot disperse you.

Returning to your own form is a standard action.

Gangrel: Your Speed in mist form is 30 feet. You may spend to make yourself opaque as thick fog (providing a 50% miss chance) or return to your normal thinly transparent state, as a free action.

Action: Standard
Cost: 0 Vitae
Duration: Until you return to your normal form

Call of the Wild (Animalism)

You can call a kind of animal to you as long as it is in range of your voice.

Prerequisite: Level 4

Benefit: You call out in sounds appropriate to a kind of animal (such as wolves or sparrows) to compel animals of that kind to immediately move toward you to the best of their ability. Called animals use the fastest route available to reach you. The animal must hear your voice, so deafened animals or those in soundproofed rooms do not respond. The animals are not under your control but are friendly toward you and receptive to your powers.

The number of creatures that arrive depends on your location and the type of creature you summon; hundreds of rats may respond in a city, but you may get only a few dogs from the same location. Unless driven away, the animals remain for at least one minute and act normally for the situation (for example, dogs chase cats, rats crawl on things and so on, but all tend to run from fire or loud noises).

Gangrel or Ventrue: You may use Obedience (if you have it) on any one of the animals as a free action.

Action: Standard
Cost: 1 Vitae
Duration: 1 minute

Celerity (Celerity)

You can boost your speed to superhuman levels, traveling faster than the eye can track and making it difficult for anyone to target you.

Benefit: You augment your speed and reflexes. Your base speed increases by 30 feet. You gain a +4 dodge bonus to Defense and a +4 bonus on Reflex saves. You can activate this Discipline in response to someone else's actions (on his turn), such as if someone tries to shoot you. Regardless of when you activate this Discipline, it lasts until the beginning of your next turn. You cannot activate Celerity more than once per round (for example, to get twice the effect).

Special: You may take this Discipline up to five times. Its effects stack. Every time you take it, this Discipline increases the speed, Defense and Reflex save bonus by another increment (+60 feet to base speed, +8 to Defense and +8 on Reflex saves if you take the Discipline twice, and so on). The Vitae cost does not increase. Note that a vampire who has taken this Discipline five times can run at about 80 miles per hour.

Daeva or Mekhet: The increase to Defense is +6 per Celerity Discipline instead of +4.

Action: Free
Cost: 1 Vitae
Duration: Until the beginning of your next turn

Claws of the Wild (Protean)

You can grow powerful talons on your hands, capable of rending flesh and bone.

Prerequisite: Level 6

Benefit: You grow strong claws on your hands (and feet, if you so choose). These claws are natural weapons that each deal 1d8 damage points of slashing damage. When the claws are out, you gain a +8 equipment bonus on Climb checks. You can retract or extend the claws as a free action.

The claws may resemble those of a real animal (wolf, tiger, hawk) or something strange and unearthly.

Gangrel: This ability costs 0 Vitae.
Action: Free
Cost: 1 Vitae (0 for Gangrel)
Duration: 1 minute

Cloak of Night (Obfuscate)

You can fade from sight.

Prerequisite: Touch of Shadow, level 4

Benefit: You fade to invisibility. Anyone in your presence while you are invisible must make a Will save (DC 10 + your Hit Dice + your Charisma modifier) or ignores you as if you were not there. If you leave a creature's presence and return after a minute or longer, he gets another save to detect you.

You may activate this Discipline once per round.

Mortals who see you vanish may panic or leave the area in alarm, but most simply come up with a self-deceiving explanation for your absence ("I glanced away, and he must have gone out the door"). If the viewer is a human and rolls a 1 on his save, he forgets that you were ever there. If the viewer is supernatural and rolls a 1 on her save, she believes you slipped away while she was distracted.

If you do something to attract attention to yourself (such as shouting a warning, breaking a window or attacking), the effect ends. Otherwise, the Discipline ends when you choose; it even covers for acts that would inadvertently reveal you — crowds subconsciously part to let you pass, listeners ignore you stepping on a squeaky floorboard unless they have already pierced your invisibility and so on.

This Discipline works by affecting the mind, not light or other physical properties. For example, video cameras record you normally, but the Discipline affects people looking at you

through security devices, and they can't see you until they review the tape out of your presence. Children, animals, the mentally ill and the simple-minded can sometimes see through this obfuscation. A vampire using Auspex can pierce the effect if she beats you in an opposed Will save.

Mekhet or Nosferatu: Targets take a –4 penalty to resist this Discipline.

Action: Free
Cost: 0 Vitae
Duration: Until you end it.

Cloak of the Gathering (Obfuscate)

An expanded version of Cloak of Night, you can cause yourself and other creatures to vanish from sight.

Prerequisites: Cloak of Night, Touch of Shadow, level 8

Benefit: This Discipline works similarly to Cloak of Night, except that you can hide up to five other people at once. Each person affected is subject to the rules of Cloak of Night (drawing attention breaks the effect for them, and so on). If you break the cloak, everyone you have hidden becomes visible.

Anyone you affect with this ability can see you and each other. If they break line of sight with you, the effect ends for them.

Mekhet or Nosferatu: Targets take a –4 penalty to resist this Discipline.

Action: Standard
Cost: 1 Vitae
Duration: 1 minute

Command (Dominate)

You can force your will on another person, compelling him to obey a one-word command.

Benefit: You make eye contact with a person and issue a one-word command that he must obey instantly unless he makes a Will save. The command must be clear and straightforward — freeze, jump, run, stop, fall, blink and so on. If the command is ambiguous or confusing, the target may respond slowly or perform the task poorly. The target always interprets the command in his own best interest. For example, if you command a man on a rooftop ledge to "jump," he jumps in place or onto the roof rather than to his death. "Sleep" or other commands that leave the target helpless are effective only if the target believes he is not in any mortal danger, and work for only one round.

If the command is something that can be carried out for some time (such as wait, eat or guard), the target complies for a number of rounds equal to your Charisma modifier (minimum one round).

You may use the command in a sentence so as to disguise the use of this ability, though you must still stress that word so the target knows which command to obey, and those familiar with this Discipline may recognize this tactic.

This Discipline does not grant mental communication or guarantee comprehension. Commands must be verbal, though in some cases a gesture and eye movement may be sufficient (such as "come"). You cannot compel a target to obey if she cannot understand you, whether because of a language problem, an inability to hear or an inexplicable command.

Because this Discipline requires eye contact, you can use Command on only one creature at a time. A target may announce on his turn that he is avoiding your gaze; doing so means for the next round he has a 50% chance of not needing to make a save against this Discipline, but you have 20% concealment against him (because he cannot focus his entire attention on you). Also, on his turn, a creature can shut his eyes, turn his back to you or some similar action that prevents all eye contact; doing so means you have no chance to affect him with this Discipline, but you have 50% concealment against him (because he is blind to your location).

See "Discipline Groups," *Dominate*, above, for more information on Dominate Disciplines, including certain prohibitions and how to calculate the save DC.

Ventrue: The target takes a –4 penalty to resist your command.

Action: Standard
Cost: 0 Vitae
Duration: Until you end it

Conditioning (Dominate)

You can break down a target's mental barriers against you and strengthen them against others.

Prerequisites: Command, Mesmerize, level 10

Benefit: Over time you can erode a target's will, making her more susceptible to your mental control and resistant to that of others. Conditioning is a slow process, requiring an hour of contact each day for a week. At the end of each week, the target makes a Will save to resist the Conditioning. Each week of successful Conditioning gives the target a –1 penalty to save against any of your Dominate Disciplines, to a maximum penalty of –8. Once the target's penalty reaches –4, you no longer need to make eye contact to use Dominate Disciplines against her (though giving orders through artificial or impersonal means, such as a phone, gives the target a +4 bonus to resist). Conditioned targets are resistant to the mental control of other creatures, and Conditioned targets gain a bonus on Will saves against such effects. The bonus is equal to the penalty they have against your control.

Conditioned targets lose much of their ability to think for themselves, as your will blots out much of their personalities. Severely conditioned targets are little more than robots, with no initiative or ability to carry out orders except in the most literal fashion.

Each week of Conditioning costs one Vitae. You can Condition multiple targets per week as long as you are able to give them each at least an hour of attention every day.

Separation from you tends to erode Conditioning. If one week times the current save penalty passes without the target having contact with you, the penalty drops by 1 (eight weeks at –8 to get to –7, seven weeks at –7 to get to –6 and so on). Another vampire cannot Condition a target until its current conditioning is gone.

See "Discipline Groups," *Dominate*, above, for more information on Dominate Disciplines, including certain prohibitions and how to calculate the save DC.

Ventrue: A Conditioned subject's penalty against your Dominate Disciplines is –2 worse than normal and +2 better against those of other vampires, to a maximum of –8/+8.

Action: Standard (to begin the process)
Cost: 1 Vitae
Duration: Instantaneous

Dread (Nightmare)

You surround yourself with an aura of dread, unease and paranoia.

Prerequisite: Level 4

Benefit: You can exude a supernatural aura of uncertainty, fear and paranoia. The radius of this aura is 10 feet plus 10 feet per point of your Charisma bonus. The aura remains as long as you concentrate but ends if you attack. Creatures do not need to see you for the aura to affect them, and Dread affects all creatures in range except yourself.

Any creature within the aura becomes shaken. On your turn the round after they enter the aura, they must make Will saves (DC 10 + your Hit Dice + your Charisma modifier) or become frightened and flee for 2d6 rounds; otherwise, they remain shaken but can remain within the aura. A creature that rolls a 1 on its save is panicked rather than frightened.

Nosferatu: Targets take a –4 penalty to resist this Discipline.

Action: Free
Cost: 1 Vitae
Duration: Concentration or until you attack

Entrancement (Majesty)

You warp a person's emotional state, making her your willing servant.

Prerequisite: Awe, level 6

Benefit: You alter a person's affections toward you, making her admire, trust, love and protective toward you as if you were her best friend or lover. She believes these feelings come from herself and cannot be convinced otherwise. When the effect ends, the target feels displaced and confused (similar to ending a relationship with a lover), leading to mixed feelings; re-Entrancing her is difficult. The target does not feel ill will toward you, she just comes to the conclusion that she no longer feels "that way" about you anymore.

The target gets a Will save to resist this ability (DC 10 + your Hit Dice + your Charisma modifier). Entrancement normally lasts about an hour, but if the target rolls a 1 on her save, the Entrancement lasts for at least a week. She has a +5 bonus on her save if you have successfully used this ability on her within the past week.

Daeva: The target takes a –4 penalty to resist this Discipline.
Action: Standard
Cost: 1 Vitae
Duration: 1 hour (possibly longer)

Eye of the Beast (Nightmare)

Your gaze carries the weight of the horrors beyond death, rendering an opponent helpless with fear.

Prerequisites: Dread, Monstrous Countenance, level 6

Benefit: You stare into the eyes of a creature, revealing to it a vision of some unnamable horror or torment from beyond the grave. The target must make a Will save (DC 10 + your Hit Dice + your Charisma modifier) or become cowering, remaining in place as long as you are present; if attacked, the creature is panicked and flees for 2d6 rounds. A creature that rolls a 1 on its save is helpless rather than cowering and can do nothing (not even flee) as long as you are present, even if attacked.

Nosferatu: The target takes a –4 penalty to resist this Discipline.

Action: Free
Cost: 1 Vitae
Duration: As long as you remain present, or 2d6 rounds

The Familiar Stranger (Obfuscate)

You fool onlookers into thinking you are a particular person they are expecting to see.

Prerequisites: Mask of Tranquility, Touch of Shadow, level 6

Benefit: You meddle with the target's mind so she believes that you are someone she expects under the current circumstances. You do not decide who you "become" and do not know who you have "become," though the target's speech and reactions may allow you to figure it out. As you have no insight to your assumed identity, it is best to keep your contact with the subject brief — good for bluffing your way past a security guard, not so good for pretending to be someone's spouse on an anniversary date. The assumed identity may not even be a specific individual — in some cases, a police officer or a homeless person may be exactly whom the target expects to see, and if the target knows you, she may even expect to see *you*.

This Discipline is an adjustment to perceptions, not an actual physical change. The ability normally lasts no longer than a minute, but you can extend it another minute as a free action by spending one Vitae. The target gets a Will save (DC 10 + your Hit Dice + your Charisma modifier) to resist the Discipline. If you know whom she expects (for example, at a business lunch), she takes a –4 penalty on her save. If she makes her save, any further attempt to use this Discipline on her in the next 24 hours costs one Vitae.

You can use this ability on several creatures at once, but you must focus on one target as the primary and use her expectation as your guise; all observers who fail their saves perceive you as that target does, even if they don't know whom the primary expects.

Affected targets get another save if they actually know the person you "become" and you act contrary to that identity's normal behavior. A target who rolls a 1 on her save fully accepts your guise even if you act contrary to it (she writes off this behavior as joking, drunkenness or some other appropriate explanation).

Mekhet or Nosferatu: Targets take a –4 penalty to resist this Discipline.

Action: Free
Cost: 0 Vitae
Duration: 1 minute

Feral Whispers (Animalism)

You can create an empathic bond with animals, conversing with them and influencing their actions.

Prerequisite: Vampire

Benefit: You make eye contact with an animal, creating an empathic bond with it and allowing mutual understanding. You must maintain eye contact or a constant vocal dialogue (of words or sounds appropriate to the animal), but the bond otherwise lasts as long as you concentrate. This ability works automatically on passive or friendly animals. A hostile animal requires you to make a check to influence it. You roll 1d20 + your Hit Dice + your Charisma modifier (or make a Diplomacy check, if you have the Way with Animals feat); if you fail you may try again next round.

The information you send to or receive from the animal is colored by its intelligence and level of awareness. A cat may be able to explain that many humans scared it out of a nearby building but may not be able to recognize if one of them was wearing a baseball cap or have any real concept of numbers. The animal may help you if it is inclined to do so or understands that you will reward it for doing so (or harm it for not doing so), but most wild creatures are reluctant helpers.

Because this Discipline requires eye contact, you cannot use Feral Whispers on more than one animal at once.

Gangrel or Ventrue: You gain a +4 bonus on your check to influence a hostile animal.

Action: Standard
Cost: 0 Vitae
Duration: Concentration

The Forgetful Mind (Dominate)

You can alter or erase a target's memories.

Prerequisites: Command, Mesmerize

Benefit: You make eye contact and speak to a person, acting similarly to a hypnotist, asking questions to draw forth memories and describing in detail the changes you wish to make in those memories. Simple alterations such as blurring a recent memory (as when you fed upon the target) are easy, while more complicated alterations (such as a complete reconstruction of the target's personality) require extended time and more work.

The target's mind struggles against an implanted memory, though realistic details make it more likely to take root. For example, if you feed on a businessman in a parking lot and then implant the false memory of "you had a bad day and drove home" to cover your presence, the memory is not likely to hold up to scrutiny, but a carefully described memory (including details about why the day was bad, what traffic was like and an overplayed song on the radio) is more stable. The target gets

a Will save to resist this Discipline, and the GM may impose a DC modifier from +4 (difficult) to –4 (easy) based on the plausibility of the changes.

Clumsy users may simply sift through the target's responses and erase certain parts, but this leaves gaps that the target may attempt to resolve when he discovers them. Erased memories may haunt the target in dreams or flashbacks, particularly if they were vivid. After months or years of therapy and investigation, even detailed false memories may break down.

You can also use this Discipline to determine if someone's memory has been altered. Make a Search check (the DC equals the Will save DC of the altered memory). For example, a vampire implants a very plausible memory (DC 20); for you to notice it, you must make a DC 20 Search check while using The Forgetful Mind. Once you recognize it, you can use this Discipline to restore the original memories using the same procedure as planting false ones, but the DC decreases by –4.

You must concentrate to use this ability. The process lasts as long as you take to describe the new or restored memories. As with hypnotism, the target must be relaxed and comfortable for this to work. At the start, you must have eye contact, but once the effect is established you need only speak to the target. The target must be able to understand you.

Because this Discipline requires eye contact to initiate, you can only use The Familiar Mind on one creature at a time. A target may avoid your gaze as described in the Command Discipline.

See "Discipline Groups," *Dominate*, above, for more information on Dominate Disciplines, including certain prohibitions and how to calculate the save DC.

Ventrue: The target takes a –4 penalty to resist your alterations.

Action: Standard (plus the time to describe the altered memory)

Cost: 0 Vitae

Duration: Instantaneous

Haven of Soil (Protean)

You can physically merge with the earth, giving you a safe place to rest or hide, even from sunlight.

Prerequisite: Level 2

Benefit: You merge your body with any volume of soil that could normally hold your body. You must be able to make direct contact with the soil (e.g., if the soil is under a wooden floor or a sidewalk you must first break through this barrier). You are not merely buried; your physical essence is distributed throughout the material. Digging does not discover you. You cannot be harmed when merged this way, even by magic or sunlight.

When merged, you are asleep. If enough of your confining material is disturbed, it alerts you to the disturbance, wakes you and ejects you from your haven (usually in a shower of the material).

When you are merged, all attempts to locate you (even by scent or supernatural means) take a –10 penalty (or you gain a +10 bonus on your save to resist). Even if searchers find your general location, they still aren't able to find your body because it no longer exists as a discrete object.

You decide the duration when you activate this Discipline, though a disturbance can wake you earlier, as described above. Emerging from your haven is a free action if you initiate it and does not require an action if emerging is in response to a disturbance. When you emerge, you must spend one Vitae to awaken (as if waking at sundown). You emerge from the same direction you entered unless that direction is now blocked; for example, you cannot fuse with a stone wall and emerge on the other side.

Special: You can select this Discipline multiple times. Its effects do not stack. Each time you select this Discipline again, you learn two other types of material into which you can merge. Available materials are wood, water, natural stone, processed stone (including asphalt) and metal; you cannot learn processed stone until you have learned natural stone, and cannot learn metal until you learn processed stone. In any case, the volume of the material must be as large as your body. If you meld with water, you leave a barely visible, humanoid-shaped outline just below the surface but are otherwise protected and concealed as with any other appropriate material.

Gangrel: Each time you select this Discipline (including the first time), you may learn one additional medium that you may use as a haven.

Action: Standard

Cost: 1 Vitae

Duration: Indefinite

Heightened Senses (Auspex)

You magnify your senses to those far beyond the human norm.

Benefit: You magnify your senses to a superhuman level, giving you a +5 bonus on Listen, Search and Spot checks. At the GM's discretion you may get this bonus on other skill checks as well (Sense Motive checks, for example). When your sight is heightened, you have darkvision (60 feet) and your low-light vision range is doubled, so you see four times as far as a normal human in low light conditions.

While your senses are heightened, you are vulnerable to attacks on those senses, taking a –4 penalty on saves to resist such attacks and suffering whatever additional effect the attack has against vulnerable creatures. You may selectively amplify only some of your senses (instead of all of them at once) to reduce the number of possible sources. Adjusting which senses are magnified is a free action.

Mekhet: The bonus on Listen, Search and Spot checks is +8 rather than +5.

Action: Free

Cost: 0 Vitae

Duration: Concentration

Leashing the Beast (Animalism)

You can cause or suppress a feral rage in yourself or another creature.

Prerequisite: Level 10

Benefit: You fly into a rage, temporarily gaining a +4 bonus to Strength, a +4 bonus to Constitution and a +2 morale bonus on Will saves. (The extra hit points from the Constitution increase are not lost first the way temporary hit points are.) While raging, you cannot use any Charisma-, Dexterity- or Intelligence-based skills (except for Balance, Escape Artist, Intimidate and Ride), the Concentration skill, Disciplines or any abilities that require patience or concentration. You can use any feat except Combat Expertise.

A fit of rage lasts for one minute. You may prematurely end your rage by spending one Vitae; otherwise, you continue to attack any creature within reach, even allies.

As a standard action, you may invoke this rage in another creature within line of sight. The target gets a Will save to resist (DC 10 + your Hit Dice + your Charisma modifier). The target's rage continues for the full duration unless the target has this Discipline (and may therefore end its rage) or someone else intervenes with supernatural powers.

You may use this Discipline to end a state of fear or rage in yourself. As a standard action, you may remove fear or rage from another creature within line of sight. Such a creature can resist with a Will save if it desires.

Gangrel or Ventrue: You may end your rage without spending Vitae.

Action: Free (affect yourself) or standard (affect another creature)

Cost: 1 Vitae

Duration: 1 minute (rage) or instantaneous (ending fear or rage)

Mask of Tranquility (Obfuscate)

You can mask the taint of undeath on your soul.

Prerequisite: Level 2

Benefit: You conceal your vampire nature from all supernatural forms of detection, causing others to perceive you as a normal human. For example, other vampires do not automatically recognize you as a vampire with the Predator's Taint; a vampire using Aura Perception shows your aura as strong and colorful as a human. This Discipline does not affect your ability to detect other vampires or prevent more overt means of detection — you do not bleed, sunlight burns you and so on.

This ability is always active, though you may turn it on or off as a free action. This is an all-or-nothing change; you cannot have some aspects of Mask of Tranquility active and others not. If someone is using Auspex or other active supernatural means to detect that you are a vampire, make an opposed Will save; if you win, the other does not detect that you are a vampire.

Mekhet or Nosferatu: You do not have to spend Vitae to give yourself the semblance of life (see Chapter 2: Character, "Vampire," *Vitae*).

Action: None (always active)

Cost: 0 Vitae

Duration: Instantaneous (always active)

Mesmerize (Dominate)

Similar to a hypnotist, you can implant a suggestion or task in a person's mind.

Prerequisite: Command

Benefit: You make eye contact with a person and implant a suggestion in his mind. The suggestion may be immediate ("walk over here and unlock this door"), extended ("follow this man, take notes on his actions, and report back to me at the end of the month") or triggered ("when the man with the blue suit and red tie enters the room, spill your drink on him"). Impossible tasks ("count all the grains of sand on this beach") automatically fail. The target gets a Will save to resist. He gets another save if performing the task puts him in danger or forces him to compromise his moral code.

Only one suggestion can be in effect at a time. A second suggestion from you automatically overrides the first. A suggestion from another vampire (or other supernatural force) requires the target to save against both commands; if he fails the other vampire's save but makes yours, he abandons your task to work on the other's, but otherwise he ignores the other vampire's suggestion to work on yours.

See "Discipline Groups," *Dominate,* above, for more information on Dominate Disciplines, including certain prohibitions and how to calculate the save DC.

Ventrue: The target takes a –4 penalty to resist your suggestion.

Action: Standard

Cost: 0 Vitae

Duration: Until the task ends

Monstrous Countenance (Nightmare)

You take on a horrific appearance to scare someone.

Benefit: You bare your fangs, make a threatening noise and gain a horrifying visage. Any creature viewing you must make a Will save (DC 10 + your Hit Dice + your Charisma modifier) or be frightened for a number of rounds equal to 1 + your Charisma modifier. The target gets another save every round after the first to stop fleeing but still refuses to come within sight of you for the duration.

The viewers must have line of sight to you; seeing you in a mirror, photo or television is no more frightening than any other "special effect." You may resume your normal appearance as a free action, though this does not cause those already affected to recover.

Nosferatu: Targets take a –4 penalty to resist this Discipline.

Action: Free

Cost: 0 Vitae

Duration: Until you end it

Mortal Fear (Nightmare)

You use fear as a weapon, stabbing your prey's heart and mind.

Prerequisites: Dread, Eye of the Beast, Monstrous Countenance, level 12

Benefit: You trigger the target's most primal fears. You engage the reptile part of his brain, flooding his body with erratic nerve impulses, adrenaline and coagulated supernatural terror. These factors combine to cause a horrible shock: the target ages prematurely, his hair turns white and he may even have a heart attack and die from the strain on his body.

This Discipline deals 5d6 points of damage (this damage bypasses physical defenses and damage reduction does not affect it); the target may make a Will save for half damage (DC 10 + your Hit Dice + your Charisma modifier). If he rolls a 1 on his save, he also takes two points of Constitution damage and two points of Wisdom damage.

The target must be able to see you for this Discipline to work, though seeing your silhouette or just your face is sufficient. You can use Mortal Fear on a particular target only once every 10 minutes. Even if multiple witnesses are present, this Discipline affects only one target; all others see you staring intently but suffer no adverse reactions.

You can use this Discipline only once per round.

Nosferatu: Targets take a –4 penalty to resist this Discipline.

Action: Free

Cost: 1 Vitae

Duration: Instantaneous

Obedience (Animalism)

You can empathically command one animal to perform a task.

Prerequisite: Feral Whispers

Benefit: You make eye contact with an animal, allowing you to telepathically convey a command to it and tell it exactly what you want it to do. The animal obeys to the best of its ability, but the animal's intelligence and nature may cause it to interpret your command in unusual ways.

Once you give the order, the animal carries it out, assuming it can be completed before sunrise. At sunrise, the compulsion ends, regardless of whether or not the task is finished. The animal gets a Will save (the DC is your Hit Dice + your Charisma bonus) to resist any order to act against its nature or to obviously cause itself harm.

Because this Discipline requires eye contact, you cannot command more than one animal at once, but you can command multiple animals in sequence and have them act at the same time.

Gangrel or Ventrue: You may command up to two animals at once if you give them the same order.

Action: Standard

Cost: 0 Vitae

Duration: Until the order is completed or sunrise, whichever comes first

Possession (Dominate)

You can completely take over someone else's mind and use his body as a puppet.

Prerequisite: Command, level 12

Benefit: This power goes beyond spoken commands. You make eye contact and crush the victim's will, taking over his body like a malevolent spirit. The target's mind is in a dream state during this time, perceiving everything that you do (perhaps in a distorted fashion) but not quite sure how real it is. Your body is helpless and appears to be nothing but a corpse. You keep your Intelligence, Wisdom, Charisma, level, base attack bonus, base save bonuses, skill ranks and other abilities that are purely mental (such as resistance to mind-affecting abilities). The body retains its Strength, Dexterity, Constitution, hit points and natural abilities (natural weapons, modes of breathing and movement, and so forth). A body with extra limbs does not allow you to make more attacks (or more advantageous two-weapon

attacks) than normal. You can't activate the body's extraordinary or supernatural abilities and cannot use Disciplines.

The target gets a Will save to resist this ability. A demon, mage, werewolf or Awakened gets a +4 bonus on his save. This Discipline does not work on vampires.

While possessing the target, you can travel safely during the day, though you must still spend one Vitae as normal to remain awake during the day. Damage to the host, including ability damage and ability drain, also affects your body. If the host dies, you return to your body, reduced to –1 hit point and unconscious.

You may end the possession at any time, returning to your body instantly, but can continue the possession indefinitely (though you cannot feed in the host and you must continue to spend Vitae to awaken as normal, so extended stays leave your body depleted).

See "Discipline Groups," *Dominate*, above, for more information on Dominate Disciplines, including certain prohibitions and how to calculate the save DC.

Ventrue: The target takes a –4 penalty to resist your possession attempt.

Action: Standard
Cost: 1 Vitae
Duration: Until you end it

Resilience (Resilience)

You can boost your endurance to superhuman levels, making it very difficult for anyone to kill you.

Benefit: You give yourself a +4 enhancement bonus to Constitution and the benefits of the Diehard and Endurance feats. (The extra hit points from the Constitution bonus are not lost first the way temporary hit points are.)

Special: You may take this Discipline up to five times. Its effects stack. Every time you take it, it increases your Constitution bonus by another increment (+8 for two Disciplines, +12 for three, and so on). The Vitae cost does not increase.

Gangrel or Ventrue: When the Discipline ends, you automatically heal 3d6 points of damage. This effect occurs before your Constitution score drops to normal.

Action: Free
Cost: 1 Vitae
Duration: 1 minute

Revelation (Majesty)

You cause a target to reveal hidden fears, secrets, desires or confessions of past deeds.

Prerequisite: Awe

Benefit: You speak a few heartfelt words or give a compassionate look to a single person, which causes the target to confess things he normally keeps private. The target gets a Will save to resist this ability (DC 10 + your Hit Dice + your Charisma modifier). He takes a –5 penalty on his save if he is currently subject to your Awe or Entrancement, a +5 bonus if you are his enemy and another +5 bonus if you have inflicted violence upon him within the past day.

The nature of what the target reveals is determined by your words and actions before using this ability. (If you were talking about fears, the target reveals his fears and so on.) The target continues to reveal these private feelings each round until you stop him or he makes a Will save; each round after the first gives him a cumulative +1 bonus on this save. You can steer the conversation to other subjects (and other types of secrets). If the target's initial save against this ability is a 1, he cannot stop from exposing all of his secrets to you, stopping only when you direct him to or he runs out of secrets.

The target remembers that he confessed but may not understand why he did so and may take action later to correct this "error in judgment."

Daeva: The target takes a –4 penalty to resist this Discipline.

Action: Free
Cost: 1 Vitae
Duration: Instantaneous

Shatter the Mind (Nightmare)

Your confront a person with her greatest fear, temporarily driving her insane.

Prerequisites: Dread, Eye of the Beast, Monstrous Countenance, level 10

Benefit: You awaken the target's thoughts to the most horrific thing she can imagine, turning her subconscious mind against the conscious. The target imagines her greatest fear coming to pass at that moment, no matter how implausible or nonsensical that fear may be (such as drowning on a city sidewalk). The target must see you, but you do not need to make eye contact.

The target must make a Will save (DC 10 + your Hit Dice + your Charisma modifier) or be dazed for one round and gain a mild derangement (psychological disorder; GM's discretion) for a number of weeks equal to your Charisma modifier (minimum 1); if the target already has a derangement, the GM may instead upgrade the derangement to a more severe form for the duration. If the target rolls a 1 on her save, she falls unconscious for one minute and when she wakes she has a severe derangement; this condition does not wear off without therapy or supernatural intervention.

Mild derangements include Bulimia, Depression, Fixation, Inferiority Complex, Irrationality, Narcissism, Phobias and Suspicion. Severe derangements include Anxiety, Hysteria, Manic Depression, Megalomania, Melancholy, Multiple Personality Disorder, Obsessive Compulsion, Paranoia and Schizophrenia.

You can use Shatter the Mind on a particular target only once per day.

Nosferatu: Targets take a –4 penalty to resist this Discipline.

Action: Free
Cost: 1 Vitae
Duration: Instantaneous (dazed) plus one week per point of Charisma modifier (derangement)

Sovereignty (Majesty)

Your presence is so overwhelming that the weak bow down to you and the strong cannot help but acquiesce.

Prerequisites: Awe, Entrancement, level 12

Benefit: You augment your personality and presence so that only the strongest-willed have any chance to disobey you. This

Discipline affects anyone with line of sight to you, even if just a part is visible or if you are screened in some way (such as by a translucent curtain). Sovereignty has two levels of power.

Passive: People feel a zealous fear of or devotion to you; this effect is always active (though you can deactivate or reactivate it as a free action). They may speak freely around you as long as they don't defy or criticize you, and their demeanor is obviously affected by your Sovereignty.

Active: Your presence is almost a physical weight upon any who oppose you — socially, physically or supernaturally.

If someone tries to attack you (socially, physically or supernaturally), you may trigger the active level of the Discipline (even if it is not your turn). A would-be attacker gets a Will save to resist the active effect (DC 10 + your Hit Dice + your Charisma modifier). If he succeeds, he may attack you for the remainder of the night without making saves against your Sovereignty. Failure means he may try to attack again next round by attempting another save; he takes a –4 penalty on his save for each failed attempt to attack you that night. If he rolls a 1 on his save, he cannot attempt to attack you for the rest of the night; the attacker is humbled and stifled, unable to speak out against you in any way.

Any other would-be attackers during this time must save against your power to proceed, but these additional attacks do not cost you extra Vitae. If someone attacks after this one-hour period, you may reactivate the full power of this Discipline.

If you physically or supernaturally attack someone, your Sovereignty (passive and active) is broken with respect to that target only, and he may retaliate freely without saving against this Discipline. However, you may criticize, berate or insult someone without breaking either level of Sovereignty.

Daeva: Targets take a –4 penalty to resist this Discipline.

Action: Free

Cost: 0 Vitae (passive effect) or 1 Vitae (full effect)

Duration: Instantaneous (passive level) or 1 hour (active level)

The Spirit's Touch (Auspex)

You can sense the psychic impressions left on objects.

Prerequisites: Aura Perception, Heightened Senses

Benefit: By handling an object and entering a light trance, you pick up psychic impressions from the object in the form of mental images or rapid sensations. Most impressions come from the last person to have handled the object, but two circumstances overrule this. First, a long-time owner or user of the object leaves a stronger impression than a more recent but shorter use by someone else. Second, experiences associated with strong emotion leave more significant psychic "fingerprints," overriding those from more casual use. Some items have so many handlers or insignificant attachment that they give muddled images or none at all.

The typical impression you receive is the owner's identity or a strong memory associated with the object. The sensations are usually visual and exact identification is not guaranteed; you may perceive "a blond man in a business suit and red tie" rather than "Jack Hartman of Hartman Law Partners," though mundane clues on the object may allow you to identify him (such as a monogrammed briefcase or a

name tag). The images may be brief or run a minute or more depending on the intensity and relevance of the psychic impression.

You can use this ability on a creature to witness its most recent dramatic, tense or passionate act. You must touch the target, and it receives a Will save to resist (DC 10 + your Hit Dice + your Wisdom modifier). Especially intense and recent impressions may give the target a penalty to its save at the GM's discretion. You perceive the events from the target's viewpoint.

Mekhet: You may delve deeper into an object's or creature's impressions, receiving a second image or vision that is weaker than the first.

Action: Full round
Cost: 0 Vitae
Duration: Concentration

Subsume the Lesser Spirit (Animalism)

You can mentally take over the body of an animal and use it as your own.

Prerequisites: Feral Whispers, Obedience, level 8

Benefit: You make eye contact and psychically enter an animal's body, temporarily leaving yours behind. The animal's body is under your complete control; your own body appears to be nothing more than a lifeless corpse. You keep your Intelligence, Wisdom, Charisma, level, base attack bonus, base save bonuses and skill ranks, and other abilities that are purely mental (such as resistance to mind-affecting abilities). The body retains its Strength, Dexterity, Constitution, hit points and natural abilities (natural weapons, modes of breathing and movement and so forth). A body with extra limbs does not allow you to make more attacks (or more advantageous two-weapon attacks) than normal. You can't activate the body's extraordinary or supernatural abilities.

The animal gets a Will save to resist this ability (DC 10 + your Hit Dice + your Charisma modifier); the animal takes a –4 penalty if it is a predator. While in the animal's body, you can use any Animalism Discipline. If the possessed animal rolled a 1 on its Will save, you may also use Auspex and Majesty Disciplines while possessing the animal.

While possessing the animal, you can travel safely during the day, though you must still spend one Vitae as normal to remain awake during the day. Damage to the animal, including ability damage and ability drain, also affects your body (you take the same amount of damage the body does). If the animal is killed, you are forced back to your body, reduced to –1 hit point and knocked unconscious.

You may end the possession at any time, returning to your body instantly, but can continue the possession indefinitely (though you cannot feed as an animal and you must continue to spend Vitae to awaken as normal, so extended stays leave your body depleted).

Gangrel or Ventrue: You may use this ability on an animal in your line of sight without requiring eye contact.

Action: Standard
Cost: 1 Vitae
Duration: Until you end it

Summoning (Majesty)

You send a psychic call to the target, who tries to get to you as soon as possible.

Prerequisite: Awe, level 10

Benefit: You reach out to anyone who knows you and telepathically urge him to attend your presence immediately. The call can reach anyone in the world, though a distant target takes longer to get to you. The target takes the most direct route to you and knows where to go even if you change locations (similar to a psychic directional sense), though he doesn't necessarily know the final destination. The target knows who summons him but not why. He may pause to make arrangements before departing (such as calling in sick to work) but otherwise travels as fast as reasonably possible — he is no single-minded drone willing to drive 100 miles per hour through city streets to get to you. If he has the means to contact you (such as your phone number), he may do so.

The effect of the summoning fades at sunrise, as does the subject's awareness of your direction. If you want the subject to continue beyond sunrise, you need to use this ability again (though a target inclined to help you may continue on his own volition during daylight hours). If the subject does not wish to go to you, he may use the daylight hours to get farther from you. A vampire under this Discipline's effect makes normal plans to avoid the coming day.

The target gets a Will save to resist this ability (DC 10 + your Hit Dice + your Charisma modifier). The target gets a +4 bonus on his save if he is your enemy, a +4 bonus if he is more than 500 miles away and a +4 bonus if he has urgent business that answering the summons would ruin. If the target rolls a 1 on his save, the effect persists even through daylight (including the direction sense) and you do not need to reinstate the Summoning each sundown (though affected vampires still avoid the daylight).

Daeva: The target takes a –4 penalty to resist this Discipline.

Action: Standard
Cost: 1 Vitae
Duration: Until sunrise (perhaps longer)

Telepathy (Auspex)

You can create a mental link with another person, sending and receiving thoughts or even reading her mind.

Prerequisite: Level 6

Benefit: You can create a telepathic link with another person as a free action, allowing you to communicate with her mentally. This communication is two-way; you and the other person may send and receive thoughts. The target recognizes that your communication comes from outside her mind, though she may not realize you are the source of the words (though the mental "voice" sounds like your real voice).

The target must be within view when you activate this Discipline, and the effect is broken if she moves out of sight for more than one round; otherwise, the link lasts as long as you concentrate. An unwilling target can end the link with a Will save (DC 10 + your Hit Dice + your Charisma modifier).

You can use the link to read the target's thoughts against her will. Each round, you can read the target's surface thoughts (a Will

save resists this attempt); you can probe for thoughts or memories the target isn't actively thinking about, but she gets a +4 bonus on her save. You can try to read thoughts each round the link is active.

The link counts as a sympathetic conduit for mind-affecting magic (see Chapter 5: Magic, "Spells," *Spell Range*).

Mekhet: You can remain in contact with a target even if she is out of your line of sight for up to one minute.

Action: Free
Cost: 0 Vitae (willing target), 1 Vitae (unwilling targets)
Duration: Until you end it

Touch of Shadow (Obfuscate)

You can conceal small items in your grasp or on your person so that they are all but undetectable.

Benefit: You conceal on your person an object of Diminutive or smaller size. The item is undetectable even if it is in plain sight (such as a pack of cigarettes held in your open palm).

Anyone trying to find the concealed object must make a Will save (DC 10 + your Hit Dice + your Charisma modifier) to find the item. Furthermore, he must know exactly what he is looking for (such as a pack of cigarettes, a knife, a pistol, a bag of drugs and so on); a nonspecific search fails to turn up anything.

Smaller objects increase the DC by +4 per size category, larger ones decrease the DC by –4 per size category.

If you draw attention to the object (such as by pointing at it or deliberately showing it to someone), the concealment ends. A person who spots the object can point it out to others, giving them a +4 bonus on their saves, but anyone who rolls a 1 on his save cannot see the object despite all attempts.

As with Cloak of Shadow, this Discipline is a mental effect rather than a physical one. Because the ability is nonphysical, you cannot conceal an object and hide another object behind the first object; the other object is clearly visible.

Mekhet or Nosferatu: Creatures have a –4 penalty to resist this Discipline.

Action: Free
Cost: 0 Vitae
Duration: 1 minute

Twilight Projection (Auspex)

You can leave your body in an invisible ghostlike form and fly anywhere in the world.

Prerequisite: Heightened Senses, level 12

Benefit: You project your senses out of your physical body, creating an astral form or ghost body. In this form, you are invisible and invulnerable but cannot physically interact with the world. You may travel anywhere in moments, including underground or miles into the air (though not beyond the orbit of the moon or to another dimension). If you encounter another vampire using this ability or a supernatural creature with a similar power, you can see and communicate with each other as if you were in the real world, but you cannot harm each other in any way. You cannot use Disciplines or other supernatural abilities when in the ghost body.

Your projection looks like you but is naked and has no possessions. Supernatural objects with strong ties to souls may have a residual manifestation if you project while carrying them, but this manifestation is cosmetic, and the objects have no abilities in projected form.

You are invisible to most creatures and can be detected as an invisible creature by supernatural methods (see Chapter 7: Playing the Game, "Special Abilities," *Invisibility*). Children, animals and the mentally ill or deficient may be able to see you, as may a vampire using Aura Perception or Heightened Senses.

While your consciousness roams, your physical body lies inert and lifeless as a corpse. While projected, you do not know what is happening to or near your body. If your body is reduced to –1 hit point or below, your projection immediately returns to your body. Your body spends one Vitae at sundown even if your consciousness is not within your body.

Certain supernatural effects may bar your projection from returning to your body or take over your body while your projection is absent, preventing you from using your body. Each full day that you are denied your body against your will reduces your Charisma by two points; when your Charisma reaches 0, your projection fades into oblivion, and you die.

Mekhet: Your projected form may appear naked or clothed as your body currently is. By spending one Vitae, you can make yourself visible to a single creature for up to one minute, though this does not allow you to communicate verbally or telepathically (though you can still gesture or even use sign language).

Action: Free
Cost: 1 Vitae
Duration: Until you end it

Vigor (Vigor)

You can boost your Strength to superhuman levels, making it possible to perform incredible acts.

Prerequisite: Vampire

Benefit: You give yourself a +4 enhancement bonus to Strength and a +5 bonus on Jump checks (in addition to the Jump bonus from your improved Strength).

Special: You may take this Discipline up to five times. Its effects stack. Every time you take it, it increases your Strength and Jump bonuses by another increment (+8 Strength and +10 on Jump checks for two Disciplines, +12 and +15 for three and so on). The Vitae cost does not increase.

Daeva or Nosferatu: The Strength bonus for each Vigor Discipline is +6 instead of +4.

Action: Free
Cost: 1 Vitae
Duration: 1 minute

"Are you going to turn me into a vampire, too?"
—Leslie Garrison

Devotion Descriptions

Devotions are described below.

Body of Will (Devotion)

You can ignore pain and other debilitating effects.

Prerequisites: Resilience (x3), Vigor

Benefit: You can temporarily ignore pain and other physical effects. You are not numb to all sensation and are still aware if you take damage, but your will overrides your body's limitations.

You can ignore following conditions while you use this devotion: dazed, exhausted, fatigued, staggered and stunned. You do not lose hit points for acting while disabled. All ignored effects resume when the devotion ends.

Action: None (you can activate this ability when it is not your turn, even in response to an attack that causes one of these conditions)

Cost: 1 Vitae

Duration: 10 minutes

Instantaneous Transformation (Devotion)

You can change forms in an instant.

Prerequisites: Celerity, Body of Spirit

Benefit: You may change form as a free action instead of a standard action.

Action: None

Cost: 0 Vitae

Duration: Instantaneous

Iron Facade (Devotion)

You can hide the extent of your injuries, no matter how grave.

Prerequisites: Vampire, Mask of Tranquility, Resilience (x2)

Benefit: You shrug off wounds, debilitating injuries and other effects that make you less than at your best. That is, you appear to do so — it is actually a carefully built illusion only partly based on reality. You appear to be uninjured. You ignore penalties to your movement stemming from injuries (such as caltrops or a broken leg) but not from other sources (for example, wading through cement or wearing leg shackles still slows you). If injuries or other effects occur after you activate this Discipline, they appear to heal instantly.

This devotion only masks the extent of the damage; this devotion does not heal damage. The devotion is strong enough to let you run on a shattered leg (perhaps giving you time to escape a dangerous enemy), laugh off shotgun blast to the chest (even if it reduces you to one hit point) or even walk through sunlight (though your flesh appears to boil away and re-grow instantly). This devotion does not protect you from effects, injuries or hit point damage that would knock you unconscious or kill you (though for the duration you appear to be a strangely intact corpse). All masked injuries reappear as soon as the devotion ends.

TABLE 4–5: VAMPIRE DEVOTIONS

Devotion	Prerequisites	Benefit
Body of Will	Resilience (x3), Vigor	Ignore dazed, exhausted, fatigued, staggered and stunned conditions; act normally when disabled or dying.
Instantaneous Transformation	Celerity; Body of Spirit	Change form as a free action.
Iron Façade	Vampire, Mask of Tranquility, Resilience (x2)	Hide your injuries.
Quicken Sight	Celerity, Heightened Senses	+12 on Spot checks when looking at fast-moving items.
Veridical Tongue	Mesmerize, Revelation	Target cannot lie.

You gain a +10 bonus on Intimidate checks against anyone who sees you "heal" with this devotion. Any human who sees you "heal" immediately realizes that something is unnatural about you (and the normal human reaction is to flee). A demon, mage, werewolf, vampire or Awakened who sees you do this probably assumes you are very powerful or at least guarded by powerful magic — unless he knows about this devotion, of course.

Action: Free
Cost: 1 Vitae
Duration: 1 minute

Quicken Sight (Devotion)

You combine reflexes and awareness to let you carefully examine fast-moving objects as if they were still.

Prerequisites: Celerity, Heightened Senses

Benefit: You gain a +12 bonus on Search and Spot checks regarding fast-moving objects that would otherwise be a blur. Following a particular card in a shuffle is a trivial task, subliminal messages are as clear as a newspaper headline and you can read a newspaper headline as you drive by at 60 miles per hour. You also get a +5 bonus on Search and Spot checks regarding sight of slow or stationary objects. (This bonus does not stack with the bonus from Heightened Senses, though you can still use that Discipline to improve your hearing, touch and so on.)

Action: None (you can activate this ability when it is not your turn)
Cost: 1 Vitae
Duration: 1 minute

Veridical Tongue (Devotion)

You can make someone unable to speak anything but the truth.

Prerequisites: Mesmerize, Revelation

Benefit: You negate the target's ability to lie. She can remain silent, but if she speaks, it can only be the truth as she knows it. The subject does not have a supernatural sense of truth; if what she knows is actually false, she speaks as if it were true.

Action: Free
Cost: 1 Vitae
Duration: 1 minute

Werewolf Rites

Rites are the alien, supernatural powers that werewolves possess. Using a rite is a supernatural ability (as opposed to an extraordinary or spell-like ability; see the "Types of Special Abilities" sidebar in Chapter 7: Playing the Game, "Actions in the Round," *Action Types*), and so does not provoke attacks of opportunity.

Rite descriptions are similar to feat descriptions, except rite descriptions include the following information.

Action: What type of action (such as free, move or standard) the rite constitutes.

Cost: How much Essence the rite costs.

Duration: How long the rite lasts.

"Werewolf" does not appear as a prerequisite in the descriptions, but only werewolves can use rites.

Some rites are designated as New Moon, Crescent Moon, Half Moon, Gibbous Moon or Full Moon rites. Only Irraka, Ithaeur, Elodoth, Cahalith or Rahu (respectively) werewolves can use these rites, as indicated in their prerequisites. All other rites are available to all werewolves.

Alien Fury (Full Moon)

You call upon memories of the moon from your alien dimension and enter a terrifying powerful rage.

Prerequisite: Rahu level 12

Benefit: You invoke thoughts of your homeworld's strange moon, filling yourself with its power. You gain a +8 dodge bonus to Defense and a +8 bonus on attack rolls. Your eyes, fangs and claws blaze with a strange white energy resembling fire.

You can use this rite in combination with a normal rage as long as you activate the rite first (though this combination lasts only one round, as you cannot activate rites while raging).

Action: Free
Cost: 1 Essence
Duration: 1 round

Alien Speed

You greatly increase your natural speed.

Prerequisite: Level 4

Benefit: You increase your base speed by +30 feet in human or hybrid form, or +40 feet in beast form. You get a +8 dodge bonus to Defense against ranged attacks.

Action: Free

TABLE 4–6: WEREWOLF RITES

Rite	Prerequisites	Benefit
Alien Fury	Rahu level 12	Enter a special rage, gaining +8 dodge bonus to Def and a +8 to hit.
Alien Speed	Level 4	+30 feet to speed in human or hybrid form; +40 feet in beast form; +8 dodge bonus to Def against ranged weapons.
Anybeast		Your beast and hybrid forms resemble animals other than wolves.
Attunement	Rahu level 2	+2 to hit, additional +2 per Primal Urge rite.
Aura of Truce	Elodoth level 6	Nearby creatures must make a Will saves to fight.
Between the Weave	Ithaeur level 8	Use a Nightmare Site to hide or travel intangibly for a short distance.
Bind or Sunder	Fuel Rage, Elodoth level 10	Force a creature into its natural form or allow a werewolf to stay in hybrid form.
Blending	Level 2	Hide in plain sight.
Break the Defiant	Level 6	Deal 8 Wisdom damage.
Bystander	Irraka level 8	Fool others into thinking you're just part of the crowd.
Call of Glory	Cahalith level 12	Howl to heal nearby packmates 8d6.
Clarity	Rahu	Negate surprise and being flat-footed; +8 on initiative checks.
Command Fire	Level 6	Manipulate flame, increasing, decreasing or moving it.
Crashing the Gates	Between the Weave, Ithaeur level 10	Bring others with you when you use Between the Weave.
Crushing Blow	—	Melee attacks deal +4 damage; gain Improved Unarmed Strike feat.
Death Grip	Rahu level 6	+8 to grapple; you cannot speak or use rites while doing so.
Double Back	Level 12	Recognize non-supernatural attempts to hide, cover or disguise anything near you.
Feet of Mist		Tracking attempts to find you take a –4 penalty; –10 if you spend Essence.
Fog of War	Level 16	Battle howls give opponents a –10 penalty on attacks, saves, and checks.
Friend of the Dark	—	Darkvision in beast form and hybrid form.
Fuel Rage	Elodoth level 10	Remain in hybrid form one round longer.
Ghost Step	Irraka level 12	Become a ghostlike mist and fly.
Hone Rage	—	Sacrifice rounds in hybrid form for +4 Str or Dex.
Intrusion Cloak	Ithaeur level 6	+8 on Hide checks; 20% miss chance against ranged attacks.
Invoke the Wind's Wrath	Level 8	Create a whirlwind that traps and moves creatures.
Iron-Rending	Level 6	Ignore eight points of hardness or DR.
Killing Frost	Level 10	3d6 cold damage to everything within 25 feet.
Lament of the River	Level 12	Animate nearby water to create a wave or flood.
Leach Rage	Level 6	Steal 1 round of rage time from another werewolf.
Legendary Arm	Level 10	Lift and throw large objects.
Loose Tongue	—	+8 on Diplomacy, Gather Information and Sense Motive checks.
Mask of Rage	—	Reveal your bestial alien spirit to terrorize witnesses.
Mechanical Failure	—	One mechanical object fails to work for one minute.
Mighty Bound	—	+10 on Jump checks.
Mortal Savage	Level 8	Gain some beast form abilities while in human form.
Nightfall	Level 4	Disrupt all nearby electrical devices for one minute.
Pack Awareness	Cahalith	Sense your packmates' direction and condition.
Partial Change	—	Change part of your body to gain a benefit of one of your other forms.
Playing Possum	Level 6	Appear as a corpse even to thorough examination.
Primal Urge	—	+10 maximum Essence, +1 Essence spent/round; –3 on peaceful Diplomacy, Gather Information and Sense Motive.

TABLE 4-6: WEREWOLF RITES

Rallying Cry	Cahalith level 6	Howl to give packmates a +2 on attacks, saves and checks; 25% chance that humanity points aren't lost when used.
Rage Armor	Rahu level 10	+8 to Def.
Read Intrusion	Two-World Eyes, Ithaeur	Study a Nightmare Site or supernatural object to understand its powers.
Rekindle Rage	Level 10	Take hybrid form earlier than normal.
Rending the Gauntlet	Between the Weave, Crashing the Gates, Ithaeur level 12	Create a weak point in reality, then use Crashing the Gates.
Resist Pain	Cahalith level 2	Ignore pain, fatigue, stuns and near-death.
Running Shadow	Level 6	Make Move Silently checks without penalty for speed or noisy surfaces.
Sand in the Eyes	Level 2	Target forgets specific details about you and cannot describe you.
Savage Might	Level 12	+10 Str.
Savage Rending	Level 2	Claws deal +4 damage.
Scent Beneath the Surface	Elodoth	Detect lies and general emotional state.
Sense Weakness	Irraka	Learn opponent's weakness.
Silver Jaws	Level 6	Teeth and claws become silver.
Skin-Stealing	Level 10	Grow a false skin as a disguise, masking even your scent and size.
Slip Away	Irraka	Easily escape physical bonds.
Snarl of Command	Elodoth	Force target to reveal the truth.
Speak with Beasts	—	Speak with a normal animal as if you shared a language.
Two-World Eyes	Ithaeur	Recognize Nightmare Sites and supernatural creatures.
Unspoken Communication	Cahalith level 10	Create a telepathic net linking your packmates' thoughts.
Vanish	Level 12	Become invisible.
Ward	—	Mark territory or a creature so others are hesitant to enter or harm it.
Warning Growl	—	+6 Def against one target.

Cost: 1 Essence
Duration: 1 minute

Anybeast

You can make your hybrid and beast forms resemble a non-wolf-like creature.

Benefit: With this rite you skew your appearance so you resemble another animal rather than a wolf. For example, you may look more like a tiger, hyena, bear and so on. These are not perfect imitations of Earth creatures any more than your beast form is a perfect imitation of a wolf. In hybrid form, you resemble a cross between human and your new beast form.

Your size does not change (you are still Medium), so taking wolverine or elephant form results in a creature of the wrong size. Your basic shape as a biped/quadruped does not change, so pretending to be a weresnake (no limbs) or werespider (eight limbs) is impossible. You can drop the disguise as a free action, reverting to your normal shape for your current form (dropping a man-tiger hybrid shape means you take on your normal man-wolf hybrid form). Each time you use this rite, you may adopt a new temporary form (you are not limited to one specific new form when you learn this rite).

Action: Free
Cost: 1 Essence
Duration: 10 minutes or until you end it (a free action)

Attunement (Full Moon)

You heighten your perceptions toward an opponent, reducing his ability to avoid your attacks.

Prerequisite: Rahu level 2

Benefit: You gain an intuitive understanding of the target's combat ability. You get a +2 bonus on attack rolls against the target; you get an additional +2 bonus for each Primal Urge rite you have (to a maximum of +12). The target gets a Will save to resist (DC 10 + your Hit Dice + your Wisdom modifier).

Action: Free
Cost: 1 Essence
Duration: 1 minute

Aura of Truce (Half Moon)

You maintain a peaceful truce between two parties.

Prerequisite: Elodoth level 6

Benefit: You soothe flaring tempers and establish a mood that facilitates arbitration to violence. It is especially effective if one party wishes to talk and the other prefers to fight. Targets may resist with a Will save (DC 10 + your Hit Dice + your Charisma modifier + 2 for every target willingly accepting the effect). Failure means the target cannot attack, use a rite to harm another or even damage property (though non-hostile "damage" such as eating offered food is not prohibited); success means the target can act normally. You may end the effect as a free action, which ends the effect for everyone. If you attack an affected target, the effect ends for everyone.

You must be able to see a target to affect him, though affected targets do not need to see each other. Once violence has broken out, you cannot use this rite to stop it (though you can still restrain or talk-down a malcontent).

Action: Free
Cost: 1 Essence
Duration: 10 minutes or until ended

Between the Weave (Crescent Moon)

You can use weak points in the fabric of our universe to hide and travel.

Prerequisite: Ithaeur level 8

Benefit: The Intrusion stretched and snapped the supernatural material that separates our universe from others. In some places, this weakness is apparent by the strange abilities it manifests, and with careful effort, you can slip through one of these points and use it as a hiding place or a way to travel secretly.

When at an area affected by the Intrusion (or Nightmare Wave), you can make a DC 20 Will save to squeeze through this point of weakness and enter a place called the Gauntlet, a strange barrier zone between the Earth's dimension and somewhere else. The GM may decide that the affected area is more or less damaged than a typically weakened area and assign a bonus or penalty on your save (anywhere from +4 to –4). You can bring only what you can carry, and not another creature. The tainted area must be at least as large as your body.

When in the Gauntlet, you are invisible and invulnerable to attack from things outside it, but you cannot take any actions against anything outside the Gauntlet. You may target yourself with skills or supernatural abilities as normal. You may move through the Gauntlet at your normal speed, though physical objects in the Earth-universe still block your progress (for example, you cannot use the Gauntlet to walk through walls, but you can walk through an open doorway as easily as if you were in the Earth-dimension). While in the Gauntlet, you do not leave a scent.

The Gauntlet plays havoc with your senses while you are there. Though you can perceive things outside the Gauntlet, they are often distorted, brightly colored, patterns of shadow or even stranger things: ghosts crushed into the shapes of walls and doors. These images are not harmful and do not affect your ability to move in the Gauntlet or relate to Earth-dimension features, but such images may be distracting or frightening. Some werewolves speculate these distortions are just another aspect of the Intrusion; some think it's the influence of a neighboring dimension. Most don't care.

Once you pierce the edge of reality, you can remain there for only a short time (up to one round per point of your Wisdom bonus, minimum one round), after which you return automatically. You can return earlier than this as a free action. When you leave the Gauntlet, you arrive at the equivalent Earth-dimension location; therefore, this rite is handy for waiting out a short danger or getting a head start against pursuers but not so good at breaking into sealed areas such as bank vaults. Some large areas of damaged reality may allow you to remain in the Gauntlet longer.

Transitioning back to the Earth-dimension is disorienting; once you do so, you cannot take any more actions during that round.

It may be possible to use the Gauntlet to reach other dimensions, but no werewolf who has tried has ever returned.

Action: Standard
Cost: 1 Essence
Duration: 1 round per point of Wisdom bonus (minimum 1) or until you end it

Bind or Sunder (Half Moon)

You can influence a shapechanger's control over his or her form.

Prerequisites: Fuel Rage, Elodoth level 10
Benefit: You can manipulate a target's delicate control over her form-changing. Doing so has one of two effects.

Extend: If the target is a werewolf, you can extend the maximum time she may spend it hybrid form, just as if you were using Fuel Rage on yourself. The target gets no save to resist this effect, as the target always has the option to change form even if you extend her maximum possible time as a hybrid (though she must make a DC 20 Will save to do so, as described in Chapter 2: Character, "Werewolf"). You cannot use this aspect of the rite on anything other than a werewolf.

Suppress: If the target is a creature not in its natural form (whether demon, mage, vampire or anything else), you can force the target to assume its natural form. The target may resist with a Will save (DC 10 + your Hit Dice + your Charisma modifier). Failure means that the target assumes its natural form and cannot change shape for a number of rounds equal to your Wisdom bonus (minimum 1). If another creature tries to change the target's form (such as a mage using a spell) while this ban is in effect, the acting creature must make a Will save to override the rite.

You must have line of sight to the target to affect it.
Action: Free
Cost: 1 Essence
Duration: 1 round per point Wisdom bonus (minimum 1)

Blending

You can hide in plain sight, even out in the open.
Prerequisite: Level 2
Benefit: You can make Hide checks even when you have no cover or concealment; anyone who fails her Spot check fails to see you or believes you to be an unremarkable feature of the landscape. You cannot move when using this rite. You cannot use it to hide while someone is observing you (though you may hide if she is merely in the area rather than looking specifically at you).
Action: Free (using the Hide skill still is part of your move action)
Cost: 0 Essence
Duration: Until you move

Break the Defiant

You project such a forceful authority that you weaken the target's will.
Prerequisite: Level 6
Benefit: You growl menacingly, chilling the target to the bone. The target gets a Will save to partially resist (DC 10 + your Hit Dice + your Charisma modifier). Success means she takes four points of Wisdom damage; failure means she takes eight points of Wisdom damage. If she rolls a 1 on her save, she gets no save against the next rite you use on her that normally allows a Will save to resist.

You cannot use this rite on someone more than once per day.
Action: Free
Cost: 1 Essence
Duration: Instantaneous

Bystander (New Moon)

You can become Everyman, appearing as if you belong in your current environment.
Prerequisite: Irraka level 8
Benefit: You become a face in the crowd, failing to attract attention to yourself as an unexceptional example of the people around you, even if your appearance or personal hygiene would indicate otherwise. An Irraka wearing blood-spattered sweatpants and a T-shirt could walk through a Wall Street brokerage firm without attracting attention, as anyone who sees him thinks he sees another "suit."

The effect ends if you draw attention to yourself (such as kicking open an emergency exit door or attacking someone; even a helpful action such as pulling someone out of the way of an oncoming car) unless that action is appropriate for a typical bystander in the environment; drawing a gun on an armed attacker is unusual for a typical man on the street but perfectly ordinary if you're surrounded by police officers or at an NRA convention. Otherwise, the effect remains active even if you interact with others in an unobtrusive manner (chatting with others on an elevator, waving to a security guard and so on).

This rite doesn't fool security devices such as retinal scanners, voice scanners or key-code locks, but does fool facial-recognition software trying to pick you out of a crowd. It may be foiled by something as simple as signing a logbook or handing over a bus ticket if you cannot cover for these actions (by signing an illegible name or name that is known at the area, providing a bus ticket or paper that looks like a bus ticket, and so on). Finally, the rite fails if the area includes no bystanders with whom you can mingle, such as a security checkpoint near the Intrusion or a company's board meeting (though you might be able to crash a small invitation-only party by mingling with the caterers).

Someone using supernatural means of awareness or actively trying to recognize you as not belonging gets a Will save to resist (DC 10 + your Hit Dice + your Charisma modifier); if he rolls a 1 on his save, he fails to remember you were present at all.
Action: Free
Cost: 1 Essence
Duration: 10 minutes or until you end it

Call of Glory (Gibbous Moon)

You can channel your alien spirit into a powerful inspiring howl that heals nearby allies.
Prerequisite: Cahalith level 12
Benefit: You can let loose a supernatural howl that rejuvenates nearby packmates. Any werewolf packmate (including yourself) who hears you immediately heals 8d6 points of damage. A non-werewolf packmate who hears you heals 4d6 points of damage.

This rite only works if the targets hear your voice directly; hearing you in a recording or over the phone is insufficient.

Action: Free
Cost: 1 Essence
Duration: Instantaneous

Clarity (Full Moon)

You touch the white-hot core of your soul, focusing your mind against distractions.

Prerequisite: Rahu

Benefit: When you activate this ability, you become alert and ready for battle. If you are surprised, you are no longer surprised (and get to take a turn during the surprise round). If you are flat-footed, you are no longer flat-footed. This rite does not affect stunning, paralysis, sleep or other conditions that make you unable to take actions.

You may activate this rite even if you are surprised or when it is not your turn. If you activate this rite before combat, you get a +8 bonus on Initiative rolls.

Action: None
Cost: 1 Essence
Duration: 1 minute

Command Fire

You can bend and move existing flames.

Prerequisite: Level 6

Benefit: You can bend and shape any open flame, even arcing it through the air to strike an object or creature. Attacking with flame in this way requires a ranged touch attack and deals 1d6 points of fire damage per point of your Charisma bonus (minimum 1d6).

By concentrating and making a DC 0 Will save, you can cause a large fire to spread faster or slower. For every 5 points you exceed the DC, you cause the fire to expand into or stay out of one five-foot-square area for one round. (For example, if you roll a 20, you can cause a large fire to advance into an additional four squares or stay out of four squares.)

Action: Standard
Cost: 1 Essence
Duration: Instantaneous (fire attack) or concentration (manipulate large fire)

Crashing the Gates (Crescent Moon)

You can bring others with you enter the Gauntlet.

Prerequisites: Between the Weave, Ithaeur level 10

Benefit: This rite works similarly to Between the Weave, except you can bring up to four other people with you. Each person coming with you must be willing, conscious and touching you. Any Ithaeur werewolf brought with you can return on his own, but all other passengers remain until you bring them back or the rite's duration expires.

Humans (normal humans, not Awakened or mages) find the Gauntlet disturbing and must make DC 15 Will saves or be shaken for one minute after leaving it.

Action: Instantaneous
Cost: 1 Essence per person (including yourself)
Duration: Instantaneous

Crushing Blow

Your attacks are lethal even when you do not use your claws or teeth.

Benefit: Your unarmed attacks and attacks with melee weapons deal +4 points of damage. You gain the benefits of the Improved Unarmed Strike feat.

Action: Free
Cost: 1 Essence
Duration: 1 minute

Death Grip (Full Moon)

You use your jaws to help grapple your target in a nearly unbreakable grip.

Prerequisite: Rahu level 6

Benefit: You focus your energy into your jaws, making them the perfect agent for restraining your prey. You do not provoke an attack of opportunity for initiating a grapple (provided you use your bite to do so). In this grapple, as long as you do not speak, use a rite requiring a howl or bite a different creature, you can lock your jaws and get a +8 bonus on grapple checks against your prey. You can still use your bite as a natural attack to damage your prey (by making an opposed grapple check) without releasing this hold.

You must be in hybrid or beast form to use this rite.

Action: Free (though you still must use an attack to start a grapple)
Cost: 1 Essence
Duration: 1 minute or until you let go with your bite

Double Back

You heighten your perception, easily recognizing a physical deception near you.

Prerequisite: Level 12

Benefit: You become aware of all mundane attempts to physically hide, cover or alter something near you. You know where someone has tried to hide evidence (such as by bleaching or painting over bloodstains) or conceal tracks. You recognize when someone is wearing a disguise (though you do not automatically see through the disguise) and can see where someone is physically hidden (negating all Hide attempts, even if the person is fully concealed). The rite does not reveal social deceptions (such as when someone tells a lie). You do not automatically pierce supernatural concealing effects but gain a +4 bonus on rolls to do so.

Action: Standard
Cost: 1 Essence
Duration: 1 minute

Feet of Mist

Your scent is almost imperceptible; tracking you by scent is difficult.

Benefit: This rite, which is always active, imposes a –4 penalty on checks to track you by scent. If you spend Essence, this penalty increases to –10 for one hour. You may suppress and reactivate this rite as a free action.

Action: Free

Cost: 0 Essence or 1 Essence
Duration: Instantaneous or 1 hour

Fog of War

You howl repeatedly through a battle, causing confusion and limiting the effectiveness of anyone who hears you.

Prerequisite: Level 16

Benefit: You howl with furious unnerving power. All within hearing range take a –10 penalty on attacks, saves and checks. Targets make Will saves (DC 10 + your Hit Dice + your Charisma modifier) the first time they hear you to resist this rite for its entire duration. When you activate this rite, you may designate targets that are immune to it; they must be within sight at the time but can move out of your sight afterward.

Maintaining this rite is a standard action, and you cannot use other rites (even those requiring less time than a standard action) while doing so.

Action: Standard (each round you use the rite)
Cost: 1 Essence
Duration: Concentration

Friend of the Dark

While in beast form or hybrid form, you can see in the dark.

Benefit: While in your beast form or hybrid form, you gain darkvision with a range of 60 feet. This rite is always active, although you may suppress and reactivate this rite as a free action. If you spend Essence, the range is 120 feet for one hour.

Action: Free
Cost: 0 Essence or 1 Essence
Duration: Instantaneous or 1 hour

Fuel Rage (Half Moon)

You can remain in hybrid form longer than normal.

Prerequisite: Elodoth level 10

Benefit: As a master of controlling the balance of flesh, you can remain in your hybrid form longer than other werewolves. You can activate this rite while in hybrid form. Each time you activate this rite, it extends the maximum duration of your hybrid form; you can activate the rite once per round, possibly greatly extending your time in this form. You can still change form normally; you are just able to linger in hybrid form longer than normal. Activating this rite on a round when you are not in hybrid form or changing into hybrid form has no effect (you cannot activate this rite one round, change to hybrid form the next and still gain the benefit of its extra duration).

Action: Free
Cost: 1 Essence
Duration: 1 round per point Wisdom bonus (minimum 1)

Ghost Step (New Moon)

You can assume an invulnerable ghostlike form.

Prerequisite: Irraka level 12

Benefit: You transform yourself, your clothing and small items you carry into a transparent ghostly form resembling a faint mist. Your body volume does not change, and you can fly at Speed 20 (perfect maneuverability). You are invulnerable to physical attacks, but supernatural attacks may still affect you if they do not rely on a physical form or mundane means. (For example, a spell that makes a blade of hard air cannot harm you, and vampire Disciplines that require eye contact cannot harm you, because you have no eyes.) You cannot physically attack anyone (even another werewolf using this ability) or manipulate any physical object, though you may use rites that affect only yourself. You can change form while in this ephemeral state, though doing so has no effect until you end this rite. You gain a +10 bonus on Hide checks.

Your senses are normal despite not having eyes or ears, and you leave no scent and make no sound. You cannot speak, as you have no mouth. Your clothes transform with you, as do one or two objects up to Tiny size. Werewolves using this rite and some other supernatural creatures can see and hear you without penalty.

Maintaining this form is taxing. You may remain in it without penalty for a number of rounds equal to your Charisma bonus (minimum 1); each round after that gives you a –4 penalty on attacks, saves and checks. The penalties last for one minute after you return to your normal form.

Action: Standard
Cost: 1 Essence
Duration: Until you end it, plus 1 minute for detrimental effects

Hone Rage

You can sacrifice remaining time in hybrid form to boost your Strength or Dexterity.

Benefit: When in hybrid form, you sacrifice one round of remaining time in that form, converting this rage into a +4 enhancement bonus to Strength or Dexterity. You can use this rite only if you have at least one full round available in hybrid form, and the bonuses stack with themselves. (If you have at least two full rounds of hybrid form available, you can sacrifice two rounds to give yourself a +8 enhancement bonus to Strength, a +8 enhancement bonus to Dexterity or a +4 enhancement bonus to both Strength and Dexterity, and so forth.) These bonuses go away when you leave hybrid form.

Example: Gareth can normally spend four rounds in hybrid form before he has to become human or beast. At the start of the first round in hybrid form, he activates Hone Rage, sacrificing two rounds in hybrid form to increase his Strength and Dexterity by +4. He gets these bonuses all of this round (first round in hybrid form) and the next (second round). At the start of his next turn (on what would have been his third round in hybrid form, had he not sacrificed two rounds of the ability), he reverts to human form and loses the benefits of hybrid form and the temporary Strength and Dexterity boosts from this rite. If he had decided to switch to full beast form rather than human form, he still would lose the additional Strength and Dexterity bonuses from this rite, though he would gain the normal bonuses appropriate to beast form.

Action: Free
Cost: 1 Essence
Duration: Until you change forms

Intrusion Cloak (Crescent Moon)

You manipulate a tiny element of the Intrusion to conceal yourself in a cloak of mysterious power.

Prerequisite: Ithaeur level 6

Benefit: You wrap yourself in a shroud of dimensional instability resembling a starry night sky. You gain a +8 bonus on Hide checks. Attempts to identify you take a –4 penalty. Ranged attacks against you suffer a 20% miss chance.

You cannot use Between the Weave, Crash the Gates or Rend the Gauntlet when using this rite.

Action: Standard

Cost: 1 Essence

Duration: 1 minute

Invoke the Wind's Wrath

You manipulate the air to create a destructive whirlwind.

Prerequisite: Level 8

Benefit: You create one whirlwind within 100 feet of you. The whirlwind fills a 10-foot cube and moves at your speed in a direction you indicate. Once directed, the whirlwind is no longer under your control. Any creature the whirlwind touches must make a DC 16 Reflex save or take 2d6 points of damage, and a second Reflex save to avoid being pulled into it and taking this damage every round without a save. A trapped creature cannot escape the whirlwind unless the creature can fly or receives outside aid (such as a rope). Creatures trapped in the whirlwind are carried along with it, taking a –4 penalty to Dexterity and a –2 penalty on attack rolls. A whirlwind can hold as many creatures as can fit inside its space.

The whirlwind lasts two rounds, but you can spend extra Essence to cause the whirlwind to last longer. Any creature trapped in the whirlwind when it dissipates drops to the ground (taking no damage).

If two whirlwinds collide, they destroy each other and drop anything they are carrying.

Action: Standard

Cost: 1 Essence plus 1 Essence for each round you want it to last beyond the first two rounds (spent when you activate the rite)

Duration: 2 rounds

Iron-Rending

You can easily tear apart metal and weaker materials.

Prerequisite: Level 6

Benefit: You treat the hardness of an item as if it were 8 less than normal. To you, stone is as fragile as cloth; iron or steel is no stronger than leather. If the item is a creature's armor, ignore up to eight points of the armor's protection for the purpose of your attack roll. This ability works only on physical items, not magic barriers, force fields and so on.

Action: Free

Cost: 1 Essence

Duration: 1 round

Killing Frost

You absorb ambient heat, creating unnatural cold and ice.

Prerequisite: Level 10

Benefit: You take in a slow breath, drawing the thermal energy out of the area and harmlessly into yourself. Everything in the area takes 3d6 points of cold damage. Frost forms on surfaces, water freezes and the ground becomes icy. Rain may turn briefly into snow or hail (harmless but noisy). The rite affects a spherical area centered on you and extending outward from you to a range of 25 feet plus 25 feet for every Primal Urge rite you have (though you can choose to affect a smaller area).

A creature can walk on the icy ground at half normal speed with a DC 10 Balance check. Failure means the creature can't move during that round, while failure by 5 or more means the creature falls (see the Balance skill description in Chapter 3: Skills).

You do not take damage from this ability, but you are still subject to reduced movement and other secondary effects. This rite may suppress fires in the area for one round if they deal 3d6 points of damage or less; much smaller fires may go out entirely at the GM's discretion.

Action: Standard

Cost: 1 Essence

Duration: Instantaneous (secondary effects such as ice last as long as appropriate for the current weather and temperature)

Lament of the River

You can cause nearby waters to rise and flood.

Prerequisites: Level 12

Benefit: You cause nearby water to flow to your will. You can use this rite for one of two effects.

Wave: You animate a mass of water within 50 feet, causing it to burst forth in a low but strong wave 10 feet wide. The wave moves in a straight line in a direction you indicate (the wave flows around large obstacles such as buildings but otherwise maintains its path) for 50 feet. Creatures and objects the wave strikes take 2d6 points of bludgeoning damage and are subject to a bull rush (your check is d20 + your Charisma bonus + 10). Creatures that lose the bull rush check are pushed back five feet for every five points by which the wave won the check, and must make a DC 15 Reflex save or be knocked prone. If you use this rite on targets already swimming, they still take damage and may be pushed but are not knocked prone.

You cannot use this aspect of the rite if a suitable source of water is not nearby, though the presence of a water tower, swimming pool or even a fire hydrant or city water pipe is sufficient.

Flood: By concentrating, you slowly build a connection with the water within one square mile, eventually causing the water to spill out of its confines and rage forth. Make a Will save and subtract your result from 60; this is the number of minutes you must concentrate to create this flood. A flood has the same effect as a wave but on a much larger scale, causing indiscriminate deaths, destruction of property and damage to flora and fauna. (The flood can also put out large fires, scatter an army and so on, so if used properly, this rite may be a mixed blessing rather than a disaster.) Dry areas have less water and suffer less damage as a result; deserts or other extremely dry places may be immune to this rite. You may take a move action each round and maintain concentration, but cannot activate rites or spend Essence.

Creatures attuned to the natural world or sensitive to magic or the supernatural can notice your manipulation of the water with a Spot check (DC equal to the number of minutes remaining before the flood occurs); if the creatures beat the check DC by 10, they know your relative direction at that moment.

Action: Standard (wave); consecutive standard (flood)

Cost: 1 Essence (wave); or 3 Essence (flood)

Duration: Instantaneous (once triggered), though once you move the water drains and flows at its natural pace as appropriate for the surroundings

Leach Rage

You can steal rage from another werewolf in hybrid form, extending your time as a hybrid at the expense of hers.

Prerequisite: Level 6

Benefit: When in hybrid form, you draw in a hissing breath while facing another werewolf in hybrid form, drawing on the energy of her rage to extend your own. The target gets a Will save to resist (DC 10 + your Hit Dice + your Charisma modifier). Failure means the target's available time in hybrid form decreases by one round and yours increases by one round. If the target rolls a 1 on her save, she loses two rounds and you gain two rounds.

You cannot steal time in hybrid form that the target does not have; for example, if she has to change form on her next turn (0 rounds remaining in hybrid form), you cannot draw rage from her to extend your hybrid state.

You can use this rite on a particular werewolf once per minute, though multiple werewolves with this rite can gang up on a particular werewolf and steal all of her time as a hybrid.

Action: Free

Cost: 1 Essence

Duration: Until you change forms (the extended duration applies only to your current use of hybrid form, not later transformations)

Legendary Arm

You can throw objects that would normally be too big or unwieldy to lift or throw.

Prerequisite: Level 10

Benefit: You can lift and throw large objects as if they were toys. Use the following table to determine what you can throw and how much damage it deals.

Strength	Object Size/Weight	Damage
1–10	Human/300 lbs.	2d6
11–20	Motorcycle/800 lbs.	3d6
21–30	Small car/1,500 lbs.	4d6
31–40	Full-size car/2,000 lbs.	5d6

You can throw a typical irregular object as a ranged weapon with a 10-foot range increment. If the item has an aerodynamic shape (even a spheroid boulder), the range increment increases to 20 feet. If you throw the object at something, the object deals

the listed damage plus one and a half times your Strength bonus. (In most cases, the object takes as much damage as it deals to the target, though the object's hardness may offset the damage.)

You can throw an object so it lands relatively lightly on a surface rather than colliding with it, taking half damage. If you throw a creature this way, she can further reduce the damage by 1d6 by making a Jump or Tumble check (as if she were trying to reduce falling damage).

Lifting and throwing objects with this rite is no more taxing than throwing a baseball; the rite augments your Strength to what is necessary and compensates for any strain that the lifting and throwing would cause an unaugmented person.

Action: Standard (includes throwing the item)
Cost: 1 Essence
Duration: 1 round

Loose Tongue

You can cloud someone's better judgment, making it difficult for them to keep things from you.

Benefit: You must speak with the target or targets (up to three) for at least five rounds for this ability to work. The targets do not need to have your exclusive attention for this time, and you can selectively affect them out in a crowd of people. Each target gets a Will save to resist (DC 10 + your Hit Dice + your Charisma modifier, –2 for each target beyond the first). If they fail, you get a +8 bonus on rolls to influence them with Diplomacy, Gather Information, and Sense Motive checks (and rites that rely on these skills). If a target rolls a 1 on his save, he also takes a –4 penalty on Will saves to resist your rites.

If the target is in combat or under threat of harm, the rite fails automatically.

Action: Free (speaking is not an action, but you cannot use any other rites while activating this one)
Cost: 0 Essence
Duration: 10 minutes

Mask of Rage

You can drive mortals temporarily insane by revealing your bestial self.

Benefit: You reveal your bestial alien spirit, making it obvious that you are not of this world. Any humans who see you must make a Will save (DC 10 + your Hit Dice + your Charisma modifier) or succumb to fear.

Humans are bolstered by the presence of others, so each gets a +1 bonus on her save for every two other humans present (to a maximum of +5). Thus, this ability is less effective against crowds. (You may frighten a dozen people but they are unlikely to run screaming in terror.)

The degree of failure affects the witness' actions.

Failed By	Result
1 to 4	Shaken
5 to 9	Frightened
10 to 14	Panicked
15 to 19	Cowering
20 or more	Confused

The degree of fear affects the witnesses' memories of the event. Shaken and frightened witnesses may remember a scary person or animal but not specifically what set them off, and may rationalize their fear by making up false details ("he had a gun," "it looked rabid"). Panicked witnesses blot out most memories of the event and rationalize in the most general sense ("I saw the pit bull attack that guy; I don't want to talk about it"). Cowering witnesses remember only glimpses and can't explain what happened at all. Confused witnesses have no memory of the event at all and deny evidence that places them there.

This rite does not affect mages, vampires, werewolves or Awakened who know they are Awakened; these supernatural creatures may be momentarily startled by your display, but their awareness of the supernatural precludes this simple effect from bothering them.

Action: Free
Cost: 1 Essence
Duration: 1 minute

Mechanical Failure

You cause a technological device to fail for a short time.

Benefit: Though primarily a creature of killing, as a werewolf you also represent more subtle forms of destruction. You cause one mechanical or technological object within five feet to fail without a discernable cause. A gun fails to fire a bullet, a cell phone goes dead, a computer crashes, a car engine stalls or fails to start. If another creature attends the object, the creature makes a Will save to resist (DC 10 + your Hit Dice + your Charisma modifier).

Action: Free
Cost: 1 Essence
Duration: 1 minute

Mighty Bound

You easily leap great distances.

Benefit: You gain a +10 bonus on Jump checks. This ability is always active.

Action: Free (using the Jump skill still is part of your move action)
Cost: 0 Essence
Duration: Instantaneous

Mortal Savage

You retain some beast abilities even in human form.

Prerequisite: Level 8

Benefit: While in human form, you have low-light vision and a Speed of 40 feet. You can understand werewolf speech while in human form. This ability is always active.

Action: Free
Cost: 0 Essence
Duration: Instantaneous

Nightfall

You cause a small electrical power outage.

Prerequisite: Level 4

Benefit: You release a burst of invisible chaotic energy, preventing electrical devices from functioning. This burst is similar to the electromagnetic pulse from a nuclear weapon except this burst causes no lasting damage and has no harmful side effects;

electronic devices simply stop working for no apparent reason. Even battery-powered devices and objects drawing electricity from portable gas-powered generators fail (in fact, the generators fail); these devices include cars (which are powered by gas, are started by a battery and rely on an ongoing electrical current to function).

This ability affects all electricity-powered devices in approximately a 40-foot-square area, plus additional adjacent areas of that size if you spend more Essence. You must have line of effect to all areas you want to target. Devices brought into the area after you activate the rite function normally. When the duration ends, affected objects function normally (though computers, cell phones and similar items may need a few seconds to start up as if they had just been turned on). Targeting a power plant with this rite has little effect unless you can affect the entire facility, as power plants are designed to be redundant and pick up the slack if one unit fails.

Action: Standard
Cost: 1 Essence per area
Duration: 1 minute

Pack Awareness (Gibbous Moon)

You extend your senses toward your packmates and learn their location and if they are harmed.

Prerequisite: Cahalith

Benefit: You may make a DC 15 Search check as a free action to get a sense of where your packmates are relative to you, what form they are in (if applicable), what activities they are performing and whether they are wounded, unconscious or dead. A packmate may be "to the left about 100 feet" or "one floor above me in this building." Activities may be "fighting," "waiting," "running," "sleeping," "fleeing," "having sex" and so on.

This information comes to you unconsciously and does not distract you from whatever you are doing. A packmate must be within one mile (plus one mile for each Primal Urge rite you have) for you to sense her.

Action: Free
Cost: 0 Essence
Duration: 1 minute

Partial Change

You can change only part of your body to gain a slight advantage or offset a penalty.

Benefit: Rather than being limited to exactly three forms, you can selectively change one aspect of your body to that of one of your other forms. For example, in human form you can give yourself hybrid-form claws to help you in battle without attracting attention as an obvious monster, or take human hands in beast form to be able to pick a lock or take human eyes in hybrid form to have unhindered color vision. You may make one partial change per round; the change typically affects both the left and right halves of your body, but you may limit it to just one side if you choose.

Action: Free
Cost: 0 Essence
Duration: Instantaneous

Playing Possum

You can make yourself seem dead, even to a thorough examination.

Prerequisite: Level 6

Benefit: You appear as dead as a corpse, falling prone if you are not already. You evidence no pulse or respiration, and your flesh is cool. Any current wounds seem clotted with dead blood, new wounds do not bleed and you do not react to pain or other stimuli (you still take damage as normal but it appears to be the damage a corpse would suffer). You do not heal while using this rite (though someone can heal you with supernatural abilities). You are aware of your surroundings but cannot move without breaking the effect; you can end it as a free action.

Anyone spending at least one round examining you gets a Heal check to recognize you are not actually dead (DC 10 + your Hit Dice + your Charisma modifier). Those using supernatural means to detect life must make this save, although their methods may take less time.

Action: None (you may even activate this when it is not your turn)
Cost: 1 Essence
Duration: 24 hours or until you end it

Primal Urge

Your alien spirit is powerful, increasing your available Essence and your skill in using it.

Benefit: Your maximum Essence increases by 10, and the number of Essence you can spend per round increases by 1. You can remain in hybrid form for one additional round.

Your alien spirit is fearsome to humans — even if they don't know you are a werewolf, they can sense that something is horrible and wrong about you. You take a –3 penalty on Diplomacy, Gather Information and Sense Motive checks (or simple Charisma checks) involving peaceful relations with humans; this penalty also applies to rites relying on those checks. This rite has no effect on Intimidate checks.

Special: You may take this rite up to five times. Its effects (bonuses and penalties) stack.

Rallying Cry (Gibbous Moon)

You can inspire others with power.

Prerequisite: Cahalith level 6

Benefit: You can howl or speak words of fury as a free action, filling nearby allies with courage. All allies (including yourself) within hearing range gain a +2 morale bonus on attacks, saves and checks. If they (or you) use a humanity point to do something heroic, they have a 25% chance to retain the humanity point.

This rite works only if the targets hear your voice directly; hearing you in a recording or over the phone is insufficient.

Action: Free
Cost: 1 Essence
Duration: 1 minute

Rage Armor (Full Moon)

You fill yourself with rage, toughening your flesh against attacks.

Prerequisite: Rahu level 10

Benefit: You channel your rage, increasing your natural bonus to Defense by +8. This bonus does not apply to silver weapons. When this rite is active, your eyes glow amber and the air around you distorts like the heat from a fire.

Action: Free

Cost: 1 Essence

Duration: 1 minute

Read Intrusion (Crescent Moon)

You can study an Intrusion-tainted thing and gain insight into its nature.

Prerequisites: Two-World Eyes, Ithaeur

Benefit: You may make a Search check to study a Nightmare Site or object or creature altered by the Nightmare Wave; you gain supernatural insight as to the Site, object or creature's powers. The result of your Search check determines what you learn about the target.

Search Result	Information Revealed
10	Basic Nature
20	Fact
Each +5 above 20	Fact

Basic Nature: If the target is an object, you learn if its taint is generally helpful or harmful and whether this information applies to the bearer of the object or on which it is used (if an object is more than one of these aspects, you learn that fact as well). For example, a coffee cup that heals you if you drink from it but makes you paranoid is both helpful and harmful toward the user.

If the target is a location, you learn if staying at the location is generally helpful or harmful (a location may be both). For example, a room that gives you nightmares is harmful, a staircase that temporarily makes you more agile is helpful and a rooftop that lets you fly and gives you brain cancer is both.

If the target is a creature, it gets a Will save to resist your scrutiny (DC 10 + your Hit Dice + your Wisdom modifier). Success means you cannot use this ability on the creature for 24 hours. Otherwise, you learn if it is a demon, vampire or werewolf.

Fact: You learn one specific fact about the target's supernatural abilities. If the target has multiple abilities, you decide which to learn based on your existing knowledge of the target. For example, if you examine the coffee cup, you decide if you learn the helpful or harmful effect. If the target is a supernatural creature, you learn one of the following (your choice): its approximate power level (in terms of Hit Dice), its most powerful supernatural ability (specific Discipline for a vampire, rite for a werewolf and so on) or its current amount of expendable power (component points for mages, Vitae for vampires and so on).

For every 5 points above a Search check result of 20, you learn another fact about the target (one additional fact for 25, two for 30 and so on).

Repeat uses of this ability give the same result unless you wait at least 24 hours between each use. (In other words, you can't use this rite twice on two successive rounds to learn two different facts; you have to wait 24 hours to try again.)

Action: Free (though the normal time requirements for Search checks still apply)

Cost: 1 Essence

Duration: 1 round

Rekindle Rage

You can take hybrid form again sooner than usual, though for a shorter duration.

Prerequisite: Level 10

Benefit: Normally, once you leave hybrid form, you cannot assume it again until 10 minutes have passed, but with this rite, you can take hybrid form again without waiting. You use the normal mechanic of taking hybrid form (take a full-round action, or make a Will save or spend Essence) and your available time in hybrid form is two rounds less than normal (human-form Constitution modifier + number of Primal Urge rites –2, minimum 1).

This use of hybrid form is otherwise exactly as a normal use of that form, and you can use rites that rely on hybrid form (such as Hone Rage or Leach Rage) normally. You can continue to use this rite to regain hybrid form as long as you can spend Essence to activate the rite.

Action: Free

Cost: 1 Essence

Duration: Until you change forms

Rending the Gauntlet (Crescent Moon)

You create a weak point in reality and enter the Gauntlet.

Prerequisites: Between the Weave, Crashing the Gates, Ithaeur level 12

Benefit: This rite works similar to Crashing the Gates except you do not need to be at a Nightmare Site — you create such a place, focusing your inherent powers of destruction to cut open a doorway in reality.

The weak spot you create is temporary and returns to normal once you enter the Gauntlet. Repeat uses of this ability in close physical proximity can cause fatigue over time, eventually creating a new Nightmare Site.

Action: 1 full round

Cost: 1 Essence per person (including yourself)

Duration: Instantaneous

Resist Pain (Gibbous Moon)

You can ignore pain and other debilitating effects.

Prerequisite: Cahalith level 2

Benefit: You can temporarily ignore pain and other physical effects that hinder you. You are not numb to all sensation and are still aware if you take damage, but your will overrides your body's limitations.

You can ignore the following conditions while you use this rite: dazed, exhausted, fatigued, staggered and stunned. If you are disabled or dying, you may act as if you had at least one hit point (and do not continue to lose hit points while the rite is active). All ignored effects resume as soon as the rite ends.

Action: None (you can activate this ability when it is not your turn, even in response to an attack that causes one of these conditions)

Cost: 1 Essence

Duration: 10 minutes

Running Shadow

Your ability to move silently is unaffected by noisy surfaces or your speed.

Prerequisite: Level 6

Benefit: When you make a Move Silently check, you ignore penalties for noisy surfaces and your speed. Moving silently while running through brush is no more difficult than creeping along a smooth concrete floor.

Action: Free (using the Move Silently skill still is part of your move action)

Cost: 1 Essence

Duration: 1 minute

Sand in the Eyes

You can cloud someone's memories, making it unlikely she remembers you later.

Prerequisite: Level 2

Benefit: You can try to affect the target's memory as a free action so she forgets details about you. The target gets a Will save to resist (DC 10 + your Hit Dice + your Charisma modifier). If she fails, the last 10 minutes of her memory are muddled with respect to you; she doesn't remember what you look like, how long you were there or what you were talking about. If she rolls a 1 on her save, she forgets you were there at all. You may affect up to three targets with this rite; each target beyond the first gives each a +2 bonus on the save.

If you attack a target, the effect ends immediately for her. This rite affects only memories for the last 10 minutes before you use it; if you interacted with the target at an earlier time, those memories are intact, though she may not realize her clouded memories are of the person she knows from earlier.

You can use this rite on a particular target only once every 10 minutes, even if she makes her save.

Action: Free

Cost: 0 Essence

Duration: Instantaneous

Savage Might

You can boost your strength to impossible levels.

Prerequisite: Level 12

Benefit: You gain a +10 enhancement bonus to Strength. This bonus stacks with itself if you spend multiple Essence in one round.

Action: Free

Cost: 1 Essence per +10 bonus to Strength

Duration: 1 round

Savage Rending

You call upon your alien spirit to augment the power of your claws.

Prerequisite: Level 2

Benefit: Your claws deal +4 points of damage. This bonus stacks with itself. You can end the effect as a free action.

Action: Free

Cost: 1 Essence

Duration: 1 minute or until you end it

Scent Beneath the Surface (Half Moon)

You can detect if someone is lying and read her emotional state.

Prerequisite: Elodoth

Benefit: After observing a target for one round, you gain a keen insight into the meaning of her words, body language and even the secret leanings of her heart. Unless she has supernatural means to conceal these facts, you immediately know if she is lying outright, lying by omission, speaking the truth in a misleading way or is being deliberately evasive. You can also determine the target's overall emotional state no matter how she tries to conceal or disguise it.

This rite does not reveal the truth behind the target's lies, but you can often figure it out from context and her method of falsehood.

Action: Free

Cost: 1 Essence

Duration: 1 minute

Sense Weakness (New Moon)

You sense flaws and weaknesses in the target.

Prerequisite: Irraka

Benefit: You learn a specific weakness of the target, such as a powerful vice, a mental disorder or a physical flaw such as poor eyesight or a limp. The target resists with a Will save (DC 10 + your Hit Dice + your Charisma modifier); if she rolls a 1 on her save, you learn two weaknesses instead of one. The GM determines what weakness or weaknesses you learn.

You can use this rite on a particular creature once per day. Each time you use this rite, you learn a different weakness (if any).

Action: Standard

Cost: 0 Essence

Duration: Instantaneous

Silver Jaws

Your teeth and claws become silver, able to make terrible wounds on werewolf flesh.

Prerequisite: Level 6

Benefit: Your teeth and claws become metallic silver, capable of harming a werewolf just as easily as any silver weapon. This change has no effect in human form (though you look like you painted your nails and have a grill or braces) unless you use a rite such as Partial Change to turn your puny human hands or teeth into something more dangerous. The silver transformation does not harm you (though someone could make you scratch yourself with your claws, which would). You gain a +4 bonus on Intimidate checks against creatures vulnerable to silver.

Action: Free

Cost: 1 Essence

Duration: 1 minute

Skin-Stealing

You can disguise yourself as any creature whose flesh you have tasted.

Prerequisite: Level 10

Benefit: This rite lets you grow a fleshy skin over your own skin, emulating the scent and appearance of someone whose flesh you have tasted. This skin is separate from your own, but fits perfectly. The skin appears real — it is warm, sweats, expands as you move and breathe and your blood flows through the skin when it is cut — and it masks your scent. The rite changes your size to match the assumed skin, even if the guise is of someone much larger or smaller than you. Your own ability scores do not change. This rite works only on people, not on animals.

The skin gives you a +8 bonus on Disguise checks to appear as the appropriate person. As the skin does not change your voice or cover your eyes or orifices, an alert observer who knows the subject may more easily recognize the difference.

You cannot adopt the skin of a vampire or other undead creature. If you change form, the skin tears and falls off (ending the disguise) unless the skin is of another werewolf. You may discard the skin as a standard action. The skin decays into unidentifiable dust within a few minutes, as do pieces of it taken from you.

Action: Standard

Cost: 2 Essence if the skin is of a werewolf, otherwise 1 Essence

Duration: Instantaneous

Slip Away (New Moon)

You are able to easily slip out of chains, handcuffs or even grapples.

Prerequisite: Irraka

Benefit: You slip out of any physical bond, leaving the item behind unharmed and unchanged (rope still tied, handcuffs locked and so on). If you are in a grapple, you can use standard action to automatically escape as if you had successfully used the Escape Artist skill or broken the grapple by winning an opposed grapple check. This rite does not work on binding supernatural effects, mundane bindings supernaturally enhanced for this purpose or on enclosed spaces such as prison cells, car trunks or footlockers.

Action: Free or standard (if used to escape a grapple)

Cost: 1 Essence

Duration: Instantaneous

Snarl of Command (Half Moon)

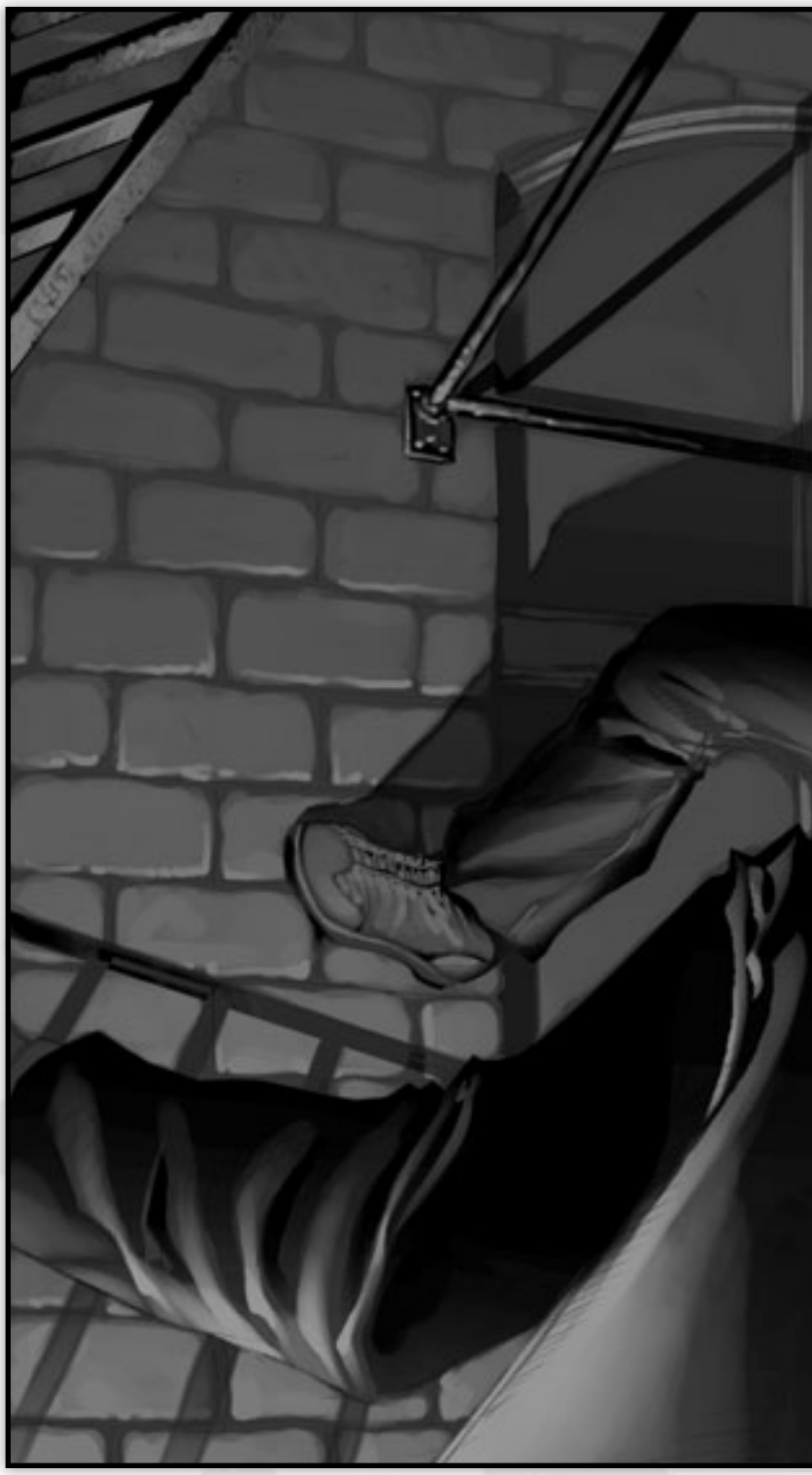
You force a target to reveal a truth.

Prerequisite: Elodoth

Benefit: With an ugly snarl and a few harsh words, you force the target to reveal the simple truth about a topic you are discussing. She may resist with a Will save (DC 10 + your Hit Dice + your Charisma modifier). This revelation usually involves answering a single question following your use of the rite, or you may force her to remove a disguise or reveal her supernaturally concealed true form (if the concealment is something she controls). She cannot reveal truths she does not know, and she is not otherwise forced to obey your commands. If she rolls a 1 on her save, she reveals the complete truth as best she knows it regarding your question, even providing details you may not have guessed.

You don't have to know that the target is lying before using this rite, but it has no effect if the target has been truthful and compliant with your questioning (nor does it force her to lie in an act of contrariness).

You must be face-to-face with the target. You can use this rite on a specific person only once per day.



Action: Free

Cost: 1 Essence

Duration: 1 round (or one minute if the target rolls a 1 on her save)

Speak with Beasts

You can communicate with normal animals as if you shared a common language.

Benefit: You may speak normally with an animal and it understands you, and you understand its responses as well. What an animal can tell you is limited by its intelligence and awareness. The animal is under no obligation to listen to or agree with you (though bribing it with food helps). Most animals are fearful of werewolves, and this fear affects their behavior.

Action: Free

Cost: 0 Essence, or 1 Essence if you want to affect up to 10 animals at the same time

Duration: 1 minute

Two-World Eyes (Crescent Moon)

You can split your vision, maintaining a partial focus in this world and a partial awareness on the effects of the Intrusion.

Prerequisite: Ithaeur

Benefit: You shift the vision in one eye so that it becomes hypersensitive to the Intrusion; this eye turns completely black while you use this ability. You may make a DC 20 Search check to recognize

"Just let me do my job. In case you haven't been paying attention, I tear things apart — people, houses, buses . . ."
—Darrin Sutton, werewolf

Nightmare Sites and objects or creatures (including demons, werewolves and vampires but not mages or Awakened) that are strongly affected by the Nightmare Wave or the Intrusion — to your sight these things appear distorted from their "real" forms, sometimes gaining subtle features related to their new abilities. For example, an old house that eats the souls of anyone who sleeps within it might look like a giant face with two hollow "eyes" (windows) and a gaping "mouth" (door), a rifle that poisons anyone it shoots might look like a stiffened snake and a vampire might look like a withered corpse. Sometimes, the Intrusion-afflicted shape may not be clear or indicative of what has happened to it; the house, rifle or vampire might look a little blurry, have a dark halo or just look wrong. Some Intrusion-tainted things may be harder to detect (DC 30 or higher).

You retain normal vision in your other eye. This duality of senses does not cause you any discomfort or give you any other penalties or benefits (for example, a sudden bright light can still blind you just as easily).

Action: Standard
Cost: 0 Essence
Duration: 1 minute

Unspoken Communication (Gibbous Moon)

You can telepathically link the minds of your packmates, enhancing their communication and ability to coordinate attacks.

Prerequisite: Cahalith level 10

Benefit: You link the minds of your packmates, allowing them to communicate instantly and silently with each other or you by thought alone. They can "hear" each other perfectly clearly despite physical noise, and may send their mental "voice" to just one or all simultaneously.

You can link only packmates who are in your sight when you activate the rite. They do not need to see you or each other (you are the "hub" for the communication). Once you activate the rite, affected packmates may pass out of your sight without breaking the effect. Because they can quickly coordinate their efforts, when two or more packmates attack the same creature, each gets a +4 circumstance bonus on attack rolls.

Action: Free

Cost: 1 Essence. After the start of the link, you may add other packmates to the mental network (for example, if they were out of sight when you started) by spending one Essence.

Duration: 1 minute. You may continue the effect for another minute by spending one Essence (without requiring your packmates to be in sight).

Vanish

You can fade from sight, even in full view of a crowd and cameras.

Prerequisite: Level 12

Benefit: You vanish, becoming invisible. No form of sense that relies on light (including heat sensors, ultraviolet detectors and other forms of light outside the human visual range) can detect you, though this rite is not proof against nonvisual methods such as vibration or scent. You can attack while invisible. If you take damage, you must make a Concentration check (DC 15 + damage taken) to remain invisible. See Chapter 7: Playing the Game, "Special Abilities," *Invisibility,* for more information.

Action: Free
Cost: 2 Essence
Duration: 1 minute, or until broken or until you end it
Duration: 1 round

Ward

You mark your territory so that others sense it.

Benefit: You mark the boundary of your territory by urinating on objects at its perimeter. This creates a scent-mark backed by supernatural power, which affects predators and humans.

Any natural predator that wants to enter your territory must make a Will save (DC 10 + your Hit Dice + your Charisma modifier) to do so. Most avoid these areas, not liking competition. A predator brought into your territory against its will has no penalties but tries to leave as soon as possible.

The ward triggers a primal flight instinct in humans, causing feelings of fear and dread. Any human who tries to enter the warded area must make a Will save (DC 10 + your Hit Dice + your Charisma modifier) or become panicked and flee. If she is brought into your territory against her will, she cowers.

Other werewolves and supernatural creatures that can follow scents (even if they require supernatural means to do it) sense this boundary but can breach it without a roll. In this regard, the ward is a warning that you are willing to kill to protect your territory. Supernatural creatures without a strong sense of smell (such as most Awakened) don't detect the ward and may break it without a roll.

You can mark an area up to one square mile plus an additional square mile for every Primal Urge rite you have. The ward fails if your territory already contains 10 or more different types of significant predators per square mile (such as a zoo) or a large concentration of humans (such as a city); in such cases you can only ward a smaller area (such as a cave, an alley or rarely used parking lot).

You can also mark a single creature with this rite (and urine), signifying that the creature is under your protection (or perhaps as prey with which you don't want others to interfere). A marked creature does not trigger a fear reaction in humans the way a boundary does.

Action: None (the entire process takes about an hour per square mile marked)

Cost: 0 Essence

Duration: 1 lunar month

Warning Growl

You voice a powerful growl, filling an opponent with doubt and weakening her ability to face you.

Benefit: You glare at the target and issue a growl of warning. The target gets a Will save to resist (DC 10 + your Hit Dice + your Charisma modifier). Failure means you gain a +6 dodge bonus to Defense against that target.

Action: Move

Cost: 1 Essence

Duration: 1 minute

Magic works. It's a fact. For thousands of years many people claimed to practice magic, but those few with any true power could muster only a few minor effects. With the arrival of the Nightmare Wave, things are very different. What once took days and elaborate rituals now happens with a gesture and a quick chant, and formerly impossible feats are now almost commonplace among mages.

Spells

Magic is not a rigid, formalized practice with strict rules on how to make things work and detailed formulas for every effect passed down through generations. Mages don't need to memorize magical formulas and repeat them later. Magic is about sensing the flow of power through the world, noticing the pinholes in our reality caused by the Nightmare Wave and pushing those elements together to get the result you want. Sometimes it's a gentle push, like threading a needle, and sometimes aggressive like hammering a nail into a particularly stubborn block of wood — it just depends on where you are, what you know, and what you want to do.

Mages cast spells "on the fly," using their knowledge of magic and whatever environmental conditions are at hand. This means mages are flexible in terms of what spells they can create. They don't sit down each morning and decide what spells they are going to cast for the day (like wizards in some games); mages craft spells at the spur of the moment based on their current needs. A mage may call himself a "fire mage" but go an entire day (or more) without creating a single fire spell. A Necromancer might be good at animating skeletons and conjuring spirits, but if need be he could conjure waffles and coffee.

Improvised and Rote Magic

It is perfectly natural for a mage to develop a spell on the spur of the moment based on his present need and available power. In fact, this is how those with the power realized that magic worked differently with the arrival of the Nightmare Wave — a reflexive action made possible with their gift. Mages call this sort of spellcasting improvised magic.

In the months following the Intrusion, mages understand at least some of the methodology of casting spells: what gestures accentuated the flow of magic, what words activated apertures of power, what objects resonated with certain effects. To make it easier to describe and teach magic to themselves and others, mages codified this methodology, even going so far as to create instructions for spellcasting. These instructions are the closest thing mages have to spell formulas. These tried-and-true spells are called rote magic or rotes. They are usually simple but effective, and are well-known among the mage community, whether developed independently or shared from mentor to student.

Rote magic is easier than improvised magic because rote magic uses principles that have been reliably practiced hundreds of times. All of the pre-built spells described later in this chapter are rotes. Some complex improvised spells have rote spells at their cores, though adding improvised elements to a rote spell loses the rote's efficiency.

To use a musical analogy, a novice guitarist first learns the finger positions for basic chords and uses them to strum simple tunes, typically well-known songs that are easily recognized. As he develops his playing skill, he learns how to transition between chords, play in a different key and recognize when a room has bad acoustics for playing. A master guitarist can pick up a guitar and jam on it, producing complex music that a beginner could never duplicate, but some of these tunes may derive from a simple "power chord" either in the introduction or as a recurring element.

Mages do not disparage rote magic (any more than advanced mathematicians disparage a simple electronic calculator), as they understand its purpose and utility. However, a mage who relies predominantly on rote magic looks uncreative, and other mages may treat him with contempt or at least condescension.

Mages can teach each other any rotes they know, though custom demands the student pay for this service in some way, whether by teaching a rote of her own, providing a favor or performing some other appropriate compensation. Some mage orders have secret rotes that they teach only to members of their own order.

You have a +5 bonus on Spellcraft checks to cast rote spells. Rote spells are easier to cast than improvised spells, but cost just as many components as the equivalent improvised spell.

Components

Components are the building blocks of spells. Much as an artist uses paint to create a mural or a weaver uses colored thread to create a tapestry, a mage uses components to create a spell.

Component Summary

Area: Determines how many creatures or how much area a spell affects.

Duration: Determines how long the spell lasts.

Range: Determines how far a spell reaches.

Conjure: Summons or creates objects or creatures from elsewhere.

Control: Controls others' minds and emotions.

Damage: Determines how much damage a spell deals.

Divination: Reveals or conceals information.

Energy: Creates, destroys or converts energy.

Enhance: Improves the target's existing qualities.

Heal: Heals injuries and other afflictions.

Illusion: Creates false images and sensations.

Metaspell: Enhances, suppresses or alters magic.

Movement: Moves the target or affects its ability to move.

New Power: Gives the target a new ability or shape.

Protect: Protects against harmful things.

You create spells by choosing the proper components to create the spell you want. Different cabals of mages may call components by different names — arcana, nodes, disciplines and so on — but they all refer to components.

Many types of components exist, including Range, Duration, Heal, Illusion and Conjure. Novice mages can control only a few components and can create only simple spells, while experienced mages know how to manipulate many components and can build powerful and complex spells. Some mages are particularly knowledgeable about certain components and unskilled in others; Enchanters tend to be better with components that affect the mind but may know almost nothing of components that create fire and lightning. Some of this expertise is based on the mage's personal preference, just as one painter prefers watercolors to oils or blues to reds.

The section below goes into detail about exactly what the components can do, but for now take a look at the "Component Summary" sidebar for a quick rundown on all the component categories.

A spell always has Area, Duration and Range components — you always have to know what the magic is going to affect, how long it's going to last and how far it reaches. Other than those three required components, anything else in the spell is up to you. If you want to make a lawyer run in fear, add a Control component. If you want to pick him up and throw him through a window, add a Movement component. If you want to learn his credit card numbers, add a Divination component. With enough practice, you can build a spell that does all three of these things at once, or even more. The only limits are your imagination and skill at manipulating the components of magic.

If you're playing a novice mage, you might not have the power and training to accomplish all of these things. You may be able to only make the lawyer panic momentarily, or trip him or count how much cash is in his wallet. Keep practicing. As your mage learns more about magic, you'll get familiar with how it works and you'll start exploring what your mage can do.

Components are measured in points, just as Strength points measure how strong you are and hit points measure how much damage you can take. Some mages call component points "Mana," each Mana representing one component point. For example, a spell might cost six Mana in Area, three Mana in Duration, four Mana in Range and five Mana in Damage, for a total cost of 18 Mana.

Note: Just as you spend points on different components for your spell effects, you can create a spell with multiple effects from the *same* component. For example, you can create a spell that cures blindness and hit point damage at the same time (two effects from the Heal component), or a spell that protects against fire and cold (two effects from the Protect component). Pay for each effect separately as if they were different components.

Building Spells

To build a spell, follow these steps.

1. Decide what you want the spell to do.

2. Look at the component descriptions (below) to find which components are appropriate for your spell. A spell must always have Area, Duration and Range components in addition to its other effects.

3. Add together the number of points you spend in all the components. This is the spell's component cost.

That's it! If you like the spell you designed, write down its effects and component costs so you don't have to build it again from scratch; doing so is especially handy for signature spells that you use often.

If you don't like building spells on your own, are out of ideas or in a hurry, many rote spells are pre-built for you in the "Rote Spells" section, below. Note that your mage Path or gnosis may alter the spell's cost.

Building a spell takes no time, just as deciding "I'm going to start my car" takes no time. The casting of the spell is what takes time, just as actually starting your car takes time. To cast the spell, see "Casting Spells," below.

Building Spells in Combat

Until you become familiar with creating spells, you may take several minutes looking through the component descriptions before putting together the sort of spell you want. Rather than bringing a combat scene to a screeching halt while you page through this book, it's a good idea to write down some sample spells in advance so when it's your turn to act you can do so immediately. (Doing so also keeps the other players from wanting to throttle you for slowing down the game.) Also, in a pinch you can refer to the sample spells presented in the "Rote Spells" section, below — they've already been priced out and are ready for immediate use.

Speeding Up Spell Building

If you're familiar with spell-building and tend to make up spells on the spot, here's a trick to make the process faster. Write down the names and prices for various component effects you can perform on individual 3x5 cards, blank playing cards or poker chips, and lay them out in front of you. That way, instead of flipping through the book, you can just skim your available component cards, grab the cards you need and add up their values.

A Sample Spell

Sadhvi Iyer wants to deter a mugger without causing any permanent harm or being obvious that she is using magic. She decides to craft a spell that works similar to a stun gun, building an electrical charge in her hand and discharging with a touch; if questioned later, the mugger is likely to think that Sadhvi was concealing a Taser in her hand. Here is the breakdown of the component costs and a short description of the spell's effect.

Handshock
Range (touch): 2
Duration (instantaneous): 0
Area (one target): 1
Damage (2d6 hit points): 2
Energy (spell deals electricity damage): 1
Metaspell (1 standard action casting time): 1
Total Component Cost: 7

You make a touch attack that deals 2d6 points of electricity damage to the target (Fort half).

Casting a Spell

Magic is easier than it was before the Intrusion, but it still isn't easy. Novice mages sometimes fail at their easiest spells, and even the masters sometimes botch their creations. Every time you try to cast a spell, make a Spellcraft check; the DC is 0 + the component cost of the spell you are casting + your exhaustion rating (see below). This check takes place at the end of the time you spend casting the spell. (You cannot begin a one-hour casting, roll at the start to see if you succeed and cancel the spell and start again the next turn if you fail so you get to reroll — you don't know if you will succeed or fail until the last moment of spellcasting.)

You can take 10 on this check (see "Checks Without Rolls" in Chapter 3: Skills, "Using Skills," *Skill Checks*). If you fail this check, you fail to cast the spell. Failing to cast a spell does not use up the component points used to build the spell; you can try again as often as you want.

Certain feats and gnosis give bonuses to Spellcraft checks to cast spells. You get a +5 bonus on the check if you are casting a rote.

Steps for Spellcasting

To cast a spell, follow these steps.

1. On your turn, use an action appropriate to the spell's casting time (by default a full-round action, though it can be longer or shorter depending on how you built the spell).

2. Provoke an attack of opportunity from all adjacent opponents (see Chapter 7: Playing the Game, "Staging Encounters," *Attacks of Opportunity*).

3. When you finish casting the spell, make a Spellcraft check (DC 0 + the component cost of the spell you are casting + your exhaustion rating) to see if you successfully cast the spell. If you succeed, move to the next step. If you fail, nothing happens, you don't use any component points and you may try again on your next turn. (Do not continue on to step 4 for this failed spell attempt.)

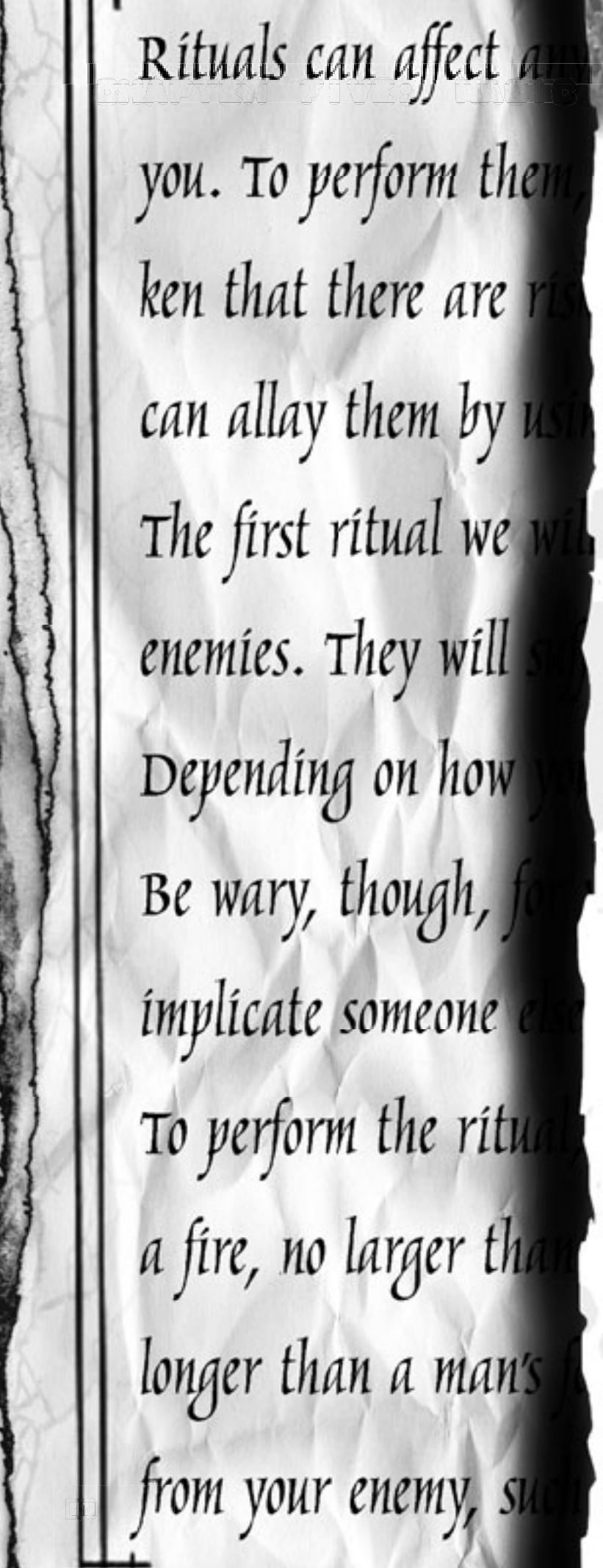
4. Spend component points equal to the spell's component cost.

5. Increase your current exhaustion rating by the spell's exhaustion rating, if any.

6. Apply the effects of your spell.

Casting Time

By default, casting a spell is a full-round action. You can speed it up by adding Metaspell components, though doing so costs more component points and makes the spell more difficult to cast. You can cast the spell more slowly by adding (negative-cost) Metaspell components, increasing the casting time to a minute, 10 minutes, an hour or even a full day, which reduces the spell's overall cost and makes the spell easier to cast.



Words and Gestures

All spells require thought, word, and action to cast.

Thought: You must be capable of thought to cast a spell.

Word: You must speak some magical words to begin the flow of power.

Action: You must gesture in some way to direct where the power goes.

To cast a spell, a mage must be able to speak clearly and have at least one hand free (arm unfettered and hand not holding anything) to gesture. You can bypass one or both of these requirements by building Metaspell components into the spell to cast it as a silent and/or stilled spell.

Spell Exhaustion

Life is not so easy that a mage can cast spells all day long without breaking a sweat. Magic is physically, mentally and spiritually taxing: you are exploiting loopholes in reality to make things happen that shouldn't be happening. The mage Luke Johnson once described casting a complex spell as "solving a calculus equation in your head while doing sign language and humming a symphony at the same time." This sort of activity can wear down even the toughest person.

When you successfully cast a spell, take its component cost and subtract your mage level and 10 (treating results less than 0 as 0). This number is the spell's exhaustion rating (ER). For example, a 16-component spell cast by a 1st-level mage has a ER of: 16 (spell's component cost) – 1 (mage level) – 10 = 5.

At the start of the day (after eight hours of rest), your exhaustion rating is 0. Every time you cast a spell, add its exhaustion rating (if any) to your current exhaustion rating. For example, after casting three spells with ER 5, your exhaustion rating is 15. Your exhaustion rating increases the Spellcraft DC to cast a spell, so the more exhausted you are from casting, the harder it is to cast another spell.

Since your mage level figures into a spell's exhaustion rating, in the long run casting simpler spells (i.e., fewer components) makes it easier for you to cast more spells over the course of the day. A fifth-level mage can cast three 15-point spells in a row without difficulty as each one has an exhaustion rating of (15 – 5 – 10) 0, whereas two 30-point spells (ER 15 each) puts her at an exhaustion rating of 30, greatly reducing her chances of chances of casting any more spells that day because the Spellcraft DCs are at least 30.

Certain feats and gnosis reduce the exhaustion rating of spells. A spell can never have an exhaustion rating less than 0.

Sleeping for eight hours reduces a mage's exhaustion rating to 0. The mage does not need to sleep for every minute of the time, but she must refrain from movement, combat, spellcasting, skill use, conversation or any other fairly demanding physical or mental task during the rest period. If her rest is interrupted, each interruption adds one hour to the total amount of time she must rest to clear her mind. If the mage does not need to sleep for some reason, she still must have eight hours of restful calm to reduce her exhaustion rating to 0. A mage may rest, sleep or meditate for shorter periods to recover from spell exhaustion; each hour of rest removes 10% of her current exhaustion rating.

"I'm sure you do think you want to talk to your dead wife, sir, but trust me, you don't want to know what she has to say."

—Carter Lindeman, Necromancer

Averting Spell Disruption

When you're casting a spell, taking damage forces you to make a Concentration check cast the spell (see the Concentration skill description in Chapter 3: Skills). The DCs appear in the Concentration skill description. If you fail the check, your spell is disrupted, and you stop casting. You do not lose any component points or increase your exhaustion rating for a disrupted spell.

Ending Spellcasting

You may interrupt your own spellcasting at any time. Doing so does not take an action (you can even do it when it is not your turn), cost component points or add to your exhaustion rating. In effect, ending a spell is totally "free."

Dismissing Spells

You may end one of your ongoing spells at any time as a standard action. Doing so does not cost component points, increase your exhaustion rating or provoke attacks of opportunity. You may dismiss a spell at any range.

Group Spellcasting

Mages can combine their efforts to create spells more cheaply than they could as individuals. The group designates one mage to be the leader of the casting. All participating mages contribute components to the leader's spell (with a minimum five-point contribution). The leader may use any appropriate gnosis or feats for the casting.

When the spell is finished, all participants make a Spellcraft check to cast the spell as if they had cast the entire spell on their own; each mage gains a +2 bonus on this Spellcraft check for every participant involved (including himself). If any of the mages fail this check, the spell fails. If all mages make the check, the spell succeeds. All participants suffer the full exhaustion rating of the spell.

All factors for normal spellcasting apply to each participant (casting time, attacks of opportunity, and so on).

Example: Four first-level mages join together at the start of the day to cast a 20-component spell to protect their ravaged holdout from the werewolves who have been preying upon the mages. Each contributes five components to the effort. When the spell is finished, each makes a Spellcraft check (DC = 0 + component cost 20 + exhaustion rating 0 = 20) with a +8 bonus (4 participants x 2) to the roll. If all four succeed, the spell works and each mage increases his current exhaustion rating by (component cost 20 – mage level 1 – 10) 9. Though all four are just as exhausted as if they had cast the spell alone, each only spent five components instead of 20.

Counterspelling

Counterspelling is the act of magically interfering with another mage's spellcasting. Counterspelling makes it much more difficult for an opponent to successfully cast a spell; the drawback is that any action you spend counterspelling is an action in which you are not casting spells of your own (or shooting the bad guys with a gun, or whatever). You can counterspell once per round. To counterspell, follow these steps.

1. On your turn, use the Ready action (see "Ready" in Chapter 7: Playing the Game, "Actions in the Round," *Action Descriptions*) and tell the GM you plan to counterspell a target. You may be as precise or as general as you like. ("I will counterspell the next enemy mage who tries to cast" is just as acceptable as "I will counterspell if Margrim tries to cast, but not his apprentice.")

2. If a suitable opponent starts casting (even if the opponent's spell has an instant casting time), spend component points to interfere with his spell. These component points do not require you to roll but do add to your exhaustion rating, just as if you were casting a spell with that number of component points. You must decide how many points to spend at the time of your counterspelling attempt.

3. Every component point you spend in the previous step adds +1 to the DC of the mage's Spellcraft check to successfully cast his spell. You must spend all counterspelling component points before the mage makes his Spellcraft check; you cannot add more after he makes the check.

More than one mage can try to counterspell the same opponent at the same time (they do not even need to be aware of each others' counterspelling attempts). All counterspelling component points add to the DC of the opponent's Spellcraft check.

You are aware if someone is counterspelling you, but you are not automatically aware of her location. (You need to use normal or magical methods to find who is interfering with you.)

Counterspelling does not count as spellcasting and does not provoke attacks of opportunity; a counterspelling mage appears to be staring intently but does not need to concentrate, speak or gesture. As long as a mage can see an opponent (and has line of effect or a sympathetic conduit to the target), a mage

can try to counterspell. So, a mage standing on a skyscraper casting big flashy spells to rip people apart is an easy target for counterspelling as all mages within several city blocks can interfere with him.

Spell Saves

By default, a spell allows an unwilling target to resist its effects with a saving throw (see Chapter 7: Playing the Game, "Saving Throws," for more information about saves). A spell's save DC is equal to 10 + your Intelligence modifier. You can increase this DC by adding Metaspell components. Certain gnosis also increase your spell DCs.

Damaging Spells: Any spell that has a damaging effect expressed as a number (hit point damage, ability damage, a reduction in hardness and so on) allows the target to make a save; success means the target takes half damage. For example, a spell that deals 6d6 points of damage on a failed save deals half damage (6d6 divided by two, not 3d6) on a successful save; a spell that reduces an object's hardness by 10 on a failed save reduces its hardness by 5 on a successful save. The spell's description uses the terminology (Fortitude half), (Reflex half), or (Will half) to represent this.

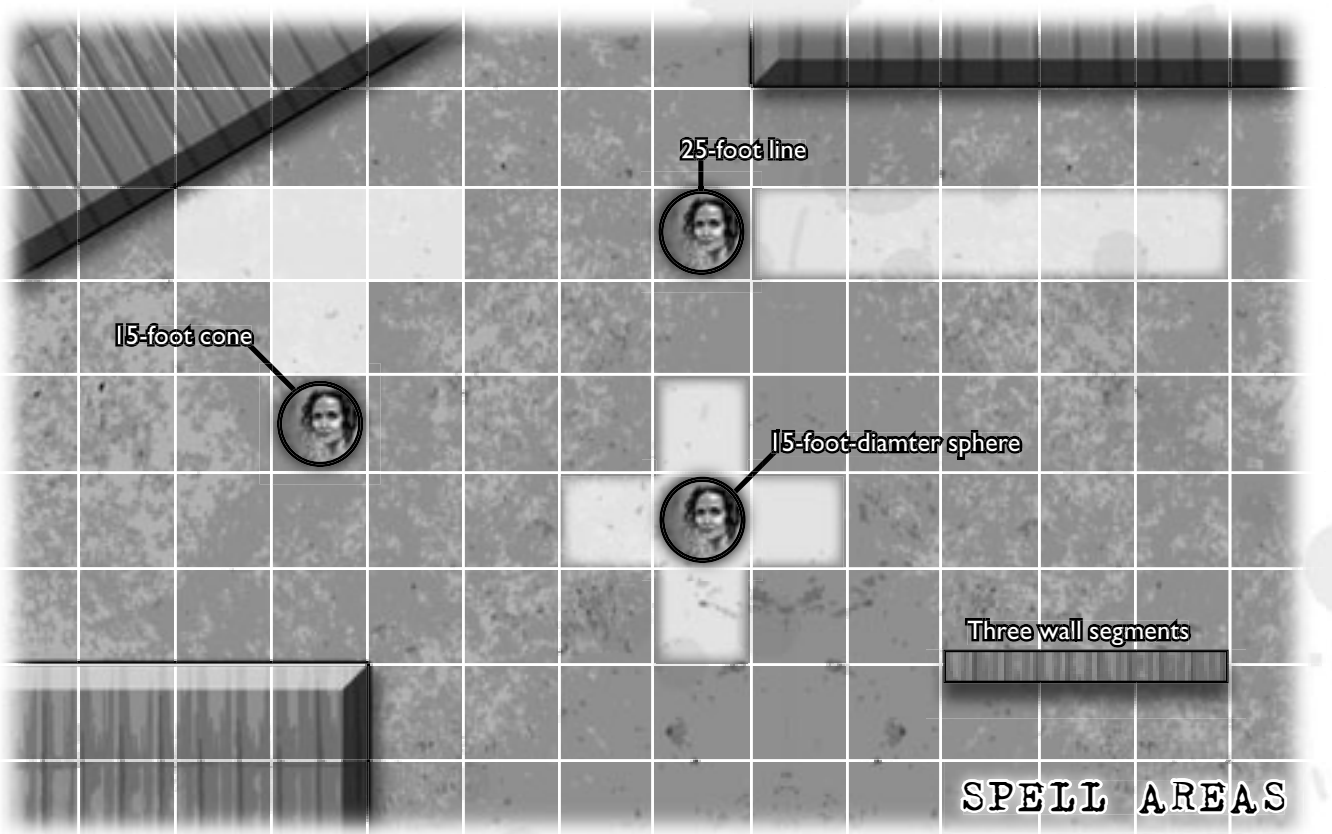
Fortitude Saves: A spell that transforms or physically manipulates a target, or otherwise must overcome the target's physical toughness, usually allows a Fortitude save. A spell that duplicates a natural effect that allows a Fortitude save (such as a disease or poison) usually allows a Fortitude save. A spell that has an all-or-nothing effect (such as causing a person's eyeballs to melt — they either melt or they don't) probably allows a Fortitude save to negate the effect (in game terms, the save type is "Fortitude negates").

Reflex Saves: A spell that a target could try to dodge, avoid by taking cover or is otherwise resisted by the target's quickness and agility usually allows a Reflex save. Most Area damage spells fall into this category, and they usually deal half their normal damage if the target makes its Reflex save. A targeted spell (one where you select who the spell affects rather than affecting everyone in an area) that allows a Reflex save usually deals no damage if the target saves ("Reflex negates"). This is an exception to the rule that damaging spells deal half damage on a successful save.

Will Saves: A spell that affects a creature's mind must overcome its mental strength; the creature makes a Will save. Normally, if the target makes its save the spell has no effect ("Will negates").

Spell Area

A spell might affect a single target or a large area of space, depending on how many Area components you build into it. Spells that affect areas come in one of four types: cone, line, sphere or wall. For cones and spheres, you select the origin point of the spell (which must be within the spell's range), and the effect radiates from that point to the extent of the built-in area. Unless a spell is built so it originates from you, all spell areas are fixed at the time of casting; for example, you cannot create a cone spell and then turn it to affect additional targets.



Cone: A cone-shaped spell shoots away from you in a quarter-circle in the direction you designate up to the spell's range. A cone-shaped spell starts from any corner of your square and widens out as it goes. The magic does not turn corners; the magic does not affect a creature around the corner from the cone's starting point.

Line: A line-shaped spell shoots away from you in a line in the direction you designate. The spell starts from one side of your square (or corner, if you send it diagonally) and extends to the limit of the spell's range or until the line strikes a barrier that blocks line of effect (see "Spell Range," *Line of Effect*, below). A line-shaped spell affects all creatures in squares that the line passes through.

Sphere: A sphere-shaped spell expands from its point of origin to fill a defined spherical area. (Since the point of origin is often on the ground, the spell's Area usually resembles a hemisphere.) The magic does not turn corners; the magic does not affect a creature around the corner from the sphere's starting point.

Wall: A wall spell creates one or more five-foot-wide squares (usually one inch thick) of matter or energy — wood, stone, ice, fire, light and so on. Wall areas are also suitable for illusion spells, particularly if the image is flat and immobile (like an image of a wall or door), as two-dimensional illusions of three-dimensional things appear distorted if viewed at an angle (similar to watching a movie from the corner of a theater).

Wall spells may be vertical, horizontal or any combination of the two. Wall-area spells are shapeable; you can place the wall-elements anywhere you see fit within range as long as each wall-element is connected to at least one other wall-element along an edge. For example, you could create four wooden walls in a square to make an enclosed room, a snakelike wall of fire that meanders across a city street or a U-shaped concrete conduit to redirect a flood.

Spells Affecting Multiple Creatures

Some spells affect multiple targets, whether you select them individually (such as a spell that shields four allies against fire) or affecting all in an area (such as a cone of magical fear). If something breaks the spell on one target, it does not break the spell's effects other targets. For example, if your fire-protection spell absorbs 20 points of fire damage and one of your allies runs through a burning building and expends all 20 points, your other three allies are still protected for the full 20 points. Likewise, a rival mage can dispel the fear on one of his fleeing minions, but any other minions continue to flee. To dispel the effect from all targets, a mage must build a multiple-target or area dispel.

Spell Duration

How long a spell lasts depends on how many Duration components you build into it, but the consequences of the spell may persist beyond the direct influence of the magic. Some spells require you to concentrate to maintain them and end when you stop concentrating.

Lasting Effects

Most spells create consequences that are natural parts of reality. Once the spell ends, these consequences persist without additional magic. Many lasting spells (particularly attack, healing and divinatory spells) require only an instantaneous application of magic and thereafter let nature take its course, relying on the lasting effect. Use common sense to determine if a spell has lasting nonmagical effects.

Example: A spell that ignites a pile of tires may have an instantaneous Duration, but the tires continue to burn after the spell is over; no ongoing magic exists. You therefore cannot dismiss the spell (which is already over) to snuff out the fire (though you can of course use magic to counter the flames, douse them in water, turn the tires into something inflammable and so on). Likewise, a witness remembers seeing the igniting spell; its existence is not wiped from her mind simply because the magic of the fire spell ends.

Example: You cast an instantaneous Duration spell that heals an injured friend. This spell restores the target's the body to its natural state; the wounds do not reappear when the spell is over, and your friend does not magically forget that you healed him. Likewise, a spell that poisons an enemy may require only an instant of magic, but the ability damage the poison causes persists until healed.

Example: You cast an instantaneous Duration spell to find your car keys. Once the knowledge is in your mind, the knowledge persists like any other memory.

Example: You create a wall of fire that burns for 10 minutes. A person burned by the wall remains burned when the spell ends, whether he was burned at the instant you cast it or the instant before the spell expires.

Example: You create a concrete barricade to block a street. The barricade must have a Duration longer than instantaneous; otherwise, the barricade appears and vanishes instantly. A car that crashes into the barricade is still damaged when the barricade spell ends.

Concentration

Some spells have a Duration of "concentration." The mage must concentrate on the spell to maintain its effect, which requires a standard action every round. If the mage stops concentrating or his concentration is broken (such as by taking damage), the spell ends. You can maintain concentration on only one spell at a time. (For rules on maintaining concentration, see the Concentration skill description in Chapter 3: Skills and Chapter 7: Playing the Game, "Actions in the Round," *Action Descriptions*.) Concentrating on a spell is sometimes called "channeling" a spell.

Maintaining Multiple Spells

A spell with a Duration of other than "instantaneous" demands a tiny portion of a mage's attention; a mage can mentally "juggle" only so many at a time. A mage can maintain a number of non-instantaneous spells equal to his Intelligence modifier. If a mage is at his limit for ongoing spells, casting another non-instantaneous spell fails; he must dismiss one of his ongoing spells to cast another.

Spell Range

A spell's range depends on how many Range components you build into it. You might want a long-range spell to attack a distant vampire, or a touch-range spell to affect your nearby werewolf ally.

Line of Effect

A line of effect is a straight, unblocked path that indicates what a spell can affect. A solid barrier cancels line of effect. Line of effect is similar to line of sight for ranged weapons, except that fog, darkness and other factors that limit normal sight do not block a line of effect.

You must have a clear line of effect to any target on which you cast a spell or to any space in which you wish to create an effect. You must have a clear line of effect to the point of origin of any spell you cast. (However, see "Sympathetic Magic," below.)

An Area spell affects only an area, creatures or objects to which the spell has line of effect from its origin (see "Spell Area," above).

An otherwise solid barrier with a hole of at least one square foot does not block a spell's line of effect. Such an opening means that the five-foot length of wall containing the hole is no longer considered a barrier for purposes of a spell's line of effect.

Attacking with Spells

Spells that strike targets at a range normally do not require you to make an attack roll; that is the benefit of spending the extra component compared to a touch-range spell. Ranged spells cannot get critical hits. Ranged spells require line of effect (see "Line of Effect," above) from you to the target.

Many spells have a range of touch. To use these spells, you cast the spell and then touch the subject, either in the same round or any time later. In the same round that you cast the spell, you may also touch (or attempt to touch) the target. You may take your move (which might be only a five-foot step) before casting the spell, after touching the target, or between casting the spell and touching the target. You can automatically touch one friend or use the spell on yourself, but to touch an opponent, you must succeed on an attack roll.

Touching an opponent with a touch spell is an armed attack and therefore does not provoke attacks of opportunity. However, the act of casting a spell does provoke an attack of opportunity.

You can score a critical hit with a touch attack. Your opponent's Defense against a touch attack does not include any natural bonus. His class bonus, size modifier, Dexterity modifier and deflection bonus (if any) all apply normally.

If you don't discharge the spell in the round when you cast it, you can hold the discharge of the spell (hold the charge) indefinitely. You can continue to make touch attacks round after round. You can touch one friend as a standard action or up to six friends as a full-round action. If you touch anything or anyone while holding a charge, even unintentionally, the spell discharges. If you cast another spell, the touch spell dissipates. Alternatively, you may make a normal unarmed attack (or an attack with a natural weapon) while holding a charge. In this case, you aren't considered armed, and you provoke attacks of opportunity as normal for the attack. (If your unarmed attack or natural weapon attack doesn't provoke attacks of opportunity, neither does this attack.) If the attack hits, you deal normal damage for your unarmed attack or natural weapon and the spell discharges. If the attack misses, you are still holding the charge (essentially, you can keep attempting to touch someone with the spell until you succeed).

Sympathetic Magic

Many magical traditions teach that it is possible to curse or harm someone with a spell if you have some sort of connection to that person, such as a lock of hair, blood or fingernail clippings. This magic is called sympathetic magic, and it does work, though it has limitations.

Sympathetic magic allows you to cast spells on a target even if you do not have line of effect to the target. For example, you can cast a nightmare-inducing spell on someone if you have a lock of his hair, even if he is in a house on the opposite side of town and even if you cannot see him. The sympathetic connection between yourself and the target is called a conduit.

Using sympathetic magic requires you to build the spell with more Range components depending on the degree of connection between you and the target. These component costs are *instead of* the components spent regarding the spell's actual range. The degrees of connection, and their associated sympathetic component costs, are as follows.

5: Intimate Connection — A piece of the target, such as blood, hair or fingernails (in the case of a living creature), or a significant piece of the object or target Area such as a brick from a building or carpet fibers from a room. Knowing the target well, such as a family member, longtime friend, beloved pet or a place you visit regularly, such as a favorite restaurant or your office.

10: Moderate Connection — Knowing the target reasonably well, such as a friend, coworker or frequently carried personal possession such as a briefcase or car keys. A secondhand physical "piece" of the target, such as a close blood relative or blood or Vitae from a vampire's thrall.

10: Documentation — Photo or accurate representation of target, or live video or audio representation of the target.

15: Acquaintance — Casual acquaintance or connection, such as a friend's spouse whom you met once or a coworker you hardly know.

15: Remote Connection — An item the target held or used once, such as a disposable cup.

20: Encountered — You encountered the target once, such as passing a person or building on the street or an object you touched once.

25: Described — You can describe the target with a reasonable level of detail, or know a person's name. This must be a name she actually uses, including aliases, but not throw-away names used just once or to confound. The "described" connection is the minimal level of connection you need to work sympathetic magic. Because of this potential, most mages use one or more pseudonyms to hamper sympathetic magic.

Example: Sadhvi Iyer wants to cast a curse spell on a rival mage who in his hideout, torturing a victim, one mile away. This distance normally costs 10 Range components and requires line of effect to her target. Fortunately, from their last battle Sadhvi retrieved a few drops of her enemy's blood, which is an intimate connection to him. Therefore, by using sympathetic magic, she can affect him and the spell's Range costs only five components. By using sympathetic magic and the blood, she can attack him from afar without seeing him or even knowing exactly where he is.

Some spells are almost always sympathetic. For example, scrying spells let you see and hear things in distant locations; there is no point casting a scrying spell from your driveway into your open garage because you can see into the garage already. Likewise, most teleporting spells are sympathetic because you're traveling far out of sight from your present location and need to establish some connection to your destination, and so on; you can teleport across a room, but usually it's easier to walk (or fly) rather than building an expensive teleport spell.

Celebrity Penalty: Well-known people, objects and places are more difficult to affect with sympathetic magic because their celebrity muffles their identity. For example, unless you know Brad Pitt personally, your perception of him is based on the media, which is likely to be a distorted perception and therefore a poor conduit for sympathetic magic (else he would be under the influence of dozens of love spells by now). Likewise, the Statue of Liberty is a symbol of America to millions of people, and the tens of thousands who visit or pass it every year color its psychic signature with their desires and feelings about it.

When trying to cast a sympathetic spell on a famous target, increase the component cost by up to +10 (GM's discretion) unless you have an intimate connection to the target.

Tracking: A sympathetic conduit maintains its connection to the target regardless of its conventional motion. If you cast a scrying spell on Brad Pitt, it doesn't matter if he walks, drives, uses a flying spell or takes an airplane to another location, you can watch him. If he (or you) teleports or enters an area where magic doesn't work, the conduit breaks. Likewise, you can scry a particular airplane and follow it even at supersonic speeds. A sympathetic spell fails if you attempt to cast it on a target not on Earth or on an area where magic doesn't work.

Risks of Sympathetic Casting: Though the cost to cast a sympathetic spell is high, it is within the means of skilled mages, and you may wonder why these masters don't use sympathetic magic to set their rivals on fire from miles away. The answer is that this type of magic leaves the caster vulnerable in two ways.

First, you are flat-footed while casting or concentrating on a sympathetic spell. Thus, these spells are dangerous to use and maintain in combat, and most mages restrict their sympathetic casting to times and places when they are safe from threat.

Second, the sympathetic conduit you create with the spell works both ways. If the target is aware of your intrusion (see below), she knows your identity and location, and can retaliate immediately in supernatural ways if such means are at her disposal. A mage can use your sympathetic conduit to cast spells on you or your location. She must pay the appropriate sympathetic magic cost based on her connection to you, which may be much higher or lower depending on the nature of your relationship; for example, you may have a lock of her hair but she has none of yours. At worst, your target's sympathetic cost is 20 points, as your sympathetic spell counts as encountering her once.

The conduit remains open for as long as you maintain the sympathetic spell (minimum one round). As long as the conduit is open, your target can use it to cast spells on you; if you cast a sympathetic spell that lasts an hour and your target notices it, she can cast spells as often as she wants through it until the conduit breaks or closes.

A conduit closes automatically one round after it is no longer being used for sympathetic magic, regardless of which person created it or last used it. For example, you might open a conduit with an instant Duration spell, and then your target casts an hour Duration spell through the conduit to keep it "propped open." You can dispel a conduit just like a spell; the difficulty is based on the Hit Dice of the mage who created the conduit, not of the mage currently using it.

Non-mages with supernatural powers may use the conduit against you, though its effectiveness for anything other than spells is limited. You gain a +10 bonus on saves to resist non-spell attacks made through the conduit. Only supernatural abilities and spells can reach through the conduit; fists, fire, bullets and all other mundane items have no effect on it and cannot use it.

If the target is an area rather than a person, any creature in the area has a chance to detect the conduit and use it against you as if it was the specific target of your spell. This means that scrying busy areas known to contain several mages is a dangerous practice as any or all of them may decide to retaliate.

Detecting Sympathetic Casting: A creature you target with a sympathetic spell gets a Will save (DC 10 + your Intelligence modifier + Metaspell difficulty components) to sense the connection. This save is in addition to any save against the spell's effects (if any). Creatures unaware of the supernatural tend to dismiss a sensed conduit as a feeling of being watched and nothing more.

A mage or other supernatural entity who makes this save can make a DC 20 Spellcraft or Spot check every round to locate the sympathetic conduit, starting as soon as she makes the save. Creatures entering an area with a conduit (or in the area when the conduit forms) get one save to sense its presence; if they succeed, they may make a Spellcraft or Spot check every round to find the conduit. Mages know what sympathetic conduits are and can inform their friends; other characters must make DC 20 Knowledge (occult) checks to figure it out after detecting it.

Each time you use the conduit to cast a spell on an unaware target, she gets another save to notice the conduit. For example, if a lawyer fails his save to notice your initial sympathetic scrying spell, he gets another chance to do so if you cast a spell to compel him to jump out his office window (and he probably gets a Will save to resist the compulsion spell, too).

Component Descriptions

This section gives detailed explanations of the sorts of things each component can do when added to a spell. These are examples and are by no means comprehensive lists of what each component can do — that would be impossible and work against the goal of a flexible spellcasting system. If you want to create a spell and the exact effect you're looking for isn't described here, use these effects as guidelines for how many component points your spell should cost.

Example: You want a spell that lets you climb walls like a spider. No climbing effect is described for any of the components. However, the New Power component lets you levitate vertically at a speed of 20 feet. Equating levitating at speed 20 with climbing at speed 20 is reasonable, especially if you consider the requirement of touching a wall (which levitating does not have) a fair trade for being able to move laterally (which levitating does not allow except through mundane effort). Therefore, you can build a spider climb spell using the cost of the levitate component.

All but the weakest spells require you to spend multiple points on each component. The more points you spend on a component, the more effective that component is — spending five points on Duration lets your spell last much longer than spending just one point. Some effects require you to spend at least a minimum number of points in a component — curing a disease costs 10 points of the Heal component, paralyzing someone's mind costs five points of the Control component and so on.

The first three components (Area, Duration and Range) are marked with asterisks to indicate that all spells must have at least these three components. (Technically, you can cast a spell that has *only* these components, but such a spell would have little game effect, merely causing invisible and barely perceptible magic to flow harmlessly over and through the target or area — good for some eerie ambience but little else. You can, however, use such a spell to prop open a sympathetic conduit.) Because every spell must have Area, Duration and Range components, they appear first; other components appear in alphabetical order.

Some component effects are listed as a plus value, for example, +1 or +2. This means you can stack this component effect by spending that value multiple times. For example, in the Damage component, dealing 1d6 points of damage is listed as +1, which means if you want your spell to deal 5d6 points of damage, spend five points.

You cannot stack component costs that are not plus-based. (A five-foot-radius area is two component points, but you cannot spend four to get a 10-foot-radius; you have to spend the listed five points.) You cannot stack negative component costs. (Using the Metaspell component to extend the casting time to an hour subtracts 3 from the spell's component cost; you cannot extend the casting time to two hours to subtract 6 from the spell's component cost.)

Area*

Determines how many individual creatures or how much area a spell affects.

Area

Component Cost	Effect
0	Affects you; no target required; or creates or conjures the target.
+1	Five-foot-square wall, one inch thick.
+2	Each additional target beyond the first.
+2	20-foot line.
+3	10-foot cube.
1	One Medium or smaller target.
3	Five-foot radius sphere or 10-foot cone.
6	10-foot radius sphere or 20-foot cone.
11	20-foot radius sphere or 40-foot cone.
25	50-foot radius sphere or 100-foot cone.
35	100-foot radius sphere or 200-foot cone.
50	200-foot radius sphere or 400-foot cone.
80	400-foot radius sphere or 800-foot cone.

Duration*

This component determines how long the spell lasts. The Duration refers only to ongoing magical effects, as the consequences of these effects may last much longer than the spell (see "Spell Duration," *Lasting Effects*, above).

Range*

This component determines how far a spell reaches or the origin point of an area spell.

Range

Component Cost	Effect
1	Affects only you (also called "personal range").
2	Affects a creature or object you touch. If the target is avoiding your touch (as in combat), you must make a melee touch attack to touch the target and release the spell.
2	Originates from you (normally used with area-affecting spells where you want to be ground zero for the effect).
3	30 feet (also called "close range").
6	100 feet (also called "medium range").
15	500 feet (also called "long range).
25	One mile (also called "extreme range").
50	Anywhere on Earth. (In theory you can build spells that reach farther than this, but no mages tell of such trips — yet.)

Duration

Component Cost	Effect
–1	You must concentrate on the spell to maintain the effect. When your concentration ends, the built-in Duration of the spell (if any) begins. For example, you can build a spell with that lasts for your period of concentration plus one round per level; the Duration component cost is –1 point for concentration and one point for one round per level for a total of 0 points in the Duration component.
–1	The spell has no effect until a creature fulfills a triggering condition that you specify (such as touching the target or reciting a password). The Duration begins when you cast the spell, but its effects don't activate until the trigger occurs. The spell ends at the end of the built-in Duration whether or not someone has triggered it.
0	Instantaneous.
0	A one-use effect that occurs on or before your next turn (such as a spell that grants you a bonus on your next attack roll).
1	One round.
3	One minute.
6	10 minutes.
9	One hour.
12	One day. A spell that creates food or drink must have at least this Duration or the items decay before providing any nutritional benefit. (Living on conjured food with a shorter Duration eventually results in starvation, while living on short-Duration conjured water quickly results in dehydration.)
50	Permanent. The magic is ongoing; magic-negating effects can interrupt or break the spell.

Reversible Effects

Sometimes you can build a desired effect by reversing one of the listed possible effects. For example, if you want to afflict someone with a disease such as the flu, use the Heal component as if you were curing a normal disease, but reverse the effect so the target acquires a disease instead. If you want to give someone a penalty on Will saves, use the Protect component as if you were giving him a bonus, then reverse the effect so he gets a penalty equal to that amount. When writing out your build of a spell, be sure you are accurate in whether or not you reverse an effect so you don't accidentally do the wrong thing when you're in a hurry.

Conjure

This component creates objects or creatures on the spot by manipulating nearby atomic and subatomic particles.

Conjured objects can have simple working parts (such as a door with hinges and a latch), but a complex item (such as a radio) requires you to have the skill to craft such an item and make an appropriate Craft check; you are manipulating nearby molecules (perhaps supplemented with a little dark matter), forcing them into your intended shape in moments, and if you don't have an idea how an object works, it is just a crude facsimile.

Conjured creatures are called minions and are under your control; you can modify the minions' nature and abilities by using minion templates (see Chapter 8: Running the Game, "Antagonists and Supporting Characters," *Minions*, for more information about minions). It is easier to conjure a templated minion if you have a "substrate" for that minion — appropriate material to create a minion of that type. For example, if you want to create a skeleton or zombie minion, a human corpse is an appropriate substrate; conjuring a fire elemental is easier at a bonfire. The substrate is incorporated into the body of the minion, lending the minion its characteristics (if appropriate to the type of minion) — a water elemental conjured at a swimming pool is nearly transparent, while one conjured from the Colorado River is opaque with sediment; an earth elemental may be sandy or rocky or earthen, and a conjured zombie looks like the corpse from which it was made.

When the spell ends, the minion reverts to the substrate; conjuring a zombie minion using a dead enemy as the substrate isn't an easy way to destroy the body. Normal physics applies to the substrate. For example, if you conjure a fire elemental from a bonfire, the fire shrinks momentarily as the minion steals some of its material, but within a round or two the bonfire is up to full strength; when the spell ends all that remains is a stolen chunk of fire, which extinguishes itself in moments if it has no fuel.

Conjure

Component Cost	Effect
–5	Harmless minion.
–2	Appropriate minion substrate.
+1	One day's worth of simple nutritious human food and water. The Duration must be at least one day for the spell to provide any lasting effect; otherwise, the consumables vanish from the body before they are processed (though short-Duration food is good for sating hunger while dieting).
+1	Per cubic foot of conjured water, wood, stone or iron. Add the material's cost (below) separately. When creating walls, use the wall Area component rather than this cost.
+5	Per minion template.
2	Creates shadow or light fog that gives all within it a 20% miss chance.
8	Wood object.
10	Minor minion.
10	Creates darkness or thick fog that gives all within it a 50% miss chance.
12	Stone object.

15	Iron object
25	Lesser minion.
40	Greater minion.
80	Superior minion.

Control

This component covers mind control and emotions. Control effects work only on creatures with minds, not on objects or mindless creatures. Mind-controlling effects are some of the most sinister weapons in the World of Darkness.

If the target of a spell with a Control component has more Hit Dice than you do, the target gain a bonus on her save equal to the difference between her Hit Dice and yours. (Controlling a creature more powerful than you is difficult.)

Control effects often have descriptors, such as compulsion or fear; these are noted in parentheses. The descriptors have no effects themselves, but they affect the way other game abilities interact with these spells. (A creature may have a bonus on saves against fear effects, for example.)

All Control effects are mind-affecting effects.

Many Control effects cause fear; see Chapter 7: Playing the Game, "Special Abilities," *Fear* for more information about the effects of fear. Some are compulsion of charm effects; see Chapter 7: Playing the Game, "Special Abilities," *Charm and Compulsion*.

Control

Component Cost	Effect
1	Target is non-hostile or passive, but not helpless. Any attack on the target immediately breaks the spell. (Compulsion)
3	Target is shaken. (Fear)
5	Target is frightened. (Fear)
6	Dispel fear effects on the target. An ongoing spell with this component makes the target immune to fear for the Duration.
7	Target is cowering. (Fear)
7	Target is stunned. A stunned creature gets another save every round to overcome the spell. (Compulsion)
7	Inspire emotion in the target. Emotions that are inappropriate for the circumstances (such as laughter or arousal at a funeral) make the target suspicious. (Compulsion)
8	Target is charmed and regards you as a friend. (Charm)
10	Target is helpless, usually from total mental or physical paralysis. A helpless creature gets another save every round to overcome the spell. (Compulsion)
10	The target falls asleep. Slapping or wounding a sleeping creature wakes him, but normal noise does not; awakening a sleeper is a standard action. (Compulsion)
10	Implant a suggestion of a course of activity, which you must describe in no more than a sentence or two. The proposed activity must sound reasonable. The target automatically resists the spell if the suggestion is an obviously self-harmful act. The suggested course of activity can continue for the entire Duration. If the suggested activity can be completed in a shorter time, the spell ends when the target completes the activity. Alternatively, you can specify conditions that will trigger an activity some time before the spell ends; if the trigger does not occur before the end of the spell, the spell ends with no effect. A very reasonable suggestion gives the target a –1 or –2 penalty on his save. (Compulsion)
10	Dispel compulsion effects on the target. An ongoing spell with this component makes the target immune to compulsion effects for the Duration.
12	Enslave the target. The target cannot resist your commands unless they are self-harmful or are a gross violation of its nature (most humans object to murder, for example). If you must directly control the target by forsaking your own actions, either through mental puppetry or a form of possession, reduce this cost by –2. If the target is of approximately human intelligence, increase this cost by +3. (Compulsion)
13	Compel the target to perform a service or refrain from an activity for the Duration. This effect cannot compel the target to kill himself or perform acts that will result in certain death. You can assign difficult tasks, but impossible tasks cause the spell to fail. Compelled service is more powerful than enslavement because enslavement requires active control while this effect lets you establish guidelines for behavior. (You do not need to micromanage the target.) (Compulsion)

"Magic has always been the true power in the universe. Now it just . . . works better."
—Dana Flores, mage

Damage

This component determines how much damage a spell deals. By default, a spell deals bludgeoning, piercing or slashing damage, similar to a club, bullet or claw, normally by hardening the air into a blunt or sharp tool and striking a target. Damage reduction (including armor) affects this sort of damage, as do other defenses that affect weapon damage. If you want your spell to deal energy damage, add an Energy component.

Damage

Component Cost	Effect
+1	Per 1d6 points of damage.
+2	Per 1d6 component points lost. (The target loses component points; affects only other mages.)
+8	Per one Anima, Vitae or Essence lost. (The target loses Anima, Vitae or Essence; you must declare which when you cast the spell, and if the target uses that type of energy, he loses some of it.)
+10	Per damaging poison effect (initial and secondary damage 1d6 Strength, Dexterity or Constitution).
2	Vampiric. The spell heals another target for the same amount of hit points that the damaged target takes, or restores components, Anima, Vitae or Essence to one target equal to the number of components, Anima, Vitae or Essence a second target loses. The energy types must be the same (you cannot drain a demon's Anima to increase a vampire's Vitae).
10	Nauseated. Target may take only one move action per round. This is a poison effect.

Divination

This component reveals or conceals information. Information revealed by a spell is accurate though the information can be muddled by misinterpretation or obscured by magic.

Divination

Component Cost	Effect
1	Reveals information that is obvious by sight (is the creature wounded, does it look undead and so on).
3	Reveals information that requires some scrutiny if determined by nonmagical means. *Examples:* Learning a person's name (which could be done by reading her driver's license), finding a lost object or secret door (which could be found by normal searching), speaking and understanding a foreign language (which could be learned with study or pieced out with a phrasebook), detecting lies (as if using a polygraph), finding an address (as if from a phone book).
4	Reveals information about the future*, up to one hour from now.
5	Reveals information that cannot be determined without interrogating the subject or using magic. *Examples:* Determining if the target is a vampire or serves the Iconnu, learning a supernatural item's properties, remotely viewing (scrying) a creature or location, finding the quickest path from one location to another, learning someone's greatest desire or fear.
5	Magically conceals the target from divination magic, regardless of what sort of information is desired.
10	Asks questions of the dead. This effect requires a dead body or the presence of a dead spirit. You may ask one question per round. The dead creature knows only what it knew when it was alive.
10	Reveals information about the future*, up to one day from now.
15	Asks questions of entities beyond our world, such as demonic spirits (those who haven't been pulled into our world by the Iconnu), creatures from the werewolves' home dimension, or the departed dead. This type of spell is risky; attracting the attention of things from beyond sometimes leaves a mage insane or dead.
25	Reveals information about the future*, up to one week from now.

* Future circumstances may change, and knowledge of the future makes such a change even more likely (for example, you can intervene if you know someone is going to die within the hour); the spell determines the most likely outcome based on current circumstances.

"Divination? A waste of magic. I deal with problems when they show up. I don't worry about the future."
—Manfred Star, warlock

Energy

This component creates, destroys or converts energy. Common energy types are acid, cold, electricity, fire and sonic damage.

Energy

Component Cost	Effect
–1	The spell manipulates the energy of the area to deal energy damage (rather than creating or suppressing energy). For example, the spell causes a tongue of flame to shoot from a furnace.
1	The spell creates energy to deal energy damage (instead of bludgeoning, piercing or slashing damage).

Sonic Damage

While most spells have some element of noise to them (a poof as a conjured item appears, the crackle of electricity from a lightning bolt, the whoosh of air from a fiery explosion spell), spells that deal sonic energy damage are particularly loud. Even a minor sonic damage spell sounds like a smoke alarm, while a powerful one rivals a police siren or rock concert. While few creatures have any special resistance to sonic damage (and thus sonic spells are popular with some mages), any use of a sonic spell attracts attention from everyone in hearing range — attention a clever mage wishes to avoid.

Sonic damage spells have a base decibel rating of 50 plus 10 for every component spent on sonic damage or other sonic-based effects; for example, a 3d6 sonic damage spell (three Damage components plus one Energy component) creates a noise with a decibel rating of (50 + 10 x 4) 90, as loud as standing next to a heavy truck. See "Noise Ratings," below.

Noise Ratings

The decibel is a unit of measurement for the ratio between two quantities. In common parlance, the decibel measures the loudness of something compared to the quietest sound a healthy human can hear. (Many animals, supernatural creatures with exceptional hearing and electronic sensors can detect fainter sounds.) The higher a sound's decibel rating, the louder it is. The rating is also based on distance from the source of a sound (a jet is much louder up close than from a mile away).

Decibels	Source
0	Threshold of human hearing
10	Human breathing at 10 feet
20	Whispering
30	Quiet movie theater
50	Quiet restaurant
70	Busy traffic at 15 feet
80	Vacuum cleaner at three feet, at the curb of a busy street
90	Heavy truck engine at three feet
100	Jackhammer at six feet
110	Chainsaw at three feet
120	Train horn at three feet; exposure can damage hearing
150	Jet engine at 150 feet

The Listen check DC of a sound at the listed range is equal to 20 minus its decibel rating. For example, hearing someone breathe at 10 feet is a DC 10 Listen check, while hearing a jet pass at 150 feet is a DC –130 Listen check.

Enhance

This component improves qualities that the target could improve with training. Most Enhance components have a cumulative component cost: each increment costs the listed value plus the cost of all lesser values leading up to that value. For example, a +1 enhancement bonus to a weapon's damage costs one component, a +2 bonus costs 3 (2 plus the 1 component for the +1), +3 costs a total of 3+2+1 = 6, +4 costs 4+3+2+1 = 10 and so on.

Enhance

Component Cost	Effect
+1*	Per +1 enhancement bonus on a weapon's attack rolls
+1*	Per +1 enhancement bonus on a weapon's damage
+1*	Per +2 enhancement bonus to an item's hardness
+1*	Per +5 feet enhancement bonus to one type of movement (land, fly, swim and so on)
+1*	Per +1 enhancement bonus on checks with a single skill
+2*	Per +1 enhancement bonus to an ability score
+2*	Per –1 penalty on all d20 rolls
+2*	Per +1 bonus on all d20 rolls

* Cumulative

Heal

This component heals injuries and other afflictions. Correcting something that the target's body can repair on its own (with time and basic medical care) is relatively easy; such injuries include a slight or moderate wound, a broken bone or an illness such as the flu or pneumonia: the magic merely amplifies the target's own regenerative or immune system, allowing it to fix the problem. These easy spells require only an instantaneous Duration component.

Correcting afflictions that a body cannot heal on its own is more difficult; such problems include cataracts, amputated limbs, diabetes, cancer, AIDS, herpes and brain injuries. A mage must enhance the body's healing ability beyond human potential, and in some cases, the fix is only temporary, as the spell addresses the symptoms but cannot correct the problem's cause. For example, a mage can shrink cancerous tumors to undetectable levels but cannot correct the cellular genetic errors that caused them, and eventually the target may grow tumors again. An AIDS patient with a ravaged immune system can receive a spell to rebuild his immunities, but the virus is embedded in his cells and might erupt again. You can cure a morbidly obese man's diabetes with magic, but his obesity and bad eating habits mean he eventually redevelops the disease.

A mage can "permanently" cure these conditions by building a permanent Duration healing spell (which suppresses the target's symptoms on an ongoing basis), but if the spell ever fails the target is once again at risk.

Powerful mages might even be able to raise the dead, though doing so is difficult and has negative consequences. See the "Raising the Dead" sidebar.

Heal

Component Cost	Effect
–2	Parasitic; the spell damages you for the amount of damage the target recovers
+1	Per 1d6 hit points of healing
+1	Per 1 point of exhaustion rating removed
+2	Per 1d6 component points recovered
+2	Per 1 point of ability damage cured
+4	Per 1 point of ability drain cured
3	Cure fatigue
6	Cure exhaustion (the exhausted condition, not spell exhaustion)
10	Cure one naturally survivable poison, disease, parasitic infestation or injury (such as a broken bone)
15	Cure blindness or deafness (magical or not)
15	Cure poison, disease, parasitic infestation or major injury that a human could not recover from or survive without magical aid
15	Cure supernatural affliction, such as a curse or magical disease
30	Raise the dead (see the "Raising the Dead" sidebar)

Illusion

This component creates false images and sensations. Illusions appear real but do not exert force (an illusory bullet doesn't hurt, an illusory chair can't support weight), though you can compensate for this drawback with other components. (For example, you can create a pistol illusion coupled with a Damage component, or a chair illusion and a Movement component to hold your weight.) A witness to an illusion gets a save only if he interacts with it in such a way to suggest it is unreal, such as by touching or passing through an illusory chair, failing to cook marshmallows on an illusory fire, and so on.

A witness who makes this save (called "disbelieving the illusion") realizes the illusion is unreal, though he may still have instinctive reactions to it, such as flinching if attacked. For example, once he realizes a wall of fire is just an illusion he can walk through it, even though it may feel warm with an illusory thermal component.

Illusion components may create still or moving images; as long as the spell is active (i.e., is within its Duration) you may cause the illusion to move and react according to your will. See the "Adjudicating Illusions" sidebar for more information.

Raising the Dead

Life's a bitch, and then you die. And that was before the Intrusion. The World of Darkness is a grim place tainted by unknowable evil. Some GMs may decide that in such an environment, part of the horror is that even beings with superhuman powers (such as mages, vampires and werewolves) can die. If they can easily return from the dead, death is not much of a penalty, and the horrors the characters face are less threatening — less horrific — as a result. Other GMs may feel that in a game where vampires contain the souls of the dead and creatures from other dimensions walk the Earth, the barrier between Earth and other worlds (including wherever souls go after death) is already broken, and mages (who can teleport across space and predict future events) should have the power to return someone to life.

This book gives component costs for raising the dead for GMs who allow it, though the book otherwise makes no assumptions about whether or not it is possible. Certainly, the setting details here do not assume that people returning from the dead is a common occurrence.

Some GMs may walk the line, allowing mages to raise the dead but giving the revived character a penalty for the experience. This penalty may be physical, based on the nature of the killing wound, or mental, based on the trauma of death or an event in the afterlife. Physical penalties include a crippled leg (reducing base speed by 10 feet) or arm (imposing a –4 penalty to Strength and Dexterity checks using that arm), a disfigurement (facial burns, a ghastly color) or an overall penalty to a physical ability score. Mental penalties include phobias, a mild form of insanity (see the Shatter the Mind Discipline for examples), mental blocks against certain activities or an overall penalty to a mental ability score. These penalties should be something that the character deals with for a while; a mage shouldn't be able to alleviate them with a simple spell. (In any case, they usually aren't things that would heal on their own, so a mage would have to use one of her limited number of ongoing spells to negate them.)

Illusion

Component Cost	Effect
+1	Audio illusion, per 20 decibels of noise (see the "Noise Ratings" sidebar earlier in this chapter). Without this component, the illusion is utterly silent. An illusion cannot cause harm due to noise unless you include Damage and Energy components.
+1	Thermal illusion. One component is sufficient to duplicate the *sensation* of warmth or cold without pain or damage. An illusion cannot cause harm due to heat or cold unless you include Damage and Energy components, but adding a thermal effect is usually sufficient to convince a casual witness that the illusion is real.
+2	Olfactory illusion. One component is sufficient for all moderate odors (food, a flower garden, a kitchen garbage can, human body odor), two for strong odors (skunk musk, sewage). An illusion cannot cause debilitating effects (such as nausea) due to stench unless you include the appropriate components.
+3	Create illusion of one object or creature up to Small size.
+6	Create illusion of one object or creature up to Medium size.
+10	Create illusion of one object or creature up to Large size.
+20	Create illusion of one object or creature up to Huge size.
1	Creates a false aura that fools supernatural perceptions, such as making an ordinary object seem as if it had a supernatural property or concealing a supernatural object's aura so it appears to be mundane. Supernatural scrutiny of the target always allows a Will save.
3	Scripted illusion. The illusion performs a pre-set series of actions that you specify when you cast the spell. These actions repeat or stop (your choice) when the script reaches its end.
10	Invisibility (standard). See the "Adjudicating Illusions" sidebar.
20	Invisibility (improved). See the "Adjudicating Illusions" sidebar.

Adjudicating Illusions

Illusions are a complex sort of magic. A mage can seem to create things out of nothing, make them grow and change, and yet it's all just tricks of light and air. Illusions aren't solid — they're like holograms, except not the cheesy rainbow-tinged kind that appear three-dimensional but are actually flat and not the futuristic kind where they can come to life and kill you. They're just perfect emulations of real things, but completely nonsolid. You wouldn't know an illusion just by looking at it — you'd have to touch it and feel nothing, or realize the campfire wasn't actually hot, or that the growling watchdog was absolutely silent.

An illusion can be flat like a painting or fully three-dimensional. It may be still or moving. For example, you can create an illusion of a mural on a wall (flat and still), a bloodied corpse (three-dimensional and still), a television program (flat and moving) or a vampire feeding (three-dimensional and moving).

Illusions normally look like real things, but you can create obviously unreal illusions as well: cartoon figures, oil paintings, waterfalls with no source that float in midair and so on. Creating an illusion of a lifelike portrait is just as easy as creating an illusion of a photograph — an artist's skill is in translating an image with her hands, but magic means an illusion-artist is perfectly skilled at creating what she sees in her mind's eye. Therefore, you can create an illusory duplicate of a person or even an illusion of something you have never seen or does not really exist (like a winged monkey).

Illusions are based on your knowledge, so misperceptions on your part or otherwise incorrect information may lead to a detail that a knowledgeable person recognizes as false. For example, if you get only a glimpse of a vampire as he ran into a safehouse and you try to duplicate his appearance later, you may get the details wrong, just as if you were trying to recreate his appearance with a mundane disguise.

Most illusions are stationary when you create them, but as long as the spell is active (i.e., its Duration has not expired) you can use a move action to change it. For example, you can change your illusion of a painting of Mona Lisa to a self-portrait, or change your illusion of a businessman to a wolf. By concentrating on the spell, you can actively alter details, including giving the illusion full motion (such as a video for a flat illusion, or lifelike motion for a three-dimensional illusion). You may start or stop concentrating on an illusion spell on your turn; unless the spell's Duration is concentration-based, the spell freezes when you are not concentrating on it. (If the spell *is* concentration-based, it simply ends when you cease concentrating.) You can also move an illusion anywhere in your line of sight on your turn, much like turning a movie projector to change the location of the projected image.

Most normal people who encounter a magical illusion and recognize it as unreal dismiss it as a trick of the light or a side effect of their medication. If those explanations aren't sufficient, the more technically- or conspiratorially-minded believe they have encountered a technological hologram, something from the military or government that the public doesn't know about.

Illusions are physical images, not projections into the minds of the viewers. (Though you can cloud a creature's mind with the right Control spell; it is not an illusion). Mindless creatures such as robots and zombies can perceive illusions. (Although they may not understand the concept, they still get saves.) Illusions look just like real objects when recorded.

Invisibility

One kind of illusion that does not allow a save is invisibility; a creature that interacts with an invisible creature quickly realizes that something isn't normal, and therefore doesn't need a save. Invisibility magic is difficult and unstable; rather than creating an object out of light in three dimensions, an invisibility spell creates the image of what is behind the object, and does so for all viewpoints. (Some claim that invisibility spells bend light perfectly around the target, but agree that wouldn't be any easier to do.)

See Chapter 7: Playing the Game, "Special Abilities," *Invisibility,* for more information on the benefits an invisible creature enjoys.

Standard Invisibility: This form of invisibility is functional but unstable. If an invisible creature attacks, the invisibility effect ends. An "attack" includes any melee attack, ranged attack or harmful spell targeting an opponent or whose area or effect includes an opponent. (Exactly who is an opponent depends on the invisible character's perceptions.) Actions directed at unattended objects do not break the spell. Causing harm indirectly is not an attack. Thus, an invisible being can open doors, talk, eat, climb stairs, conjure minions and have them attack, turn on the power to an electrified floor while enemies stand on it, remotely trigger bombs, open a cage to release attack dogs and so forth. If the subject attacks directly, however, she immediately becomes visible along with all her gear. Spells that specifically affect allies but not opponents are not attacks for this purpose, even when they include opponents in their area.

Note that if the target attacks while under the effect of a multipurpose spell, only the invisibility aspect of the spell ends, not the other parts of the spell. For example, if the spell makes the target invisible and agile, attacking ends the invisibility but the target retains the heightened agility for the spell's Duration.

Improved Invisibility: This sort of invisibility requires a more costly and stable spell; it works just like standard invisibility, but attacks by the invisible target do not break the spell — the character remains invisible even after multiple attacks. Some mages report that long-Duration invisibility spells (or frequent use in a short period of time) tend to cause adverse psychological effects, increasing the likelihood of paranoia and aggression.

Metaspell

This component enhances, suppresses or alters magic.

Metaspell

Component Cost	Effect
–7	Casting the spell takes one day. You are concentrating while casting.
–3	Casting the spell takes one hour. You are concentrating while casting.
–2	Casting the spell takes 10 minutes. You are concentrating while casting.
–1	Casting the spell takes one minute. You are concentrating while casting.
0	You cast the spell as a full-round action (this is the default).
+1	Dispel magic. Choose a single spell or magical effect. Roll 1d20 and add the number of Metaspell components you spend on the dispel attempt; the DC is 11 + the creator's Hit Dice. (The GM can assign an appropriate DC to effects that have no creator, such as effects from the Nightmare Wave.) If you succeed, the spell or magical effect ends.
+1	Per +1 increase to the spell's save DC. Mages speak of instant death spells that targets can't resist; these are actually damage spells with the damage and DCs boosted to very high numbers.
+1	Less taxing. Reduce the spell's exhaustion rating by –2 per increment of this effect.
+2*	Increase the dice from the spell effect (such as healing, damage or poison) from 1d6 to 1d8 (then to 1d10, then to 1d12, which is the maximum).
1	You cast the spell as a standard action.
2	Silent spell: the spell requires no words to cast. You can cast it in an area of magical silence.
2	Still spell: the spell requires no gestures to cast. You can cast it even if you are tightly bound. (Casting while paralyzed requires the spell to be silent and still.)
4	Discriminating. An area spell affects only targets you designate.
5	Covert spell. All obvious magical effects of the spell appear to come from a mundane source. For example, a blast of fire originates from a broken gas pipe, a death spell appears to give the target a heart attack, a fly spell appears to be the result of wires and so on. Some effects for which no realistic explanation is possible (such as a person turning into an animal) cannot be cast as covert spells. Covert spells stand up to the scrutiny of surveillance and forensic evidence (the broken gas pipe remains after the spell ends, an autopsy on a person killed by a covert death spell reveals a heart choked with cholesterol and so on). Witnesses who see you cast the spell may realize you are somehow responsible; you may want to cast the spell as stilled and silent if this is an unacceptable risk.
8	You cast the spell as a quickened spell; doing so is a free action (it takes no time), but you can cast it only on your turn. You may cast only one quickened spell (or use one other quickened effect) per round. Quickened spells still require gestures and words (though you can build a quickened, silent, still spell). Quickened spells do not provoke attacks of opportunity.

Metaspell (continued)

10	Target consumed if the spell kills it. This effect is handy for situations in which you don't want to leave evidence. Secondary evidence is not erased; if you throw a man through a window and then kill him with a death spell, the window is still broken and the glass may have his blood on it, but no corpse exists. This effect works only if the spell kills the target directly (usually by dealing damage); a spell that flings a target into the air so that he falls to his death cannot benefit from this effect.
12	Antimagic. Supernatural effects (hostile or friendly) do not work on the target or in the spell's area. Mages and other supernatural creatures immediately sense when they enter an antimagic area. Antimagic can be dispelled. Overlapping antimagic effects are still antimagic (they do not cancel each other to create a "normal" area where they overlap).

* Cumulative. Each increment costs the listed value plus the cost of all lesser values leading up to that value. For example, increasing the die size from 1d6 to 1d8 costs two components, increasing the die size to 1d10 costs 6 (4 plus the two components to increase it to 1d8), and increasing the size to 1d12 costs 6+4+2 = 12.

Movement

This component moves the target through real space or affects its ability to move, primarily through telekinesis (the New Power component covers teleportation). Note that the New Power component allows some flight and levitation as well, so which sort of spell will be cheaper depends on your gnosis and other abilities.

Movement

Component Cost	Effect
0	Move up to 5 lbs. at speed 20 feet/round.
+1	Per 10 lbs. of the target's weight.
+1	Per movement speed of 10 feet/round.

For example, for two points, you can move a 20-pound object at a speed of 10 feet or a 10-pound object at a speed of 20 feet. If the spell has a Duration longer than instantaneous, moving the target in a subsequent round takes a move action. In order to deal damage with a moving object (or by moving a creature violently), the target must have a speed of at least 200 feet/round.

You may manipulate the object as if you were holding it with one hand (for example, you could turn a key or tie a rope in a simple knot).

You may hold a target in place, resisting attempts to move it (for example, you may hold a door closed). Those who want to move the target must make an opposed Strength check (DC 10 + the number of Movement components you spend on the spell).

For example, you can spend six Movement components to move a 50-pound table at a speed of 10 feet per round. You can float the table over to a door and hold it shut; people attempting to shove the door open anyway must make DC (10 + 6) 16 Strength checks.

New Power

This component gives the target a new ability or shape. New Power spells often require more GM arbitration than others.

New Power

Component Cost	Effect
+4	Increase or decrease size by one size category. See Table 7–6: Size Categories for bonuses and penalties that apply based on a creature's size.
+4	The target gains a natural attack such as a bite (1d6 damage) or two claws (1d4 damage each). The target is proficient with this natural attack. You can use multiple components to give the target additional attack as long as it has suitable limbs (for example, you cannot give a human more than four claw attacks because a human has only four limbs).
2	Opponents have a 20% miss chance when attacking the target, and vice versa; for example, this effect could result from portions of the target phasing in and out of reality.
4	Opponents have a 20% miss chance when attacking the target, but the target can attack without penalty; for example, this effect could result from a defensive shield that deflects incoming ranged attacks but doesn't affect your ability to attack.
5	Low-light vision.
5	Telepathy. This is two-way communication that respects the privacy of your thoughts; you must think *at* the target to send a thought, and vice versa.
5	Teleport* a Tiny or smaller target(s).
7	Darkvision 60 feet.
7	Levitate at a speed of 20 feet/round. (This effect allows vertical motion only, though the target can maneuver laterally if she is adjacent to a wall or stable object).
7	Silence. Affected creatures cannot cast spells requiring speech (though the silent Metaspell effect easily compensates for this). Magical silence may hinder other supernatural abilities as well (such as vampires' Compulsion Disciplines and werewolves' howls).
9	Flight† speed of 10 feet/round; maneuverability poor.
10	Cast a spell when it is not your turn (also requires quickened casting time from the Metaspell component).

10	Cosmetic shapechanging. You give the target a new shape. The target does not get any special powers of the new form and retains its own ability scores, but may use the new shape's locomotive and breathing abilities (flight for birds, swimming and water breathing for fish and so on). You can make the target look like a different person, even a specific person, though the change is not detailed enough to duplicate fine details such as fingerprints, voice scans and retina scans. This sort of disguise-shapechange gives the target a +10 bonus on Disguise checks to pretend to be that person. (You do not have to build a separate skill bonus into the spell to gain this benefit.) The target reverts to its original form if the target dies.
10	If the target makes a full attack, he gains one extra attack at his highest base attack bonus, perhaps because he moves with extraordinary speed.
10	Opponents have a 50% miss chance when attacking the target, and vice versa; for example, this effect could result from momentary blindness that afflicts the targets at specific times.
10	Reroll one d20 roll (requires instantaneous Duration and quickened casting time from the Metaspell component).
10	Transform an object into a similar material (solid, liquid, gas; animal, vegetable, mineral) or transform one of its properties (electrical conductivity, transparency, and so forth).
10	Teleport* a Small or smaller target(s).
12	Flight† speed of 30 feet/round; maneuverability average.
18	Flight† speed of 60 feet/round; maneuverability good.
18	Opponents have a 50% miss chance when attacking the target, but the target can attack without penalty; for example, this effect could result from a spell that makes you appear to be two feet to the left of your actual location.
20	Advanced shapechanging. You give the target a new shape. This effect carries all the features of the cosmetic shapechanging effect plus exceptional senses such as low-light vision and scent as well as exceptional natural abilities such as a poisonous bite. An advanced-shapechanged target is physically indistinguishable from the original (including fingerprint, voice, and retinas), though emulating a DNA test requires a sample of the duplicated individual's blood or other DNA-rich material. Gaining the new form's increased ability scores requires Enhance magic, which you can include in this spell. The target reverts to its original form if killed.
20	Block teleportation in the area (or on the targets).
20	Teleport* a Medium or smaller target(s).
40	Teleport* a Large or smaller target(s).

* Teleportation is instantaneous travel from one place to another without crossing the space between. The distance you can teleport the target depends on the spell's Range components.

† You can rise at half speed and decline at double speed; a medium or heavy load reduces your speed by half. See Chapter 7: Playing the Game, "Movement," *Modes of Movement* for more information on flight and maneuverability.

Protect

This component protects against harm. A Protect component might increase Defense, energy resistance or save bonuses. Most Protect components have a cumulative component cost: each increment costs the listed value plus the cost of all lesser values leading up to that value. For example, a +1 Will save bonus costs one component, a +2 save bonus costs three (two plus the one component for the +1), +3 costs a total of 3+2+1 = 6, +4 costs 4+3+2+1 = 10 and so on.

Protect

Component Cost	Effect
+1*	Per one point of energy resistance or five points of energy protection against one type of energy (see Chapter 7: Playing the Game, "Special Abilities," *Energy Resistance and Protection*).
+1*	Per +1 bonus on a single saving throw (so +1 on all three saves costs three).
+1	Increase the component cost of sympathetic spells targeted at you by +5. (This effect does not apply to spells that use an already-open sympathetic conduit.)
+1*	Per +1 natural bonus to Defense.
+2*	Per +1 deflection bonus to Defense.
+5*	Per +1 point of type-less damage reduction (DR 1/–).
10	Immunity to poison. This effect does not cure existing poison effects, but it does prevent them from dealing any more poison damage while it is in effect.
10	An aura that prevents creatures from directly attacking the subject unless they resist the spell with a Will save (a creature makes one save against the spell; success means it can directly attack the target, failure means it cannot). This aura ends if the subject attacks, and it does not prevent creatures from attacking the target with area effects.

* Cumulative.

Rote Spells

Rotes are well-known mage spells, simpler and easier to cast than improvised spells. You get a +5 bonus on Spellcraft checks to cast rotes.

All player character mages know all of these rotes; in mage society, they are as popular and rehearsed as the songs of the Beatles, Elvis Presley and the Doors (though given the recentness of Nightmare Wave, some prefer a comparison to Pearl Jam, Nirvana and Green Day). You can cast these rotes as-is or add additional components to suit your needs, but tampering with a rote in this way usually means you no longer get the +5 bonus on your Spellcraft check (because it's no longer a rote spell — it's improvised magic).

Adding certain Metaspell components, however, does not affect a rote's status as a rote. You may cast a rote as a quickened, stilled or silent spell, cast it more slowly or more quickly, increase the DC or add components to reduce its exhaustion rating. Some rotes allow you to add specific other components without losing the rote benefit; these exceptions are listed at the end of the spell description as "Variants." For example, the "Cleanse the Body" spell is a rote that cures a nonmagical poison or disease; by spending five additional Heal components the spell can also cure a magical affliction, and it remains a rote.

A "#" in the variant description refers to a number of your choice. For example, a variant might be "(Area + [2 x #]): Affects # additional targets." That means you can use area components equal to two times the number of targets you wish to affect to affect those targets.

All other additions or changes to a rote make it an improvised spell.

Each rote includes an explanation of its cost. Some rotes list a component and its parenthetical explanation as "custom" — this represents a ballpark cost for one aspect of the spell when the component rules do not include an appropriate effect. (Remember that the effects listed under each component are only *some* possibilities. These rotes provide examples of how you can use the components to create whatever effect you want.) In terms of difficulty, a cost of 5 is easy, 10 is a moderately difficult effect, 20 is a very difficult effect and 40 is nearly impossible.

Some spells have a parenthetical entry after the name listing one or more paths. A mage of that path gains an additional +5 bonus on Spellcraft checks to cast that spell as a rote. As with the normal rote bonus, you lose this bonus if you change the spell in such a way that it is no longer a rote.

Remember that if the costs for these spells seem low, none of them include Metaspell components to elevate the DC. Don't fall into the trap of being able to cast a dozen weak spells — you should be sure to include an appropriate DC increase so your enemies don't automatically resist your spells.

Alarm

Area (5-foot square): 1
Duration (1 day): 12
Duration (triggered): –1
Range (touch): 2
Divination (obvious): 1
New Power (100-decibel illusion): 5

Total Component Cost: 20

You create a magical alarm that creates a loud noise when a creature enters the area. The noise persists until the end of the spell. You determine what size or type of creature triggers the alarm. For example, you can have the spell ignore anything of Small size or smaller, or only react to women, or tigers, someone not wearing a particular uniform or visible insignia or someone who doesn't speak an appropriate word or phrase.

Normally, the spell reacts to visible stimuli, so an illusionary creature triggers it but not an invisible one. The spell cannot determine if an apparent human is actually a supernatural creature any more than a typical physical inspection can.

Variant (same cost): Weight on the area, rather than visual presence, triggers the alarm. (Thus it detects invisible creatures but not flying ones.)

Variant (Divination +4): The spell reacts to or ignores a particular kind of supernatural creature. For example, you can set an alarm to react to werewolves, and actual werewolves trigger it regardless of the werewolf's shape, but the spell doesn't react to other creatures in wolf form.

Variant (Area +#): The spell affects # additional five-foot-square areas.

Paths and New Rotes

When creating new rote spells, you should determine what mages (if any) get the additional +5 bonus on Spellcraft checks for being path-appropriate. Below are some effects that fall into specific paths, though these are only guidelines; they are not comprehensive, and some of the listed rotes do not fit squarely into these categories.

Enchanter: Divining the future, scrying, altering luck, changing appearance, influencing minds.

Necromancer: Weakness, decay, manipulating corpses or spirits, parasitic attacks.

Theurgist: Mental and physical enhancements and afflictions, studying living creatures, weather, healing.

Shaman: Mental and physical enhancements and afflictions, studying and dominating living creatures, influencing minds, healing, gaining animal traits.

Warlock: Destruction, overt energy effects, weakening objects, conjuring or influencing demons, bargains.

Table 5–1: Rotes lists the rotes by cost.

TABLE 5–1: ROTES

Cost	Rote	Path	Effect
4	Influence Energy	Warlock	Deals 1d6 energy damage.
5	Dispel Magic	—	Dispels a single supernatural effect.
5	Exorcism	Necromancer, Shaman, Theurgist	Drives out possessing force.
5	Healing	Shaman, Theurgist	Heals 2d6 hp.
6	Analyze Life	Shaman, Theurgist	Determines target's age, gender and species.
6	Forensic Gaze	Necromancer	Determines how target died.
6	Healer's Trance	Shaman, Theurgist	Identifies illnesses affecting the target.
6	Kinetic Blow	—	2d6 damage
7+	Apportation	Enchanter	Teleports Tiny object to or from scried location.
7	Aura Perception	—	Identifies a creature's emotions, personality and if it is supernatural.
7	Devour the Living	Necromancer	2d6 damage to touched target; you heal a similar amount.
7	Winds of Chance	Enchanter	Makes target more or less lucky.
8	Analyze Supernatural Item	—	Determines powers of a supernatural item.
8	Control Fire	Warlock	+/– 2d6 damage to a fire.
8	Destroy the Threads	Enchanter	Reduces your sympathetic connection to the target.
8	Postcognition	—	Perceives psychic impressions on an object.
8	Shape Liquid	—	Shapes liquid or liquid vapor.
9	Incognito Presence	Enchanter, Shaman	People don't notice you and forget you were there.
9+	Scrying	Enchanter	Perceive a remote target.
9	Simple Illusion	—	Creates illusion of Small creature or object.
10	Burst of Speed	—	+30 feet to movement.
10	Receiver	—	You can hear ultrasonic and infrasonic sounds.
10	Sound Recorder	—	Records sounds you hear.
11	Imposter	Enchanter, Shaman	+10 on Disguise checks to appear to be someone else.
11	Personal Invisibility	—	You become invisible (standard invisibility).
12	Augury	—	Determines outcome of a target's action over the next hour.
12	Destroy Mana	Necromancer, Warlock	Destroys 4d6 components.
12	Read the Mental Depths	Enchanter, Shaman	Reads surface thoughts and memories.
12	Sound Mastery	—	Creates auditory illusion or changes volume of existing sound.
13	Bestow Invisibility	Theurgist, Warlock	Target becomes invisible (standard invisibility).
13	Cleanse the Body	Shaman, Theurgist	Removes poison or disease.
13	Influence Sound	Warlock	Controls and directs existing sound.
13	Tune in	—	You perceive local cell phone, walkie-talkie, radio and television broadcasts.
14	Emotional Urging	Enchanter, Shaman	Projects emotion in target's mind.
14	Platonic Mechanism	—	Item functions perfectly.
14	Shifting the Odds	Enchanter	You're lucky in completing a task or escaping a situation.
14	Siphon Mana	Necromancer, Warlock	Target loses 4d6 components; you gain a similar amount.
15	Call Lightning	Theurgist, Warlock	Creates 4d6-damage lighting stroke from electrical source.

TABLE 5–1: ROTES (CONTINUED)

Cost	Rote	Path	Effect
15	Create Tass	—	Stores up to 50 components for later use.
15	New Friend	Enchanter, Shaman	Charms target.
15	Slow Flight	—	Subject flies at 10 feet/round (poor maneuverability).
16	Detect Substance	—	Detects the existence of a specified substance.
16	Finder	Enchanter	Determines location of an object.
16	Find the Hidden Hoard	—	Discovers secret doors and compartments.
16	Plasticity	—	Material becomes as malleable as clay.
16	Reading the Outmost Eddies	Enchanter	Determines outcome of random event.
16	Sharpshooter's Eye	—	+5 on your next attack roll.
16	Speak with Corpse	—	Asks questions of a corpse.
16	Steel Window	—	Turns opaque wall transparent, or vice versa.
16	Transform Life	Shaman, Theurgist	Transforms a creature via cosmetic shapechanging.
17	Alter Size	Enchanter	Target grows or shrinks up to two size categories.
17	Create Life	Shaman, Theurgist	Conjures minion.
17	Sleep	Enchanter, Shaman, Theurgist	Target falls asleep.
18	Alter Aura	—	Masks emotions/traits.
18	Invoke the Fire	Warlock	Deals 10d6 fire damage.
18	Memory Hole	Enchanter, Shaman	Temporarily forget one of your memories.
18	Omnivision	—	Target cannot be flanked, +3 on Spot checks.
18	Transmute Earth	—	Transforms matter from one type to another.
18	Transmute Water	—	Transforms liquid from one type to another.
19	Body Weakening	Necromancer, Shaman, Theurgist	Deals 8 Str, Dex, or Con damage to touched target.
19	Control Mind	Enchanter, Shaman, Theurgist	Takes control of an animal.
19	Mental Weakening	Shaman, Theurgist	Deals 8 Int, Wis or Cha damage to touched target.
19	Nightsight	—	You gain low-light vision and darkvision (60 feet).
19	Soul Jar	Necromancer, Shaman, Theurgist	Container can hold a soul.
19	Superlative Luck	Enchanter	Rerolls a d20.
19	Thunderbolt	Warlock	Deals 10d6 electricity damage in a line.
20	Alarm	—	Sets magical alarm on five-foot area.
20	Annihilate Matter	Necromancer, Warlock	2d6 damage; target consumed if destroyed.
20	Autonomous Servant	—	Creates harmless minion to serve you.
20	Possession	Enchanter, Shaman	Takes control of target.
21	Alter Integrity	Warlock	Reduces object's hardness by 10.
21	Complete Invisibility	—	You become invisible (improved invisibility).
21	Imbued Weapon	—	Weapon gains +5 to hit.
21	Light Mastery	Warlock	Create, amplify or extinguish light.
22	Armor	—	You gain +4 to Defense
23	Chronos's Curse	—	Target takes only action/round; half speed; –1 on attack rolls, Ref saves and Defense.
23	Mental Shield	Enchanter, Shaman	You gain +4 on Will saves.
24	Eradicate Radiation	—	Eliminates radiation.

TABLE 5–1: ROTES (CONTINUED)

Cost	Rote	Path	Effect
24	Telepathy	Enchanter, Shaman	Allows mental communication.
24	Temporal Pocket	—	You disappear into a pocket in time.
26	Exceptional Luck	Enchanter	Target has +4 on all d20 rolls.
26	Raw Creation	—	Create Medium object made of wood and/or softer materials.
27	Turn Projectile	You are immune to projectiles.	
28	Quicken Corpse	Necromancer	Turns a corpse into a zombie.
28	Suppress Own Life	Necromancer	You appear dead.
29	Body Augmenting	Shaman, Theurgist	Target gains +4 to Str, Dex or Con.
29	Breach the Vault of Memory	Enchanter, Shaman	Alters target's memories.
29	Dead Zone	—	Suppresses all supernatural powers in an area.
29	Mental Augmenting	Enchanter, Shaman	Target gains +4 to Int, Wis or Cha.
30	Regeneration	Shaman, Theurgist	Regrows limbs and corrects major injuries.
30	Telekinesis	—	Move up to 200 pounds at 20 feet/round.
31	Demonic Slave	Warlock	Conjures a demon minor minion.
31	Unliving Vigor	Necromancer	Critical hits stun the target instead of dealing Con damage.
33	Divination	—	Receives answer to a question concerning up to one week in the future.
33	Sense Life	Shaman, Theurgist	Reveals number and direction of living creatures of a chosen type.
33	Spatial Map	—	Creates mental 3D radar.
33	Swift Flight	—	Subject flies at 60 feet/round (good maneuverability) for one day.
35	Sense Consciousness	Enchanter, Shaman	Sense the presence and strength of minds nearby.
36	The Evil Eye	Enchanter	Target takes –4 on attacks, saves and checks.
38	Electromagnetic Pulse	Warlock	Disables electronic devices in an area.
41	Labyrinth	Enchanter	Compress or expand space.
45	Follow Portal	Enchanter	Follows a teleporting character.
45	Radio Transmission	—	Transmits your voice over a radio frequency.
45	Teleport	Enchanter	Teleports you up to one mile away.
48	Swearing an Oath	Enchanter, Warlock	Compels subject to obey an oath.
51	Ward	Enchanter	Protects an area from scrying and teleportation.
69	Supreme Mind Augmenting	Enchanter, Shaman	Targets gains +4 Int, Wis and Cha.
72	Speak with the Dead	Necromancer	You speak with any dead creature.
79	Psychic Projection	Enchanter, Shaman	Project your senses from your body.
88	The Great Curse	Enchanter	Target takes a –8 on attacks, saves and checks.
94	Great Scourge	Enchanter, Warlock	Strange phenomena causes creatures to be shaken and take –4 on all d20 rolls.
101	Geas	Enchanter	Compels subject to obey an oath.
143	Change Weather	Theurgist, Warlock	Alters weather in a large area.

Variant (Range +25): Rather than an audible alarm, the spell notifies you mentally of the intrusion as long as you are within one mile of it.

Variant (Range +50): Rather than an audible alarm, the spell notifies you mentally of the intrusion, regardless of your distance from it.

Alter Aura

Area (personal): 0
Duration (1 hour): 9
Range (personal): 1
Divination (conceal): 5
Total Component Cost: 18

You change your aura, projecting whatever emotions or traits you desire and hiding your true nature. You cannot change your aura's obvious type (it always looks like a mage's aura rather than a vampire or werewolf's).

Alter Integrity (Warlock)

Area (1 target): 1
Duration (1 minute): 3
Range (touch): 2
Enhance (+10 hardness, reversed): 15
Total Component Cost: 21

You weaken a Medium or smaller object's hardness by 10, making it easier to damage that object. An attended object can save (Fortitude half).

Alter Size (Enchanter)

Area (1 target): 1
Duration (10 minutes): 6
Range (touch): 2
New Power (two size categories): 8
Total Component Cost: 17

You cause the target to grow or shrink up to two size categories. This change does not affect the target's hardness (if an object), hit points, ability scores or abilities (if a creature); a Large human is strangely weak and dexterous for his new size, while a Small adult human is surprisingly strong but clumsy compared to naturally Small creatures. If you want an enlarged creature to be stronger or a reduced one to be more agile, you must add Enhance components. The target gets a save to resist (Fortitude negates).

Variant (Enhance +10): An enlarged creature gains a +4 enhancement bonus to Strength, or a reduced creature gains a +4 enhancement bonus to Dexterity.

Analyze Life (Shaman, Theurgist)

Area (1 target): 1
Duration (instantaneous): 0
Range (touch): 2
Divination (scrutiny): 3
Total Component Cost: 6

You learn the species, age and gender of a nearby living thing. You may identify supernatural creatures (demons, vampires, werewolves) with this spell, but if you have never examined one before, the spell tells you the species is "unknown." Humans, Awakened and mages are all detected as human.

Analyze Supernatural Item

Area (1 target): 1
Duration (instantaneous): 0
Range (touch): 2
Divination (requires magic): 5
Total Component Cost: 8

You analyze an object altered by or infused with supernatural power, whether from mage-magic, an effect of the Nightmare Wave, demonic power or something else. You learn if the item's powers are offensive or defensive (or both), and if it is generally helpful or harmful (or both)

for the user. By making a DC 20 Spellcraft check, you learn one of the item's abilities. Casting the spell again (and making a check) reveals an additional ability if the item has more than one.

Variant (same cost): You may activate one of the item's known abilities, whether or not you know the trigger for doing so. All normal requirements and side effects apply, which may mean your attempted activation has no effect. For example, a cup that heals you when you drink blood from it won't heal you with this spell if no blood is in it.

Annihilate Matter (Necromancer, Warlock)

Area (1 target): 1
Duration (instantaneous): 0
Range (touch): 2
Damage (2d6): 2
Metaspell (target consumed): 10
New Power (custom): 5
Total Component Cost: 20

You deal 2d6 points of damage to an object or creature, ignoring its hardness. If this damage reduces the targets hit points to 0, the item disintegrates, leaving nothing behind, not even dust. An attended object gets a save (Fortitude half).

Variant (Damage +#): +#d6 points of damage.

Apportation (Enchanter)

Area (1 target): 1
Duration (instantaneous): 0
Range (personal): 1
New Power (teleport Tiny): 5
Total Component Cost: 7 + scrying cost

This spell requires you to be scrying the target or the area where the target is. You teleport a Tiny or smaller target from the scried area to your location, or vice versa. (If the target of the scry is a Tiny or smaller object rather than an area, you can teleport it to you.) If the scried target is an object, another object teleported to its location appears next to it (not inside it). Unwilling targets and attended objects get a save to resist teleportation (Will negates).

Variant (New Power +5): The teleported object or creature is Small.

Armor

Area (personal): 0
Duration (1 hour): 9
Range (personal): 1
Protect (+3 natural bonus): 12
Total Component Cost: 22

You gain a +4 natural bonus to Defense.

Augury

Area (1 target): 1
Duration (instantaneous): 0
Range (touch): 2
Divination (requires magic): 5
Divination (future, 1 hour): 4
Total Component Cost: 12

You ask a question about the target's present course of action and receive a short general answer regarding its probable outcome (in regard to the target) in the next hour: favorable, unfavorable, both or nothing (for actions don't have especially good or bad results). The prediction takes into account only the consequences in the next hour; asking about the outcome of a heist may be "favorable" because the target escapes with the money, but doesn't take into account four hours later when his drunk partner shoots him to take the money.

You can use this spell on a particular target only once per day.

Aura Perception

Area (1 target): 1
Duration (concentration): 0
Range (personal): 1
Divination (requires magic): 5
Total Component Cost: 7

This spell is identical to the vampire Discipline Aura Perception.

Autonomous Servant

Area (Conjure): 0
Duration (1 day): 12
Range (30 feet): 3
Conjure (minor): 10
Conjure (harmless): –5
Total Component Cost: 20

You conjure a harmless minor minion to perform simple physical chores, freeing you to work on higher things. The servant does not need to stay in your presence but you can give it new orders only in person.

Bestow Invisibility (Theurgist, Warlock)

Area (1 target): 1
Duration (1 round): 1
Duration (concentration): –1
Range (touch): 2
Illusion (standard invisibility): 10
Total Component Cost: 13

The target becomes invisible with standard invisibility. It lasts as long as the target concentrates plus 1 round.

Body Augmenting (Shaman, Theurgist)

Area (1 target): 1
Duration (10 minutes): 6
Range (touch): 2
Enhance (+4 to an ability score): 20
Total Component Cost: 29

You give the target a +4 enhancement bonus to Strength, Dexterity or Constitution.

Body Weakening (Necromancer, Shaman, Theurgist)

Area (one target): 1
Duration (instantaneous): 0
Range (touch): 2
Heal (8 ability damage, reversed): 16
Total Component Cost: 19

You deal eight points of Strength, Dexterity or Constitution damage to the target (Fortitude half).

Breach the Vault of Memory (Enchanter, Shaman)

Area (1 target): 1
Duration (1 day): 12
Range (30 feet): 3
Control (service): 13
Total Component Cost: 29

You alter the subject's memories. It is easier to adjust short-term or inconsequential memories, very difficult to alter long-term or deeply ingrained memories. The subject gets a save to resist (Will negates) with a bonus based on the strength of the memories you wish to change.

Save Bonus	Type of Memory Altered	Example
+0	Trivial	Where the subject left her car keys, the fact that a man in a garish hat walked by her office window that day.
+3	Strong	Her favorite color, her favorite restaurant; the existence of Roger in the mailroom.
+6	Life-altering	The existence of her child, a crippling childhood injury, literally finding Jesus Christ in the desert.
+15	Fundamental	Identity, language, personality.

You cannot make someone forget her supernatural nature (you can't make a vampire forget she's a vampire) or how to use her supernatural abilities. Psychotherapy and hypnosis may restore lost memories. When the spell ends, the memories return.

Variant (Duration +[12 x #]): Lasts # extra days.
Variant (Duration +30): The spell is permanent. Note that this spell counts against your total number of ongoing spells.

Burst of Speed

Area (personal): 0
Duration (1 minute): 3
Range (personal): 1
Enhance (+30 speed): 6
Total Component Cost: 10

You gain an enhancement bonus to your ground speed equal to +30 feet per round.

Call Lightning (Theurgist, Warlock)

Area (1 target): 1
Duration (instantaneous): 0
Range (100 feet): 6
Energy (manipulation): –1
Damage (4d6): 4
Metaspell (covert): 5
Total Component Cost: 15

A bolt of electricity arcs from a source of strong electrical power (such as a storm or electrical generator) to the target, dealing 4d6 points of electricity damage (Reflex half). This stroke appears to be a spontaneous and natural occurrence, though repeat uses of the spell on the same target stretch plausibility.

Change Weather (Theurgist, Warlock)

Area (400 foot radius): 80
Duration (1 hour): 9
Range (100 feet): 15
Movement (200 pounds, speed 20): 40
Metaspell (casting takes 10 minutes): –2
Energy (energy damage): 1
Total Component Cost: 143

You change the weather in the local area. Once you finish casting, the effects take 10 minutes to manifest, as does each subsequent weather change. You can call forth weather appropriate to the climate and season of the area you are in.

Spring: Tornado, thunderstorm, sleet storm or hot weather.
Summer: Torrential rain, heat wave or hailstorm.
Autumn: Hot or cold weather, fog or sleet.
Winter: Frigid cold, blizzard or thaw.
Late winter: Hurricane-force winds or early spring (in a coastal area).

You control the general tendencies of the weather, such as the direction and intensity of the wind. You cannot control specific applications of the weather — where lightning strikes, for example, or the exact path of a tornado. When you select a certain weather condition to occur, the weather assumes that condition 10 minutes later (changing gradually, not abruptly). The weather continues as you left it for the Duration, or until you use a standard action to designate a new kind of weather (which fully manifests 10 minutes later). Contradictory conditions are not possible simultaneously.

You can reduce or negate atmospheric phenomena (naturally occurring or otherwise) as well as create them.

Variant (Duration +[12 x #]): +# hours

Chronos's Curse

Area (1 target): 1
Duration (1 minute): 3
Range (30 feet): 3

New Power (one extra attack, reversed): 10
Enhance (+1 attack rolls, reversed): 1
Enhance (+15 feet speed, reversed): 3
Protect (+1 Reflex saves, reversed): 1
Protect (+1 Defense, reversed): 1
Total Component Cost: 23

You make time sluggish for the target so that every action seems as if he is wading through molasses (Fortitude negates). He can take only a single move action or standard action each turn, but not both (nor can he take full-round actions). He takes a –1 penalty on attack rolls, Reflex saves and to Defense, and his land speed decreases by half.

Cleanse the Body (Shaman, Theurgist)

Area (1 target): 1
Duration (instantaneous): 0
Range (touch): 2
Heal (poison): 10
Total Component Cost: 13

You cleanse the target of one poison, disease or parasitic infestation that does not require magic to cure. This spell does not repair damage the affliction caused but does allow the target to begin recovering normally.

Variant (Heal +5): You can cleanse afflictions that only magic can eradicate.

Complete Invisibility

Area (personal): 0
Duration (1 round): 1
Duration (concentration): –1
Range (personal): 1
Illusion (improved invisibility): 20
Total Component Cost: 21

You become invisible with improved invisibility. The spell lasts as long as you concentrate plus one round.

Control Fire (Warlock)

Area (1 target): 1
Duration (1 minute): 3
Range (30 feet): 3
Damage (2d6): 2
Energy (manipulation): –1
Total Component Cost: 8

You amplify or suppress an existing fire, increasing or decreasing its damage by 2d6 points. If the fire normally deals 2d6 points of damage or less, suppressing the fire extinguishes it; if the fire is maintained by magic or is larger than one five-foot square, the fire is suppressed for the Duration but reignites afterward — handy for escaping a burning building without performing any flashy tricks.

Control Mind (Enchanter, Shaman, Theurgist)

Area (1 target): 1
Duration (1 minute): 3
Range (30 feet): 3
Control (enslaved): 12
Total Component Cost: 19

You mentally control an animal, forcing it to do your bidding. The animal's intelligence and level of awareness may limit what tasks it can do. The animal can resist with a save (Will negates).

Variant (Control +3): You may control an intelligent creature, not just animals.

Variant (Area +[2 x #]): Control # additional targets. You can give them orders only as a group, not as individuals.

Create Life (Shaman, Theurgist)

Area (1 target): 1
Duration (1 minute): 3
Range (30 feet): 3
Conjure (minor): 10
Total Component Cost: 17

You conjure a minor minion in the form of an animal or human. The minion does not have any minion templates. The minion has all the instincts of the animal the minion resembles (human-shaped minions have primitive-level human instincts). (See Chapter 8: Running the Game, "Antagonists and Supporting Characters," *Minions*.)

Variant (Conjure +15): Lesser minion
Variant (Conjure +30): Greater minion
Variant (Conjure +70): Superior minion

Create Tass

Area (conjure): 0
Duration (1 day): 12
Range (touch): 2
Conjure (1 cubic foot): 1
Total Component Cost: 15

You create tass, magic energy made solid. Tass can be in the shape of any solid object up to one cubic foot volume and looks like an object of that type, though it has hardness 0 and one hit point per inch of thickness and is generally useless if you try to use it for a purpose appropriate to its form. (You can't use a tass hammer to pound in a nail; tass is too weak.) The purpose of tass is to store magical energy for later use. When you create a tass object, you decide how many additional components to store within it (up to 50). You lose these components as if you had cast them in spells. For example, you might create a tass vase and spend an additional 50 components, which you store in the tass. (See below for how to recover these components.)

At the end of the Duration, the tass dissolves into nothingness, and any components stored in it are lost.

Tass allows you to stockpile components for an upcoming large expenditure. Some mages use tass as (short-term) currency, repaying favors or services with stored magical energy. Necromancers, Shamans and Theurgists prefer to channel their components into a cloth or leather bag called a medicine bag, but the effect is the same as creating tass.

Variant (Duration +[12 x #]): Add # days to the Duration.

Variant (same cost): Reverse the spell, destroying the tass object and regaining the additional components stored in it as

if you had rested. Using the example of the tass vase, casting this variant allows you to recover the 50 stored components, adding them to your current total as if you had rested. You can cast this spell on any tass, not just tass you created, but you can only successfully draw components from tass once each day.

Dead Zone

Area (20-foot radius): 11
Duration (1 minute): 3
Range (30 feet): 3
Metaspell (antimagic): 12
Total Component Cost: 29

You suppress all supernatural effects in the area. Mages cannot cast spells, demons cannot use cants, werewolves cannot use rites and so on. Ongoing supernatural effects cease; transformed objects or creatures revert to their normal forms.

Demonic Slave (Warlock)

Area (one target): 1
Duration (1 day): 12
Range (30 feet): 3
Conjure (minor minion): 10
Conjure (demon template): 5
Total Component Cost: 31

You conjure a demon minor minion (see Chapter 8: Running the Game, "Antagonists and Supporting Characters," *Minions*).

Destroy Mana (Necromancer, Warlock)

Area (1 target): 1
Duration (instantaneous): 0
Range (30 feet): 3
Damage (4d6 components): 8
Total Component Cost: 12

The target loses 4d6 components (Will half) as if he had spent them casting spells (though this loss does not increase exhaustion rating). His available components cannot drop below 0.

Destroy the Threads (Enchanter)

Area (1 target): 1
Duration (instantaneous): 0
Range (touch): 2
Divination (concealing): 5
Total Component Cost: 8

You downgrade an object or creature's sympathetic connection to another thing by one step. For example, you can cast this rote on your girlfriend, reducing your sympathetic connection to her from "intimate connection" to "moderate connection," making it more difficult for people to use her to get to you with sympathetic magic (or vice versa). This spell does not change your memories or feelings toward each other, just the magical connection.

A stronger sympathetic connection redevelops over time (minutes for weak connections, days for moderate ones, years for intimate ones). You can cast the spell multiple times to further degrade the connection. Degrading the connection below "described" means the target cannot be used to establish a sympathetic connection to you.

Variant (Divination +[5 x #]): Reduce the sympathetic connection by # steps.

Variant (same cost): You increase your sympathetic connection to the target by one step. This variant is called New Threads.

Detect Substance

Area (20-foot radius): 11
Duration (instantaneous): 0
Range (originates from you): 2
Divination (scrutiny): 3
Total Component Cost: 16

You detect the presence and location of a specified substance in the area. You may be as vague as "ferrous metal" or "plastic" or a specific as "copper," "clean water," "gunpowder" or "my keys." If the material is present only in very small quantities (such as gunpowder residue on a visitor's hand) the GM may require a DC 20 Search check as a free action for you to detect the material.

Devour the Living (Necromancer)

Area (one target): 1
Duration (instantaneous): 0
Range (touch): 2
Damage (2d6): 2
Damage (vampiric): 2
Total Component Cost: 7

You siphon part of a target's life energy, replenishing magic or your own life force. The target takes 2d6 points of damage (Fortitude half), and you heal as many hit points of damage as you dealt the target.

Dispel Magic

Area (one target): 1
Duration (instantaneous): 0
Range (30 feet): 3
Metaspell (dispel magic): 1
Total Component Cost: 5

You attempt to snuff out a single supernatural effect of your choice. Roll 1d20+1; the DC is 11 + the creator's Hit Dice. Possible effects include spells, vampire Disciplines, demon cants, werewolf rites and even effects from the Nightmare Wave.

Variant (Metaspell +#): +# on your dispel check.

Divination

Area (1 target): 1
Duration (instantaneous): 0
Range (touch): 2
Divination (requires magic): 5
Divination (future, 1 week): 25
Total Component Cost: 33

This spell works similar to Augury, except you may ask a question and get a more specific answer regarding events up to

one week in the future. The answer may be a short phrase, a cryptic rhyme or an omen. The answer is subject to interpretation because the future is malleable, but simpler questions regarding events in the nearer future tend to give more precise answers.

You can use this spell on a particular target only once per day.

Electromagnetic Pulse (Warlock)

Area (20-foot radius): 11
Duration (instantaneous): 0
Range (100 feet): 6
Energy (energy damage): 1
New Power (custom): 20
Total Component Cost: 38

You create an invisible electromagnetic pulse that damages electronic devices, rendering them nonfunctional. Conventional motors and living tissue are unaffected, but computers, cell phones, radios, electrical systems in cars, portable music players and most of the luxuries of the modern age quietly burn out and don't work until repaired.

Emotional Urging (Enchanter, Shaman)

Area (1 target): 1
Duration (1 minute): 3
Range (30 feet): 3
Control (emotion): 7
Total Component Cost: 14

You project an emotion into the target's mind. The emotion is more of an urging than a mandate, though the target is more likely to accept the emotion if it is appropriate to the circumstances. The target can resist with a save (Will negates).

Eradicate Radiation

Area (5-foot cube): 1
Duration (instantaneous): 0
Range (30 feet): 3
New Power (transform object): 10
New Power (custom): 10
Total Component Cost: 24

You eradicate radiation in the area. The spell can convert one ounce of radioactive material (such as plutonium) into common non-radioactive lead, or scour a five-foot cube free of lingering radiation. This spell does not repair damage the radiation already caused — exposed film is still dark, cells still have chromosomal damage and so on.

The Evil Eye (Enchanter)

Area (1 target): 1
Duration (1 day): 12
Range (30 feet): 3
Enhance (–4 penalty on d20 rolls): 20
Total Component Cost: 36

You curse the target, giving her a –4 penalty on attacks, saves and checks. The target gets a save to resist (Will negates).

This spell counts as a nonlethal curse for the purpose of the Curse Magic gnosis.

Exceptional Luck (Enchanter)

Area (1 target): 1
Duration (1 minute): 3
Range (touch): 2
Enhance (+4 bonus on d20 rolls): 20
Total Component Cost: 26

The target gains a +4 bonus on all d20 rolls.

Exorcism (Necromancer, Shaman, Theurgist)

Area (one target): 1
Duration (instantaneous): 0
Range (30 feet): 3
Metaspell (dispel magic): 1
Total Component Cost: 5

You attempt to drive a possessing or controlling force out of the target's mind or body. Roll 1d20+1; the DC varies by the possessing or controlling effect. Success means you expel the invading force or effect (this drives a possessor back to his own body or ends a controlling spell's effect on the target).

Variant (Metaspell +#): +# on your exorcism roll.

Find the Hidden Hoard

Area (20-foot radius): 11
Duration (instantaneous): 0
Range (originates from you): 2
Divination (scrutiny): 3
Total Component Cost: 16

You locate hidden doors, secret compartments and concealed spaces. This spell does not tell you how to access or open them. If the hidden area is especially well concealed, the GM may require a DC 20 Search check as a free action for you to find them.

Finder (Enchanter)

Area (20-foot radius): 11
Duration (instantaneous): 0
Range (originates from you): 2
Divination (scrutiny): 3
Total Component Cost: 16

You determine the location of a single item you specify, such as "a ballpoint pen," "Dave's laptop" or "the knife that killed my brother." The item does not need to be in the area when you cast the spell; if the item is out of the spell's range or area you know only that it is out of range.

Variant (sympathetic cost): You can determine the location of the object anywhere on Earth as a sympathetic spell.

Follow Portal (Enchanter)

Area (personal): 0
Duration (instantaneous): 0
Range (1 mile): 25
New Power (teleport Medium): 20
Total Component Cost: 45

You follow someone who recently teleported, arriving at his teleport destination even though you may not know where

that is. When you cast this spell, you must be in the same square where someone teleported from in the last 10 minutes; otherwise, the spell fails. If the destination is farther than your Range component, the spell fails.

If the previous teleporter used sympathetic magic to determine his destination, the "tracking" quality of sympathetic conduits applies to you even if the conduit is closed. For example, if the previous teleporter used a sympathetic conduit to teleport to Brad Pitt, who happened to be on an airplane at the time, your spell also sends you to Brad Pitt at his current location, *not* miles in the air where he was at the time of the previous teleport. You have no idea if the previous teleporter chose a specific location or was using sympathetic magic; after his arrival, he may have driven a car or teleported a second time, leaving you hanging around with Brad Pitt.

Local conditions may have changed at the teleport destination; for example, your target may have teleported to a warehouse that was safe when he arrived but is now on fire.

Variant (New Power +[2 x #]): Bring # additional Medium creatures with you.

Forensic Gaze (Necromancer)

Area (one target): 1
Duration (instantaneous): 0
Range (touch): 2
Divination (scrutiny): 3
Total Component Cost: 6

You determine how the target died and how long ago (to the hour). Examples are "knife wound to the carotid artery," "gunshot to the heart," "rattlesnake venom" and "strangulation." Note that most magical attacks use some sort of physical method; the spell doesn't differentiate between a metal knife and a knife of hardened air, or between a car bomb and a fire spell.

The spell reveals the true cause of death even if someone made subsequent efforts to conceal it (such as by burning a body that was strangled to death). The spell is literal and reveals only the actual cause of death, even if mitigating circumstances were present, such as an eventually lethal dose of poison in the body of a man shot to death.

The spell works even if you have only a piece of the body, such as a skull or even bone fragments from a cremation. If the cause of death was obscure or happened more than a year ago, the GM may require a DC 20 Heal check to determine the precise cause (add 1 to the DC for every additional year dead beyond the first).

Geas (Enchanter)

Area (1 target): 1
Duration (1 day): 12
Range (30 feet): 3
Control (compel service): 13
Enhance (–8 penalty to d20 rolls): 72
Total Component Cost: 101

This spell is a more powerful version of Swearing an Oath. You compel the target to perform a service or refrain from an activity; he gets a save to resist (Will negates). If he fails his save, he is subject to the geas for the Duration and any time he wants to act against the oath, he must save again to do so; failure means he cannot resist the geas. Success means he can knowingly and willingly violate the geas, but if he does, he takes a –8 penalty on all attacks, saves and checks for the remaining Duration of this spell. The target can attempt these saves once per hour.

If the target is supernaturally compelled to act against the geas, he gets to make another save against the compelling force each round it would make him violate the geas. Success means he is free of the compulsion. He suffers the –8 penalty described above only if he knowingly and willingly violates the geas.

The Great Curse (Enchanter)

Area (1 target): 1
Duration (1 day): 12
Range (30 feet): 3
Enhance (-8 penalty to d20 rolls): 72
Total Component Cost: 88

You curse the target, giving her a –8 penalty on attacks, saves and checks. The target gets a save to resist (Will negates).

This spell counts as a nonlethal curse for the purpose of the Curse Magic gnosis.

Great Scourge (Enchanter, Warlock)

Area (200-foot radius): 50
Duration (10 minutes): 6
Range (100 feet): 15
Control (shaken): 3
Enhance (–4 penalty on d20 rolls): 20
Total Component Cost: 94

You bend fate to produce a strange and chaotic outcome such as a rain of frogs, animals going berserk, clouds of swarming insects and so on. All creatures in the area are shaken (Will negates), and the disturbance caused by the creatures makes it difficult to act (–4 penalty on all d20 rolls).

The disturbance does not cause people any lasting harm, though their actions may cause harm to others; for example, a scared taxi driver frightened by a rain of frogs might gun his engine to escape the area, striking a pedestrian wandering in the street. The disturbance serves as excellent cover for large-scale activities, even including battle as long as not too much obvious magic is flying around.

Healer's Trance (Shaman, Theurgist)

Area (1 target): 1
Duration (instantaneous): 0
Range (touch): 2
Divination (scrutiny): 3
Total Component Cost: 6

You learn if the target is healthy and detect all illnesses affecting his health. To detect an obscure illness (such as a rare disease from the rainforest) or illness stemming from a very small spot in the body (such as a tiny new tumor), you must make a DC 20 Heal check as a free action.

Healing (Shaman, Theurgist)

Area (1 target): 1
Duration (instantaneous): 0
Range (touch): 2
Heal (2d6): 2
Total Component Cost: 5
You heal the target 2d6 hit points of damage.
Variant (Heal +#): Add #d6 hit points of healing.

Imbued Weapon

Area (1 target): 1
Duration (1 minute): 3
Range (touch): 2
Enhance (+5 enhancement bonus): 15
Total Component Cost: 21
The touched weapon gains a +5 enhancement bonus on attack rolls.

Impostor (Enchanter, Shaman)

Area (personal): 0
Duration (1 minute): 3
Range (personal): 1
Illusion (Medium creature): 6
Illusion (audio, 20 decibels): 1
Total Component Cost: 11
You create a mental projection that fools others into thinking you look and sound like someone else. This illusion gives you a +10 bonus on Disguise checks to pretend to be that person. If you act suspiciously or otherwise out of character for your chosen guise, anyone interacting with you gets a save to pierce the illusion (Will negates).

Incognito Presence (Enchanter, Shaman)

Area (personal): 0
Duration (1 minute): 3
Range (personal): 1
Divination (conceal): 5
Total Component Cost: 9
Anyone who interacts with you sees nobody special, nothing worth remembering. If questioned about you later, she must make a Will save to be able to recall any details about you. This save succeeds automatically if you went out of your way to draw attention to yourself in her presence, such as by attacking someone or screaming, unless that behavior was normal and appropriate for the situation. (Attacking someone in a street fight and screaming at a rock concert are normal behaviors.)

Influence Energy (Warlock)

Area (1 target): 1
Duration (instantaneous): 0
Range (30 feet): 3

Energy (manipulation): –1
Damage (1d6): 1
Total Component Cost: 4

You redirect an available source of energy (cold, electricity, fire or sonic) to deal 1d6 points of energy damage to the target (Fortitude half). A typical source of cold is a refrigeration coil or container of liquid nitrogen. A typical source of electricity is a power outlet. A typical source of fire is a flame, engine or other mechanical device generating a lot of heat.

Despite its minor effect, this spell is not covert, and no mundane explanation for the effect exists — the target is chilled, shocked or burned from across the room without any direct contact to the source. (Of course, if your purpose is to burn a building down, you may not care if no clear contact exists.)

The spell fails if no line of effect exists between the energy and the target. For example, you can't use the heat from a car's engine block if the hood is closed. You can't draw on a power cable unless the insulation is damaged enough that the wire is exposed. You can't draw on the cold from an insulated container of liquid nitrogen if it is merely cool to the touch.

Influence Sound (Warlock)

Area (5-foot radius): 3
Duration (1 minute): 3
Range (100 feet): 6
Energy (manipulation): 1
Total Component Cost: 13

You redirect existing sound in the area. You could steer a whispered conversation from across the room to your ears so you can listen in, or ensure that sound from your private conversation goes no farther than those involved in it. The spell is not fast enough to shield you from instantaneous sonic effects, but you can shield yourself from ongoing sounds, giving you a +4 bonus on saves against them.

Invoke the Fire (Warlock)

Area (1 target): 1
Duration (instantaneous): 0
Range (100 feet): 6
Energy (energy damage): 1
Damage (10d6): 10
Total Component Cost: 18

You create a bolt of fire that strikes the target, dealing 10d6 points of fire damage (Reflex negates).

Kinetic Blow

Area (1 target): 1
Duration (instantaneous): 0
Range (30 feet): 3
Damage (2d6): 2
Total Component Cost: 6

You momentarily harden the air or water near a target, creating a weapon as strong as steel. Make a melee attack to hit, but add your Intelligence bonus instead of your Strength bonus. If you hit, you deal 2d6 points of bludgeoning, piercing or slashing damage.

Because the weapon is made of the same material as the ambient air or water, it is effectively invisible — to all observers, the target reacts as if clubbed, sliced or stabbed for no apparent reason. Unless you cast this as a stilled spell, observers may realize your gestures toward the target parallel the path of the invisible weapon's attack.

Variant (Damage +#): +#d6 points of damage

Labyrinth (Enchanter)

Area (10-foot cube): 3
Duration (1 day): 12
Range (100 feet): 6
New Power (teleport Medium, custom): 20
Total Component Cost: 41

You stretch or compress the space so it is smaller or larger than it appears, doubling or halving its dimensions. For example, you can make a 10-foot-square room act like a five-foot-square or 20-foot-square room, stretch a five-foot-by-20-foot hallway so it is 40 feet long or squash it so it is only 10 feet long and so on. All movement and effects that pass through the distorted area use the distorted dimensions, not the original dimensions.

The exterior of the area is unaffected, and it meshes seamlessly with non-distorted nearby areas. For example, an outhouse looks the same even if its inside is stretched to a much larger area. Repeat uses of this spell in close physical proximity can cause fatigue over time, eventually creating a new Nightmare Site.

Variant (Area +3): Affect an additional 10-foot cube.

Variant (New Power +20): Change the area's dimensions by another factor of two (for example, making a 10-foot hallway seem 40 feet long).

Variant (New Power +20): Link together the two ends of an area so objects and creatures entering from one direction are caught in an endless loop. (Reversing direction lets the object escape.)

Light Mastery (Warlock)

Area (10 foot radius): 6
Duration (1 minute): 3
Range (originates from you): 2
Conjure (darkness, custom): 10
Total Component Cost: 21

You create, amplify or suppress light. When creating or amplifying light, you can make it as dim as a candle, the shadowy illumination of a torch, as bright as day or anywhere in between, scaling from its current level to the desired level in moments. If you fill the area with bright light, an additional 10-foot radius beyond that is filled with shadowy illumination. The spell's bright light is not the same as daylight and does not harm vampires or demons susceptible to sunlight.

Regardless of the current light, you can diminish it to utter darkness in moments. Lights outside the area do not shine within it, and they do not give off any light if brought within the area. Note that ongoing chemical or electrical effects persist, but your spell affects the actual light; a lit torch still burns and gives off heat when you suppress its light, and a flashlight still drains its batteries when you leave it on in magically enforced darkness.

This spell does not give you the ability to see in darkness (though you can cast a different spell for that purpose).

Memory Hole (Enchanter, Shaman)

Area (personal): 0
Duration (1 day): 12
Range (personal): 1
Divination (conceal): 5
Total Component Cost: 18

You lock away memory of one event (lasting no longer than an hour), binding it to a secret place in your mind so that even you do not remember it. You may lie convincingly about your knowledge of this event (whether scrutinized by people, machines or magic) because you no longer have any memory of it. Memories associated with the hidden memory are likewise concealed or muddled the closer they are to the event; if you hide the memory that you killed a drug dealer last night, your memory of buying a gun and hiding outside the dealer's home are obscured — you may remember going shopping, but not that you went to the dealer's house, as that is strongly associated with the memory of killing him.

Someone using magic to read your mind can locate the hidden memory only if she saves against this spell (Will negates); examining the memory requires another save.

When the spell ends, your hidden memories return.

Variant (Divination +5): You lock away a second memory.

Mental Shield (Enchanter, Shaman)

Area (personal): 0
Duration (1 day): 12
Range (personal): 1
Protect (+4 Will save): 10
Total Component Cost: 23

You create a mental shield, giving you a +4 bonus on Will saves.

Mental Weakening (Shaman, Theurgist)

Area (1 target): 1
Duration (instantaneous): 0
Range (touch): 2
Heal (8 ability damage, reversed): 16
Total Component Cost: 19

You weaken the target's mind, dealing eight points of Intelligence, Wisdom or Charisma damage (Will half).

Mind Augmenting (Enchanter, Shaman)

Area (1 target): 1
Duration (10 minutes): 6
Range (touch): 2
Enhance (+4 to an ability score): 20
Total Component Cost: 29

The target gains a +4 enhancement bonus to Intelligence, Wisdom or Charisma.

New Friend (Enchanter, Shaman)

Area (1 target): 1
Duration (1 minute): 3
Range (30 feet): 3
Control (charm): 8
Total Component Cost: 15

The target is charmed and regards you as a friend. He can resist with a save (Will negates).

Variant (Duration +9): The spell lasts one hour.

Nightsight

Area (personal): 0
Duration (10 minutes): 6
Range (personal): 1
New Power (darkvision): 7
New Power (low-light vision): 5
Total Component Cost: 19

You gain low-light vision and darkvision (60 feet).

Omnivision

Area (1 target): 1
Duration (10 minutes): 6
Range (touch): 2
Divination (requires scrutiny): 3
Enhance (+3 enhancement bonus): 6
Total Component Cost: 18

The subject can see in all directions equally well, even directly behind him. He can no longer be flanked. He gains a +3 enhancement bonus on Spot checks.

Personal Invisibility

Area (personal): 0
Duration (1 round): 1
Duration (concentration): –1
Range (personal): 1
Illusion (standard invisibility): 10
Total Component Cost: 11

You become invisible with standard invisibility. It lasts as long as you concentrate plus one round.

Plasticity

Area (1 target): 1
Duration (1 minute): 3
Range (touch): 2
New Power (cosmetic shapechanging): 10
Total Component Cost: 16

You make a Medium or smaller solid object as malleable as firm clay, allowing you to shape it by hand (or with another spell) without breaking it, even if it is normally fragile (such as ice or glass). The material must be at least somewhat homogenous (wood, asphalt and concrete are fine; a television, engine or circuit board is not). You could pull strands of amber into a spider-web shape, bend a door until its latch pulled away from the frame or sculpt hardened concrete around a prisoner's feet as if it had been cast that way. Harder objects are more difficult

to shape than softer objects even when under this spell's effects (bending a wooden house door is easier than bending a bank vault door) and might require Strength checks. When the spell ends, the object returns to its normal pliability but retains its new shape. An attended object gets a save (Fortitude negates).

Platonic Mechanism

Area (1 target): 1
Duration (10 minutes): 6
Range (touch): 2
New Power (custom): 5
Total Component Cost: 14

The target object works perfectly, performing its task without failure or complication. The item can be old and worn, but as long as it works at all it works flawlessly for its intended purpose. A wind-up alarm clock keeps perfect time, a blender makes drinks of the perfect consistency, a computer doesn't crash and the condom that's been in your wallet since high school doesn't break. This spell does not make the item indestructible; smashing the clock, blender or computer with a sledgehammer still breaks it, and stretching a condom over a rifle barrel doesn't keep the rifle from firing.

In game terms, any item that has a chance to fail from use does not do so while the spell is in effect. For example, a car's engine doesn't overheat (even without water or antifreeze) and its tires don't blow out from typical road hazards, but pouring sugar in the gas tank still ruins it and slashing the tires still cuts them because those actions are not a typical use for the car.

Possession (Enchanter, Shaman)

Area (1 target): 1
Duration (concentration): 6
Range (30 feet): 3
Control (enslave, possession): 10
Total Component Cost: 20

This spell works the same as the vampire Discipline Possession. The target gets a save to resist (Will negates). The spell affects any type of creature — human, animal or supernatural. You decide if the owner of the body is aware of everything you do or if he sleeps. If you put the body in harm's way, its mind gets another save to resist that act.

Postcognition

Area (1 target): 1
Duration (instantaneous): 0
Range (touch): 2
Divination (requires magic): 5
Total Component Cost: 8

This spell works the same as the vampire Discipline The Spirit's Touch. The DC to read an unwilling target is your spell's DC (rather than the Discipline's DC, of course).

Psychic Projection (Enchanter, Shaman)

Area (personal): 0
Duration (1 hour): 9
Range (anywhere on Earth): 50
New Power (custom): 20
Total Component Cost: 29

This spell works the same as the vampire Discipline Twilight Projection (except you do not spend Vitae at sundown). Your projection may appear naked or clothed.

Quicken Corpse (Necromancer)

Area (one target): 1
Duration (1 day): 12
Range (touch): 2
Conjure (minor minion): 10
Conjure (substrate): –2
Conjure (zombie template): 5
Total Component Cost: 28

You conjure a zombie minor minion, using a dead body as a substrate for the spell.

Radio Transmission

Area (100-foot radius): 35
Duration (1 minute): 3
Range (originates from you): 2
New Power (custom): 5
Total Component Cost: 45

You broadcast your voice on a radio channel of your choosing, overriding the current transmission. Your voice carries on that channel within the Area of the spell as if you were using a short-range transmitter. The "microphone" of the spell is about an inch in front of your mouth, so your transmission may include ambient sounds, including other people speaking at close range. You may use magic, electronics or any other method to alter or disguise your voice. (For example, if you are good at impressions, you could pretend to be the local shock-jock.) Because of the spell's limited Area, most mages use this spell as a distraction such as by using the police band to request emergency assistance a few blocks away, causing nearby police to leave the immediate area.

Raw Creation

Area (1 target): 1
Duration (1 day): 12
Range (touch): 2
Conjure (3 cubic feet): 3
Conjure (wood): 8
Total Component Cost: 26

You create a Medium or smaller object out of wood, such as a wooden statue, door, tree trunk or desk. You can create an item of high quality or with moving parts (such as a water wheel), but your must make a Spellcraft check as a free action when casting the spell (the DC is equal to the DC to make the item with the Craft skill). Instead of wood, the object can be made of any material about that hard or softer, such as leather, polystyrene (such as Styrofoam), bone or flesh. The object does not have to be homogenous — you can create a mannequin with a wooden frame, cotton padding and a cloth exterior, or a human body of flesh, blood and bone. The object is not alive, even if is made of flesh, green plant matter or other possibly living material; the spell conjures inert material, not a living spirit.

Variant (Conjure +4): You create a Large object.

Variant (Conjure +4): Your creation includes stone or other materials of similar hardness.

Variant (Conjure +7): Your creation includes metal or other materials of similar hardness.

Read the Mental Depths (Enchanter, Shaman)

Area (1 target): 1
Duration (1 minute): 3
Range (30 feet): 3
Divination (requires magic): 5
Total Component Cost: 12

You can read the target's surface thoughts and memories. The target may resist with a save (Will negates). For particularly remote or traumatic memories (such as child abuse), the GM may require you to make a DC 20 Search check to find them. You can learn if the target has any derangements (mild or severe forms of insanity) or psychological problems.

Reading the Outmost Eddies (Enchanter)

Area (5-foot radius): 3
Duration (1 minute): 3
Range (personal): 1
Divination (future, 1 day): 4
Divination (requires magic): 5
Total Component Cost: 16

You learn the outcome of one random or almost-random event that occurs within the Duration. For example, you could know whether a coin flip will be heads or tails, the next card you'll get in a poker game or if the next lottery ticket for sale at the convenience store is worth $20 or more. This spell does not predict non-random events such as the outcome of a football game, a race or a complicated surgery (even if the game effects are determined by dice rolls).

Many mages believe that fate has inertia and repeatedly using minor magic to alter your course within it (such as casting this spell dozens of times in a week to amass a small fortune in winning lottery tickets) eventually backfires by causing you misfortune in an equal or greater amount.

Some mages call this spell Flip of the Coin.

Regeneration (Shaman, Theurgist)

Area (1 target): 1
Duration (1 day): 12
Range (touch): 2
Heal (major injury): 15
Total Component Cost: 30

You cause the target to regenerate or heal a major injury or birth defect such as a lost limb, cancerous organ, deep burn or serious brain trauma. (This spell can repair lesser injuries as well, but those are usually better served with a lesser healing spell.) The target regrows or repairs the damaged tissue over several rounds (taking up to a minute for large regenerations such as a lost leg); when the regrowth is complete, the repaired area is fully functional, just as if it had never been injured. The age of the injury does not matter; an old man's hand lost in World War II grows back just as quickly as a fresh amputation. The spell does not compensate for secondary effects of the injury; a man born without legs needs to learn how to walk, a teenager who suffered a brain injury at age two doesn't suddenly have the vocabulary and maturity level of someone his chronological age and a person deaf from birth doesn't understand spoken language.

When the spell ends, the affected area withers and returns to its injured state. If you heal the target again, she returns to her previous level of familiarity with her intact body — the man born without legs doesn't need to learn how to walk all over again and so on. In this way, you can grant the target periods of full functionality; some mages with crippling injuries use this spell to conceal their wounds from rivals.

Variant (Duration +30): The spell is permanent. Note that this counts against your maximum number of ongoing spells.

Receiver

Area (personal): 0
Duration (10 minutes): 6
Range (personal): 1
Divination (scrutiny): 3
Total Component Cost: 10

You expand your auditory range, allowing you to hear sounds too high- or low-pitched for the human ear (ultrasonic and infrasonic, respectively). This spell does not grant you bonuses on Listen checks, but does allow you to make Listen checks to hear sounds you had no chance of hearing, such as dog whistles, bat echolocation, whalesong, elephant communication, seismic activity and mechanical devices that transmit at these frequencies (such as sonar).

Scrying (Enchanter)

Area (1 target): 1
Duration (1 minute): 3
Range (scrying): sympathetic cost
Divination (requires magic): 5
Total Component Cost: 9 + sympathetic cost

You scry the target (see "Spells," *Spell Range*, above), manifesting as a "window" in space that only you can perceive. An unwilling target gets a save to resist (Will negates); success means the spell fails. Your senses operate normally through the window: you see, hear and smell through it as easily as if it were a window in a house. You cannot touch, move or alter anything viewed through the scrying space unless you cast another sympathetic spell for that purpose (for example, a sympathetic telekinesis spell lets you move objects near the target). You can change the orientation of the window as if it were a camera; it must always point directly at the target, but you can change the angle to get a better view of what is nearby.

Variant (Area +1): Scry a 10-foot cubic area rather than a specific target. The window "camera" points at the center of the area, but you can move it within the area as you like.

Sense Consciousness (Enchanter, Shaman)

Area (50-foot radius): 25
Duration (1 minute): 3
Range (originates from you): 2

Divination (requires magic): 5
Total Component Cost: 35

You sense the presence of minds near you, from the simple primitive thoughts of insects up to the most complex thoughts of humans and other sentient creatures. You know when other thinking creatures are present and what sorts of minds they have (vermin, simple animal, higher animal or intelligent). You can even detect a magically projected consciousness (such as from the spell Psychic Projection or the Discipline Twilight Projection).

Sense Life (Shaman, Theurgist)

Area (50-foot radius): 25
Duration (1 minute): 3
Range (originates from you): 2
Divination (scrutiny): 3
Total Component Cost: 33

You sense the presence of living things near you. Normally, you cast this spell and set limits to what information you want to know (such as "edible fish and plants" or "snakes and badgers" or "humans"); otherwise, your senses may be momentarily overwhelmed with knowledge of every worm, insect, fungus and microbe in the area. You learn the number and general direction of the living creatures of the type you specify. By tuning your magical sense to "humans," the spell makes a fairly good warning device, as you automatically learn when a human enters your sensory radius.

Awakened, mages, and normal humans all count as humans; you can't sense just "Awakened."

Shape Liquid

Area (1 target): 1
Range (30 feet): 3
Duration (1 minute): 3
Movement (telekinesis 10 pounds, speed 10): 1
Total Component Cost: 8

You telekinetically manipulate liquid or liquid vapor, shaping it as you desire. For example, you could raise an arm of water out of a bathtub or create a dry area in the midst of a rainstorm where no water falls. The spell affects approximately one gallon of liquid or a five-foot cube of liquid in vapor form or dispersed in air (such as fog or rain).

If you form the liquid into shapes, the objects are obviously made of the original liquid and the shape is only a replica. (Someone seeing a "book" made of water or orange juice isn't going to think she can read it.) The spell does not affect the liquid's surface tension; you can walk through a wall of water as easily as putting your hand into a bathtub.

The spell does not affect substances that are not liquid at room temperature, such as lava (normally a solid) or carbon monoxide (normally a gas).

Variant (Movement +1): One additional gallon of liquid.

Variant (same cost): The spell affects true gases instead of liquid in vapor form. This variant is called Shape Gas.

Sharpshooter's Eye

Area (personal): 0
Duration (one-use): 0
Range (personal): 1
Enhance (+5 attack roll): 15
Total Component Cost: 16

You get a +5 enhancement bonus on your next attack roll as long as the attack is before the end of your next turn.

Shifting the Odds (Enchanter)

Area (personal): 0
Duration (1 minute): 3
Range (personal): 1
New Power (custom): 5
Metaspell (covert): 5
Total Component Cost: 14

This spell is similar to Winds of Chance except your shift in luck is stronger and toward a task you specify. The results are almost immediate but rely on local circumstances to work, so you must be on your toes to recognize when fate presents you an opportunity. For example, a vampire might catch you in an alley, when suddenly you hear a police officer walking by. Fleeing a fight and needing a quick getaway, you find an unlocked car with the keys in it. Actual interpretation of the events is up to the GM; this spell is similar to asking for a lifeline in a tough situation.

The spell does not easily create long-term changes. With the vampire in the alley, the police officer is more likely to encourage you to walk with him down the street until you are at a safe distance than go through the trouble of arresting the "weirdo" who was bothering you. With the newfound car, it might be stolen or in need of repairs, encouraging you to ditch it once you're safely away from your pursuers.

The spell does not create implausible or outrageous solutions; it doesn't cause a piano to fall on the vampire's head or cause a jetpack to appear out of nowhere.

Simple Illusion

Area (creates target): 0
Duration (1 minute): 3
Range (30 feet): 3
Illusion (Small subject): 3
Total Component Cost: 9

You create the illusion of a Small object or creature. You may make it move within range as a move action.

Variant (Illusion +1): The illusion includes thermal component, so a campfire or living creature feels warm.

Variant (Illusion +2): The illusion can make sounds up to 40 decibels.

Variant (Illusion +3): The illusion creates a Medium object or creature.

Siphon Mana (Necromancer, Warlock)

Area (1 target): 1
Duration (instantaneous): 0
Range (30 feet): 3
Damage (4d6 components): 8
Damage (vampiric): 2
Total Component Cost: 14

You drain 4d6 components from the target, who gets a save to resist (Will half). The lost components add to your current total as if you had recovered them with rest.

Sleep (Enchanter, Shaman, Theurgist)

Area (1 target): 1
Duration (1 minute): 3
Range (30 feet): 3
Control (sleep): 10
Total Component Cost: 17

The target falls asleep (Will negates).

Slow Flight

Area (1 target): 1
Duration (10 minutes): 3
Range (touch): 2
New Power (flight speed 10): 9
Total Component Cost: 15

The target can fly at a speed of 10 feet per round (poor maneuverability).

Soul Jar (Necromancer, Shaman, Theurgist)

Area (one target): 1
Duration (10 minutes): 6
Range (touch): 2
New Power (custom): 10
Total Component Cost: 19

You transform a normal container (bottle, jar or even Tupperware) into an object that can hold a disembodied soul. Any soul you place in the object cannot escape and cannot be harmed as long as the container stays closed. You typically store a soul for later use in certain spells when you can't do so immediately or need multiple souls at once. The container does not have the power to extract a soul from a creature, just store one extracted by another spell.

Sound Mastery

Area (1 target): 1
Duration (1 minute): 3
Range (30 feet): 3
Illusion (audio 100 decibels): 5
Total Component Cost: 12

You can amplify a sound up to 100 decibels, render a sound of that volume inaudible to the human ear or create a false sound of your choice up to 100 decibels in volume (see the "Noise Ratings" sidebar under "Spells," *Component Descriptions*, earlier in this chapter).

Amplifying a quiet sound makes it much easier to hear, and vice versa. The spell affects one Medium target or one five-foot cube.

You can use this spell to create a noise or noises — animals, speaking, sound effects and so on, effectively attaching a "magical speaker" to the "radio in your head." Anyone hearing

a created sound gets a save (Will negates) to know the sound isn't real, typically assuming it is a recording or (in the case of a specific person's voice) an impersonator.

Sound Recording

Area (personal): 0
Duration (10 minutes): 6
Range (personal): 1
Divination (obvious): 1
Illusion (audio 40 decibels): 2
Total Component Cost: 10

Any sound you hear is magically recorded as if by a microphone. At any time before the spell expires, you can replay the recording (including the ability to pause, fast forward and reverse the recording) audibly for anyone to hear; you can even play it into a technological recorder for more permanent storage.

You may "save" a recording indefinitely by spending two components for every minute of the recorded sound. You cannot regain these spent components from rest or other methods until you release them by playing the recorded sound (though you can re-save a recording after playing it by again spending two components per recorded minute). You can save a recording indefinitely in this way.

Spatial Map

Area (50-foot radius): 25
Duration (1 minute): 3
Range (originates from you): 2
Divination (scrutiny): 3
Total Component Cost: 33

You are aware of all physical objects in the area, even if you have no direct line of effect to them. For example, if a man with a shotgun pursues you through a parking lot, you know that he is one row over and five cars behind you. This awareness is separate from your normal senses; you do not "see" the person if he is behind you, but can track his location similar to a mental 3D radar screen. Thus, this spell doesn't give you any bonuses based on location or prevent flanking, but does make it difficult for anyone to sneak up on you, as nobody has concealment relative to this awareness.

You automatically pinpoint the square of an invisible creature, though you are still subject to the normal miss chance for attacking an invisible creature. Likewise, if you use this spell when you are blind, you can easily navigate physical obstacles and pinpoint the squares of your enemies.

Speak with Corpse (Necromancer)

Area (one target): 1
Duration (1 minute): 3
Range (touch): 2
Divination (dead): 10
Total Component Cost: 16

You can speak with a dead person by touching the corpse. You can ask one question per round. The target may be hostile and is not compelled to answer. The corpse knows only what it knew in life.

Variant (Control +8): The target is friendly to you.

Speak with the Dead (Necromancer)

Area (one target): 1
Duration (1 minute): 3
Range (anywhere on Earth): 50
Divination (dead): 10
Control (charm): 8
Total Component Cost: 72

You can speak with a dead person, invoking his spirit without requiring his body. You can ask one question per round. The spirit is friendly toward you and answers your questions truthfully. If the spirit is unavailable for some reason (perhaps trapped in a Soul Jar or for some other reason at the GM's discretion), the spell fails. The target must have died within the last 20 years.

Steel Window

Area (5-foot-square wall): 1
Duration (1 minute): 3
Range (touch): 2
New Power (transform): 10
Total Component Cost: 16

You make an opaque target or area transparent, or vice versa. This spell allows you to peer through a thin (six-inch or less) wall or bank vault door, darken a window or windshield or even make someone's prescription glasses useless. The effect is two-way; creating a transparent "window" in a wall to spy on the people in a room means they can see you.

Superlative Luck (Enchanter)

Area (personal): 0
Duration (instantaneous): 0
Range (personal): 1
Metaspell (quickened): 8
New Power (reroll): 10
Total Component Cost: 19

You may immediately reroll one d20 roll (such as an attack, save or skill check), even if it's not your turn.

Suppress Own Life (Necromancer)

Area (personal): 0
Duration (1 day): 12
Range (personal): 1
Heal (supernatural affliction, reversed): 15
Total Component Cost: 28

You suppress your life, becoming an unmoving corpse for the Duration or until a specified trigger occurs (such as a dog barking near you, or taking a certain amount of damage). You do not react to stimuli. Mundane examination shows you are dead. Someone using supernatural means to detect your life must make a Will save or believe you are actually dead.

While you're under this spell's effects, the normal processes of death occur — your body experiences rigor mortis and its cessation, blood pools in the lower parts of your body, the skin on your face and extremities shrivels, and so on, though you do not decompose. After the spell ends, you take a –1 penalty on social rolls (Diplomacy,

Gather Information and so on) to influence people per hour you were dead (maximum –10), though this penalty goes away at a rate of one per hour as your body returns to normal. Any damage to your body when dead carries over to when you are alive again (a full autopsy is almost certainly lethal).

Mages normally use this spell to fake their deaths; a corpse that goes missing from a morgue is less mysterious than a living person who disappears.

Supreme Mind Augmenting (Enchanter, Shaman)

Area (1 target): 1
Duration (10 minutes): 6
Range (touch): 2
Enhance (+4 to three ability scores): 60
Total Component Cost: 69

The target gains a +4 enhancement bonus to Intelligence, Wisdom and Charisma.

Swearing an Oath (Enchanter, Warlock)

Area (1 target): 1
Duration (1 day): 12
Range (touch): 2
Control (compel service): 13
Enhance (–4 penalty to d20 rolls): 20
Total Component Cost: 48

You bind a target with an oath, relying on the power of fate to enforce the oath. The target swears to act or refrain from acting in a certain way, such as to protect someone, or refrain from murdering the innocent or never tell a particular secret. An unwilling target gets a save (Will negates). Thereafter, any time the target wants to act against the oath he must save against your spell to do so; failure means he cannot break his oath. The target can attempt these saves once per hour. The target does not need to know you are using magic to enforce the oath, and if she honestly intends to uphold the oath then she gets no saving throw to resist the spell.

Example: Your ex-boyfriend swears an oath not to reveal the location of your hideout. Your enemies try to bribe him with a million dollars for the information. He cannot reveal this secret (no matter how much he wants to) unless he makes a save against your spell.

If the target is supernaturally compelled to act against his oath, he gets to make another save against the compelling force each round it would make him violate his oath. Success means he is free of the compulsion. For example, a bodyguard sworn to protect a businessman is enthralled into stillness by a vampire. If the vampire attacks the businessman, the bodyguard gets a new save against the vampire's ability every round the attack occurs.

If a target knowingly and willingly breaks the oath (after making the save), he is immediately subject to The Evil Eye with no save for the remaining Duration of this spell.

Swift Flight

Area (1 target): 1
Duration (1 day): 12
Range (touch): 2
Movement (flight speed 60): 18
Total Component Cost: 33

The target can fly at a speed of 60 feet per round (good maneuverability). Because of the spell's speed and Duration, many mages call this spell Overland Flight.

Telekinesis

Area (1 target): 1
Duration (1 minute): 3
Range (100 feet): 6
Movement (200 pounds): 20
Total Component Cost: 30

You move, turn, drag, or lift an object or creature that weighs up to 200 pounds, moving it at speed of 20 feet per round. An unwilling creature resists with a save (Fortitude negates).

Variant (Movement +#): Add (# x 10) feet per round to the object's speed.

Telepathy (Enchanter, Shaman)

Area (1 target): 1
Duration (1 minute): 3
Range (100 feet): 15
New Power (telepathy): 5
Total Component Cost: 24

You open a two-way telepathic link to the target's mind, allowing easy communication. You must have line of effect to cast the spell but thereafter do not need it to communicate. You do not need a common language. The target can resist with a save (Will negates).

Variant (Area +[2 x #]): You create a link to # additional targets. Targets can communicate with only you, not each other, though you can relay what they say in your own words.

Teleport (Enchanter)

Area (personal): 0
Duration (instantaneous): 0
Range (1 mile): 25
New Power (teleport Medium): 20
Total Component Cost: 45

You step through a magical doorway, instantly arriving at any destination within range to which you have line of effect. You arrive safely and (if you choose and it is possible) on a stable solid surface, though other conditions may make the destination unsafe (such as a room full of armed guards or an erupting volcano).

Variant (sympathetic cost): You teleport to a location or target with which you have a sympathetic connection. This variant allows you to ignore the line-of-effect requirement.

Temporal Pocket

Area (personal): 0
Duration (1 minute): 3
Range (personal): 1
New Power (custom): 20
Total Component Cost: 24

You bend time, vanishing into a "pocket" where time flows at a different rate than the outside world. You cannot interact with the rest of the world while in the pocket, and vice versa (though another mage could cast this spell at the same location and share this time-space with you).

For every round that passes in the world, two rounds pass in the pocket. This time shift allows you to rest, heal, cast spells or formulate a better plan. The spell lasts one minute, but you can end it early as a free action, at which point time straightens out and you reappear in the same physical location where you left. To everyone else, you simply vanished for a while.

Repeat uses of this spell in close physical or temporally proximity can weaken the fabric of reality, eventually creating a new Nightmare Site.

Variant (same cost): The time-shifting effects are reversed: one round passes in the pocket for every two rounds in the world. This variant is useful if you are waiting for reinforcements.

Variant (Area +[2 x #]): Bring # willing targets with you.

Thunderbolt (Warlock)

Area (60-foot line): 6
Duration (instantaneous): 0
Range (originates from you): 2
Energy (energy damage): 1
Damage (10d6): 10
Total Component Cost: 19

You create a stroke of lightning that lashes forward, dealing 10d6 points of electricity damage to everyone on the line (Ref half).

Transform Life (Shaman, Theurgist)

Area (1 target): 1
Duration (1 minute): 3
Range (touch): 2
New Power (cosmetic shapechanging): 10
Total Component Cost: 16

You transform one form of life into another kind using cosmetic shapechanging. For example, you can turn a bucket of earthworms into a bucket of crickets, or a rose bush into a marijuana plant or a human into a wolf. The new form must be the same size as the old one. If the target is a cluster of single-celled creatures (such as bacteria in a petri dish), you can transform all of them to the new type. You can use this spell to disguise the target (changing eye color, hair color, facial features and so on) without making radical alterations to its form. As unwilling target gets a save to resist (Fort negates).

If you are not familiar with the desired new form and do not have a creature of that type nearby as a reference, the GM may require a DC 20 Knowledge (earth and life sciences) to get the details right.

Variant (New Power +10): The spell uses advanced shapechanging instead of cosmetic shapechanging. The transformation can be complete or partial; partial transformations retain most of the original form except for one feature of the new form. For example, you could give a human a wolf's nose for tracking, or a cat leafy skin to let it photosynthesize food or a rabbit a snake's venomous bite. You can use this spell to disguise the target (changing eye color, hair color, facial features and so on) without making radical alterations to its form. The new form must be a natural creature (or part of a natural creature, for partial transformations). For example, you cannot transform the target into a basilisk, phoenix, dragon, tree-man or other mythical creature. However, you can still create authentic-looking hybrid creatures such as centaurs, minotaurs and mermaids using partial transformation.

Variant (New Power +20): As the first variant, plus the new form can be a mythical creature — the only limit is your imagination. If you want the creature to have special abilities relating to its new form, you must build those effects into the spell; doing so means *the spell is no longer rote*.

Variant (New Power +40): As the second variant, except the creature's DNA changes so it passes on its new attributes to its offspring. If this spell is used on a creature in the womb, the creature is born with these new trains. This variant of the spell has an instantaneous Duration, and unlike all other variants presented here, using this variant means *the spell is no longer rote*. (Certain mages may know rote versions of specific transformations, such as a "turn a snake into a dragon" spell, but those rotes are not common enough to be available as such to the general mage populace.)

Transmute Earth

Area (10-foot cube): 3
Duration (1 minute): 3
Range (touch): 2
New Power (transform): 10
Total Component Cost: 18

You transform up to 10 cubic feet of a solid into another kind of solid, such as transforming granite into glass or wood into plaster. You cannot change the object into a material that is directly harmful (such as uranium) unless you add Damage components. You cannot transform objects into or from rare or precious materials (diamonds, gold and so on). An attended object gets a save (Fort negates).

If an object is made of multiple materials, you can change only one with each casting. For example, you could not transform an entire car, but you could affect the bumper or one of the tires.

Variant (Area +[3 x #]): Add an addition (# x 10) cubic feet.

Transmute Water

Area (10-foot cube): 3
Duration (1 minute): 3
Range (touch): 2
New Power (transform): 10
Total Component Cost: 18

You transform up to 10 cubic feet of liquid into another kind of liquid, such as transforming water into milk, orange juice or gasoline. You cannot change the liquid into a material that is directly harmful (such as acid) unless you add Damage components.

The spell does not affect substances that are not liquid at room temperature, such as lava (normally a solid) or carbon monoxide (normally a gas), whether that is the original form or the desired form.

Variant (Area +[3 x #]): Add an additional (# x 10) cubic feet.

Variant (same cost): The spell affects up to 10 cubic feet of gases instead of liquid. For example, you can transform normal air into laughing gas, or helium into carbon monoxide. As with the base spell, the transformed air deals no damage (or create other harmful effects) unless you add Damage components. This variant is called Transmute Air.

Turn Projectile

Area (5-foot radius): 3
Duration (1 minute): 3
Range (personal): 1
Movement (10 pounds, speed 200): 20
Total Component Cost: 27

Any physical projectile thrown or fired at you turns before it hits you and flies in another direction, impacting harmlessly in nearby scenery. The spell can only turn back a total of 10 pounds (25–50 bullets depending on caliber) before expiring.

Tune In

Area (personal): 0
Duration (1 hour): 9
Range (personal): 1
Divination (scrutiny): 3
Total Component Cost: 13

You can listen in on non-encrypted wireless electronic transmissions such as cordless phones, walkie-talkies, radio (commercial and police frequencies) and broadcast television as if you had an appropriate mechanical device, except the sound and images go directly into the sensory parts of your brain. You choose which available signal you want to listen to or watch; you can automatically select common transmissions such as basic television, AM/FM radio, police band and trucker channels, but hunting for a localized or rare transmission may require some channel surfing as you hop between available signals looking for what you want.

Paying attention to these sensations is just as distracting as paying attention to the appropriate mechanical device, though you can reduce the volume of these sensations if you want to focus on other things (television broadcasts shrink to a small window in your vision, like a picture-in-picture television).

Variant (Divination +5): You can understand encrypted or scrambled content by making a Listen or Spot check appropriate to the level of encryption (base DC 20 for simple encryption).

Unliving Vigor (Necromancer)

Area (personal): 1
Duration (1 hour): 9
Range (touch): 2
Heal (12 ability damage): 24
New Ability (custom): –5
Total Component Cost: 31

The target is unnaturally resistant to lethal wounds. Critical hits stun the target for one round rather than dealing Constitution damage.

The spell ends once it absorbs 12 points of Constitution damage.

Ward (Enchanter)

Area (20-foot radius): 11
Duration (1 day): 12
Range (30 feet): 3
New Power (block teleport): 20
Divination (concealing): 5
Total Component Cost: 51

You make an area resistant to scrying and teleport magic (and similar supernatural abilities). Anyone attempting to scry or teleport to the area must save against this spell (Will negates); failure means they can do neither for the spell's Duration.

Creatures and objects cannot be warded in this way, only areas.

Winds of Chance (Enchanter)

Area (1 target): 1
Duration (1 hour): 9
Range (touch): 2
New Power (custom): 1
Total Component Cost: 7

You make the target more or less lucky. This spell does not provide a concrete bonus (by altering die rolls; the spell just skews the target's path in fate to a more or less advantageous course.

In the case of good luck, a lonely target meets a new friend, a bored bar patron has someone interesting take the seat next to him or a college student with the munchies gets an extra candy bar from a vending machine. In the case of bad luck, a commuter gets stuck in traffic or misses his bus, a high school beauty gets a bad pimple right before a date or a businessman spills a drink on his shirt during lunch. None of these effects are strong enough to do more than give someone a good or bad day; a person with good luck won't win the lottery jackpot because of your spell (though she might interpret her good fortune as an excuse to buy a ticket), and a person with bad luck won't get hit by a car.

The target gets a save (Will negates) if you try to give him bad luck.

Many Faces, One Soul

Niles licked the blood from the corner of his mouth, mostly so that no one else would be tempted to do so. He looked at each of them carefully, knowing that there was one among them who could tear his heart out with but a gesture — and very likely wanted to.

"Vavaamp obmacas, ambriol totocan," he whispered, the Enochian words coming to him easily, the accompanying gestures, less so.

But that, of course, was because his hands were behind his back, in handcuffs.

His spell was a minor one, and fortunately no one seemed to have noticed that he even cast it. With it, he just might have a chance in figuring out which of the people in the police station with him was a demon.

It had been a bad night. That he was in a police station in handcuffs alone was proof of that. But Niles knew that there was still potential for this night to get a lot worse.

His brown suede jacket had turned out to be too warm for the evening. The long-sleeved tee and the short sleeve Current 93 T-shirt over it were soaked with sweat. His dark-rimmed glasses slid down his nose, and he couldn't lift his hands to adjust them, so he inched them back into place by wrinkling his nose. Niles's face was round — he was ever so slightly overweight, but amidst an average crowd you'd never notice — and his hair was straight and in need of a trim. The goatee gracing his chin was much hipper about five years ago, when he was just 21. Back when the occult was nothing but a hobby. Back when magic didn't work.

Yesterday (Jesus, had it only been one day?) he had met a girl. Rob — his friend Rob, a selfish prick constantly on the make — had called Niles on his cell to get him to come down to the bar to meet a girl. And like a fool, he had.

The bar was crowded, not odd for a Friday night. The din the crowd generated drowned out all aspects of the music played over the speakers except for the driving base, making the whole place throb. Rob met Niles at the door.

"Dude, you gotta help me out," Rob said, moving in very close to compensate for the noise. Niles could see in his friend's eyes and smell on his breath that he was already pretty drunk. "Obi-Wan, you're my only hope."

"What's the problem?" Niles shouted back.

"It's this girl, Alisa. She's amazing. But she's got a problem. And that means I've got a problem. You solve her problem, and you solve mine, if you get what I mean."

"Why me?"

"It's a spooky-shit problem. Boogety boogety. You know — your kinda stuff."

Niles rolled his eyes, but he was actually a little intrigued. He nodded, and before long he was sitting at a table with Alisa and Rob. Alisa was young, with short dark hair, wide-set cheekbones and startlingly green eyes.

"Rob says you've got a problem," Niles said to her.

"Look, just forget it," she said, shaking her head and sipping at the straw in her margarita glass, even though it was clearly empty.

"No, Alisa," Rob said, a bit too loudly, "you can tell Niles. He's an expert."

Alisa scrutinized Niles, who wished he had a drink. He shrugged. "I'll help if I can."

"Well," Alisa said slowly, "I think there's someone after me."

Niles eyes grew a bit wider. He glanced at Rob, but his friend was looking for the waitress. "Shouldn't you call the cops?" Niles asked her.

"Yeah, I know, but it's not like that." She shook her head and looked down at her drink, mumbling something Niles couldn't hear.

"What?"

She looked up. She seemed a bit cross, or maybe just a bit angry at herself for being so embarrassed. "I said, I think the person who's following me can look like other people."

Niles didn't skip a beat. "You mean, like, they can change their form?"

"Yeah, I guess."

Niles knew what she meant. Alisa seemed taken aback that his face showed understanding, not disbelief. "Do you know something about that?"

"Maybe. Is the person here?"

Alisa looked around, carefully. "No, I don't think so."

"Nevertheless, we should probably move to another location. Someplace quieter. Someplace where

we can keep tabs on everyone around us."

"Well, wait," Alisa said. "What do you know about this? Are you just playing with me?"

"No," Niles shook his head, and tried to look as sincere as he could. "And I can explain — although I don't know if you'll believe me — but not here."

* * *

The three of them sat in a booth at a cheap, all-night restaurant. Rob was unhappy that they had left the bar, but he got over it. "My boy Niles here, him and me will take care of everything," Rob said after the waitress had taken their order.

Alisa still seemed unsure and flicked the end of her paper placemat.

Niles got right to business. "How can you tell that the person following you can change shape if they can, well, change shape?"

"I can just tell," she said, glancing up at him only momentarily. "It's like, they look different, but you can just tell they're the same. No matter what he looks like, he's got that same look, and he's always watching me."

"Creepy, man," Rob said, but then looked away when Niles gave him his "shut up" face.

Niles's mind raced with ideas. The stalker just might be a demon. And if she could spot his essence like that, Alisa might be one of the Awakened. Either way, that would also explain why the demon might be after her. Maybe to convert, maybe to kill.

Alisa stared at him now. "What?" He had spent to much time musing. The waitress had already brought the coffee. "Are you going to tell me what's going on?"

Niles nodded. "I'm going to skip over a lot of details, OK? You know that big thing that happened in the Midwest about a year ago?"

"Yeah, the meteor or whatever," she replied.

"Well," he considered correcting her but didn't bother. It was no meteor, but right now, that didn't matter. "Yeah, anyway, along with that strangeness there came . . . creatures that can take on the appearance of anyone they want."

"'Creatures?'" Rob said. "OK, this is classic Niles-speak, now."

"Shut up, Rob. These things use their abilities to look for certain people. I think you might be one of them."

"What are they?" she asked, mouth slightly agape.

"Demons."

Alisa reacted with a start. Even Rob raised an eyebrow, overdramatically.

"Oh my god," she whispered. "Are you serious?"

"Yeah, but not like little guys with pitchforks and horns," Niles said. "Don't think of them like that."

"This is all just too weird."

"That's Niles," Rob replied. "King of the weird. But I know he can take care of this, sweetheart." He moved to take her hand, but she had no interest in him or what he was saying.

"Jesus! Right there." She was staring at an overweight woman in a nurse's uniform with a light jacket draped over her shoulders, standing by the glass counter with the cash register on top of it and an assortment of candy inside it. The nurse returned her stare. "That's him. Or her. Or whatever."

Without hesitation, Niles called forth the subtle threads of ephemeral energy around him in a defensive warding. The nurse changed the focus of her gaze from Alisa to him. Just for a moment, she seemed surprised. The demon clearly did not expect its prey to have mystical help.

The nurse strode toward them on thick, sturdy legs, white-knuckled fists clenched at her

sides. The waitress was nowhere to be seen, and the small restaurant was otherwise empty.

"Very well then," she said to all at the table. "You've forced me to play my hand, and so I will."

The nurse's thick hands suddenly elongated into almost birdlike talons. Swiftly, she thrust one of them out and slashed it over the table at eye level. It happened so fast, Niles did not even realize that she had struck Rob until he saw the blood spill out onto the Formica table top, and recognized that it has spattered across his own face and neck. It was disturbingly warm.

Rob's face was, more or less, gone. His head snapped backward and rested on the back of the booth's padded seat.

Alisa screamed, and Niles could feel her go limp next to him. With a quick touch, he felt that the table was not affixed to the floor, and so using both his hands and one knee he thrust the table up and at the demon. She gasped at both the force of the table and the three cups of hot coffee that spilled upon her.

Niles hoped to use the distraction to cast a spell, but the demon was extraordinarily fast. Plus the shock at seeing his childhood friend slain right before his eyes made his whole body shake. The clawed nurse tossed the table aside and lunged at him with both claws held in front. Fortunately, the ward he had created held true and turned away the demon's attack as if the demon had struck something solid in front.

At some point, Alisa apparently got hold of herself and did not faint. Instead, she flung herself over the back of the seat and into the next booth, which was empty. She was still screaming, but Niles could hardly fault her for that. He felt like screaming himself.

Her action caught the demon's eye. It snarled with a mouth full of pointed teeth decidedly out of place for the plump, matronly face the creature wore, its eyes wide in reflexive alarm. Likely afraid that its quarry would escape. Niles seized the moment. With no time to cobble together a spell, he drew from his own personal reserves — his very health and life — and focused that pure energy into a burst of light and heat.

The demon recoiled, and cried out. "Little boy! You're in way over your head here."

That was almost certainly true.

The huge nurse, her clothing and skin now lightly blackened and peeling — her clothing reacting like burned flesh rather than burned cloth — rose up to a surprising height over Niles. With regained composure, she — it — said, "You can't do this. You're not up to this. Go home. Nestle in your own warm bed. Or better yet, your couch in front of the TV. Lights out, an old rerun of a favorite show, remote in your hand, a package of Fig Newtons next to you. Sounds good, doesn't it?"

It did. So comforting. No stress. No challenge. No threat. He could see it so clearly in his mind's eye. He could feel the soft, well-worn spot on the couch, feel the smooth plastic of the television remote in his hand. The room lit only by the soft flickering of the television, the taste of the cookies. His eyes half-closed, with only warm, soft thoughts in his mind. No, not thoughts. Thoughts were too much effort. Feelings, emotions. Yeah. Alisa could take care of . . .

Alisa! No. No! He couldn't just give the girl over to this . . . *thing*. This thing in his head. His eyes popped open. The thing was close to him now, and smelled of burned meat. He could feel its breath on his face — if it breathed.

"Damn demon!" Apparently, it was losing cohesion. Its form was more amorphous, more roiling mass than nurse now. Its torso had expanded and rounded, its bulk grown, so that now it had an almost egg-like shape. The demon's skin became shiny, and partially transparent as if it had become an oily film rather than flesh. Niles did the only thing he could think of at the moment, and kicked the demon in its massive, undulating gut.

He accomplished nothing. The demon snarled, its mouth widening to something Niles would expect to see on a shark. Its legs disappeared under its oozing form, but snaking blood-red tendrils sprouted from between the folds of its quivering flesh. It still possessed talons, however, and clenched them in the air with a clicking sound.

Sirens interrupted everything.

* * *

The waitress, bless her, had called the cops. The demon fled. The waitress, damn her, told the police that Niles and Alisa had attacked a nurse.

And Rob was dead.

Niles sat on a hard wooden bench in the police station. A female cop had taken Alisa away. He didn't know where. No one would talk to him. He wanted so badly to tell these people that there was some creature after her, and now probably him, but even with all the strange things going on, who would believe him? Especially since he was

still spattered with blood, in handcuffs, under arrest for assault, and probably murder?

This was the reward he got for helping someone. He just sat on the uncomfortable bench, sighed and looked around. Cops in and out of uniform walked around him, all of them harried. Many of them clearly tired. A few others — criminals, victims of crimes, maybe lawyers? Niles wasn't sure. He hadn't spent a lot of time in police stations. His spell, however, allowed him to scrutinize each person in ways normal sight never would. He looked beyond the veil and saw each more simply: mortal, mortal, mortal, mortal —

And then something else. He looked like a timid little man in a rumpled suit, clutching a tattered briefcase too tightly against his side. His bald, oval head poorly covered in a comb-over, his eyes well concealed behind bulky glasses two decades out of date. Except that none of that was real. It was the demon in yet another guise.

The frumpy little man glared right at Niles, ignoring everyone else, just as they overlooked him in a way so befitting the persona he now wore like a suit. His mouth did not move, but Niles could *feel* the demon's sadistic grin.

Niles had read about the otherworldly things called demons in various sources, even if he had never actually encountered one firsthand. Demons sometimes had a bane — a weakness that one could exploit. But it could be anything: cold iron was the overly trite classic, but in truth it was more often ice, gabardine or coriander. He had no time to figure out what the demon's bane might be, if it even had one. No, that thing was going to kill him, and he was going to have to save himself with his own magic. Hopefully, the demon thought him helpless in the handcuffs. Maybe he had a little time. He began weaving together the threads of a spell. The little man walked slowly toward him.

Big mistake, demon dude.

The demon gave Niles the time to call upon the Guardians of the Thirty Aeons. " . . . susua, allora, bucidia," he whispered. And then he loosed his woven creation into the world. There was no visual aspect to the spell, not even a sound. No one noticed Niles at all. But then a computer monitor sitting atop a desk near where the demon stood suddenly flared with light and sputtered smoke. The screen cracked and then shattered, and with a charged popping sound, a bolt of electricity arced the few feet to where the demon stood. Like a knife, the electricity stabbed the demon in its heart, and the little man's face contorted as if he had been suddenly impaled.

The room filled with shouts and screams. Men and women rushed to the demon, which had fallen to its knees, still in the form of a skinny fellow in a bad suit.

Niles used the confusion to slip out of the handcuffs. In the times before the Intrusion, he was still a magician, but the kind one saw on a stage (or in Niles's case, the street corner). Getting out of cuffs was one of the first things he mastered.

The monitor burst into flames, which only fueled the chaos in the room, much to Niles's delight. The demon, still stunned from the surprise mystical attack, could not resist the tide of people forcing him to "lie down, easy now," and "wait for the paramedics."

Automatic sprinklers cut on as Niles assembled the components of yet another spell in his mind. He didn't have the power to slay this demon, and he knew that at any moment, it would get up and wreak a terrible vengeance on him, and probably most of the people in this room. Niles's new spell was not an attack — no more fire or lightning this night. Niles wove a far more delicate spell. This spell would not slice like a knife or crash like a charging bull but would flitter lightly like an invisible, intangible butterfly so fragile that a random breeze might tear it apart.

Wet with water, surrounded by confused people more interested in shouting than looking at a young man kneeling on the floor next to a bench, Niles gave life to his spell with a gentle breath and a silent wave of his hands. He could feel it waft across the room to where the disguised demon lay on the floor, covering the hands of those wishing to help, or at least prevent a lawsuit.

The spell did not affect flesh, but the demon's mind — a daring tactic, since demons were masters of mystical mental manipulations, but Niles could feel the spell take hold. His fragile, almost inconsequential spell erased two things from the demon's memory: Alisa's face and his own. The spell clouded the demon's mind so that it would no longer remember its targets. No matter what happened next, the demon would not know who to look for. Niles and Alisa would be disguised in their own flesh.

Niles slumped against the wall and closed his eyes. Even with this small victory, he was still going to need to get a good lawyer.

By now, your character should be an interesting creature with some useful and deadly skills, feats and abilities. The only thing left to do is outfit her so she's ready to do battle with the Iconnu's agents — or whomever she chooses.

Characters and Equipment

Characters do not purchase equipment; this is a game of supernatural wars in shadow and of developing your unnatural abilities, not finding vast sums of money and buying better gear. Within reason, you can have just about anything you want.

Base your equipment on your character concept. If you picture your character in mirrored shades, toting a .357 Magnum and flashing around in a Corvette, that's fine. If your character is more a ratty trench coat and zip gun type of guy, that's also fine. Character is far more important than equipment.

However, lugging around an arsenal is not practical, and probably not realistic, either. The GM has veto power over what sort of equipment you acquire. Though nothing in the *rules* says you can't have 6,000 handguns in your apartment, the GM is free to tell you that's not happening, for whatever reason (see "GM's Note — Gun Control" for some ideas).

GM's Note — Gun Control

Since acquiring wealth is not a focus of this game, you, the GM, get to regulate what sort of equipment player characters tote around. The idea of a wealth-less game is to allow *character* (including *developing* character through gaining levels as well as roleplaying) to be the game's focus, rather than searching for treasure. Thus, you probably want to let the player characters have whatever they want, as long as it's keeping with their characters as well as the setting. If it *doesn't* seem like it's in character (i.e., a homeless werewolf with an expensive rifle), allow the player an opportunity to justify it somehow (the werewolf's father left it for him, or he killed a security guard and stole it or any other plausible reason the player thinks of).

However, even with a good justification, you might not want the player characters strolling around the streets with rocket launchers and machine guns. Fortunately, you have some control over these possibilities because the characters live in the modern world.

Owning many of these weapons is illegal; even owning the crappiest handgun requires a license. Of course, player characters (just as millions of criminals) can hide small weapons on their persons easily; the guns are a liability only if the authorities discover them. Hiding larger weapons such as hunting rifles is more difficult, though owning them is legal. However, even a character with a license for a rifle would find life interesting if he went sauntering down the sidewalk with it.

More dangerous items are outright illegal; rocket launchers, machine guns, grenade launchers, grenades, flamethrowers, sawed-off shotguns and zip guns all fall into this category. A character caught with such an item invites a heap of attention he would probably prefer to avoid.

In addition, acquiring many of these items is not easy. You can't walk into Bob's Gun Store and pick up a rocket launcher; you can't even walk in and buy a pistol, unless you have a license for it. Criminals — and sometimes player characters — get around these regulations by purchasing items on the black market, but the more dangerous or illegal the item, the more difficult it is to acquire. You are certainly within your rights to tell a player he can't find a rocket launcher on the black market, so he can't have it. However, that's not as interesting as ruling that he *can* get the rocket launcher, but first must do the dealer a favor, or must owe him a favor down the line, or must help smuggle the rocket launcher over the state line, or has to go into a dangerous and vampire-controlled ghetto to acquire it or has to provide important personal information first . . . and so on. In some cases, finding a piece of equipment may be an adventure all its own.

Of course, some player characters — especially those in ruined areas such as Minneapolis — might not care that their weapons are visible and illegal. The ramifications are for you to decide, but if nothing else, toting around such weaponry is sure to invite attention from *someone*.

In the end, player characters may discover that the only way that they can obtain the weapons — or other equipment — they really need is to make influential allies and perhaps even join a powerful organization, such as the IDA.

Weapons

This game divides weapons into four broad types: melee, firearms, ranged and explosives. Some weapons are further designated as exotic (marked with an "E" in the tables). Exotic weapons are difficult to use; if you do not have the Exotic Weapon Proficiency feat in regard to that weapon, you take a –4 penalty on attack rolls with that weapon. Characters are assumed to be proficient with all other weapons.

The tables organize the weapons according to the amount of damage they deal. They describe the weapons in the following ways.

Weapon: The name of the weapon.

Damage: How much damage the weapon deals.

Critical: The threat range for a critical hit. If the threat is confirmed, a weapon deals Constitution damage (or stuns a supernatural target). See Chapter 7: Playing the Game, "Combat Sequence," *Dealing Damage*.

Damage Type: Weapon damage is classified according to type: ballistic, bludgeoning, energy (of a specific type), piercing or slashing. Some creatures or characters may be resistant or immune to some forms of damage.

Size: Size categories for weapons and other objects are defined differently from the size categories for creatures. The relationship between a weapon's size and that of its wielder defines whether you can use it one-handed, if it requires two hands and if it's a light weapon.

You can use a Medium or smaller weapon one-handed or two-handed. A Large weapon requires two hands. A Huge weapon requires two hands and a bipod or other mount.

A Small or smaller weapon is a light weapon. You can use it one-handed, and as a light weapon, it is easier to use in your off hand. If you wield it in two hands, you don't get an additional Strength bonus to damage.

Weight: This column gives the weapon's weight when fully loaded.

Restriction: This column is mainly for the GM's information, though players may find it useful as well. It indicates whether the weapon is perfectly legal and anyone can just carry it around (denoted by a dash: —), is restricted to those with a specific license, which a character may or may not have (denoted by "Lic") or is flat-out illegal, except possibly for military personnel (denoted by "Ill"). Remember that even if you have a license to carry around your assault rifle or don't need one to carry around your katana, doing so is not always practical and invites attention you might wish to avoid.

Melee Weapons

Melee weapons are weapons you wield against opponents right next to you. You can throw some melee weapons. Weapons of this type also appear in Table 6–3: Ranged Weapons and are denoted with an "R" in the table.

Melee Weapon Descriptions

The descriptions in this section are organized alphabetically.

Bayonet: A bayonet is a blade that straps onto a rifle so you don't have to draw a melee weapon when the fighting gets close. You can attach a bayonet to any rifle (or, in fact, anything appropriately long and narrow), though attaching a bayonet to a weapon of Huge size or larger is impractical, since you can't wield such a weapon without a bipod or mount.

With the bayonet fixed to a rifle, a rifle becomes a double weapon — club-like at one end and spear-like at the other. You can fight with the bayonet as if fighting with two weapons, but if you do, you incur all the normal attack penalties associated with fighting with two weapons, as if using a one-handed weapon and a light weapon.

If you use a readied action to attack a charging opponent with a bayonet, you deal double damage if you hit.

Brass Knuckles: A favorite of old-time gangsters everywhere, these pieces of molded metal (usually steel, despite the name) fit over the outside of your fingers and allow you to deal lethal damage with an unarmed strike instead of nonlethal damage and make such an attack armed instead of unarmed.

Whether or not brass knuckles are in fact legal is open to debate. Metal knuckles are actually illegal in most states in the United States, though those made of bulletproof glass ("clear knuckles") are legal. Many brass knuckles are sold as paperweights or with detachable screws to pose as belt buckles.

Chain Saw: Though chain saws are not intended to be used as weapons, people who watch too many horror movies sometimes use them as such anyway. Chain saws are noisy.

Club or Chain: A club is a length of metal or wood. A chain is a set of metal links, probably grabbed from a construction site. Many improvised weapons fall into this category, and a "club" can be a baseball bat, crowbar or any similar implement.

Greatclub or Heavy Chain: A greatclub is a club that is so big you need two hands to use it. A heavy chain is similar to its smaller cousin, but larger and more lethal.

Greatsword or Greataxe: A greatsword is a sword that is too large to be wielded in one hand. A greatsword might be a straight sword reminiscent of medieval knights, or a curved samurai sword or any other sort of blade. A greataxe, similarly, is an axe that is too large for one hand.

Knife: This weapon could be anything from a switchblade to a survival knife to a medieval dagger. Knives are balanced for throwing; the range increment is 10 feet.

Longspear: This long spear or pike is a reach weapon. You can strike (and threaten) opponents 10 feet away, but not those adjacent to you. If you use a readied action to attack a charging opponent with a longspear, you deal double damage if you hit.

Silver Weapons

Characters may want to acquire silver weapons, as these deal extra damage to werewolves (see Chapter 2: Character, "Werewolf," *Werewolf Weaknesses*). Silver weapons are rare and often must be custom-made. They also deal less damage; silver weapons take a –2 penalty on damage rolls. (This penalty cannot reduce a damage roll to less than 1.)

TABLE 6–1: MELEE WEAPONS

Weapon	Damage	Critical	Damage Type	Size	Weight	Restriction
Brass knuckles	1d3	20	Bludgeoning	Tiny	1 lb.	—
Pistol whip	1d4	20	Bludgeoning	—	—	Varies
Knife[R]	1d4	19–20	Piercing	Tiny	1 lb.	—
Bayonet*	1d6	20	Piercing	Large[†]	1 lb.	—
Club or chain	1d6	20	Bludgeoning	Medium	3 lb.	—
Rifle butt	1d6	20	Bludgeoning	—	—	Varies
Sap*	1d6	20	Bludgeoning	Tiny	1 lb.—	
Spear[R, *]	1d6	20	Piercing	Medium	3 lb.	—
Staff*	1d6/1d6	20	Bludgeoning	Large	4 lb.	—
Throwing axe	1d6	20	Slashing	Small	2 lb.	—
Sword or axe	1d8	19–20	Slashing	Medium	5 lb.	—
Longspear*	1d8	20	Piercing	Large	9 lb.	—
Greatclub or heavy chain	1d10	20	Bludgeoning	Large	8 lb.	—
Greatsword or greataxe	2d6	19–20	Slashing	Large	8 lb.	—
Chain saw[E, *]	3d6	20	Slashing	Large	10 lb.	

[E] This is an exotic weapon. If you do not have the Exotic Weapon Proficiency feat in regard to this weapon, you take a –4 penalty on attack rolls with it.

[R] This weapon is weighted for throwing. It also appears in Table 6–3: Ranged Weapons.

* See this weapon's description for special rules.

[†] The bayonet itself is Small, but it is affixed to a rifle, which is Large.

Pistol Whip: You can smash someone with the end of your pistol, using it like a hammer. You might do this if you are out of ammo, don't want to provoke an attack of opportunity by firing the pistol or because you want to strike for nonlethal damage.

Rifle Butt: You can smash someone with the end of your rifle in much the same way as a pistol, and for the same reasons.

Sap: A sap or blackjack is often a leather pouch filled with sand or lead balls. A sap might also be a small version of a club, such as a nightstick. A sap deals nonlethal damage. You can use a sap to strike for lethal damage, but you take a –4 penalty on the attack roll.

Spear: If you use a readied action to attack a charging opponent with a spear, you deal double damage if you hit. Spears are balanced for throwing; the range increment is 20 feet.

Staff: This long staff, sometimes called a quarterstaff, is solid and strong. Staffs are usually made of wood, but metal, plastic, fiberglass and similar materials are also possible.

A staff is a double weapon. You can fight with it as if fighting with two weapons, but if you do, you incur all the normal attack penalties associated with fighting with two weapons, as if using a one-handed weapon and a light weapon.

Sword or Axe: A sword is a long bladed weapon and the traditional armament of medieval knights and samurais. Swords come in many types, from longswords to katanas to cavalry sabers to pirate cutlasses. An axe can be used for chopping wood as well as people. Use these statistics for fire axes and wood axes as well as axes designed for battle.

Throwing Axe: Though a throwing axe is intended as a ranged weapon, you can wield a throwing axe in melee.

Firearms

Firearms have dominated modern warfare for more than a century. These are guns: both handguns (pistols) and longarms (rifles), as well as heavier weaponry.

Firearms and ranged weapons have a few additional traits, as described in the tables.

Range Increment: Any attack at less than this distance is not penalized for range. However, each full range increment inflicts a cumulative –2 penalty on the attack roll. Ranged weapons have a maximum range of 10 range increments, except for thrown weapons, which have a maximum range of five range increments. (Melee weapons do not have range increments unless they are balanced for throwing.)

For example, if you fire a pistol at an opponent 20 feet away, your attack roll does not suffer range penalties, because the opponent is within the pistol's range increment (30 feet). If you fire at an opponent 70 feet away, you take a –4 penalty on the attack roll, since the opponent is two full range increments away (but not three full increments).

Rate of Fire: Some firearms and most other ranged weapons have a rate of fire of 1, which simply means you can employ them once per round and then must reload or replace them. Most firearms, though, operate through many different forms of internal mechanisms and have varying rates of fire. The three possible rates of fire are single shot, semiautomatic and automatic.

Single Shot (1): A weapon with the single shot rate of fire requires you to manually operate the action (the mechanism that feeds and cocks the weapon) between each shot. Crossbows and pump-action shotguns are examples of firearms with single-shot rates of fire. A weapon with the single shot rate of fire can fire only one shot per attack, even if you have a feat or other ability that normally allows more than one shot per attack. You can fire more than one shot per round, though, if you have more than one attack per round because you have a high base attack bonus.

Semiautomatic (S): Most firearms have the semiautomatic rate of fire. These firearms feed and cock themselves with each shot. A semiautomatic weapon fires one shot per attack (ef-

fectively acting as a single shot weapon), and you can use the double tap action to fire shots in rapid succession, getting in more than one shot per attack. (See Chapter 7: Playing the Game, "Actions in the Round," *Action Descriptions*.)

Automatic (A): Automatic weapons fire a burst or stream of shots with a single squeeze of the trigger. You can use the burst fire and strafe actions only with automatic weapons. (See Chapter 7: Playing the Game, "Actions in the Round," *Action Descriptions*.)

Magazine: This entry tells you how much ammunition the weapon holds, and therefore how many bullets (or whatever form of ammunition the weapon uses) you can fire before needing to reload the weapon (with the load action; see Chapter 7: Playing the Game, "Actions in the Round," *Action Descriptions*).

Firearm Descriptions

The descriptions in this section are organized alphabetically.

Assault Rifle: This weapon is common in military engagements and features automatic as well as semiautomatic fire. Examples include the AK-47 and the Colt M17A2, standard issue in the U.S. military.

Auto pistol: This weapon is a handgun with an automatic as well as a semiautomatic setting, such as a Beretta 93R (the standard service pistol of the U.S. military), a Skorpion or a modified TEC-9. Auto pistols are also called autoloaders, automatic pistols and machine pistols.

Concealed Pistol: This small firearm is a common tool in assassinations and for concealed protection; the Derringer, common in ladies' garters in the 1920s, is one such example. Some versions don't look like guns and instead are disks, which hold the firing mechanism, a short barrel and a plunger at the opposite end. The wielder holds the weapon in his fist with the barrel pointing out between his fingers and squeezes to depress the plunger and fire.

Flamethrower: A flamethrower consists of a pressurized fuel backpack connected to a tube with a nozzle. A flamethrower shoots a five-foot-wide, 30-foot-long line of flame that deals 3d6 points of fire damage to all creatures and objects in its path. No attack roll is necessary. Any creature caught in the line of flame can make a DC 13 Reflex save (DC 17 if you are proficient with it) to take half damage.

A flamethrower's backpack has hardness 5 and five hit points. When worn, the backpack has a Defense equal to 9 + the wearer's Dexterity modifier + the wearer's class bonus. A backpack reduced to 0 hit points ruptures and explodes, dealing 6d6 points of fire damage to the wearer (no save) and 3d6 points of fire damage to adjacent creatures and objects (DC 13 Reflex save for half damage).

Any creature or flammable object that takes damage from a flamethrower catches on fire, taking 1d6 points of fire damage each subsequent round until the flames are extinguished. You can douse a fire engulfing a single creature or object as a full-round action. You might also use a fire extinguisher; see "Other Equipment," *Survival Gear,* below.

Grenade Launcher: This simple weapon is a single-shot grenade launcher. It fires 40mm grenades that look like huge bullets an inch and a half across; you can't use them as hand grenades, and the grenade launcher can't shoot hand grenades.

TABLE 6–2: FIREARMS

Weapon	Damage	Critical	Damage Type	Range Increment	Rate of Fire	Magazine	Size	Weight	Restriction
Tranquilizer gun*	1	20	Piercing	30 ft.	1	1	Medium	4 lb.	Lic
Concealed pistol	2d4	20	Ballistic	10 ft.	1	2	Tiny	2 lb.	Lic
Pistol	2d4	20	Ballistic	30 ft.	S	8	Small	2 lb.	Lic
Zip gun	1d10	20	Ballistic	10 ft.	1	1	Small	2 lb.	III
Auto pistol	2d6	20	Ballistic	40 ft.	S,A	10	Medium	4 lb.	Lic
Rifle	2d8	20	Ballistic	50 ft.	S	15	Large	8 lb.	Lic
Shotgun, slug	2d8	Ballistic	30 ft.	S	2		Large	7 lb.	Lic
Submachine gun	2d8	20	Ballistic	40 ft.	S,A	20	Large	8 lb.	Lic
Flamethrower[E,*]	3d6	—	Fire	30 ft.†	1	10	Large	50 lb.	III
Grenade launcher[E,*]	3d6	—	Slashing	70 ft.	1	1	Large	7 lb.	III
Shotgun, shot*	3d6/2d6/1d6	2o	Ballistic	20 ft.	1	1	Large	7 lb.	Lic
Assault rifle	2d10	20	Ballistic	60 ft.	S,A	20	Large	11 lb.	Lic
Sniper rifle	2d12	20	Ballistic	120 ft.	S	11	Huge	35 lb.	Lic
Machine gun[E,*]	2d12	20	Ballistic	110 ft.	A	Special	Huge	75 lb.	III
Rocket launcher[E,*]	10d6	—	Bludgeoning and fire	150 ft.	1	1	Large	5 lb.	III'

[E] This is an exotic weapon. If you do not have the Exotic Weapon Proficiency feat in regard to this weapon, you take a –4 penalty on attack rolls with it.

* See this weapon's description for special rules.

Attacking with a grenade launcher is identical to throwing an explosive: you make a ranged attack against a specific five-foot square (instead of targeting a person or creature). The differences between using a grenade launcher and throwing an explosive lie in the range of the weapon (which far exceeds the distance a hand grenade can be thrown) and the fact that it is an exotic weapon.

Even if you miss your target, the grenade still poses a danger; see Chapter 7: Playing the Game, "Grenade and Grenade-Like Weapon Attacks."

When you determine where the grenade lands, it explodes in a 10-foot radius. Creatures within the area can make DC 15 Reflex saves for half damage.

Reloading a grenade launcher is a full-round action that provokes attacks of opportunity.

Rifle-Mounted Grenade Launchers: You can also acquire rifle-mounted grenade launchers that you can attach to any firearm of Large or larger size (with a DC 15 Repair check). These grenade launchers are otherwise identical to the stand-alone grenade launcher.

Other Grenades: In theory, one could create smoke, teargas or other sorts of grenades compatible with grenade launchers. See "Explosives," below, for some ideas.

Machine Gun: This large and dangerous weapon uses linked belts of ammo. As long as you have belts strapped together, you don't run out of ammo. Each belt holds 50 pieces of ammo. In military circles, the gunner fires while an assistant continues clipping belts to the end of the ammo supply (doing so is a move action).

Pistol: This weapon is a revolver or handgun, such as a Desert Eagle ("Deagle"), .357 Magnum or .44 Magnum revolver.

Rocket Launcher: This weapon fires LAW (light antitank weapon) rockets. The rocket launcher is similar to a grenade launcher (see above): you target a five-foot square, and the rocket scatters if it misses its target. The rocket explodes in a 10-foot radius (DC 18 Reflex save for half damage). Because the explosive features a shaped charge designed to penetrate the armor of military vehicles, it ignores up to 10 points of hardness if it strikes a vehicle, building or object. However, this reduction applies only to the target struck, not to other objects within the burst radius.

Reloading a rocket launcher takes two rounds and provokes attacks of opportunity.

Rifle: Hunting rifles, sporting rifles, peacekeeping rifles and many other varieties fall into this category.

Shotgun: A shotgun has two barrels. Shotguns use two types of ammunition: slugs, which are single bullets, and shot (sometimes called buckshot), which fires a cloud of small and deadly projectiles.

Slug: Loading a shotgun with slugs makes it similar to a normal rifle. You can use the double tap action with a shotgun if it has two slugs; doing so fires both barrels.

Shot: Shot is deadly at close range but quickly loses its efficacy after traveling, when the individual pellets spread out. Shot deals 3d6 points of damage to a target within the shotgun's first range increment, 2d6 to a target in the second range increment, 1d6 to a target in the third range increment and no damage to a target further away.

Sawed-Off Shotguns: Sawing off a shotgun removes the bulk of the barrels, making the weapon Medium. Doing so also reduces the shotgun's range increment to 10 feet (for both slugs and shot). Sawed-off shotguns are illegal.

Sniper Rifle: This heavy but rugged weapon is incredibly powerful for its size. Although it's a sniper rifle, it fires a .50-caliber machine gun bullet, a round much more powerful than any other rifle ammunition. A Barrett Light Fifty is a good example.

Submachine Gun: Submachine guns are small machine guns; they can fire on automatic or semiautomatic fire. Examples include the Uzi and the Heckler & Koch MP5K.

Tranquilizer Gun: A tranquilizer gun, or tranq gun, fires tranquilizer darts that sedate the target. Professionals use tranq guns to capture and control large and/or wild animals. They are not legal to use on humans because no one has yet discovered or developed a tranquilizer that works quickly on humans but has no risk of dangerous side effects.

A tranquilizer dart injects the target with a poison (see Chapter 7: Playing the Game, "Special Abilities," *Poison*): initial damage sleep for 1d6 minutes, secondary damage sleep for 1d4 hours, Fort DC 17. If a human (even an Awakened or mage) rolls a natural 1 on either of these saves, he also takes 1d4 points of Constitution damage.

Zip Gun: A zip gun, also called a pipe gun, is an improvised weapon common among criminals. It involves a tube or pipe with a bullet (usually from a powerful handgun or rifle) and crude firing mechanism. Many zip guns are one-use items, but more sophisticated versions are good for multiple uses.

You can make a zip gun with a DC 17 Craft (mechanical) check. Zip guns are becoming more common in cities across the world, as frightened citizens look up the schematics on the Internet and create weapons to protect themselves from the horrors in the shadows.

Ranged Weapons

Ranged weapons are weapons you throw or that shoot something, but are not firearms. See "Firearms," above, for an explanation of the Range Increment, Rate of Fire and Magazine columns.

Ranged Weapon Descriptions

The descriptions in this section are organized alphabetically.

Bow: Modern hunting bows are often made of fiberglass and have pulleys to increase their pull. Replica longbows and the like are wood, and stringing them is difficult. Drawing an arrow and fitting it to the bowstring is a free action, allowing you to fire more than once per round if you have a high base attack bonus. You apply your Strength modifier to damage when using a bow.

Crossbow: You need two hands to use a crossbow. Reloading a crossbow is a move action that provokes attacks of opportunity; you cannot do it while moving.

Knife: Knives are balanced for throwing. You add your Strength modifier on damage rolls with thrown weapons. You can also use a knife as a melee weapon.

Pepper Spray: Also referred to by the brand name "Mace," pepper spray is a chemical irritant that can temporarily blind a target. Mace comes in a single-shot container. To use pepper spray, make a ranged touch attack against the target. The target must make a DC 15 Fortitude save or be blinded for 1d4 rounds. Pepper spray has a maximum range of five range increments.

Shuriken: A shuriken is a thrown, often star-shaped projectile with a number of razor-sharp points. Drawing a shuriken is a free action. Unlike other thrown weapons, you do not add your Strength bonus on damage rolls with shuriken. Also unlike other thrown weapons, you can throw three of them at the same time with a single hand; make a separate attack roll for each. When you hold two or three shuriken in one hand, treat all of them as a single Small weapon.

Spear: Spears and javelins are balanced for throwing. You add your Strength modifier on damage rolls with thrown weapons. You can also use a spear as a melee weapon.

Taser: A Taser, also called a stun gun or electroshock gun, uses springs or compressed air to fire a pair of darts at a target. On impact, the darts release a powerful electrical current that disrupt superficial muscle functions, thus incapacitating the target. On a successful hit, the darts deal 1d4 points of electricity damage and the target must make a DC 15 Fortitude save or be paralyzed for 1d6 rounds.

Reloading a Taser is a full-round action that provokes attacks of opportunity.

Throwing Axe: This tomahawk-like weapon whirls through the air before thudding into your enemy's skull. You can also use a throwing axe as a melee weapon.

Whip: Whips deal a small amount of lethal damage. Although you don't "fire" the weapon, treat a whip as a ranged weapon with a maximum range of 15 feet and no range penalties.

Because a whip can wrap around an enemy's leg or other limb, you can make a trip attack with a whip by succeeding at a ranged touch attack. You do not provoke an attack of opportunity when using a whip in this way. If you are tripped during this trip attempt, you can drop the whip to avoid being tripped. (See Chapter 7: Playing the Game, "Actions in the Round," *Action Descriptions*, for more information on tripping.)

TABLE 6–3: RANGED WEAPONS

Weapon	Damage	Critical	Damage Type	Range Increment	Rate of Fire	Magazine	Size	Weight	Restriction
Pepper spray*	Special	—	Special	5 ft.	1	1	Tiny	1/2 lb.	—
Shuriken*	1	20	Piercing	10 ft.	1	—	Tiny	1/2 lb.	—
Whip*	1d2	20	Slashing	15 ft.†	1	—	Small	2 lb.	—
Knife	1d4	19–20	19–20	Piercing	10 ft.	—	Tiny	1 lb.	—
Taser*	1d4	20	Electricity	5 ft.	1	1	Small	2 lb.	—
Spear*	1d6	20	Piercing	20 ft.	1	—	Medium	3 lb.	—
Throwing axe	1d6	20	Slashing	10 ft.	1	—	Small	2 lb.	—
Bow*	1d8	20	Piercing	40 ft.	1	—	Large	3 lb.	—
Crossbow*	1d10	19–20	Piercing	40 ft.	1	1	Medium	7 lb.	—

* See this weapon's description for special rules.

† This is the weapon's maximum range.

When using a whip, you get a +2 bonus on your opposed attack roll when attempting to disarm an opponent (including the roll to keep from being disarmed if you fail to disarm your opponent).

Explosives

Explosives blow up. These are implements such as grenades and dynamite. Some require the Demolitions skill to set up appropriately. If an explosive misses its target, the explosive still explodes, meaning you don't necessarily have to hit your opponent to deal damage. See Chapter 7: Playing the Game, "Grenade and Grenade-Like Weapon Attacks" for more information.

A few different traits describe explosives.

Burst Radius: The explosive blows up in a radius of this size. Creatures within the radius take damage.

Reflex DC: Creatures caught in the explosive's radius can attempt Reflex saves for half damage. The DC varies by explosive and appears in the table.

Explosive Descriptions

The descriptions in this section are organized alphabetically. Many explosives require detonators, which are described below under "Other Equipment," *Weapon Accessories*.

Dynamite: Sometimes still used in mining operations, dynamite is a straightforward explosive based on nitroglycerin. Dynamite comes in sticks and is stable under normal conditions — but in the World of Darkness, even of a situation *seems* normal, it might not be.

A stick of dynamite requires a fuse or detonator to set it off. Additional sticks can be set off at the same time if they are within the burst radius of the first stick, increasing the damage and burst radius of the explosion. Each additional stick increases the damage by +1d6 (maximum 10d6) and the burst radius by five feet (maximum 20 feet).

You can wire together several sticks of dynamite for an even greater explosive effect. Doing so requires a Demolitions check (DC 10 + 1 per stick). If you make the check, the damage or the burst radius of the explosion increases by 50% (your choice).

To set off dynamite using a fuse, you must first light the fuse, requiring a move action (and a lighter or other source of flame). The amount of time until the dynamite explodes depends on the length of the fuse — you can cut a fuse short enough for the dynamite to detonate in the same round (allowing it to be used similarly to a grenade), or long enough to take several minutes to detonate. Cutting the fuse to the appropriate length is a move action.

Frag Grenade: This is the standard military grenade you see in movies and on battlefields. You pull the pin, throw the grenade and it explodes, sending shrapnel shredding into your opponents.

Molotov Cocktail: You don't actually buy Molotov cocktails anywhere; people make them illicitly. A Molotov cocktail is any kind of scratch-built, improvised explosive, and just as zip guns, Molotov cocktails are becoming more common as everyday citizens think of implements to keep on hand "just in case." Often, a Molotov cocktail consists of a jar of gasoline and a rag. The rag sticks out of the jar and functions as a fuse. Creating a Molotov cocktail requires a DC 15 Craft (Chemical) check.

To use a Molotov cocktail, you must first light the rag, requiring a move action (and a lighter or other source of flame). The cocktail detonates in two rounds or on impact with a solid object, whichever comes first. A target that takes a direct hit takes an additional 1d6 points of fire damage in the following round and must make a DC 15 Reflex save or catch on fire. (See Chapter 7: Playing the Game, "The Environment," *Heat Dangers*.)

Although it's legal to own a jar of gasoline with a rag in it, it is decidedly illegal to use it as a Molotov cocktail.

Urban slang sometimes refers to Molotov cocktails as "homemade frags" or "the poor man's hand grenades."

Plastic Explosive: This item resembles a slab of wax. Hard and translucent when cold, these explosives warm up when kneaded, and then can be coaxed to take various shapes. The information in the table represents a one-pound block. Additional blocks can be wired together, increasing the damage and burst radius; each additional block increases the damage by +2d6 and the burst radius by two feet, and requires a DC 15 Demolitions check to link them.

Plastic explosive requires a detonator to set off. It is considered to be a moderate explosive for the purpose of using a Craft (Chemical) check to manufacture it.

Smoke Grenade: Military and police forces use these weapons to create temporary concealment. On the round when the smoke grenade is thrown, it fills the four squares around it with smoke. On the following round, the smoke grenade fills all squares within 10 feet and on the third round the smoke grenade fills all squares within 15 feet. The smoke obscures all sight, including the darkvision ability granted by night vision goggles. Any creature within the area has total concealment (attacks suffer a 50% miss chance, and the attacker can't use sight to locate the target). The smoke disperses after 10 rounds, though a moderate wind (11+ mph) disperses the smoke in

TABLE 6–4: EXPLOSIVES

Weapon	Damage	Damage Type	Burst Radius	Reflex DC	Range Increment	Size	Weight	Restriction
Smoke grenade*	—	—	See text	—	10 ft.	Small	2 lb.	—
Teargas grenade*	—	—	See text	—	10 ft.	Small	2 lb.	Lic
Molotov cocktail	1d6	10 ft.	12		10 ft.	Small	2 lb.	—
Dynamite	2d6	Bludgeoning	5 ft.	15	10 ft.	Tiny	1 lb.	Lic
Frag grenade	4d6	Slashing	20 ft.	15	10 ft.	Tiny	1 lb.	III
Plastic explosive	4d6	Bludgeoning	10 ft.	18	—	Small	1 lb.	III
Thermite grenade	6d6	Fire	5 ft.	12	10 ft.	Small	2 lb.	III

* See this weapon's description for special rules.

Improvised Weapons

You can use any portable object as a weapon in a pinch. In most cases, you can wield an object as either a melee weapon or a ranged weapon.

You take a –4 penalty on your attack roll when wielding or throwing an improvised weapon. The Exotic Weapon Proficiency feat cannot offset the –4 penalty.

TABLE 6–5: IMPROVISED WEAPON DAMAGE BY SIZE

Object Size	Examples	Damage
Diminutive	Ashtray, CD disk case, crystal paperweight	1
Tiny	Fist-sized rock, mug, softball, flashlight	1d2
Small	Bottle, fire extinguisher, flower pot, helmet, metal hubcap, vase	1d3
Medium	Bar stool, brick, briefcase, bowling ball, garbage can lid	1d4
Large	Empty garbage can, guitar, computer monitor, office chair	1d6
Huge	10-foot ladder, mailbox, oil barrel, park bench, sawhorse	1d8
Gargantuan	Desk, Dumpster, file cabinet, large sofa, vending machine	2d6
Colossal	Junked vehicle, stoplight, telephone pole	2d8

See "Weapons," *Size,* above, for more information about wielding these weapons with one or two hands.

An improvised thrown weapon has a range increment of 10 feet.

Damage: Improvised weapons deal lethal damage based on their size, although the GM may adjust the damage of an object that is especially light, heavy or dangerous for its size. (Especially dangerous items are those that are already weapon-like, such as drills, screwdrivers, nail guns and the like.) In some cases, an improvised weapon might count as a normal weapon, such as a club, in which case you don't take the –4 penalty on attack rolls with it (fireplace pokers and baseball bats fall into this category). Your Strength modifier applies only to damage from Tiny or larger improvised weapons.

Improvised weapons threaten a critical hit on a natural roll of 20. Improvised weapons of Fine size deal no damage – even when dropped from the Empire State Building.

four rounds and a strong wind (21+ mph) disperses the smoke in one round.

Smoke grenades are available in several colors, including white, red, yellow, green and purple. Thus, they can be used as signal devices.

Teargas Grenade: Military and police forces use these weapons to disperse crowds and smoke out hostage-takers. On the round that the teargas grenade is thrown, it fills a five-foot radius with a cloud of irritant that causes eyes to fill with tears. On the following round, the cloud fills a 10-foot radius, and on the third round the cloud fills a 15-foot radius. The cloud disperses after 10 rounds, though a moderate wind (11+ mph) disperses the cloud in four rounds and a strong wind (21+ mph) disperses the cloud in one round.

A character caught in a cloud of teargas must make a DC 15 Fortitude save or be nauseated. This effect lasts as long as

There are few problems I can't solve with a 44 magnum . . . and those can be solved with my sawed-off shotgun. I like to call it my room-broom

—Richard Cordell, New York City

TABLE 6–6: ARMOR

Armor	DR	Defense Penalty	Armor Check Penalty	Speed Penalty	Weight
Light	2/–	–1	–2	—	4 lb.
Medium	4/–	–2	–4	–10 ft.	8 lb.
Heavy	6/–	–4	–8	–10 ft.	20 lb.

the character is in the cloud and for 1d6 rounds after he leaves the cloud. Those who succeed at their saves but remain in the cloud must continue to save each round. A gas mask renders the target immune to the effects. A wet cloth held over the eyes, nose and mouth provides a +2 bonus on the Fortitude save. Creatures immune to poison are immune to teargas.

Thermite Grenade: Thermite does not technically explode. Instead, it creates intense heat meant to burn or melt through an object upon which the grenade is set. Military forces use thermite grenades to quickly destroy key pieces of equipment.

Armor

Armor has come a long way since knights stomped around in hammered steel suits. Characters can wear armor to reduce the damage they take; however, armor is bulky and interferes with movement, so the wearer is less likely to dodge out of the way of an attack. Armor makes you easier to hit, but harder to damage.

Table 6–6: Armor describes armor according to the following traits.

Armor: The type of armor: light, medium or heavy.

DR: Armor provides damage reduction, or DR. Every time you take damage, subtract the indicated amount: 2, 4 or 6. The value after the slash indicates what sort of weapon or damage bypasses this damage reduction; no weapon or damage type bypasses armor's damage reduction. It is even effective against energy attacks like fire.

Defense Penalty: Your Defense decreases by the indicated amount while you wear the armor.

Armor Check Penalty: Since armor interferes with your movements, while you wear it you take the indicated penalty on Balance, Climb, Escape Artist, Hide, Jump, Move Silently, Sleight of Hand, Swim and Tumble checks. If you are not proficient with the armor, you also take this penalty on attack rolls and any check that involves moving, such as Ride.

Speed Penalty: Medium and heavy armor reduces your base speed by 10 feet.

Weight: How much the armor weighs. This value applies to modern armor; historical versions can weigh twice as much or more.

Armor Descriptions

Light Armor: Light armor often consists of heavy leather and padding. Some improvised armor, such as football pads with helmet, falls into this category. Some modern versions consist of shirts with protective material sewn in.

Medium Armor: Modern medium armor is a flak vest or something similar. Medieval medium armor is a chain mail shirt.

Heavy Armor: Heavy armor is full riot gear: vest, helmet with transparent faceplate, neck and groin guards, Kevlar pads on the arms and legs, the works. Medieval heavy armor is a suit of plate mail.

Other Equipment

Player characters can acquire anything that exists in the modern world, from alphabet soup to zoot suits. The items on the following tables simply list some items that may be of particular interest.

TABLE 6–7: COMPUTERS AND CONSUMER ELECTRONICS

Item	Weight
Camera, digital	1/2 lb.
Computer, laptop	4 lb.
Digital audio recorder	1/2 lb.
Modem	1 lb.
PDA	2 lb.
Printer	3 lb.
Scanner	3 lb.
Video camera, digital	1 lb.

Computers and Consumer Electronics

Camera, Digital: This camera can link to a computer to upload images. A digital camera has zoom and limited audio and video capabilities.

Computer, Laptop: This computer serves all your computing needs. Everything is wireless, from mouse to Internet.

Digital Audio Recorder: It's like an old-fashioned tape recorder, but fits in the palm of your hand. Students use such items to record lectures. Some people use them as digital diaries.

Modem: This is a broadband connection and the modem to power it.

PDA: The personal digital assistant, such as a Blackberry or Palm Pilot, allows you to take notes, make cell phone calls, check email, mark dates, store information, set alarms, get online in a limited capacity and a variety of other functions.

Printer: This item sits on your desk and prints information from your computer or pictures from your camera.

Scanner: It's similar to a photocopier but uploads the images to your computer.

Video Camera, Digital: This camera can link to a computer to upload video files. A digital video camera has zoom capabilities and a variety of other special effects.

Communications

Cell Phone: You can call people with a cell phone, as well as access the Internet in a limited, time-consuming capacity. You can also take pictures, send people text messages, set an alarm and perform a few other functions similar to those found in a PDA. Beware, though: may of a cell phone's functions work only in places where they can get a clear signal. Since the Intrusion, those places have gotten fewer, especially in the central United States.

Fax Machine: You can send an image of a document to another fax machine. You can also print documents sent to you via fax.

Satellite Phone: This object looks similar to a bulky cell phone and functions in much the same way. However, because a satellite phone communicates directly via satellite, you can use this phone anywhere on Earth, even in remote areas well beyond the extent of cell phone service. A satellite phone is expensive.

Walkie-Talkie: Walkie-talkies come in linked groups, from two on up. Push down a button and speak into the walkie-talkie, and your voice comes out of the other walkie-talkies. Modern professional walkie-talkies have an effective range of 15 miles.

TABLE 6–8: COMMUNICATIONS

Item	Weight
Cell phone	1/2 lb.
Fax machine	4 lb.
Satellite phone	2 lb.
Walkie-talkie	1/2 lb.

Professional Equipment

Caltrops: Caltrops are four-pronged iron spikes designed so that one prong is pointing up when the caltrop rests on a surface. You scatter caltrops on the ground to injure opponents, or at least slow them down.

One bag of 25 caltrops covers a single five-foot square. Each time a creature moves through a square containing caltrops at any rate greater than half speed, or each round a creature spends fighting in such an area, the caltrops make a touch attack (base attack bonus +0). A caltrop deals one point of damage on a successful hit, and the injury reduces foot speed to half normal (a DC 15 Heal check, or one day's rest, removes this penalty). A charging or running creature must immediately stop if it steps on a caltrop. See the avoid hazard stunt for the effect of caltrops on vehicles (Chapter 7: Playing the Game, "Vehicle Movement and Combat," *Driving a Vehicle*.)

Duct Tape: It has a light side and a dark side, and it holds the universe together. Duct tape can support up to 200 pounds indefinitely or up to 300 pounds for 1d6 rounds. Characters bound with duct tape must make DC 20 Strength or Escape Artist checks to free themselves.

TABLE 6–9: PROFESSIONAL EQUIPMENT

Item	Weight
Caltrops (25)	2 lb.
Duct tape	1lb.
Fake ID	—
Handcuffs	1/2–1 lb.
Instrument	Varies
Tool	2 lb.
Toolkit	5 lb.
Toolkit, advanced	10 lb.
Workshop	—

Fake ID: This could be a passport, driver's license or just about anything else; the important thing is that it's forged. A character can make a DC 15 Forgery check to identify the fake. (This DC of 15 assumes the forger had four ranks in Forgery, a +1 ability modifier and took 10 on the Forgery check. Alternatively, the GM can make a skill check for the forger, or a player character can seek out a particularly skilled forger.)

Handcuffs: Handcuffs are restraints designed to lock two limbs — normally the wrists — of a prisoner together. Handcuffs fit any Medium or Small human or other creature that has an appropriate body structure. Two varieties exist: steel and zip-tie.

Steel: These heavy-duty cuffs have hardness 10, 10 hit points, a break DC of 30 and require a DC 35 Escape Artist check or a DC 25 Open Lock check to remove without the key.

Zip-Tie: These are single-use disposable handcuffs, similar to heavy-duty cable ties. They have hardness 0, four hit points and a break DC of 25. Zip-tie handcuffs can only be removed by cutting them off (Escape Artist and Open Lock checks automatically fail).

Instrument: This is a musical instrument for use with the Perform skill. It might be anything from castanets to a piano.

Tool: A tool is just about anything useful for a skill — it might be a wrench for Craft (Mechanical) or a multi-tool for a Craft (Electronics). A tool generally reduces the penalty for using a skill from –4 to –2, though in some cases a tool allows you to use a skill without taking penalties. Some skills and situations, such as Heal and certain uses of Craft, require more extensive equipment, and a single tool doesn't help at all.

Toolkit: A toolkit is an array of tools for a particular purpose. A mechanical toolkit probably includes a screwdriver, hammer, wrench, drill and the like, while a climbing toolkit includes a set of crampons and belaying pins. At the GM's discretion, a toolkit might provide a +2 circumstance bonus on skill checks, but in most cases, a toolkit simply eliminates a penalty on a skill check. In some cases (e.g., massive damage to a vehicle or person), a toolkit simply allows you to attempt the skill check; you still take penalties.

Toolkit, Advanced: The advanced toolkit contains many sophisticated tools suited to a particular purpose. Advanced toolkits exist for all sorts of skills, from Craft to Heal. Depending on the circumstances (GM's discretion) an advanced toolkit might eliminate the penalty for performing a skill check or might provide a circumstance bonus on the check: +2 or +4. In extreme cases (e.g., making advanced explosives or performing neurosurgery), an advanced toolkit simply allows you to attempt the check; you still take penalties.

Workshop: A workshop is a big room or series of rooms that has just about everything you can imagine for performing a particular skill. A workshop might be an automotive garage, a laboratory, a hospital room or something similar. A workshop is large and immobile, but you can probably set it up in your apartment or basement. Depending on the circumstances (GM's discretion), a workshop provides a circumstance bonus on a skill check: +2, +4 or +6. In extreme cases, a workshop simply eliminates the penalties for using a skill.

Surveillance Gear

Binoculars: Look through binoculars to make far-away people and objects seem closer. They reduce the range penalty for Spot checks to –1 for every 50 feet (instead of –1 for every 10 feet). Using binoculars for Spot checks takes five times as long as making the check unaided. Some modern binoculars include digital readouts that indicate the exact distance to the object on which they are focused. Others grant the darkvision ability, such as night vision goggles.

Black Box: This device, easily concealed in the palm of one hand, emits digital tones that convince the phone system to make a long-distance connection free of charge. They also let you "bounce" a call through multiple switches, making the call harder to trace (the DC of any Computer Use check to trace the call increases by 5).

Caller ID Defeater: When a phone line contains a caller ID defeater, phones attempting to connect with that line show up as "anonymous" or "unavailable" on a caller ID unit. Such a call can still be traced as normally, however.

Cellular Interceptor: About the size of a small briefcase, a cellular interceptor can detect and monitor a cell phone conversation within a five-mile area by listening in on the cellular service's own transmitters. Intercepting the calls of a particular cell phone requires a DC 35 Computer Use check; if you know

TABLE 6–10: SURVEILLANCE GEAR

Item	Weight
Binoculars	2–4 lb.
Black box	1 lb.
Caller ID defeater	1/2 lb.
Cellular interceptor	1/2 lb.
Hidden camera	1 lb.
Lineman's buttset	1 lb.
Listening bug	1/2 lb.
Metal detector	2 lb.
Night vision goggles	3 lb.
Tap detector	1 lb.
Telephone tap	
Line tap	1/2 lb.
Receiver tap	1/2 lb.
Telephone line tracer	5 lb.

Hell yes they show up on film. The reason you don't see more pictures of vampires is that they tear your throat out while you're trying to take one.
—Mike Eichstadt, Dallas

the phone number of the phone in question, the DC drops to 25. Obviously, the phone must be in use for you to intercept a call. You cannot use a cellular interceptor to intercept regular (ground line) phone connections.

Hidden Camera: This digital video recorder is "hidden" because it is disguised as another object and/or because it is really, really small. It runs continuously, wirelessly sending its video recordings (only; it does not include audio, though you can incorporate a listening bug as well) to a computer at another location up to 500 feet away. (If you have plenty of time to install it, you can instead use wires, and it sends recordings as far as its wires reach.) Detecting a hidden camera requires a DC 25 Spot check or a DC 15 Search check.

Lineman's Buttset: This device resembles an oversized telephone handset with a numeric keypad on the back and wire leads hanging from the bottom. This device functions as a portable, reusable telephone line tap. With a DC 10 Repair check, you can connect this device to a phone wire and hear any conversation that crosses it. A lineman's buttset is a common tool for telephone repair personnel.

Listening Bug: This device is a combination microphone and audio transmitter. A listening bug is similar to a hidden camera, but relays sound only. This device runs continuously, wirelessly sending its audio recordings to a computer at another location up to 500 feet away. (If you have plenty of time to install a listening bug, you can instead use wires, and it sends recordings as far as its wires reach.) Detecting a listening bug requires a DC 40 Spot check or a DC 30 Search check.

Metal Detector: This handheld device provides a +10 equipment bonus on Search checks involving metal objects.

Night Vision Goggles: Night vision goggles use passive light gathering to improve vision in near-dark conditions. They grant the user the ability to see in darkness, also called darkvision (range 120 feet) — but because of the restricted field of view and lack of depth perception, the goggles impose a –4 penalty on Spot and Search checks made when you wear them.

Night vision goggles must have at least a little light to operate. A cloudy night provides sufficient ambient light, but a pitch-black cave or a sealed room doesn't. For situations of total darkness, the goggles come with an infrared illuminator that, when switched on, operates as a standard flashlight whose light is visible only to the wearer (or anyone else wearing night vision goggles).

Tap Detector: Plug this item into a telephone line between the phone and the outlet, and the tap detector helps detect if the line is tapped. To detect a tap, make a Computer Use check (DC 25 for a line tap, 15 for a receiver tap). With a success, the tap detector indicates that a tap is present. The detector does not indicate the type or location of the tap, however. Also, the detector can't detect a lineman's buttset.

Telephone Tap: These devices allow you to listen to conversations over a particular phone line.

Line Tap: You can attach this tap to a phone line at any point between a phone and the nearest junction box (usually on the street nearby). Installing a line tap requires a DC 15 Repair check. A line tap broadcasts all conversations on the line over a radio frequency that any professional walkie-talkie can pick up.

Receiver Tap: You can easily slip this item into a telephone handset as a DC 5 Repair check. A receiver tap broadcasts all conversations over a radio frequency that any professional walkie-talkie can pick up.

Telephone Line Tracer: Essentially a highly specialized computer, a line tracer hooked to a phone line can trace phone calls made to that line, even if there's a caller ID defeater hooked up at the other end. All it takes is time.

Operating a line tracer is a full-round action requiring a DC 10 Computer Use check. Success gains one digit of the target phone number, starting with the first number of the area code.

Survival Gear

Camping Gear: Camping gear includes a tent, a portable stove, a sleeping bag, pots and pans and other essentials.

Cold Weather Clothing: A parka, scarf, gloves and the like provide a +4 equipment bonus on Survival checks in cold weather and a +2 bonus on Fortitude saves to resist deleterious effects of cold weather.

Flash Goggles: This eye covering totally protects you from blinding light.

Flashlight: Flashlights shine light into dark areas. They negate penalties for darkness within their illuminated areas. A typical modern, rugged flashlight projects a beam 30 feet long and 15 feet across at its end.

Fire Extinguisher: This portable apparatus uses a chemical spray to extinguish small fires. The typical fire extinguisher ejects enough extinguishing chemicals to put out a fire in a 10-foot-

TABLE 6–11: SURVIVAL GEAR

Item	Weight
Camping gear	10 lb.
Cold weather clothing	5 lb.
Flash goggles	2 lb.
Flashlight	1/2–2 lb.
Fire extinguisher	3 lb.
GPS receiver	1 lb.
Rope (150 ft.)	12 lb.

by-10-foot area as a move action. A fire extinguisher contains enough material for two such uses.

GPS Receiver: Global positioning system receivers use signals from GPS satellites to determine the receiver's location to within a few dozen feet. A GPS receiver provides a +4 equipment bonus on Navigate checks, but because the receiver must be able to pick up satellite signals, it works only outdoors.

Rope (150 ft.): This climbing rope can support up to 1,000 pounds.

Weapon Accessories

Detonator: A detonator activates an explosive, causing it to explode. The device consists of an electrically activated blasting cap and some sort of device that delivers the electrical charge to set off the blasting cap. Connecting a detonator to an explosive requires a DC 15 Demolitions check. Failure means that the explosive fails to go off as planned. Failure by 10 or more means the explosive goes off as you are installing the detonator.

Blasting Cap: This is a detonator without a built-in controller. A blasting cap can be wired into any electrical device, such as a light switch or a car's ignition switch, with a DC 10 Demolitions check. When the electrical device is activated, the detonator goes off.

Radio-Controlled: This device consists of two parts: the detonator and the activation device. The activation device is an electronic item about the size of a deck of cards, with an antenna, a safety and an activation switch. When you toggle the switch, the activation device sends a signal to the detonator by radio, setting it off. This device has a range of 500 feet.

Timed: This is an electronic timer connected to the detonator. Similar to an alarm clock, this device can be set to go off at a particular time.

Wired: This is the simplest form of detonator. A wire connects the blasting cap to an activation device, usually a small pistol-grip device that the user squeezes. The detonator comes with 100 feet of wire, but longer lengths can be spliced in with DC 10 Demolitions checks.

Holster: Holsters carry firearms. Some you wear on your hip, while others conceal the weapon under your arm, in your waistband or on your leg.

TABLE 6–12: WEAPON ACCESSORIES

Item	Weight
Detonator	
Blasting cap	1/2 lb.
Radio-controlled	1/2 lb.
Timed	1/2 lb.
Wired	1 lb.
Holster	1/2 lb.
Illuminator	1/2 lb.
Laser sight	1/2 lb.
Scope	3 lb.
Sheath	1 lb.
Silencer, pistol	1 lb.
Silencer, rifle	4 lb.

Illuminator: An illuminator is a flashlight mounted to a firearm. An illuminator functions as a standard flashlight.

Laser Sight: This small laser mounts on a firearm and projects a tiny red dot on the weapon's target. A laser sight grants a +1 equipment bonus on attack rolls made against targets up to 30 feet away. However, a laser sight is useless outdoors during the daytime.

Scope: A scope is a sighting device that makes it easier to hit targets at long range. However, although a scope magnifies the image of the target, a scope has a limited field of view, making it difficult to use. A scope increases the range increment for a ranged weapon by one-half (multiply by 1.5). However, to use a scope you must spend a standard action acquiring your target. If you change targets or otherwise lose sight of the target, you must reacquire the target to gain the scope's benefit. Some modern scopes provide the darkvision ability (such as night vision goggles) as well.

Sheath: A sheath carries a melee weapon, usually a sword or knife. Some, especially those for knives, are meant to conceal the weapon on the ankle or similar location.

Silencer: A silencer, also called a suppressor, fits on the end of a firearm, capturing the gases traveling at supersonic speed that propel a bullet as it is fired. This eliminates the noise from the bullet's firing, dramatically reducing the sound the weapon makes when it is used. For handguns, the only sound is the mechanical action of the weapon (DC 15 Listen check to notice). For rifles, the supersonic speed of the bullet still makes noise. However, characters find it difficult to tell where the sound is coming from, requiring a DC 15 Listen check to locate the source of the gunfire.

You can attach or remove a silencer as a move action. You cannot use a silencer on a shotgun or revolver.

Vehicles

Most of the following vehicles are available for the average consumer — including player characters and the creatures that prey upon characters — to go out and buy, but a few military-level vehicles appear in the table as well. More rules about vehicles appear in Chapter 7: Playing the Game, "Vehicle Movement and Combat."

A number of statistics describe vehicles, as shown in Table 6–13: Vehicles.

Crew: The standard number of crew. In most cases, the vehicle needs only one person to drive it; other crew members serve as gunners or copilots.

Passengers: The number of passengers (in addition to the crew) the vehicle is designed to carry. Vehicles that carry passengers can use that space to carry additional cargo when passengers aren't present. Each unused passenger slot allows the vehicle to carry an additional 100 pounds of cargo.

Cargo Capacity: The amount of cargo the vehicle is designed to carry. Many vehicles can carry extra passengers instead of cargo, but doing so is usually a cramped, uncomfortable and often unsafe experience for those passengers. As a rule of thumb, one additional passenger can be carried for each 250 pounds of unused cargo capacity.

Initiative: The modifier you add to your initiative check when operating the vehicle.

TABLE 6–13: VEHICLES

Vehicle	Crew	Pass	Cargo	Init.	Maneuver	Top Speed	Defense	Hardness	Hit Points	Size	W x L	Restriction
Land Vehicles												
ATV	1	0	675 lb.	–1	+1	95 (9)	9	5	22	L	1 x 2	—
APC	2	11	200 lb.	–2	–2	62 (6)	8	10	48	H	3 x 4	III
Bicycle	1	0	0 lb.	+0	+2	70 (7)	10	5	10	M	1 x 1	—
Car	1	4	275 lb.	–1	–1	220 (22)	9	5	30	L	2 x 3	—
Limousine	1	7	425 lb.	–4	–4	195 (19)	6	5	38	G	2 x 5	—
Motorcycle	1	1	0 lb.	–1	+1	275 (27)	9	5	22	L	1 x 2	—
Snowmobile	1	1	0 lb.	–1	+1	275 (27)	9	5	22	L	1 x 2	—
Sports car	1	1	175 lb.	–2	+1	335 (33)	8	5	34	H	2 x 3	—
SUV	1	4	300 lb.	–2	–2	200 (20)	8	5	32	H	2 x 3	—
Tank	4	0	425 lb.	–4	–4	80 (8)	6	20	64	G	3 x 6	III
Truck	1	2	1,700 lb.	–2	–2	175 (17)	8	5	36	H	2 x 4	—
Van	1	4	325 lb.	–2	–2	195 (19)	8	5	34	H	2 x 4	—
Air Vehicles												
Fighter jet	1	0	200 lb.	–2	–2	2,682 (268)	6	5	44	G	10 x 12	III
Helicopter	1	4	250 lb.	–4	–4	245 (24)	6	5	28	G	2 x 7	Lic
Helicopter, cargo	2	13	5,000 lb.	–4	–4	200 (20)	6	5	36	G	3 x 7	Lic
Prop plane	1	3	120 lb.	–4	–4	210 (21)	6	5	30	G	7 x 6	Lic
Water Vehicles												
Jet Ski	1	1	60 lb.	–1	+1	105 (10)	9	5	22	L	1 x 2	—
Runabout	1	5	2,100 lb.	–2	–2	55 (5)	8	5	28	H	2 x 4	—
Yacht	1	3	2,100 lb.	–4	–4	80 (8)	6	5	40	G	3 x 6	—

Maneuver: The modifier you add to your Drive or Pilot checks with the vehicle.

Top Speed: The maximum number of squares the vehicle can cover in one round at character scale (with the number of squares at chase scale in parentheses). This value is the fastest the vehicle can move.

Defense: The vehicle's Defense.

Hardness: The vehicle's hardness. Subtract this number from any damage the vehicle takes.

Hit Points: The vehicle's full normal hit points.

Size: Vehicle size categories are defined differently from the size categories for weapons and other objects; see Chapter 7: Playing the Game, "Vehicle Movement and Combat."

W x L: This is the vehicle's width (in squares) and length (in squares). For example, "1 x 2" means the vehicle is 1 square wide and 2 squares long. For planes, these numbers include the wings; the fuselage is only 1 or 2 squares wide.

Restriction: This column is identical to the column of the same name in the weapons tables.

Vehicle Descriptions

Each of the entries here can represent a number of different individual vehicles; in some cases (such as the "car"), a vast number. The variety in vehicles is staggering, but, for the most part, the differences between the top speeds of a Toyota Corolla and a Chevy Nova are unimportant. GMs wishing to expand upon these rules are welcome to do so.

Land Vehicles

ATV: All-terrain vehicles are similar to four-wheeled motorcycles, meant to go off-road in just about any environment. An ATV offers no cover to its occupants.

APC: An armored personnel carrier transports troops into combat. Entering the vehicle through a top hatch is a full-round action; starting it moving is another. In addition to its own armament, the APC's passenger compartment has ports that allow passengers to fire their personal weapons from within. An APC provides full cover to its occupants (unless they're firing out the ports, in which case the cover is nine-tenths).

This vehicle comes equipped with a 25mm cannon (see Table 6–16: Vehicle Weapons) mounted in a full turret.

Bicycle: A versatile vehicle, a bicycle can travel up to twice the indicated speed at optimum conditions (traveling downhill on a paved road). Mounting a bicycle is a free action, as is starting to pedal. A bicycle provides no cover to its rider. You use the Drive skill to ride a bike.

Car: Your car can be just about any sort of car out there, from a clunker left over from the '80s to a modern luxury automobile. (The GM can alter the statistics in the table as he likes in order to represent specific cars.) Cars provide three-quarters cover for their occupants (although passengers who lean out of windows or sunroofs, perhaps to fire weapons, may be reduced to one-half or even one-quarter cover).

Limousine: A limousine is a big, comfortable car. The statistics given are for a moderate-sized vehicle, rather than a stretch limo or a conventional car with a professional driver. Limousines feature virtually every available luxury feature, often

including televisions and small refrigerators. A partition divides the front seat from the rest of the vehicle. A limousine provides three-quarters cover for its occupants.

Motorcycle: Motorcycles come in many varieties, from street bikes to dirt bikes. Mounting a motorcycle is a free action. Motorcycles provide no cover for their occupants.

Snowmobile: A snowmobile has tracks and skis for traveling on snow and ice. A snowmobile cannot travel on roads, but can skim across shallow water if the snowmobile is traveling fast enough. Most snowmobilers use the vehicles for recreation rather than travel. Mounting a snowmobile is a free action. A snowmobile provides no cover to its occupants.

Sports Car: This is a high-performance, speedy car, such as a Porsche or Lamborghini. Similar to other cars, a sports car provides three-quarters cover for its occupants.

SUV: A sport utility vehicle is sort of a cross between a car and a truck. Similar to a car, an SUV provides three-quarters cover to its occupants.

Tank: A tank is crewed by a driver, a gunner, a gun loader and a commander. It has three top hatches: one for the driver and two on the turret. Entering a tank is a full-round action; starting it moving is another. A tank provides full cover to its occupants.

This vehicle comes equipped with a tank cannon (see Table 6–16: Vehicle Weapons) on a full turret. The vehicle's fire-control computer provides a +2 equipment bonus attack rolls with this weapon.

Truck: This is a pickup truck, with a big bed for transporting anything that needs transporting. Similar to a car, a truck provides three-quarters cover to its occupants, except for the bed, which provides one-half cover.

Van: A small van of the sort approved by soccer moms everywhere. Similar to a car, a van provides three-quarters cover to its occupants.

Air Vehicles

Fighter Jet: Modern fighter jets can travel at speeds in excess of Mach 2. A fighter jet provides three-quarters cover for the pilot.

This vehicle comes equipped with a 25mm cannon and two air-to-air missiles (see Table 6–16: Vehicle Weapons). Both fire only in the vehicle's front arc. The vehicle's fire-control computer provides a +2 equipment bonus attack rolls with these weapons.

Helicopter: A basic helicopter provides three-quarters cover for crew and passengers.

Helicopter, Cargo: This large helicopter provides three-quarters cover for crew and passengers (one-quarter cover for passengers if the cargo doors are open).

Prop Plane: Amateur flyers the world over use these single-engine propeller planes. They provide three-quarters cover for crew and passengers.

Water Vehicles

Jet Ski: Also called personal watercraft, Jet Skis allow you to skim about on the surface of a body of water. Most people use them for recreation rather than transportation. Jet Skis offer no cover to their riders.

Crew Quality

Rather than force the GM to create or remember statistics for everyone aboard a vehicle, you can use a general "crew quality" descriptor. This trait indicates a typical crew's aptitude with the vehicle's systems.

Table 6–14: Vehicle Crew Quality shows the five levels of crew quality for non-player character vehicle crews, along with the appropriate check modifier. Use the check modifier for all skill checks related to the operation of the vehicle (including Drive and Repair checks). Use the attack bonus for all attack rolls the crew makes. For quick reference, Table 6–15: Crewed Vehicles shows the typical crew quality, and the crew's total initiative, maneuver and attack modifiers, for the vehicles covered in this book.

This reference by no means restricts the GM from creating unique vehicles where the crew's statistics are included, or from using non-player characters' abilities when they drive or attack from vehicles, or from strange, Nightmare-altered vehicles with their own agendas and statistics. It's merely a shortcut to save time if the GM doesn't have particular characters behind the wheel.

TABLE 6–14: VEHICLE CREW QUALITY

Crew Quality	Check Modifier	Attack Bonus
Untrained	–4	–2
Normal	+2	+0
Skilled	+4	+2
Expert	+8	+4
Ace	+12	+8/+3

TABLE 6–15: CREWED VEHICLES

Name	Crew	Initiative	Maneuver	Attack Bonus
Land Vehicles				
ATV	1 (Normal +2)	+1	+3	+0
APC	3 (Skilled +4)	+2	+2	+2
Bicycle	1 (Normal +2)	+2	+2	+0
Car	1 (Normal +2)	+1	+1	+0
Limousine	1 (Skilled +4)	+0	+0	+2
Motorcycle	1 (Normal +2)	+1	+3	+0
Snowmobile	1 (Skilled +4)	+3	+5	+2
Sports car	1 (Normal +2)	+0	+3	+0
SUV	1 (Normal +2)	+0	+0	+0
Tank	4 (Skilled +4)	+0	+0	+2
Truck	1 (Normal +2)	+0	+0	+0
Van	1 (Normal +2)	+0	+0	+0
Air Vehicles				
Fighter jet	1 (Expert +8)	+6	+6	+4
Helicopter	2 (Skilled +4)	+0	+0	+2
Helicopter, cargo	2 (Skilled +4)	+0	+0	+2
Prop plane	1 (Normal +2)	–2	–2	+0
Water Vehicles				
Jet Ski	1 (Normal +2)	+1	+3	+0
Runabout	1 (Normal +2)	+0	+0	+0
Yacht	1 (Normal +2)	–2	–2	+0

TABLE 6–16: VEHICLE WEAPONS

Weapon	Damage	Critical	Damage Type	Range Increment	Rate of Fire	Magazine	Size
25 mm cannon	4d12	20	Ballistic	300 ft.	A	Special	Huge
Air-to-air missile*	20d12		Fire and slashing		7,920 ft.	1	1 Large
Tank cannon	10d12	20	Ballistic	400 ft.	1	1	Huge

* See the weapon's description for special rules.

Runabout: This is the sort of motorboat that is the equivalent of a car on the water. A runabout includes an outboard engine and an open cockpit with a tiny cabin (about the size of the interior of an economy car) forward. A runabout comes with a trailer; loading or unloading it requires a paved boat ramp and 10 minutes of work. A runabout provides one-half cover to occupants in the cockpit or stern, full cover to occupants in the cabin and no cover to those forward of the cockpit.

Yacht: This cabin cruiser is a motor yacht with two internal diesel engines. A yacht comes equipped with four berths and a fully equipped galley. A yacht provides one-half cover to occupants in the cockpit or stern, full cover to occupants below deck and no cover to those forward of the cockpit.

Vehicle Weapons

Vehicle weapons do not have listed weight or restriction values because they are a part of the vehicle to which they are attached.

25mm Cannon: This weapon is similar to a giant machine gun. A 25mm cannon uses linked ammunition just as a machine gun.

Air-to-Air Missile: The air-to-air missile is a long-range explosive fired from an aircraft to destroy another aircraft. Against targets that are not in the air, the missile deals half damage and takes a –10 penalty to hit.

Against an airborne target in the missile's first range increment, the missile automatically locks onto its target, providing a +10 equipment bonus on attack rolls.

The missile explodes in a 20-foot radius (DC 18 Reflex save for half damage).

Tank Cannon: This enormous weapon fires shells.

GM's Note — Purpose of Supernatural Items

The purpose behind supernatural items is twofold: to expand the world by displaying some of the breadth and depth of the supernatural changes within it and to provide you (the GM) with concrete rewards you can give the player characters. The game includes many other rewards, from status within an organization to various contacts, but, especially since money is unimportant, solid rewards that obviously and directly affect a character's statistics are few. Experience points are an excellent reward, and supernatural items are another. You might place them in areas where player characters can find them during the course of an adventure. You might have a patron provide one as a reward. You might put one in the hands of a villain to make her more deadly (and possibly more rewarding to defeat).

Because supernatural items are rare, avoid giving them out too freely. Even the most powerful supernatural beings probably only have a dozen of these items. At most, the player characters should gain about one item (each) every two or three levels

Supernatural Items

The recent wave of supernatural changes is not confined to beings and places — objects are also transformed. Many prove useful for paranormal creatures, though some carry a frightening price for their power.

Supernatural items are not common; in fact, most people (even most paranormal people) are unaware of their existence. Many people in possession of such items do not realize their power. Others — especially powerful supernatural creatures — go to great lengths to obtain these objects.

Three types of supernatural items exist: mystic items, Nightmare items and soul-infused items. Below are explanations of these items as well as some examples. Supernatural items come in a great variety, and those presented here are only a small sampling of the possibilities.

Mystic Items

Before the Intrusion, people placed great mystic value in some objects. These were often items used in the primitive, questionable "spells" that so-called wizards and shamans cast in the time before the Intrusion. Similar to the mages and the spells, the items they used were of indeterminate value. Now,

though, just as the mages who use these items, supernatural power infuses these objects.

Since most mystic items were once used in spells and rituals, they retain that power; the majority of mystic items aid mages in spellcasting. Some mystic items have other functions, however. A Thracian dagger is said to have the power to call the dead; an Egyptian orb is said to enthrall those who look upon it; a religious relic is said to heal the sick. They all might have true power now, due to the importance people attribute to them, the rituals in which they were used, and the influx of magic from the Intrusion.

The following are some examples of mystic items. You can incorporate them directly into your game, and/or you can use them as a basis for inventing your own.

Honjô Masamune

Description: This katana is perhaps the most famous sword ever crafted. The legendary Japanese swordsmith Masamune crafted it in the early 1300s. It was a symbol of the Tokugawa shogunate and passed from one shogun to another. A rival of the Tokugawa shoguns took the sword as a battle trophy in the 1500s, and the Honjô Masamune passed among many different owners for the next several centuries, eventually returning to the Tokugawa family. The authorities declared the katana a Japanese National Treasure in 1939. In 1946, the katana passed as a gift to Sergeant Coldy Bimore of the U.S. 7th Cavalry and dropped out of history.

The sword is long and pitted from many battles (the most famous being the one in which it originally passed from the Tokugawa family's hands). Despite the sword's old appearance, with magic now flowing throughout the world, the sword slices through armor, flesh and bone with supernatural ease.

Powers: The Honjô Masamune is a sword (see Table 6–1: Melee Weapons), but deals 2d8 points of damage and threatens a critical hit on a 17–20. In addition, the sword ignores all forms of damage reduction (bypassing even damage reduction followed by a slash, like that of body armor) and provides a +4 enhancement bonus on the wielder's attack and damage rolls.

Hunter's Bow

Description: A native Canadian warrior and hunter wielded this bow two centuries ago. He used it to slay animals for his tribe's rituals, and the tribe's shaman spoke blessings over the hunter, his prize and his bow, thanking the animals for their sacrifice and wishing the warrior luck in his endeavors.

The bow is four and a half feet tall and made of polished wood. It is in good condition for its age, but is otherwise unremarkable.

Powers: The hunter's bow is a bow (see Table 6–3: Ranged Weapon). It provides the wielder with a +2 enhancement bonus on attack and damage rolls.

Spellcasting Aid

Description: These objects are the most common of mystic items — perhaps the most common of all the supernatural items. They take many forms: wands, ritual daggers, masks, rods, staffs, books, musical instruments and many others that vary based on culture and practice. They are usually well used, well made, and able to be held in a hand. They sometimes bear arcane symbols or writing.

Powers: No matter its appearance, a spellcasting aid provides an enhancement bonus on Spellcraft checks to cast spells. The bonus ranges from +1 to +10; those providing bonuses above +5 are rare.

Wrathful Staff

Description: An old Sumerian staff from the cradle of civilization, this staff disappeared from the National Museum of Iraq when unknown parties looted that building in April of 2003. Over the next two years, the staff appeared occasionally in black market deals, but authorities could never recover it. Its whereabouts are now unknown.

The wrathful staff is made of petrified cedar and stands 6 feet tall. The epic of Gilgamesh is inscribed along its length, as well as a suggestion that the staff was crafted from the wood of a tree in the forest where Gilgamesh and his companion Enkidu confronted their first foe, the demon Humbaba the Terrible. Additional text on the staff says that the staff contains Humbaba's spirit, which now serves the Sumerian people and will help destroy their enemies.

Powers: If you carry the staff and employ it in your spellcasting, every Damage component you add to a spell costs only half a component point. Thus, if you cast a spell with six Damage components, the component cost is 3, rather than 6.

Nightmare Items

Nightmare items are like mobile Nightmare Sites. When the Nightmare Wave spread from the Intrusion Point, the Wave *changed* places through which it traveled. It also affected items, though not as many.

Similar to Nightmare Sites, Nightmare items have humanity's fears and hatreds imprinted upon them. While many Nightmare items are beneficial in some regard, nearly all of them also have drawbacks. These curses range from the trivial (blood drips from the item) to the dangerous (it burns you for 1d6 points of fire damage whenever you use it) to the horrifying and sinister (every time you use it, a child dies). Nightmare items can be anything: guns, cell phones, hub caps, empty beer cans, clothing, cigarettes and anything else you can think of.

TABLE 6–17: NIGHTMARE ITEM CREATION

d%	Item
1–10	Crumpled piece of trash
11–20	Necklace
21–30	Mug
31–40	Light bulb
41–50	Laptop computer
51–60	Camera
61–70	Stone
71–80	Salt shaker
81–90	Branch
91–100	Weapon (of your choice)

TABLE 6–18: NIGHTMARE ITEM POWER CREATION

d%	Item d%
01–04	An Awakened bearer can throw balls of fire: ranged touch attack to hit, 1d8 fire damage, range 30 ft.
05–08	An Awakened can touch it to gain a +4 bonus on his next skill check
09–13	Using it gives an Awakened +2 to a random ability score for 1 min.
14–17	A demon bearer gains 1 Anima per day
18–21	Increases the damage of the Corrupting Lash cant by 2d6
22–26	A demon bearer need never return to its true form
27–30	A mage bearer gains +30 components per day
31–35	Grants the Bane Casting gnosis
36–40	A mage bearer can maintain unlimited ongoing spells
41–45	A vampire bearer no longer takes damage from sunlight
46–50	A vampire bearer always counts as the appropriate clan (to gain a bonus) for all her disciplines
51–55	A vampire bearer gains 1 Vitae per day
56–60	Grants the Blood Potency and Vigor disciplines — even to non-vampires
61–65	+2 bonus on DCs to resist bearer's disciplines
66–70	A werewolf bearer gains 1 Essence per day
71–75	A werewolf bearer's bonuses to Str, Dex, and Con in hybrid form double (to +8 Str and Dex, +4 Con)
76–80	A werewolf bearer is no longer vulnerable to silver
81–85	As long as he has this, a werewolf bearer count as an Irraka (in addition to his real auspice) for the purposes of gaining and using rites
86–90	A werewolf bearer gains the Alien Speed rite
91–94	Bearer has a +1 bonus on all rolls and checks
95–97	Bearer's touch deals 1d6 points of damage
98–100	Bearer gains sprint healing 5/30

TABLE 6–19: NIGHTMARE ITEM CREATION

d%	Item
01–10	Backfires on the roll of a 1
11–20	Deals 1d6 damage to bearer each use
21–30	Bearer ages 10 times faster
31–40	Constantly coated in sticky mucous
41–50	Bearer takes –2 penalty on all rolls and checks
51–60	Bearer's friends turn on him
61–70	Bearer's footsteps melt ground and burn grass
71–80	Bearer takes –2 penalty to Str, Dex, and Con
81–90	Item functions only when bathed in fresh blood
91–100	Bearer can speak only the truth

Also similar to Nightmare Sites, Nightmare items are more common the closer you get to the Intrusion Point; a good many of them lie around in Minneapolis, but perhaps all of Australia contains only a single Nightmare item.

Nightmare items have a variety of powers, but most of them, due to their genesis, affect supernatural creatures in some way. Nightmare items often provide a boost to a vampire's disciplines or a werewolf's rites, for example.

The following are some examples of Nightmare items. You can incorporate them directly into your game, and/or you can use them as a basis for inventing your own.

Bloodthirsty Firegun

Description: This .45 automatic pistol is well made and well used. It is worn and scratched and heavy in the hand. It is also warm. When this pistol fires, its bullets burst into flame, leaving fiery trails as they streak toward their target.

Powers: This weapon is an auto pistol (see Table 6–2: Firearms) that provides a +1 enhancement bonus on attack and damage rolls. On a successful hit, the pistol deals an additional 1d6 points of fire damage.

Curse: The gun seeks blood. If the gun goes a full day without killing a sentient creature, its bearer must attempt a DC 10 Will save. If he fails, the gun compels him to move out and sate its thirst. The bearer can resist shooting any given creature with a DC 10 Will save, but not until the gun kills a sentient creature can the bearer rest — at least, for another 24 hours.

Healing Flask

Description: This silver hip flask has an inscription obviously purchased at a shopping mall: "#1 Lush."

Powers: When a character drinks any liquid from the healing flask, he recovers 2d6 points of damage.

Curse: If the dice come up doubles, the imbiber instead takes that amount of damage as the liquid turns to poisonous acid and ravages his system. (Creatures immune to both poison and acid do not take this damage, but they don't recover hit points, either.)

Lucky Boot

Description: This boot looks as if it is 30 years old and belongs to a homeless person. The sole is peeled halfway off, its sides are tattered and its shoelace is missing. The boot's mate is nowhere to be found.

Powers: The lucky boot allows a werewolf to change forms as a free action, even when his auspice moon is not in the sky, without making a Will save or spending Essence. When in hybrid form, the werewolf gains a +1 luck bonus on attack and damage rolls. A werewolf who attains the lucky boot is most likely to wear it on a rope around his neck so that his transformations do not destroy it.

Curse: In hybrid form, the wearer's rage is enhanced. He cannot tell friend from foe and must move toward and attack the closest living target of at least Medium size. If attacked, he can attack his attacker on his next turn.

Phone of Regrets

Description: This slim cell phone is of the latest design. Its black exterior is polished and gleaming; it looks like the sort of phone a CEO or president would use.

Powers: The phone of regrets functions as a normal cell phone. In addition, a vampire speaking into it can use Dominate disciplines over the phone; she does not need to make eye contact.

Curse: While speaking into the phone, the bearer is blind.

Wakeful Pen

Description: This ballpoint pen is unremarkable. It has black ink.

Powers: When an Awakened presses down the plunger to extend the pen's tip, he gains a +10 bonus on his next d20 roll. After he makes this roll, the tip automatically clicks back into the pen.

Curse: Whenever the pen's power is used, a random person within a 10-mile radius has a crippling accident (the GM determines the specifics).

Soul-Infused Items

When the Iconnu came to this world, the souls of dead, evil humans also arrived; they entered the bodies of living men and women, creating vampires. Bestial, savage spirits from another world did the same, creating werewolves. Some of these souls and spirits, however, did not find human hosts, but instead entered objects, where they still reside. The souls grant the items various powers depending on the soul within them, but the bearer must contend with the soul's wishes. The stronger the soul's personality, the more powerful the item and the more likely the item is to control its bearer, instead of the other way around.

Many of the souls in these items chafe at their confinement and yearn to be set free. However, they don't know how to achieve that end. Some believe that if the item is destroyed, they will be free. Others think that they must find a freshly dead corpse and enter it (and therefore might attempt to lead the bearer to his death). Others are resigned to their fate or don't feel bitterness about their current existence; they are simply glad to have an opportunity to (again) affect the world.

The descriptions of soul-infused items include an explanation of the soul's personality, which includes the soul's driving force. Most of these souls have a single need or desire that overrules all others. Whenever the bearer has a chance to indulge this desire but does not do so, the soul attempts to overrule his will and compel him to carry through with its wants. The bearer must attempt a Will save (the DC varies based on the soul's strength of personality and is given below). If he succeeds, he crushes the soul's urges for now and for the next hour. If he fails, he must carry out the soul's wishes.

Each item's personality description also explains how the soul communicates with its bearer. Weak souls communicate simply by empathic urges, while powerful souls are capable of vocal communication — with their bearers as well as anyone nearby.

Soul-infused items perceive the world through their bearer's senses, seeing what (and as) he sees and hearing what he hears.

The following are some examples of soul-infused items. You can incorporate them directly into your game, and/or you can use them as a basis for inventing your own.

Beastly Ring

Description: The item is a small hoop earring made of titanium.

Personality: This nameless, animalistic spirit from the werewolves' homeworld raged against its entrapment for many months. Eventually, the ring found its way to a real werewolf, and the soul felt a vicarious thrill when that werewolf tore living things apart, blood dropping onto his jaws. Now, the soul is content to assist another werewolf in shredding his enemies — as long as he does so in the proper bestial form.

The soul in the earring communicates with its wearer through empathic urges.

Driving Force: For the bearer to transform into hybrid form whenever he enters physical combat of any kind (DC 11).

Powers: In hybrid form, the werewolf gains an additional +4 bonus to Strength and the Improved Natural Attack (bite) feat.

Inquisitor Rubinstein's Pistol

Description: The soul of Donald Rubinstein inhabits an antique pistol from the 1600s, of the sort he used in life.

Personality: Don Rubinstein was a witch hunter in the Catholic Church's Inquisition — in fact, he was Inquisitor Rubinstein. Don was ruthless in hunting down and exterminating the enemies of the Catholic Church, willingly branding anyone he wished as a "witch" and torturing her until she gave up other "witches," then burning the accused at the stake. (Especially cooperative witches were hanged before they burned.) Over time, Don began to believe that these people really *were* witches, casting spells to foil their enemies and collaborating with other witches, and that he could sniff them out.

Now that Don has returned to the modern world, the evidence of witchcraft is clearer than it ever was in his time. Though vampires and demons and werewolves all have certain aspects of the witch about them, and he hates them, the obvious witches are those who really *do* cast spells. Some of these people even openly claim the title of "witch."

Inquisitor Rubinstein (as he demands to be called) can communicate with his bearer via telepathy and empathic urges. He speaks English and German.

Driving Force: To kill mages (DC 14).

Powers: The antique handgun functions as a pistol (see Table 6–2: Firearms), save that reloading it is a move action that provokes attacks of opportunity, and the bearer cannot reload it while moving. It provides a +1 enhancement bonus on attack and damage rolls. Against mages, this bonus increases to +3, and the gun deals an additional 2d6 points of damage.

When a mage takes damage from the gun, he must make a caster level check (DC 14) for every beneficial spell currently affecting him. If he fails, the spell ends.

Inquisitor Rubinstein can accurately identify any mage by sight within 20 feet.

Molly Davis's Garter

Description: The item is a lacy white garter, of the sort a woman might wear on her wedding day.

Personality: Molly Davis was preparing for her wedding in spring of 1942 when her friend burst into her dressing room to give her news she had feared: her father, a homosexual who had been living in Poland, was slain by the Nazis in a concentration camp. Molly Davis calmly nodded, calmly took the ice pick from the nearby table and calmly walked out to the street. She murdered the first person she found who looked to have German blood, stabbing him through the eyes.

Of course, Molly couldn't see her groom, Mike Camden, after that. She had to run, to lay low. She didn't feel any remorse over what she had done; an eye for an eye, after all, but the damn Nazis had robbed her of both her father and her wedding night. Yet she was in love with Mike. Eventually he would forgive her, she knew, and she would save herself for him. Until that time, she would wear her garter as a symbol of her faithfulness.

Molly never did get together with her Mike — he refused her in horror when she appeared on his doorstep — and she died a desperate virgin five years later. However, before she died, she went on a killing spree that spanned continents, traveling to and through Europe in the midst of World War II, killing any German she could find — especially Nazis. She had been a gymnast before her marriage, and her dexterity served her well in her role as vengeful assassin. Eventually, she was shot to death fleeing from a crime scene.

Molly has a powerful and strident personality. Her burning desire is to punish the Nazis — which to her means all Germans. She is also depressed that she died a virgin, and urges her bearer to have sex whenever possible.

Molly can communicate with her bearer via empathic urges and telepathy. She can also speak in a normal woman's voice, allowing anyone nearby to hear her. (She speaks English only.) She might use this ability to attain her desires even if her bearer attempts to thwart her: speaking seductively to a man in a bar or shouting loudly to alert guards to her bearer's presence.

Driving Force: To kill Germans and anyone of German ancestry, and to destroy anything overtly German and valuable (DC 17; the DC increases to 22 if she knows the person or item is associated with the Nazi or neo-Nazi party).

Powers: Whoever wears the garter gains a measure of Molly's old athleticism; she gains a +4 enhancement bonus to Dexterity. She also gains a +2 enhancement bonus on attack and damage rolls with knives and knifelike improvised weapons (such as ice picks). She does not take the standard –4 penalty for improvised weapons when using such an implement.

If the Chapters 1 and 2 are the heart of the game, this chapter is the brain. While previous chapters showed you how to polish your character with skills and feats and revealed a glimpse of the horrors in the world, this chapter tells you how to actually figure out what your character can do.

This chapter covers all the various ways in which characters physically interact with the world — moving, looking around, having encounters, fighting battles, getting wounded, and more.

Movement

The game includes four different movement scales:

- *Tactical*, for combat, measured in feet per round.
- *Local*, for exploring an area, measured in feet per minute.
- *Overland*, for getting from place to place, measured in miles per hour or day.
- *Chase*, for vehicle encounters. See "Vehicle Movement and Combat," below, for more information.

Modes of Movement

While moving at the different movement scales, creatures generally *walk*, *hustle*, or *run*. To find your character's movement at each of these rates, refer to the column in Table 7–1: Movement and Distance that matches your character's base speed. (All characters have a base speed of 30 feet, but supernatural effects can change this value.)

Walk: A walk represents unhurried but purposeful movement at three miles per hour for an unencumbered human.

Hustle: A hustle is a jog at about six miles per hour for an unencumbered human. The double move action (see "Actions in the Round," *Action Descriptions*, below) represents a hustle.

Run (x3): Moving three times your character's standard speed is a running pace for a character in heavy armor.

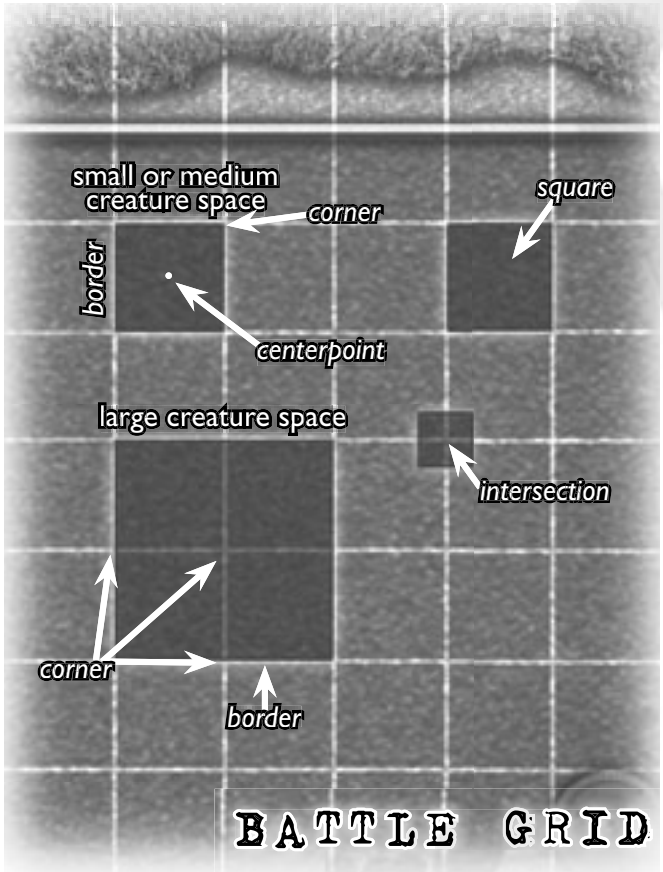
Run (x4): Moving four times your character's standard speed is a running pace for a character in light, medium, or no armor.

Hampered Movement: Obstructions, bad surface conditions, or poor visibility can hamper movement. The GM determines the category that applies for a specific condition (see Table 7–2: Hampered Movement). When movement is hampered, multiply the standard distance you could travel by the movement penalty (a fraction) to determine the distance actually covered.

If more than one condition applies, multiply the normal distance covered by all movement penalty fractions that apply.

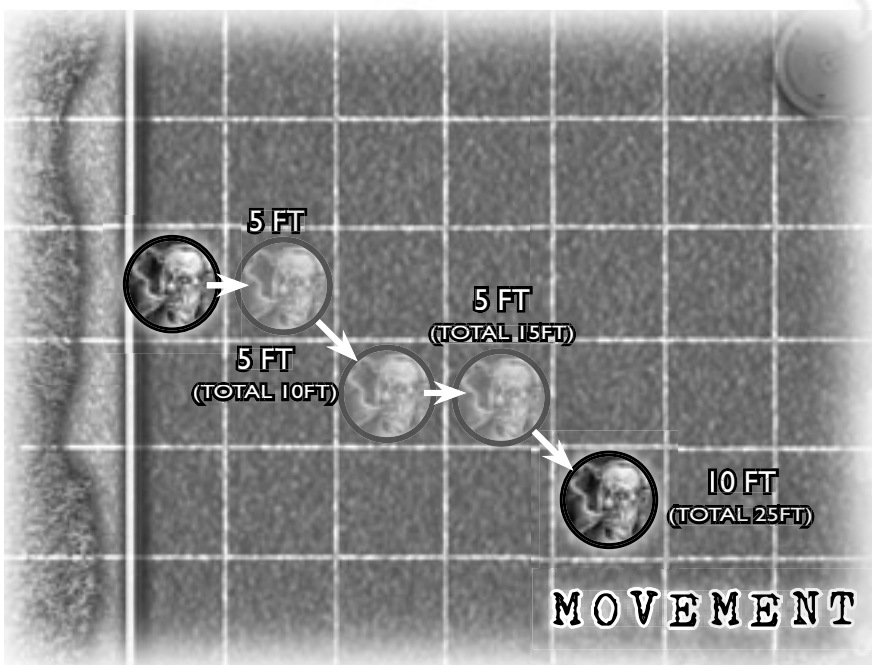
TABLE 7–1:
MOVEMENT AND DISTANCE

	Base Speed			
Movement	**15 feet**	**20 feet**	**30 feet**	**40 feet**
One Round (Tactical)				
Walk	15 feet	20 feet	30 feet	40 feet
Hustle	30 feet	40 feet	60 feet	80 feet
Run (x3)	45 feet	60 feet	90 feet	120 feet
Run (x4)	60 feet	80 feet	120 feet	160 feet
One Minute (Local)				
Walk	150 feet	200 feet	300 feet	400 feet
Hustle	300 feet	400 feet	600 feet	800 feet
Run (x3)	450 feet	600 feet	900 feet	1,200 feet
Run (x4)	600 feet	800 feet	1,200 feet	1,600 feet
One Hour (Overland)				
Walk	1.5 miles	2 miles	3 miles	4 miles
Hustle	3 miles	4 miles	6 miles	8 miles
Run	—	—	—	—
One Day (Overland)				
Walk	12 miles	16 miles	24 miles	32 miles
Hustle	—	—	—	—
Run	—	—	—	—



Movement on a Grid

You may wish to use a map grid to facilitate combat. If you do so, each square on the grid counts as 5 feet. Thus, you can determine the number of squares a character moves by dividing her speed by 5. (A typical humanoid creature — vampire, mage, or whatever — has a speed of 30 feet, and thus can move 6 squares on a grid with a single move action.)



When moving diagonally on a grid, every other square counts as 2 squares (10 feet). Thus, Mephistopheles the demon might move forward 1 square (5 feet), 1 square diagonal forward and right (5 feet), 1 square to forward (5 feet), and 1 square diagonal forward and right (10 feet, since this is the second diagonal square of his movement). Mephistopheles' total movement is 5 squares (25 feet).

Tactical Movement

During combat sequences, characters use tactical speed. However, some creatures have other modes of tactical movement as well.

You may see references to these modes in statistics and descriptions in Chapter 8: Running the Game, "Antagonists and Supporting Characters."

Burrow: The creature can tunnel through dirt but not rock unless its description says otherwise. Creatures cannot run while burrowing.

Climb: A creature with a climb speed has the Climb skill at no cost and gains a +8 racial bonus on Climb checks. The creature must make a Climb check to climb any wall or slope with a DC of more than 0, but it always can choose to take 10, even if rushed or threatened while climbing. The creature climbs at its listed speed while climbing. If it chooses an accelerated climb, it moves at double its listed climb speed (or its normal land speed, whichever is less) and makes a single Climb check at a –5 penalty.

Creatures cannot use the run action while climbing.

Fly: A creature can fly at its listed speed if carrying no more than a medium load. All fly speeds in creature descriptions include a parenthetical note indicating a maneuverability, as follows.

- *Perfect:* The creature can perform almost any aerial maneuver it wishes.
- *Good:* The creature is very agile in the air (like a house fly or hummingbird) but cannot change direction as readily as those with perfect maneuverability.
- *Average:* The creature can fly as adroitly as a small bird.
- *Poor:* The creature flies as well as a very large bird.
- *Clumsy:* The creature can barely fly at all.

Creatures can use the run action while flying, provided they fly in a straight line. Most flying creatures have to slow down at least a little to make a turn. Many are limited to fairly wide turns and must maintain a minimum forward speed. Each flying creature's maneuverability rating defines how it moves when flying. Note that atmospheric problems, like the insane weather near the Intrusion Point, can make flying more difficult.

TABLE 7–2: HAMPERED MOVEMENT

Condition	Example	Movement Penalty
Obstruction		
Moderate	Rubble	x 3/4
Heavy	Thick undergrowth	x 1/2
Surface		
Bad	Steep slope; mud; shattered ground	x 1/2
Very bad	Deep snow	x 1/4
Poor visibility		
Poor Visibility	Darkness or fog*	x 1/2

* Includes any effects that create a "fog."

What's Different?

If you are familiar with other games that make heavy use of a die called a d20, you are probably familiar with many of this game's core rule mechanics. Aside from the obvious changes (based on the fact that the game takes place in a dark, modern world and players play vampires, werewolves, mages, and other supernatural creatures with a unique spin), the game changes a few other rules with which you may be familiar. These differences are outlined below, so that you do not have to spend hours scanning the rules chapters to find them.

• **Death and Dying.** If you are familiar with **Monte Cook's Arcana Evolved,** these rules should be familiar. A character is dying when he reaches negative hit points equal to his Con modifier, and he is dead when he reaches negative hit points equal to his Con score. See "Death, Dying and Healing," below, for more information.

• **Critical Hits.** In many games, critical hits deal double or triple damage. In this game, they deal *Constitution* damage. Many supernatural creatures, however, are resistant to damage and, instead of taking Con damage from critical hits, are stunned. See "Combat Sequence," *Dealing Damage,* below, for more information. We made this change in order to emphasize the dark and gritty nature of the game and to make firearms dangerous — especially against normal humans — without forcing constant Fortitude saves to prevent death from massive damage.

• **Firearms.** Anyone can use automatic and semiautomatic firearms to fire a stream of bullets at a single target (the burst fire and double tap actions) or to cover an area with autofire (strafe), though doing so imposes penalties. You can take feats to mitigate these penalties. In addition, reloading firearms is simpler than in other games.See "Actions in the Round," *Action Descriptions*, below, for more information.

• **Humanity Points.** Player characters have a little something that sets them apart from others and gives them a chance — or, at least, more of a chance — to save the world. Humanity points represent this extra something, and spending them allows you to perform amazing feats and survive against all odds. (If you are familiar with **Arcana Evolved,** hero points are similar, but not identical, in concept and mechanic to humanity points.) See "Humanity Points," at the end of this chapter, for more information.

• **Massive Damage.** This game eliminates the "Death from Massive Damage" mechanic.

TABLE 7–3: FLIGHT MANEUVERABILITY

	Type				
	Perfect	**Good**	**Average**	**Poor**	**Clumsy**
Minimum forward speed	None	None	Half	Half	Half
Hover	Yes	Yes	No	No	No
Fly backward	Yes	Yes	No	No	No
Reverse	Free	–5 feet	—	—	—
Turn	Any	90°/5 feet	45°/5 feet	45°/5 feet	45°/10 feet
Turn in place	Any	+90°/–5 feet	+45°/–5 feet	No	No
Maximum turn	Any	Any	90°	45°	45°
Up angle	Any	Any	60°	45°	45°
Up speed	Full	Half	Half	Half	Half
Down angle	Any	Any	Any	45°	45°
Down speed	Double	Double	Double	Double	Double
Between down and up	0	0	5 feet	10 feet	20 feet

The passages below explain the entries on Table 7–3: Flight Maneuverability.

Minimum Forward Speed: If a flying creature fails to maintain its minimum forward speed, it must land at the end of its movement. If it is too high above the ground to land, it falls straight down, descending 150 feet in the first round of falling. Should this distance bring it to the ground, it takes falling damage.

If the fall doesn't bring the creature to the ground, it spends its next turn recovering from the stall. It must make a DC 20 Reflex save to recover, otherwise it falls another 300 feet. If it hits the ground, it takes falling damage. If it doesn't hit, it has another chance to recover on its next turn.

Hover: The ability to stay in one place while airborne.

Fly Backward: The ability to fly backward.

Reverse: A creature with good maneuverability uses up 5 feet of its speed to start flying backward.

Turn: How much the creature can turn after covering the stated distance.

Turn in Place: A creature with good or average maneuverability can "spend" some of its speed to turn in place.

Maximum Turn: How much a creature can turn in a space.

Up Angle: The steepest angle at which the creature can climb while flying.

Up Speed: How fast the creature can climb while flying.

Down Angle: The steepest angle at which the creature can descend.

Down Speed: A flying creature can fly down at twice its normal flying speed.

Between Down and Up: An average, poor, or clumsy flier must fly level for a minimum distance after descending and before climbing. Any flier can begin descending after a climb without an intervening distance.

Swim: A creature with a swim speed can move through water at its listed speed without making Swim checks. It gains a +8 racial bonus on any Swim check to perform some special action or avoid a hazard. The creature always can choose to take 10, even if rushed or threatened when swimming. Creatures can use the run action while swimming, provided they swim in a straight line.

Local Movement

Exploring an area requires local movement, measured in minutes.

Walk: A character can walk with no problem on the local scale.

Hustle: A character can hustle without a problem on the local scale. (See below for movement measured in hours.)

Run: A character with a Constitution score of 9 or higher can run for a minute without a problem. Generally, a character can run for about a minute or two before having to rest for a minute.

Overland Movement

Characters covering long distances cross-country — perhaps because they are refuges from some Iconnu-spawned calamity — use overland movement, measured in hours or days. A day represents eight hours of actual travel time. For vehicles, a day represents 10 hours of travel.

Walk: You can walk eight hours in a day of travel without a problem.

Hustle: You can hustle for one hour without a problem.

Hustling for a second hour in between sleep cycles causes you to take 1 point of nonlethal damage, and each additional hour, you take twice the damage taken during the previous hour.

Run: You can't run for an extended period of time. Attempts to run and rest in cycles work out to the equivalent of a hustle.

Terrain: The terrain through which you travel affects how much distance you can cover in an hour or a day, as shown on Table 7–4: Terrain and Overland Movement.

Forced March: In a day of normal walking, you walk for eight hours. You spend the rest of daylight time making and breaking camp, checking into seedy hotels, resting, and eating. You can walk for more than eight hours in a day by making a forced march. For each hour of marching beyond eight hours, you make a Constitution check (DC 10 + 1 per extra hour). If the check fails, you take 1d6 points of nonlethal damage. You can't recover this nonlethal damage normally until you halt and rest for at least four hours. It's possible for characters to march into unconsciousness by pushing themselves too hard.

TABLE 7–4: TERRAIN AND OVERLAND MOVEMENT

Terrain	Highway	Road	Trackless
Plains	x1	x1	x1
Scrub, rough	x1	x1	x3/4
Forest	x1	x1	x1/2
Jungle	x1	x3/4	x1/4
Swamp	x1	x3/4	x1/2
Hills	x1	x3/4	x1/2
Mountains	x3/4	x1/2	x1/4
Sandy desert	x1	—	x1/2

Vision

Characters need a way to see in the dark. Characters with low-light vision can see objects twice as far away as the radius given in the table below.

Light Source	Light Duration
Candle	5 feet /12 hours
Torch	20 feet /2 hours
Halogen lantern	40 feet /24 hours
Flashlight	20 feet*/6 hours

* Creates a beam 30 feet long and 5 feet high.

Staging Encounters

When the PCs are about to encounter an NPC or creature, follow these basic steps:

1. Determine vision conditions and terrain. Select from the choices on Table 7–5: Spotting Distance.

2. If line of sight or illumination defines the distance at which the encounter occurs (as often happens indoors), start the encounter there. Otherwise, roll for spotting distance on Table 7–5: Spotting Distance.

3. All creatures involved in the encounter make Spot checks. Success means that a creature sees the other creature or group. See Table 7–5: Spotting Distance for modifiers on these checks.

4. If neither side succeeds, all creatures spot each other at one half the rolled range.

The circumstances can modify the base Difficulty Class of a Spot check:

Size: Apply a +4 bonus to the base DC 20 for each size category the creature being spotted is smaller than Medium, or a –4 penalty for each size category larger. You can make exceptions for creatures with unusual shapes, such as a Large snake that's low to the ground and thus as hard to see as a Small creature.

Contrast: This circumstance refers to how starkly the creature's coloring stands out against the surroundings. It's easy to spot a black bear on a snowfield, but hard to see camouflaged commandos in the jungle.

TABLE 7–5: SPOTTING DISTANCE

Terrain	Distance
Smoke or heavy fog	2d4 x 5 feet (average 25 feet)
Jungle or dense forest	2d4 x 10 feet (50 feet)
Inner city	2d4 x 10 feet (50 feet)
Light forest	3d6 x 10 feet (105 feet)
Scrub, brush, or bush	6d6 x 10 feet (210 feet)
Grassland, little cover	6d6 x 20 feet (420 feet)
Total darkness	Limit of sight
Indoors (lit)	Line of sight
Spotting Difficulty	
Circumstances	DC
Base	20*
Size	+/–4 per size category
Contrast	+/–5 or more
Stillness (not moving)	+5
Six or more creatures	–2
Moonlight**	+5
Starlight†	+10
Total darkness	Impossible‡

* 25 if one side is hiding, and ignore size modifiers (see text).

** +5 bonus on Spot check if the spotter has low-light vision or darkvision that extends far enough.

† +5 bonus on Spot check if the spotter has low-light vision, or +10 if she has darkvision that extends far enough.

‡ Unless the spotter has darkvision that extends far enough.

Stillness: It's harder to see creatures that are not moving.

Six or More Creatures: Groups of creatures are easier to spot than singles, even if they are smaller than Medium.

Moonlight: Nighttime, but with moonlight (or similar lighting conditions).

Starlight: Nighttime with no moon but a clear, starry sky (or similar lighting conditions).

Total Darkness: Overcast at night, or otherwise lightless.

Hiding and Spotting

If creatures are trying not to be seen, it's usually harder to spot them, but keeping low to avoid being spotted makes them less likely to notice other creatures as well.

If creatures are hiding, they can move at only half their normal overland speed. They also take a –2 penalty on their Spot checks to notice other creatures, because they are staying low.

Instead of a base DC 20 for others to spot them at the standard spotting distance, the Difficulty Class to spot someone who's hiding becomes 25 + the hiding character's Hide skill modifier. The modifiers from Table 7–5: Spotting Distance still apply, except for the size modifier (which is already part of the character's skill modifier). A character whose Hide ranks, Dexterity modifier, and armor check penalty total –6 or lower actually has a lower Difficulty Class while hiding than if she weren't hiding. In such cases, simply calculate the Spot DC as if she weren't hiding (according to Table 7–5: Spotting Distance).

If a creature gets a special bonus on Hide checks because of camouflage, special coloring, and so on, use that bonus rather than the contrast bonus from the table.

Additionally, the other creatures do not automatically spot hiding creatures at one-half the encounter distance. Instead, that is the distance at which the other creatures can make Spot checks to notice the hiding creatures. These are normal Spot checks opposed by the hiders' Hide checks.

Missed Encounters

The rules for spotting creatures assume that both sides eventually notice each other — the rules simply establish the distance at which they do so. But sometimes you want to take into account the possibility that the two groups will miss each other entirely.

To handle these possibilities, simply establish a 50 percent chance that the other creatures and the PCs don't get any closer but rather pass by each other, such as when one group is moving north and the other east. (Creatures following the PCs' trail, of course, always close with them.)

Combat Sequence

At the start of a battle, each character makes an *initiative check*. An initiative check is a Dexterity check adjusted by the character's initiative modifier (if any). If two or more characters get the same initiative check result, those that tied act in order of Dexterity (highest first). If the tie persists, roll dice to break it.

Flat-Footed Characters: At the start of a battle each character is flat footed. A character can't use a Dexterity bonus to Defense (if any) while flat footed. A flat-footed character can't make attacks of opportunity. Once the character acts in combat, however (when his first turn comes in the initiative order), he is no longer flat footed.

Handle the procedure of starting an encounter and determining initiative in these steps:

Step 1: Surprise

The Iconnu's agents are often stealthy and cunning, and their preferred method of killing you might be to sneak up behind you and shatter your spine with a blow. The GM determines which characters are aware of their opponents at the start of the battle (see "Staging Encounters," above). If some but not all of the characters are aware of their opponents, a surprise round happens before regular rounds begin.

The characters who are aware of the opponents can act in the surprise round, so they roll for initiative. In initiative order (highest result to lowest), the characters that started the battle aware of their opponents each take a standard action OR a move action during the surprise round (but not both). Characters who were unaware do not get to act in the surprise round.

If no one or everyone starts the battle aware, there is no surprise round. (For more on actions, see "Actions in the Round," below.)

Step 2: Initiative

Characters who have not yet rolled initiative do so.

Step 3: Actions

Characters act in initiative order (highest result to lowest).

Step 4: Repeat

When everyone has had a turn, the character with the highest initiative result acts again. Repeat Steps 3 and 4 until combat ends.

The Combat Round

The combat sequence occurs in *rounds*. Each round represents about six seconds in the game world. (Thus, one minute is the equivalent of 10 rounds.) So, anything a person could reasonably do in six seconds, a character can do in 1 round.

When a character's turn comes up in the initiative sequence, that character performs his entire round's worth of actions. Normally, a character can take a standard action and a move action in a single round. Alternatively, a character can take two move actions in a round. Taking two move actions — moving twice — is called a "double move." Lastly, a character can take a full-round action in a round. A character can also do things that are not actions, or things that are free actions (like talking), in addition to any other actions in a round, as the GM sees fit. (For more on the various types of actions, see "Actions in the Round," below.)

Simultaneous actions are not possible. All effects of a character's action fully resolve before the next character acts. A character cannot split an action to allow another character to act between portions.

Effects that last a certain number of rounds end just before the same initiative count on which they began.

Defense

Defense is an indication of how difficult it is to hit and inflict damage upon a target. Every character (and even items, in some circumstances) has a Defense. The base Defense for a Medium character or item is 10. Bonuses and penalties apply to this base Defense to reflect the effects of Dexterity, experience, and so forth.

Dexterity Modifier

Apply a character's Dexterity modifier to her Defense any time that she can physically react to an attack. Characters lose their Dexterity modifier when they are flat-footed, unaware of an attacker, or when they are restrained or otherwise rendered immobile.

Class Bonus

Most characters receive a class bonus to Defense, which represents their instincts moving them automatically out of danger. A character retains his class bonus to Defense even when flat-footed (but not when helpless).

Size

A creature's size provides a standard Defense modifier; see the "Size Category" sidebar for more information. Applying the appropriate size modifiers to the base Defense 10, a Large beast spawned by the Nightmare Wave has a Defense of 9 and a child

Size Category

Just about everything in the game, from creatures to objects, has a size category that tells you how large it is. A creature's size affects a number of other traits as well.

TABLE 7–6: SIZE CATEGORIES

Size	Def/Attack Modifier	Space	Natural Reach
Fine	+8	1/2 ft.	0 ft.
Diminutive	+4	1 ft.	0 ft.
Tiny	+2	2-1/2 ft.	0 ft.
Small	+1	5 ft.	5 ft.
Medium	0	5 ft.	5 ft.
Large (tall)	–1	10 ft.	10 ft.
Large (long)*	–1	10 ft.	5 ft.
Huge (tall)	–2	15 ft.	15 ft.
Huge (long)*	–2	15 ft.	10 ft.
Gargantuan (tall)	–4	20 ft.	20 ft.
Gargantuan (long)*	–4	20 ft.	15 ft.
Colossal (tall)	–8	30 ft.	30 ft.
Colossal (long)*	–8	30 ft.	20 ft.

*A long creature is large because of its length, rather than its height; a horse is a good example.

Def/Attack Modifier: This modifier is a size bonus or penalty. It applies to the creature's Defense and on its attack rolls.

Space: How much space the creature occupies on the battlefield. This number is typical of creatures of this size; exceptions exist.

Natural Reach: How far the creature can reach on a battlefield, which determines which squares it threatens and who it can attack. This number is typical of creatures of this size; exceptions exist.

(Small) has Defense 11. This is, of course, before we figure in other modifiers such as Dexterity and armor.

Other Modifiers

Other factors also offer bonuses to Defense. These include spells and a creature's natural armor (thick leathery flesh, scales, and so on), which is known as a "natural" bonus.

Hit Points

Hit points represent a character's luck, health, skill at lessening the impact of blows, and basic physical condition. They also represent a character's mental and spiritual condition. All characters (and some items) have a certain number of hit points.

Since a character's Constitution modifier affects her hit point total, if a character's Constitution changes, modify that character's hit point total immediately.

Space and Flanking

Space is how much area a character occupies in combat. Most characters have a 5-foot space, meaning that they occupy a space 5 feet square on the battlefield. (Similarly, a creature with a space of 10 feet occupies a 10-foot-by-10-foot space on the battlefield.) The character's facing is abstract, so characters do not need to worry about which is their "front," "back," "left," or "right." Characters are assumed to be constantly moving and turning in battle. Unless a character is immobile, for all practical purposes he doesn't have a "front" or a "left side" — at least not one that you can identify on the tabletop.

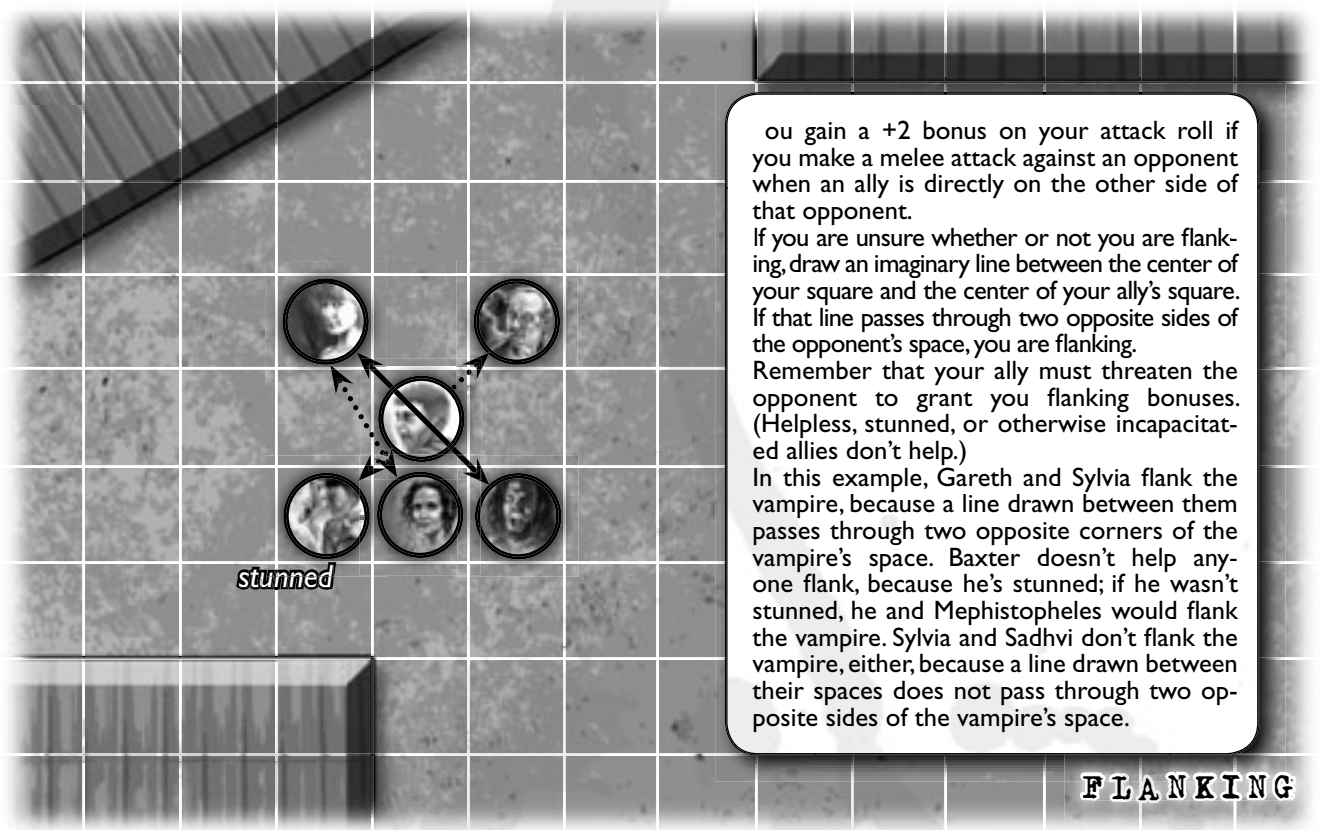
Flanking

If a character is making a melee attack against an opponent, and an ally directly opposite the character threatens the opponent, the character and his ally flank the opponent. A character gains a +2 flanking bonus on his attack roll. A character in this position with the Sneak Attack feat can also sneak attack the target while flanking. The ally must be on the other side of the opponent, so that the opponent is directly between the character and the ally.

For more details, see "Attacks of Opportunity," *Threatened Area,* below.

Making Attacks

Characters and creatures attack their foes by firing pistols, swinging fire axes, slashing with claws, snapping with fierce jaws, lashing



ou gain a +2 bonus on your attack roll if you make a melee attack against an opponent when an ally is directly on the other side of that opponent.

If you are unsure whether or not you are flanking, draw an imaginary line between the center of your square and the center of your ally's square. If that line passes through two opposite sides of the opponent's space, you are flanking.

Remember that your ally must threaten the opponent to grant you flanking bonuses. (Helpless, stunned, or otherwise incapacitated allies don't help.)

In this example, Gareth and Sylvia flank the vampire, because a line drawn between them passes through two opposite corners of the vampire's space. Baxter doesn't help anyone flank, because he's stunned; if he wasn't stunned, he and Mephistopheles would flank the vampire. Sylvia and Sadhvi don't flank the vampire, either, because a line drawn between their spaces does not pass through two opposite sides of the vampire's space.

FLANKING

with mutated tentacles, and so on. While many supernatural powers can be attacks, like blasts of magical energy or withering demonic auras, right now we are talking about the two kinds of conventional attacks: *melee attacks* (such as with claws or a broken bottle) and *ranged attacks* (as with a pistol or thrown knife).

A character can make a melee attack against any foe in a space that he threatens and a ranged attack against any foe in range and in line of sight. A melee combatant threatens the spaces within his reach.

Reach: Most characters have a 5-foot reach, although Large characters and those with reach weapons (like a longspear — see Chapter 6: Equipment) have a 10-foot reach. Some massive creatures spawned by the Nightmare Wave enjoy even greater reach. Saying that a creature "has reach" means it has at least a 10-foot reach.

To determine whether an attack hits, use the following general procedure:

d20 + attack modifiers vs. target's Defense

A natural 1 on the d20 is always a miss, and a natural 20 on the d20 is always a hit.

If the modified attack roll is equal to or greater than the target's Defense, the attack succeeds and the attacker makes a damage roll. The attack may also be a threat. See "Critical Hits," below, for more details.

Sometimes creatures get more than one attack in a round, such as a vampire with two claws (thanks to the Claws of the Wild discipline) or a 3rd-level werewolf (with a base attack bonus of +6/+1). In order to use multiple attacks in 1 round, a character must take a full attack action. This full-round action does not allow the character to also make a move action. If a character takes such an action (such as standing up from being prone), he can make only a single attack that round.

Melee Attacks

The character attacks an opponent in a space that he threatens.

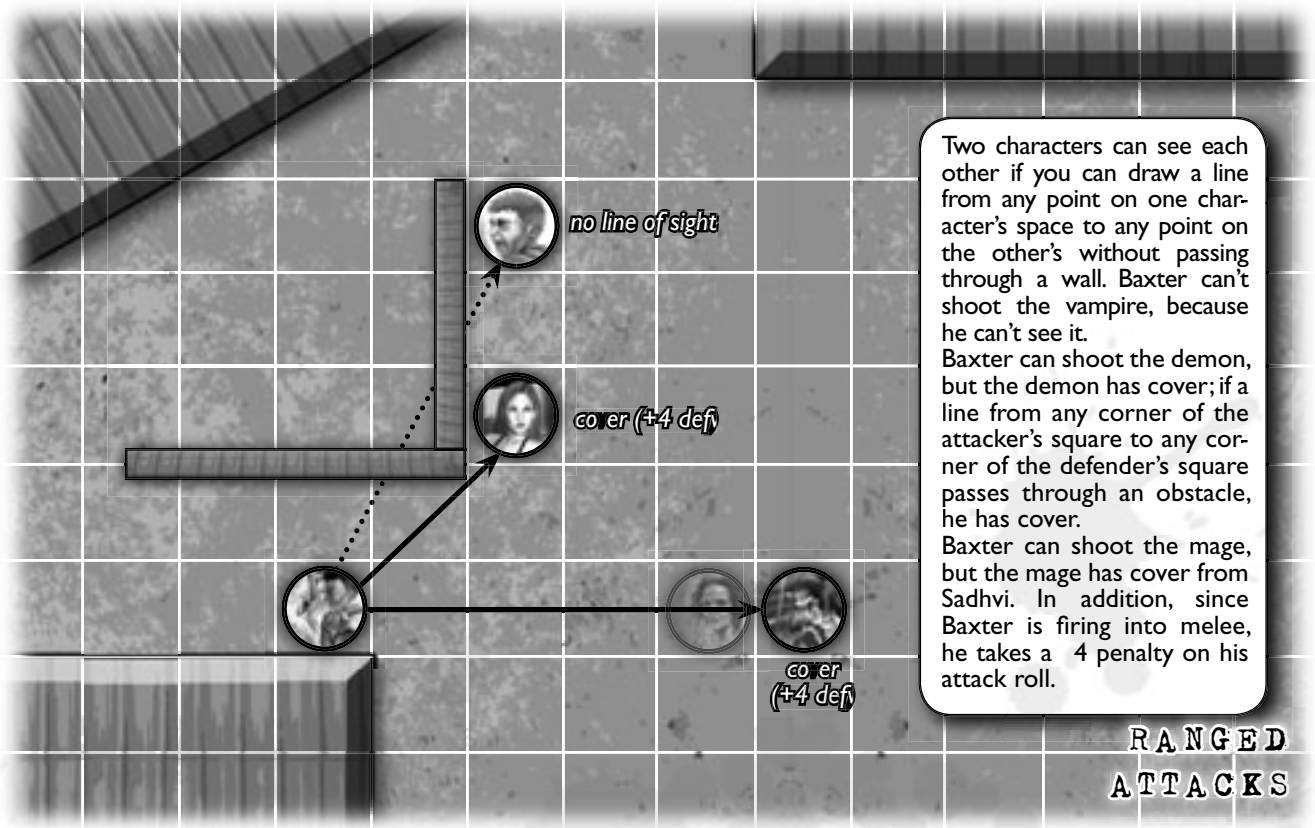
Attack modifiers in the equation above consist of the character's base attack bonus, size adjustment, Strength modifier, and any other bonuses that apply to the attack roll.

If the character is attacking an armed opponent while unarmed, he provokes an immediate attack of opportunity from the target, which is resolved before his own attack (see "Attacks of Opportunity," below). Note that under certain circumstances (such as the Improved Unarmed Strike feat), a character attacking without a weapon is still considered "armed."

Ranged Attacks

The character attacks an opponent in his line of sight, within range of his ranged weapon. A target is considered to be in line of sight if no obstructions between the character and the target grant 100 percent cover. The maximum range for a thrown weapon is five range increments; for projectile weapons it is ten range increments.

Attack modifiers consist of the character's base attack bonus, size adjustment, Dexterity modifier, and any other bonuses that apply to the attack roll. Each range increment of distance between the character and the target after the first imposes a penalty, as per the weapon description in Chapter 6: Equipment.



A character who fires or throws a ranged weapon at a target that is engaged in melee with an ally takes a –4 penalty on his attack roll. This penalty represents the difficulty of aiming at the target while avoiding hitting an ally in close proximity. Two characters are engaged in melee if they are each other's enemies and if either threatens the other. (A held, unconscious, or otherwise immobilized character is not considered engaged unless he is actually being attacked.)

If the target (or the part of the target that the character is aiming at, if it's a big target) is at least 10 feet away from the nearest ally, the character can avoid the –4 penalty, even if the target is engaged in melee with an ally.

The character can fire into the dark or at an invisible creature and hope to hit something. The character must guess which 5-foot-by-5-foot area he is firing into (which may or may not be where the unseen target is), and then he still has a 50 percent chance to miss outright, even if the attack roll succeeds.

Full Attack

If a character gets more than one attack per action, he must use the full attack action to make those additional attacks. A character does not need to specify the targets of the attacks ahead of time. He can see how the earlier attacks turn out before assigning targets to the later ones.

A character may make more than one attack in a round due to having a high base attack bonus, using two weapons, or employing certain feats as or abilities (like some effects of New Power spell components). A character who gets multiple attacks based on his base attack bonus must make the attacks in order from highest bonus to lowest. Otherwise, multiple attacks can be made in whatever order the character wishes.

The character may take a 5-foot step before, after, or between the attacks. This is not considered a move action. After a character's first attack, if he has not yet taken a 5-foot step, he can decide to move instead of making his remaining attacks.

The character uses each attack to attack an opponent in a space that character threatens or, in the case of a ranged weapon, at opponents within range and in line of sight.

Touch Attacks

For a touch attack, it is important only to touch a foe, not necessarily to wound or penetrate armor. Touch attacks come in two types: melee touch attacks and ranged touch attacks. A character can score critical hits with either type of attack. An opponent's Defense against a touch attack does not include any natural bonus. The target's size modifier, Dexterity modifier, class bonus, and deflection bonus (if any) all apply normally.

Fighting Defensively

A character can choose to fight defensively when taking either an attack or full attack action (either melee or ranged). If a character does so, he takes a –4 penalty on all attacks in a round to gain a +2 dodge bonus to Defense for the same round.

Attacks of Opportunity

Sometimes an opponent takes an action that gives a character a "free attack," because the action exposes the opponent or is so distracting that he opens himself to attack. This is called an *attack of opportunity*. Only characters who are not flat footed can make attacks of opportunity.

Threatened Area

A character *threatens* the area into which he can make a melee attack, even when it is not his action. An enemy that takes certain actions while in a threatened area may provoke an attack of opportunity from a character.

A Small or Medium character normally has a 5-foot threat radius. "Reach weapons" and "natural reach" can change the threatened area. For example, a Large creature might have a reach of 10 feet rather than 5 feet.

Provoking Attacks of Opportunity . . .

A character can provoke an attack of opportunity from an opponent in a couple different ways:

. . . By Moving

A character usually provokes an attack of opportunity by moving from one place within a foe's threatened area to another part of the same foe's threatened area or by moving out of the threatened area.

If all a character does during his turn is make a normal move or a double move (not a run), the space that he started out in is not considered threatened. This means that, unless the foe has reach, it's safe for a character to withdraw from an adjacent foe — assuming he does nothing else that round. If the adjacent foe does have reach, running away is not guaranteed to be safe, because while the space where a character starts the move is safe, the next space (threatened by the creature with reach) is not.

If a character's entire move for the round is 5 feet, this 5-foot move does not provoke an attack of opportunity.

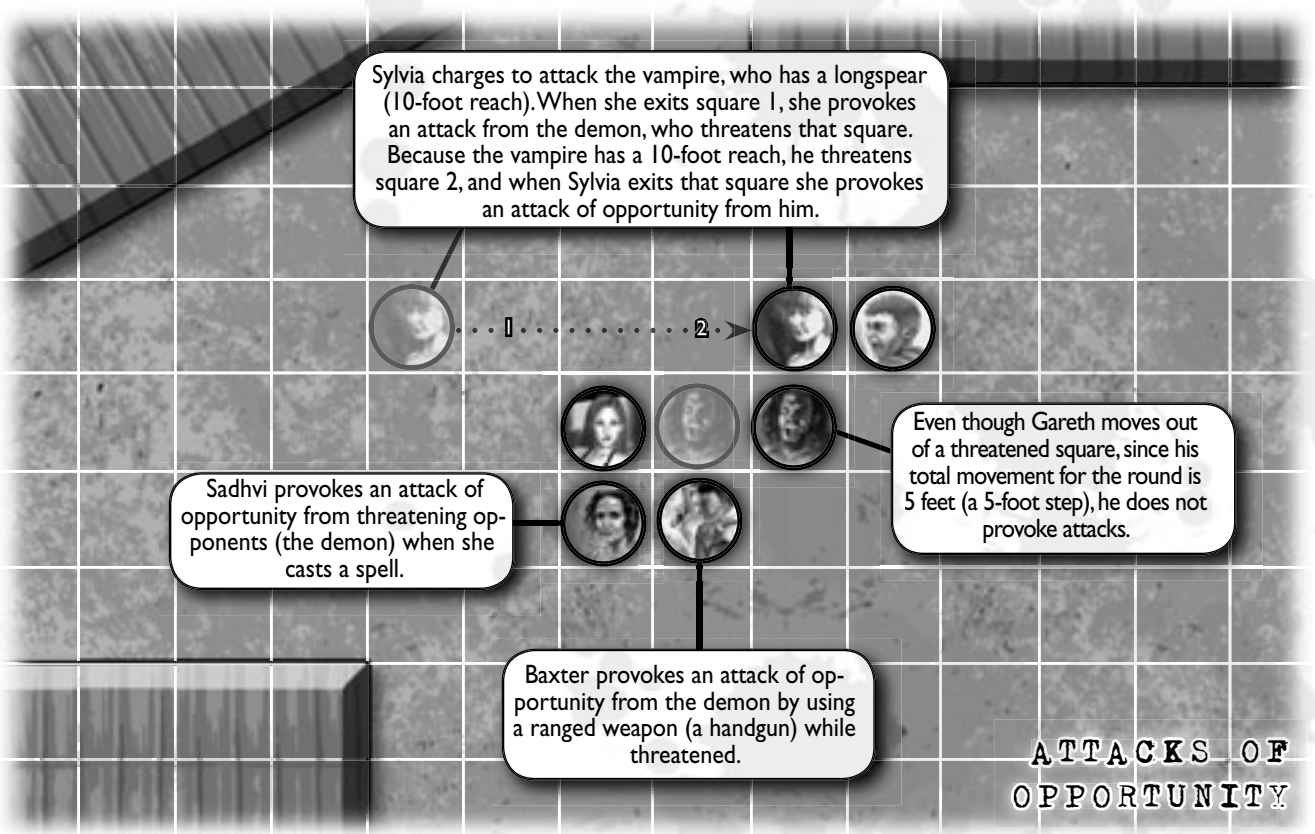
. . . By Taking an Action

Some kinds of actions, such as casting a spell, provoke attacks of opportunity. For details, see the rules for each type of action, below.

Making an Attack of Opportunity

An attack of opportunity is a single melee attack, and a character can make only one per round. She does not have to make an attack of opportunity if she doesn't want to. She makes the attack of opportunity at her normal base attack bonus. She does so immediately, without waiting for her normal turn in the initiative order.

If a character provokes an attack of opportunity while more than one foe threatens her, all the foes threatening her may attempt an attack of opportunity against her that round, as long as they have not already used up their opportunity attacks for the round.



ATTACKS OF OPPORTUNITY

TABLE 7–7: ATTACK ROLL MODIFIERS

Circumstance	Melee Mod.	Ranged Mod.
Attacker flanking defender*	+2	—
Attacker on higher ground	+1	+0
Attacker prone	–4	+0†
Attacker invisible	+2‡	+2‡
Defender sitting or kneeling	+2	–2
Defender prone	+4	–4
Defender stunned, cowering, or off balance	+2‡	+2‡
Defender climbing	+2‡	+2‡
Defender surprised or flat footed	+0‡	+0‡
Defender running	+0‡	–2‡
Defender grappling (attacker not)	+0‡	+0**
Defender pinned	+4‡	–4‡
Defender has cover	see "Cover"	
Defender concealed or invisible	see "Concealment"	
Defender helpless	see "Helpless Defenders"	

* A character flanks a defender when he has an ally on the opposite side of the defender, and that ally threatens the defender.

† Characters can't use thrown weapons while prone.

‡ The defender loses any Dexterity bonus to Defense.

** When someone makes a ranged attack against two or more grappling characters, roll randomly to see which grappling character is struck. The character attacked also loses any Dexterity bonus to Defense. The GM may rule that larger grappling characters more likely to be struck.

Attack Roll Modifiers

Use these adjustments, depending on the circumstances, whenever a character makes a melee, ranged, full, or other type of standard action.

Helpless Defenders

A character attempting a melee attack against a helpless defender gets a +4 circumstance bonus on his attack roll. A ranged attack against a helpless character confers no special bonus. A helpless defender has a Dexterity score of 0. Foes can make coup de grace attacks against helpless defenders; see below.

Two-Weapon Fighting

If a normal character wields a second weapon (fights two handed), he can make one extra attack per round with that weapon. Gaining the extra attack from fighting with two weapons always requires the use of the full-attack action.

Two-weapon fighting is very difficult, however, causing the character to take a –6 penalty for regular attacks with the first hand and a –10 penalty to the attack with the off hand. A character can reduce these stiff penalties with the Two-Weapon Fighting feat and/or using a light weapon in his off hand.

Note that these penalties apply when a character wields two weapons in his hands; natural weapons, like claws, follow different rules; see the "Natural Weapons" sidebar, below.

Double Weapons

A character can use a double weapon, such as a staff or a rifle with a bayonet, to make an extra attack as if he were fighting with two weapons. The penalties apply as if the off-hand weapon were light. If the character does not elect to take the extra attack, he suffers no penalty for fighting with two weapons.

Gaining the extra attack from fighting with two weapons always requires the use of the full attack action, even when using a double weapon.

Cover and Concealment

Depending on the situation, a character may gain bonuses or suffer penalties due to cover. The GM judges what bonuses and penalties apply.

TABLE 7–8: TWO-WEAPON FIGHTING PENALTIES

Condition	Primary Hand	Off Hand
Normal	–6	–10
Off-hand weapon is light	–4	–8
Two-Weapon Fighting feat	–4	–6
Off-hand weapon is light and Two-Weapon Fighting feat	–2	–2

Stacking Modifiers

You cannot add together two bonuses with the same name and apply them both to your Defense, ability score, ability check, skill check, attack roll, combat action, saving throw, or other action. Thus, two enhancement bonuses of +2 do not "stack" to make a modifier of +4 to your check. However, because they are different bonus types, an enhancement bonus of +2 and a competence bonus of +2 stack to make a modifier of +4.

This rule has exceptions. Circumstance bonuses always stack together. Dodge bonuses to Defense always stack as well. If you receive a bonus that does not have a name, it always stacks with all other modifiers, even other bonuses without names.

Cover

Cover, such as a tree or low wall, provides a bonus to a character's Defense and Reflex saving throws. The more cover a character has, the bigger the bonus.

Degree of Cover: The GM determines the value of cover by subjectively assessing how much protection it offers a character.

Cover Reflex Save Bonus: Add this bonus on Reflex saves against attacks that affect an area, like explosions. For nine-tenths cover, a character also effectively has Improved Evasion (successful Reflex saving throws for half damage result in no damage, and failed saves result in half damage). These bonuses, however, apply only to attacks that originate or spread out from a point on the other side of the cover.

Degree of Cover	Cover Reflex	Cover Defense
1/4	+2	+1
1/2	+4	+2
3/4	+7	+3
9/10	+10	+4*
Total	—	—

* Character takes half damage upon failing the save, no damage on a success.

Cover and Attacks of Opportunity

An attacker can't make an attack of opportunity against a character with one-half or better cover.

Cover and Reach Weapons

If a character is using a reach weapon, such as a long-spear, someone standing between the attacker and the target provides cover to the target. Generally, if both the other characters are the same size, the one farther from the attacker has one-half cover (+4 bonus to Defense).

Striking the Cover Instead of a Missed Target

Should it ever become important to know whether an attacker actually struck the cover instead of the intended target on a miss (for example, if your buddy is standing between you and the vampire), the GM determines whether the attack roll would have hit the target without the cover. If the attack roll result was low enough to have missed the target with cover but high enough to have hit it without the cover, the attack did strike the object used as cover. This information can prove important to know in cases where a character uses another character as cover. In such a case, if the attack strikes the cover and the attack roll result exceeds the covering character's Defense, the covering character takes the damage intended for the target.

If the covering character has a Dexterity bonus, class bonus, or dodge bonus to Defense, and this bonus keeps him from being hit, then the attack hits the original target instead — the covering character dodged out of the way and didn't provide any cover after all. A covering character can choose not to apply his Dexterity bonus, class bonus, and/or his dodge bonus to Defense, if he actually seeks to take the damage to safeguard the covered character.

Concealment

Concealment takes place when nothing physically blocks a blow or shot but something interferes with an attack's accuracy.

Concealment	Example	Miss Chance
1/4	Light fog, moderate darkness, light foliage	10%
1/2	Dense fog at 5 feet	20%
3/4	Dense foliage	30%
9/10	Near total darkness	40%
Total	Attacker blind, target invisible, total darkness , dense fog at 10 feet	50%

Concealment is subjectively measured according to how well concealed the defender is. Concealment always depends on the attacker's point of view.

Concealment Miss Chance: Concealment gives the target of a successful attack a chance that the attacker missed thanks to the concealment. If the attacker hits, the target must make a miss chance percentile roll (d%) to avoid being struck. When multiple concealment conditions apply to a defender, use the one that would produce the highest miss chance. Do not add the miss chances together.

Dealing Damage

If the attack roll result equals or exceeds the target's Defense, the attack succeeds, and the attacker deals damage to the defender. Roll the appropriate damage for the attacker's weapon, according to the damage rating listed for the weapon in Chapter 6: Equipment.

Damage with a melee weapon is always calculated as follows:

Natural Weapons

Some creatures — including vampires and werewolves and horrible beasts that wander out of the Conflagration — have natural weapons like bites and claws.

Natural weapons are weapons that are physically a part of a creature. A creature making a melee attack with a natural weapon is considered armed and does not provoke attacks of opportunity. Likewise, it threatens any space it can reach. Creatures do not receive additional attacks from a high base attack bonus when using natural weapons. The number of attacks a creature can make with its natural weapons depends on the type of the attack — generally, a creature can make one bite attack, one attack per claw or tentacle, one gore attack, one sting attack, or one slam attack (although Large creatures with arms or armlike limbs can make a slam attack with each arm).

Unless otherwise noted, a natural weapon threatens a critical hit on a natural attack roll of 20.

When a creature has more than one natural weapon, one of them (or sometimes a pair or set of them) is the primary weapon. All the creature's remaining natural weapons are secondary.

The primary weapon is given in the creature's Atk entry, and the primary weapon or weapons is given first in the creature's Full Atk entry. A creature's primary natural weapon is its most effective natural attack, usually by virtue of the creature's physiology, training, or innate talent with the weapon. An attack with a primary natural weapon uses the creature's full attack bonus. Attacks with secondary natural weapons are less effective and are made with a –5 penalty on the attack roll, no matter how many there are. This penalty applies even when the creature makes a single attack with the secondary weapon as part of the attack action or as an attack of opportunity.

If the creature's primary (or only) natural attack is a bite, add one and one-half times the creature's Strength bonus on damage rolls with it.

Apply only one-half the creature's Strength bonus on damage rolls with secondary weapons.

If the creature wields a manufactured weapon as well (such as a club or pistol) and fights with it in the same round as natural weapon, the manufactured weapon is considered primary and all other attacks are secondary. The creature gets multiple attacks with the manufactured weapon if it has a high enough base attack bonus.

Weapon's damage (expressed as dice) + wielder's Strength modifier + other bonuses (Weapon Specialization feat, for example)

Damage with a ranged weapon is normally only the weapon's damage (expressed as dice) unless it is a thrown weapon or bow, in which case the wielder's Strength modifier also applies.

Sometimes, bonus damage is expressed as additional damage dice. This occurs in the case of sneak attacks and some other abilities, such as automatic or semiautomatic fire (see the burst fire and double tap actions under "Actions in the Round," *Action Descriptions*, below).

Deduct the damage from the target character's current hit points.

Minimum Weapon Damage

If penalties to damage bring the damage result below 1, a hit still deals 1 point of damage.

Fighting with Two Weapons

When you fight with two weapons or a double weapon and deal damage with the extra attack, add only half your Strength bonus to the damage roll for the extra attack.

Wielding a Weapon Two-Handed

When you deal damage with a weapon you wield two-handed, add one and one-half times your Strength modifier to the damage roll. Light weapons don't get this higher Strength bonus when used two-handed.

Unarmed Strike Damage

An unarmed strike from a Medium character deals 1d3 points of damage (plus a character's Strength modifier, as normal). All unarmed strike damage is nonlethal damage. Unarmed strikes count as light weapons (for purposes of two-weapon attack penalties and so on).

Dealing Normal Damage: A character can specify that his unarmed strike will deal normal damage before she makes an attack roll, but in this case, the attack takes a –4 penalty.

Critical Hits

When a character makes an attack roll and gets a natural 20, he hits regardless of the target's Defense, and he has scored a critical threat. The hit might be a critical hit. To find out if it's a critical hit, he immediately makes a critical roll — another attack roll with all the same modifiers as the one he just made. If the critical roll also results in a hit against the target's Defense, the character's original hit is a critical hit. If the critical roll misses, then his hit is just a regular hit.

A critical hit means that the attack deals both normal damage and Constitution damage, as follows:

• Damage from the *die roll* (not any bonuses to it) is Constitution damage, not hit point damage. For example, Gareth bites a human opponent with his mighty werewolf jaws, which deal 1d6+7 damage. He hits. The 1d6 deals damage to his opponent's Constitution score, rather than his hit points.

• Bonus damage, from any source, applies to the opponent's hit points, as normal. Continuing the example above, Gareth's opponent takes 1d6 points of Constitution damage and 7 points of hit point damage.

• Most supernatural creatures — including vampires, demons, mages under the effects of an *unliving vigor* spell, and Awakened and werewolves with the Supernatural Toughness feat — are resistant to damage. Critical hits do not deal Constitution damage to these characters; critical hits work differently against them. In addition to taking normal hit point damage (e.g., 1d6+7), the character is also stunned for 1 round. A stunned creature drops everything he holds, can't take actions, takes a –2 penalty to AC, and loses his Dexterity bonus to Defense (if any).

Exception: Bonus damage represented as extra dice, such as with a sneak attack, applies to hit points, not Constitution, on a critical hit.

Nonlethal Damage: If an attack that deals nonlethal damage scores a critical hit, it does not deal Constitution damage. It deals normal damage. In addition, the target must make a Fortitude save (DC = twice nonlethal damage dealt) or be stunned for 1 round. Creatures immune to nonlethal damage are, of course, immune to the effects of nonlethal critical hits.

Increased Threat Range: Normally, a character threatens a critical hit on a roll of 20. Sometimes a character's threat range is greater than 20. Using a sword, for example, a character's threat range is 19–20. In such cases, a roll below 20 is not an automatic hit. Any attack roll that doesn't result in a hit is not a threat.

Death, Dying and Healing

As a character takes damage, subtract that damage from the character's hit points.

Effects of Hit Point Damage

In the descriptions below, "M" equals the character's Constitution modifier (if above 0, otherwise it is 0) and "S" equals his Constitution score.

• As long as a character has at least 1 hit point, he can act normally.

• Between 0 and –M hit points, a character is disabled.

• Between –M and –S hit points, a character is dying.

• At lower than –S, a character is dead.

Disabled

Hit Points ≤ 0 but ≥ Negative Constitution Bonus

When a character's current hit point total drops to a number between 0 and his Constitution bonus (if any) expressed as a negative number, he becomes disabled. He is not unconscious, but is close to it. He can take only a standard *or* a move action each round, and if he performs any strenuous activity, he takes 1 point of damage after the completing the act. Strenuous activities include running, attacking, or using any ability that requires physical exertion or mental concentration. A disabled character makes all attack and damage rolls, saving throws, and checks at a –2 circumstance penalty.

If the character has a Constitution bonus, any hit point total from 0 to a negative number equal to his Constitution bonus results in disabled status. This means that a character with a +3 Constitution bonus has a disabled range of 0 to –3. If the character at 0 hit points takes a strenuous action, his hit points drop to –1, and he remains disabled. If he drops to –4 hp, the character is dying. A character with no Constitution bonus or one with a Constitution penalty becomes disabled at 0 hit points and is dying at –1 hit point.

Dying

Hit Points < Negative Constitution Bonus but ≥ Negative Constitution Score

When a character's current hit point total drops to a negative number between his Constitution bonus +1 and his negative Constitution score (inclusive), the character is dying. He immediately falls unconscious and can take no actions. For example, a character with a Constitution score of 16 has a Constitution bonus of +3. Should that character's hit points drop to anywhere between –4 to –16, he is dying.

At the end of each round, starting with the round in which the character began dying, roll d% to see whether he stabilizes. The character has a percentage chance equal to his Constitution score to stabilize. So a character with a Constitution 16 has a 16 percent chance to stabilize. If he doesn't, he loses 1 hit point. If the character's hit points drop to a negative number lower than his Constitution score, he is dead.

An ally can stabilize a dying character with a Heal check. The Difficulty Class for the check is equal to 10 + the character's number of negative hit points. Thus, stabilizing a character with –11 hit points requires a DC 21 Heal check.

If any sort of healing cures the dying character of even 1 point of damage, he stops losing hit points and becomes stable.

Healing that raises the dying character's hit points back to equal his negative Constitution bonus makes him conscious and disabled. Healing that raises the character's hit points to 1 or more makes him fully functional again, just as if he had never been disabled or dying.

Dead

Hit Points < Negative Constitution Score

If a character's hit points drop to a negative number lower than his Constitution score, he is dead. A character can also die from taking ability damage or suffering ability drain that reduces his Constitution to 0.

Stable Characters and Recovery

An hour after a tended, dying character becomes stable, roll d%. The character has a percentage chance equal to his Constitution score of becoming conscious, at which point he becomes disabled. If the character remains unconscious, he has the same chance to revive and rise to disabled status every hour. Even if unconscious, the character recovers hit points naturally (see below). He returns to normal when his hit points rise to 1 or higher.

A character who stabilizes on his own (by making the d% roll while dying) and has no one to tend him still loses hit points, just more slowly. The character has a percentage chance equal to his Constitution score each hour of becoming conscious. Each time he misses the hourly roll to become conscious, he loses 1 hit point. The character also does not recover hit points through natural healing.

Even once the character becomes conscious and disabled, if unaided he still will not recover hit points naturally. Instead, each day an unaided character has a percentage chance equal to his Constitution score to start recovering hit points naturally (starting with the day he regains consciousness); otherwise, he loses 1 hp.

Once an unaided character starts recovering hit points naturally, he is no longer in danger of losing hit points (even if his current hit point total is negative). Thus, a character horribly injured and left for dead may still recover and crawl back to safety. In the World of Darkness, though, characters are often better off dying than being taken alive.

Healing

Several modes of healing are open to characters. A character can never get back more hit points through healing than he lost.

Natural Healing

A character recovers 1 hit point per character level per day of rest. If she undergoes complete bed rest (doing nothing for an entire day), she recovers one and one-half times her character level in hit points. A character making a DC 15 Heal check on behalf of a wounded character doubles the number of hit points a wounded character regains from resting.

Supernatural Healing

Various abilities, including magic, can heal hit points. Each use of the spell or ability restores a different number of hit points. Even supernatural healing can't raise a character's current hit points higher than his hit point maximum.

Healing Ability Damage

Temporary ability damage returns at the rate of 1 point per day of rest (light activity, no combat or use of supernatural abilities). Complete bed rest restores 2 points per day.

Temporary Hit Points

Certain effects give a character temporary hit points. When a character gains temporary hit points, note his current hit point total. When the temporary hit points go away, the character's hit points drop back to that total. If the character's hit points are already below that total at that time, all the temporary hit points have already been lost and the character's hit point score does not drop.

Lost temporary hit points cannot be restored the way real hit points can be.

Nonlethal Damage

Sometimes a character gets roughed up or weakened. This sort of stress won't kill a character, but it can knock him out or make him pass out.

Nonlethal damage is *nonlethal*. If a character takes sufficient nonlethal damage, he falls unconscious, but doesn't die.

Dealing Nonlethal Damage

Certain attacks deal nonlethal damage. Other stresses, such as heat or exhaustion, also deal nonlethal damage. When a character takes nonlethal damage, keep a running total of how much has accumulated. Do not deduct the nonlethal damage number from the character's current hit points — it is not "real" damage.

Instead, when a character's nonlethal damage is between his current hit points and his current hit points + his Constitution modifier (if positive), he is staggered. When it exceeds this number, he goes unconscious. It doesn't matter *how* the nonlethal damage equals or exceeds his current hit points (e.g., because the nonlethal damage has gone up or because the character's current hit points have gone down).

A character can use a melee weapon that deals normal damage to deal nonlethal damage instead, but he takes a –4 penalty on the attack roll. A character can use a weapon that deals nonlethal damage, including an unarmed strike, to deal normal damage instead, but he likewise takes a –4 penalty on the attack roll.

Staggered and Unconscious

Staggered: ***Nonlethal Damage ≥ Current Hit Points but ≤ Current Hit Points + Constitution Modifier***

Unconscious: ***Nonlethal Damage > Current Hit Points + Constitution Modifier***

A staggered character is so badly weakened or roughed up that he can take only a standard action *or* a move action each round (but not both). A character ceases being staggered when his current hit points exceed his nonlethal damage again.

An unconscious character is helpless.

Each full minute that a character is unconscious, he has a percentage chance equal to his Constitution score to wake up and become staggered until his hit points exceed his nonlethal damage again. Nothing bad happens to a character who fails this roll.

Healing Nonlethal damage

A character heals nonlethal damage at the rate of 1 hit point per hour per character level. When a spell or a supernatural ability cures hit point damage, it also removes an equal amount of nonlethal damage, if any.

Actions in the Round

In general, in a round, a character can take a *move action* and a *standard action* (in any order). Alternatively, he can take two move actions (often called a "double move") or a *full-round action*. Some move actions don't actually involve a character moving his speed — these are sometimes called "move-equivalent actions." So, a character could take a move-equivalent action and a move action, a move-equivalent action and a standard action, or two move-equivalent actions in a round.

If a character does not take a move action in a round, he can almost always take a simple *5-foot step* in any direction.

Action Types

Below are further details on the various kinds of actions characters can perform.

Free Action: A character can perform one or more *free actions*, like talking or dropping something held, while taking another action normally. However, the GM puts reasonable limits on what a character can really do for free.

Move Action: A character can move his speed. If a character takes a move action, he cannot also take a 5-foot step that round.

Other actions, usually just called move actions but occasionally "move-equivalent actions," take the place of a move action. Thus, they can be coupled with a standard action, a move action, or another move-equivalent action. A character can normally also take a 5-foot step.

Opening a door or pulling something out of a backpack is a move (or move-equivalent) action.

Standard Action: A standard action is usually the main focus of a character's turn, such as an attack. A character can take a move action in the same round as a standard action, but he can't take two standard actions.

Full-Round Action: A full-round action consumes all a character's effort during a round. Taking the full attack action (see below) is a full-round action. The only movement a character can take during a full-round action is a 5-foot step before, during, or after the action. Some full-round actions, like climbing, do not allow a 5-foot step. The character can also perform free actions.

Not an Action: Some activities are not even considered free actions. They literally don't take any time at all to do and are considered an inherent part of doing something else. Using a character's bonus of +1 to hit gained through the Weapon Focus feat is not an action, it's just a part of a standard action.

Action Descriptions

This section describes the actions you'll see used often during encounters in the game. Each description follows the format below:

Name: The name of the action.

Type: What type of action is it? Not an action, free action, move, standard, or full-round? If the type of action is "Standard (attack)," then it's normally a standard action, but you can perform it in lieu of a normal attack. For example, you can perform it at the end of a charge, you can perform it as an attack of opportunity, and if you have iterative attacks due to a high base attack bonus, you can perform these actions more than once per round.

Attack of Opportunity: Does this action type grant an attack of opportunity? Yes, no, or varies, depending on the description.

Description: A brief description of the action.

Aid Another

Standard; Attack of Opportunity: No

If you threaten an opponent engaged in melee combat with an ally, you can attempt to aid the ally as a standard action. You make an attack roll against Defense 10. If you succeed, your ally gains either a +2 circumstance bonus to attack the opponent or a +2 circumstance bonus to Defense against that opponent (your choice).

You can also aid another on other actions that more than one character can try at once, such as breaking down a door with Strength checks, convincing someone of a lie with Bluff checks, tending wounds with a Heal check, and so on.

Attack (Melee)

Standard (attack); Attack of Opportunity: No

You attack an opponent in a space that you threaten.

Attacking an armed opponent while unarmed provokes an immediate attack of opportunity from the target, which is resolved before your attack. Note that under certain circumstances, such as when a character has the Improved Unarmed Strike feat or when a mage casts a touch-range spell, the character attacking without a weapon is still considered "armed."

You can choose to fight defensively when taking the standard action. Doing so imposes a –4 penalty on all your attacks in that round but grants you a +2 dodge bonus to Defense for the same round

Attack (Ranged)

Standard (attack); Attack of Opportunity: Yes

You attack an opponent in your line of sight, within range of your ranged weapon.

You can choose to fight defensively when taking the standard action. Doing so imposes a –4 penalty on all your attacks in that round but grants you a +2 dodge bonus to Defense for the same round.

Bull Rush

Standard; Attack of Opportunity: Yes

You can bull rush as a standard action or a charge action.

When you bull rush, you attempt to push an opponent straight back instead of attacking her. You only bull rush only an opponent who is one size category larger than you, the same size, or smaller.

Initiating a Bull Rush: First, you move into the defender's space. Moving in this way provokes an attack of opportunity from each foe that threatens you, probably including the defender. An attack of opportunity made by anyone other than the defender against you during a bull rush has a 25% chance of accidentally targeting the defender instead, and, likewise, an attack of opportunity against the defender by anyone other than you has a 25 percent chance of accidentally targeting you.

Opposed Strength Check: Second, you and the defender make opposed Strength checks. You each add a +4 bonus for each size category that you are above Medium or a –4 penalty for each size category that you are below Medium. You get a +2 charge bonus if attempting the bull rush at the end of a charge. The defender gets a +4 stability bonus if she has more than two legs or is otherwise exceptionally stable.

Bull Rush Results: If you beat the defender, you push her back 5 feet. If you wish to move with the defender, you can push her back up to an additional 1 foot for each point by which you exceed the defender's check result. However, you can't exceed your normal movement limit.

If you fail to beat the defender's Strength check, you move 5 feet straight back, as with a rebound or recoil. If that space is occupied, you fall prone in that space.

Burst Fire

Standard (attack); Attack of Opportunity: Yes

When using an automatic firearm with at least five bullets loaded, you may fire a short burst as a single attack against a single target. You take a –4 penalty on the attack roll and are flat footed for 1 round, but deal +2 dice of damage.

Firing a burst expends five bullets and you can do it only if the weapon has at least five bullets in it.

Cast a Quickened Spell

Free; Attack of Opportunity: No

A mage can use Metaspell components to reduce a spell's casting time to a free action. See the Metaspell component description in Chapter 5: Magic for more information.

Cast a Spell (Full-Round)

Full; Attack of Opportunity: Yes

A spell's casting time is a full-round action by default. A mage can take a 5-foot step before, during, or after casting such a spell, but otherwise cannot move.

The mage may attempt to cast a spell while on the defensive. Casting a spell while on the defensive does not provoke an attack of opportunity. It does require a Concentration check (DC = opponent's attack bonus [or 10, whichever is higher] + the value listed in the Concentration skill description). Failure means the spell fails.

Cast a Spell (Standard-Action)

Standard; Attack of Opportunity: Yes

A mage can use Metaspell components to reduce a spell's casting time to a standard action. In this case, the mage can move and then cast the spell, or cast the spell and then move.

A mage may attempt to cast a spell while on the defensive. Casting a spell while on the defensive does not provoke an attack of opportunity. It does require a Concentration check (DC = opponent's attack bonus [or 10, whichever is higher] + the value listed in the Concentration skill description). Failure means the spell fails.

Cease Concentration on a Spell

Free; Attack of Opportunity: No

Self explanatory.

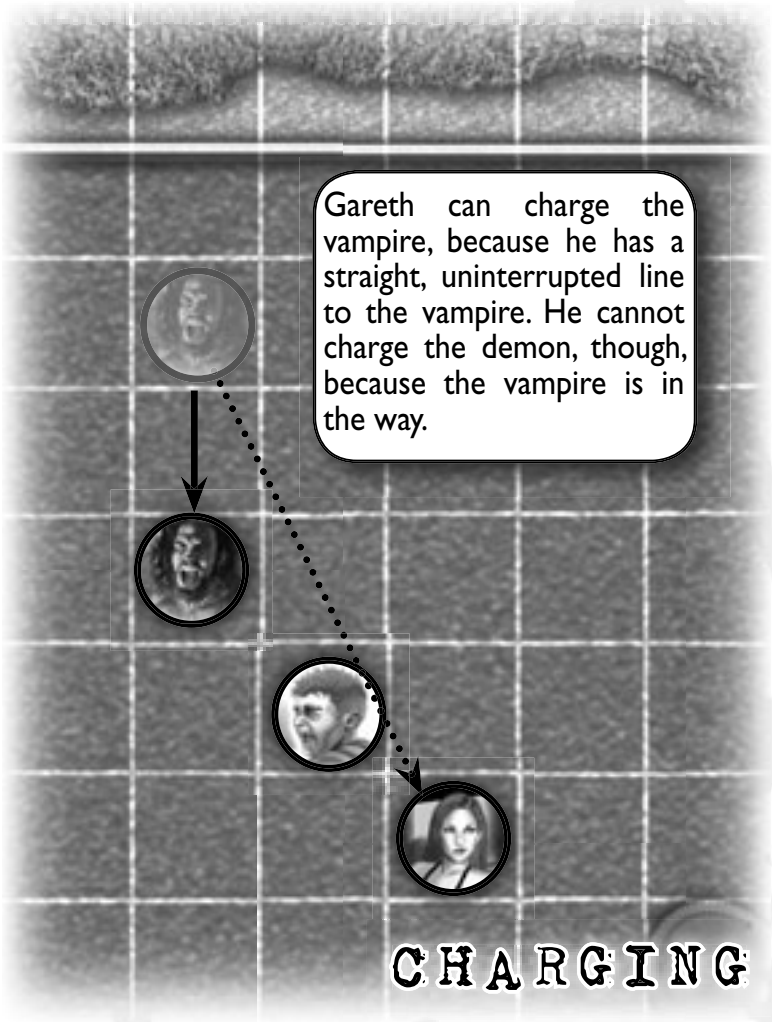
Charge

Full; Attack of Opportunity: No

If you charge, you must move before attacking, not after. You must move at least 10 feet and may move up to double your base speed. All movement must be in a straight line, with no backing up allowed. The charge stops as soon as you threaten the target. You can't run past the target and attack from another direction.

After moving, you may make a single melee attack or a bull rush. You get a +2 bonus on the attack roll. You also take a –2 penalty to Defense for 1 round.

A target can ready any piercing weapons, such as spears or bayonets, setting them to receive charges by using the ready action against receiving a charge. A weapon of this



type deals double damage if the readied attack succeeds (only the weapon's damage doubles, not other bonuses). A target cannot use a light weapon, such as a knife, in this way.

Climb

Full or Move; Attack of Opportunity: No

As a full-round action, you can climb at one-half your base speed. As a move action, you can climb at one-quarter your base speed.

Concentrate to Maintain or Redirect a Spell

Standard; Attack of Opportunity: No

Anything that could break your concentration when casting a spell can keep you from concentrating to maintain a spell.

If your concentration breaks, the spell ends.

Coup de Grace

Full; Attack of Opportunity: Yes

A coup de grace is a killing blow. You can use a melee weapon to deliver a coup de grace to a helpless foe. You can also use a firearm, crossbow, or bow, provided you are adjacent to the target. You automatically hit and score a critical hit. A target who survives the damage must make a Fortitude save (DC 10 + damage dealt) or die.

You can't deliver a coup de grace against an opponent that is immune to critical hits. This means humans can't deliver these killing blows to vampires and demons, but demons and vampires can (and often do) slay innocent humans in this way.

Delay

Not an Action; Attack of Opportunity: No

When you delay, you voluntarily reduce your initiative result for the rest of the combat. When your new, lower initiative count comes up later in the same round, you can act normally. You can specify this new initiative result or just wait until some time later in the round and act then, thus fixing your new initiative count at that point. You can even delay into the following round(s), waiting to take your action until just the right moment.

If multiple characters are delaying, the one with the highest initiative bonus (or highest Dexterity, in case of a tie) has the advantage. If two or more delaying characters both want to act on the same initiative count, the one with the highest bonus gets to go first. If two or more delaying characters are trying to go after the other, the one with the highest initiative bonus gets to go last.

Disarm

Standard (attack); Attack of Opportunity: Yes

You and an adjacent target make opposed attack rolls with your respective weapons. (You must use a melee weapon to attempt a disarm.) If the weapons are different sizes, the character with the larger weapon gets a bonus on the attack roll of +4 for each difference in size category. If the target is using a weapon in two hands, she gets an additional +4 bonus.

If you beat the target, the target is disarmed. If you attempted the disarm action unarmed, you now have the weapon. Otherwise, it drops to the ground at the target's feet.

If you fail, the target may make an attempt to disarm you as an immediate, free action.

Dismiss a Spell

Standard; Attack of Opportunity: No

A caster ends one of his own spell effects; see Chapter 5: Magic, "Spells," *Steps for Spellcasting*.

Double Move

Full; Attack of Opportunity: Varies

You can move up to double your base speed. The space where you begin the move is not considered threatened, and

therefore enemies do not get attacks of opportunity for your move from that space.

Double Tap

Standard (attack); Attack of Opportunity: Yes

When using a semiautomatic firearm with at least two bullets loaded, you may fire two bullets as a single attack against a single target. You take a –2 penalty on this attack and are flat footed for 1 round, but deal +1 die of damage with a successful hit.

Firing a double tap uses two bullets and you can do it only if the weapon has at least two bullets in it.

Draw a Weapon

Move; Attack of Opportunity: No

If you have a base attack bonus of +1 or higher, you can combine this action with a regular move. If you have the Two-Weapon Fighting feat, you can draw two light or one-handed weapons in the time it would normally take you to draw one.

Drop an Item

Free; Attack of Opportunity: No

The item you drop falls to the floor in your space.

Drop to the Floor

Free; Attack of Opportunity: No

A character who drops to the floor is prone.

Enter or Exit a Vehicle

Move; Attack of Opportunity: Yes

Self explanatory. Entering or exiting some vehicles takes another sort of action; see the vehicle descriptions in Chapter 6: Equipment.

Extinguish Flames

Full; Attack of Opportunity: No

This action extinguishes small fires on equipment, furniture, or you. Larger blazes require the use of water, sand, or some other material to snuff the flames.

Feint

Standard; Attack of Opportunity: No

This action is a specialized use of the Bluff skill. See the Bluff description in Chapter 3: Skills for more details.

Full Attack

Full; Attack of Opportunity: No

If you get more than one attack per round, you must use the full attack action to take those additional attacks. You may take a 5-foot step before, after, or between the attacks.

If you are attacking an armed opponent while unarmed, you provoke an immediate attack of opportunity from the target, which resolves before your own attack. Note that under certain circumstances, such as when a character has the Improved Unarmed Strike feat or when a mage casts a touch-range spell, the character attacking without a weapon is still considered "armed."

You can choose to fight defensively when taking the full attack action. Doing so imposes a –4 penalty on all attacks in that round but grants you a +2 dodge bonus to Defense for the same round.

Grapple

Varies; Attack of Opportunity: Yes

Grappling means wrestling and struggling hand to hand.

Repeatedly in a grapple, you need to make opposed grapple checks against your opponent. A grapple check is something like a melee attack roll. Your grapple check is:

Base attack bonus + Strength modifier + special size modifier

Special Size Modifier: The special size modifiers for a grapple check are as follows: Colossal +16, Gargantuan +12, Huge +8, Large +4, Medium +0, Small –4, Tiny –8, Diminutive –12, Fine –16. Use this number in place of the normal size modifier you would use when making an attack roll.

To start a grapple, you first need to grab and hold the target. Attempting to start a grapple is the equivalent of making a melee attack. If you get multiple attacks in a round, you can attempt to start a grapple multiple times (at successively lower base attack bonuses).

Step 1: Attack of Opportunity: You provoke an attack of opportunity from the target you're trying to grapple. If the attack of opportunity deals damage, you fail to start the grapple.

Step 2: Grab: You make a melee touch attack to grab the target. If you fail to hit the target, you fail to start the grapple.

Step 3: Hold: Make an opposed grapple check. If you succeed, you have started the grapple and deal damage to the target as if with an unarmed strike. If you lose the opposed check, you fail to start the grapple.

You automatically lose an attempt to hold if the target is two or more size categories larger than you (but you can still attempt to grab such a target, if that's all you want to do).

Step 4: Move In: To maintain the grapple, you must move into the target's space. This is not a part of your move (it's free). Moving, as normal, provokes attacks of opportunity from threatening foes, but not from your target. If you cannot move into the opponent's space, the hold is breaks.

Step 5: Grappling: You and the target are now grappling.

If your target is already grappling someone else, then you can use an attack to start a grapple, as above, except that the target doesn't get an attack of opportunity against you, and your grab automatically succeeds. You still must make a successful opposed grapple check to deal damage, and still must move in to be part of the grapple.

When you are grappling (regardless of who started the grapple), you can make an opposed grapple check as an attack. If you have multiple attacks in a round, you can grapple and then attempt one or more of these actions in the same round. Each is considered one attack.

If your grapple check succeeds, you can do one of the following:

Damage the Opponent: You deal damage as with an unarmed strike (1d3 points for Medium attackers, plus Strength modifiers). If you want to deal normal damage, you take a –4 penalty on the grapple check.

Pin: You can hold an opponent immobile for 1 round. (If you get multiple attacks, you can use subsequent attacks to damage the opponent. You can't use a weapon on a pinned opponent or attempt to damage or pin a second opponent while holding a pin on the first.) While a target is pinned, opponents other than you pinning her get a +4 bonus on attack rolls against her (but she is not helpless).

Break Another's Pin: You can break an opponent's hold over an ally.

Escape: You can escape the grapple. You can take whatever movement you get if you escape, once you are free. If more than one opponent is grappling you, however, your grapple check result has to beat all their check results for you to escape. (Opponents don't have to try holding you if they don't want to.)

You can make an opposed grapple check as a melee attack. If you win, you escape the pin but are still grappling (see below).

In addition to making opposed grapple checks, you have a few other options while grappling.

Attack with a Weapon One Size Category Smaller Than You: You can attack with a weapon one size category smaller than you (or smaller), an unarmed attack, or a natural weapon while grappling (but not while pinned or pinning). (For example, vampires bite their grappling opponents.) You can't attack with two weapons while grappling.

Other Actions While Grappling: Grappling characters have a few other options. These do not count as attacks, but as other types of actions, as described below:

Cast a Spell: You can cast a standard-action, still spell. You can do so only if you make a Concentration check opposed by your opponent's grapple check + a value determined by the spell's component cost (listed under the Concentration skill description in Chapter 3: Skills).

Wriggle Free: You can make an Escape Artist check (opposed by your opponent's grapple check) to get out of a grapple or out of being pinned (so that you are just being grappled). Doing so counts as a standard action; if you escape a grapple, you also can move in the same round. Size modifiers do not apply to you attempting to wriggle free or to the grappler attempting to stop you.

Draw a Weapon One Size Category Smaller Than You: If you make a successful grapple check, you can draw a weapon one size category smaller than you (or smaller) or an object of a similar size a move action.

Move: If you make a successful grapple check, you can move half your speed, bringing all those involved in the grapple with you. This is a standard action, and you gain a +4 bonus on your grapple check for this action if your opponent is pinned. You must have the carrying capacity to at least drag your opponent to accomplish this action (see the "Using Strength — Encumbrance" sidebar in Chapter 2: Character).

Multiple Grapplers: Several characters can be in a single grapple. Up to four characters can grapple a single opponent in a given round. Opponents that are one size category smaller than you count for half, opponents that are one size category larger than you count double, and opponents two or more size categories larger count quadruple.

Additional characters can help their friends with the aid another action.

Other Considerations: While you are grappling, your ability to attack others and defend yourself is limited.

No Threatened Area: You don't threaten any area while grappling.

No Dexterity Bonus: You lose your Dexterity bonus to Defense (if you have one) against opponents you aren't grappling. (You can still use the bonus against opponents you are grappling.)

Heal an Ally

Varies; Attack of Opportunity: Yes

This may involve a spell or the Heal skill.

Holster a Weapon

Move; Attack of Opportunity: Yes

If you have the Two-Weapon Fighting feat, you can holster two weapons on the same action.

Load

Move; Attack of Opportunity: Varies

You can load (or reload) a firearm (or other weapon) as a move action or while moving. If you are not proficient with the weapon you are reloading, you cannot do it while moving and it provokes attacks of opportunity.

Make Spellcraft Check or Counterspell Attempt

Free; Attack of Opportunity: No

Self explanatory. See Chapter 3: Skills and Chapter 5: Magic for more details.

Move a Heavy Object

Move; Attack of Opportunity: Yes

You pick up or push a boulder, topple a tall bookcase, or the like.

Open a Door

Move; Attack of Opportunity: No

You open a normal (unlocked, unstuck) door.

Overrun (Charge)

Standard; Attack of Opportunity: Yes

You can try to overrun as part of a charge action against an opponent that is one size category larger, the same size, or one size smaller than you. You can make only one attempt to overrun per charge.

An overrun takes place during the movement portion of a charge. With an overrun, you attempt to move through the opponent's area.

First, you must charge at least 10 feet in a straight line into the defender's space. Then the defender chooses either to avoid you or to block you. If she avoids you, you keep moving. (You can always move through the space occupied by someone who lets you by.) If the defender blocks you, make a trip attack against the defender (see "Trip an Opponent," below). If you trip the defender, you can continue the charge in a straight line as normal.

If you fail and are tripped in turn, you fall prone in the defender's space. If you fail but are not tripped, you must move 5 feet back the way you came. If that space is occupied, you fall prone in that space.

Pick up an Item

Move; Attack of Opportunity: Yes

You must be in the same space as the item you want to pick up.

Ready

Standard; Attack of Opportunity: No

The ready action lets you prepare to take an action later, after your turn is over but before your next one has begun.

Readying is a standard action, so you can move as well. Though it does not provoke an attack of opportunity, the action that you ready might.

You can ready any standard action. To ready an action, specify the action you will take and the conditions under which you will take it. (For example, "If I see the werewolf, I shout a warning then run away.") When those conditions are met, you may take the readied action. The readied action comes before the action that triggers it. For the rest of the fight, your initiative result remains the count on which you took the readied action, and you act immediately ahead of the creature whose action triggered the readied action.

If you take the readied action in a subsequent round, and the conditions are met before your normal initiative result, your initiative rises to that new point in the order of battle. You may then take the readied action, but whether you do or not, you do not get a regular action that round.

Ready to Interrupt Spellcasting

Standard; Attack of Opportunity: No

You can ready an attack against a character with the trigger, "If she starts casting a spell." If you damage the character or otherwise distract her, she may fail casting the spell (as determined by her Concentration check; see Chapter 3: Skills for more information).

Retrieve a Stored Item

Move; Attack of Opportunity: Yes

You can get something out of a backpack, a pocket, tucked in your boot, or from a box at your feet.

Run

Full; Attack of Opportunity: Yes

You can move up to four times your base speed in a straight line (or three times your base speed if you're wearing heavy armor). You lose any Dexterity bonus to Defense, since you can't avoid attacks.

You can run for a number of rounds equal to your Constitution score, but after that, you must make a DC 10 Constitution check to continue running. You must check again each round in which you continue to run; the check's Difficulty Class increases by 1 for each check you've made.

When you fail this check, you must stop running. If you run to this limit, you must rest for one minute (10 rounds) before running again. During a rest period, you can move no faster than a normal move.

Speak

Free; Attack of Opportunity: No

The GM may place limits on what you may reasonably communicate in a six-second combat round.

Stand up From Prone Position

Move; Attack of Opportunity: No

Self explanatory.

Start Full-Round Action

Standard; Attack of Opportunity: No

This action lets you start undertaking a miscellaneous full-round action, which you can complete the following round.

This option is normally used when you have been supernaturally slowed or are suffering some other condition that restricts you from taking full-round actions.

Strafe

Standard (attack); Attack of Opportunity: Yes

If a ranged weapon has an automatic rate of fire, you may set it on autofire and strafe an area. A strafe attack affects an area and everyone in it, not a specific creature. You target either a 10-foot-by-10-foot area or an area four 5-foot squares long and one square wide (that is, any four squares in a straight line). Make an attack roll; the targeted area has an effective Defense of 10, and you take a –4 penalty on the attack roll. You are also flat-footed for 1 round.

If the attack succeeds, every creature within the affected area must make a DC 13 Reflex save or take the weapon's damage.

A strafe attack shoots 10 bullets, and you can do it only if the weapon has at least 10 bullets in it.

Strike a Weapon

Standard; Attack of Opportunity: Yes

You can use a melee attack with a slashing or bludgeoning weapon to strike a weapon that your opponent is holding.

The attacking weapon must be no more than one size category smaller than the weapon attacked. Doing so provokes an attack of opportunity from the opponent, because you are diverting your attention from your opponent to her armaments.

Then you and the defender make opposed attack rolls. If you win, you have made a successful attack against the weapon and may roll damage. See "Breaking Items and Attacking Objects," below.

Throw a Two-Handed Weapon With One Hand

Full; Attack of Opportunity: Yes

Self explanatory.

Total Defense

Standard; Attack of Opportunity: No

You don't attack or perform any activity other than moving at your base speed, but you get a +4 dodge bonus to Defense for 1 round. Your Defense improves at the start of this action, so it helps against any attacks of opportunity provoked while moving.

Trip an Opponent

Standard (attack); Attack of Opportunity: No

You can try to trip an opponent as a melee attack. You can trip only opponents one size category larger than you, the same size, or smaller.

To attempt a trip attack, make a melee touch attack. If it succeeds, make a Strength check opposed by the defender's Dexterity or Strength check (whichever ability score has the higher modifier). You each get a +4 bonus for every size category you are larger than Medium or a –4 penalty for every size category you are smaller. The defender gets a +4 stability bonus on her check if she has more than two legs or is otherwise more stable than a normal humanoid.

If you win, you trip the defender. If you lose, the defender may react immediately and make a Strength check opposed by your Dexterity or Strength check to try to trip you.

A tripped character falls prone. Standing up from a prone position is a move action.

Use a Skill or Feat

Varies; Attack of Opportunity: Varies

Refer to the skill or feat description in Chapter 3 or 4. If the description does not specify, it is usually a free action.

Use a Spell-Like Ability

Standard; Attack of Opportunity: Yes

A spell-like ability mimics the effects of a spell (often a specific rote), but is not actually a spell. Some strange, Nightmare-spawned creatures might have them (or you might find them in material from compatible game material sources).

Types of Special Abilities

Your character type may give you access to three types of special ability:

Extraordinary (Ex): These abilities are not supernatural and thus are not susceptible to anything that disrupts or suppresses the supernatural. A vampire's ability to bite with her sharp teeth is extraordinary.

Supernatural (Su): These are abilities that cannot be disrupted like spells, but can be suppressed and dispelled. Spell resistance (a concept found in some compatible game material sources) does not protect against supernatural abilities. The potency of a supernatural ability sometimes depends on Hit Dice and ability score modifiers. If the ability specifies a caster level (another concept found in some compatible game material sources), use that instead of Hit Dice. If it does not specify an ability score, use Charisma.

Spell-Like (Sp): These are magical abilities that work just like spells (although they have no verbal or somatic components) — often like specific rote spells. They can be disrupted, suppressed, and dispelled like spells. Spell resistance can protect against spell-like abilities. Like spells, the potency of a spell-like ability can depend on Hit Dice and the ability score modifier used. If the ability specifies a caster level, use that instead of Hit Dice. If it does not specify an ability score, use Charisma.

Using a spell-like ability works like casting a spell in that it requires concentration and provokes attacks of opportunity. Spell-like abilities can be disrupted. If something breaks your concentration, your attempt to use the ability fails, but it counts as if you had used the ability (for the purpose of abilities usable only a certain number of times per day). The casting time of a spell-like ability is one standard action, unless the ability description notes otherwise.

You may attempt to use a spell-like ability on the defensive, just as with a spell. If the Concentration check (DC = the opponent's attack bonus or 10, whichever is higher) fails, you can't use the ability, but the attempt counts as if you had used it.

Use a Supernatural Ability

Standard; Attack of Opportunity: No

Using a supernatural ability is usually a standard action (unless the ability description says otherwise). Its use cannot be disrupted, does not require concentration, and does not provoke attacks of opportunity. Most demons cants, vampire disciplines, and werewolf rites are supernatural abilities.

Use a Touch Spell on One Target

Varies; Attack of Opportunity: No

Touching a target is part of the casting time of the spell; it takes no additional time. (Though if you have already cast the spell and are holding the charge, touching the target is a standard action.) You can automatically touch one friend or use the spell on yourself, but to touch an opponent, you must first make a touch attack.

Use a Touch Spell on up to Six Friends

Full; Attack of Opportunity: Yes

You can touch one friend as a standard action or up to six friends as a full-round action.

Use an Extraordinary Ability

Usually Free or Not an Action; Attack of Opportunity: No

Using an extraordinary ability is usually not an action, because most extraordinary abilities are used automatically in a reactive fashion. Those extraordinary abilities that are actions are usually standard actions that cannot be disrupted, do not require concentration, and do not provoke attacks of opportunity.

Breaking Items and Attacking Objects

Attacking an inanimate object is not the same as attacking a creature, but it is similar. Before attacking it, determine whether the object is attended (held or worn by a creature) or unattended.

Attacking a held, carried, or worn object provokes an attack of opportunity. The object uses its bearer's Dexterity modifier (not its own –5 modifier for having no Dexterity), class bonus, and deflection bonus (if any). The attacker doesn't get any special bonus for attacking the object. If the target object is in the opponent's hand, it gets a +5 dodge bonus to Defense because the opponent can move it quickly out of harm's way.

Unattended objects are easy to hit. Normally, their Defense is based only on size. Usually, attacking an unattended object requires no attack roll — particularly in a noncombat situation (such as smashing a door to get through it).

Objects each have a Defense modifier based on their size, as shown below:

Object's Size	Defense Modifier
Colossal	–8
Gigantic	–4
Huge	–2
Large	–1
Medium	+0
Small	+1
Tiny	+2
Diminutive	+4
Fine	+8

Damage to Objects

The amount of damage an object can withstand depends on its size and composition. Roll weapon damage normally against objects.

Material Hardness and Hit Points

Material	Hardness*	Hit Points
Paper	0	2/inch of thickness
Rope	0	2/inch of thickness
Plastic, soft	0	3/inch of thickness
Glass	1	1/inch of thickness
Ceramic	1	2/inch of thickness
Ice	0	3/inch of thickness
Plastic, hard	2	5/inch of thickness
Wood	5	10/inch of thickness
Aluminum	6	10/inch of thickness
Concrete	8	15/inch of thickness
Steel	10	30/inch of thickness

* See "Item Hardness" section.

Breaking or Bursting Items

A common use of Strength is to break open doors and burst bonds all at once, as opposed to damaging them over time. If an item has lost half or more of its hit points, the Difficulty Class to break it drops by 2.

Larger and smaller creatures get size bonuses and size penalties on these Strength checks: Fine –16, Diminutive –12, Tiny –8, Small –4, Large +4, Huge +8, Gargantuan +12, Colossal +16.

Strength Check to:	DC
Break down simple door	13
Break down good door	18
Break down strong door	23
Burst rope bonds	23
Bend metal bars	24
Break down barred door	25
Burst chain bonds	26
Break down steel door	28

An object's break DC is the Difficulty Class for a Strength check needed to destroy the item in one action, rather than reducing it to 0 hit points through a series of attacks.

Object Hardness and Hit Points

Object	Hardness	Hit Pts.	Break DC
Lock			
Cheap	0	1	10
Average	3	5	15
High quality	5	10	20
High security	10	120	35
Ultrahigh security	20	150	40
Manufactured objects by size*			
Fine	0	1	10
Diminutive	0	1	10
Tiny	1	2	10
Small	3	3	12
Medium	5	5	15
Large	5	10	15
Huge	8	10	20
Gargantuan	8	20	30
Colossal	10	30	50
Specific manufactured objects			
Firearm, Medium	5	7	17
Rope	0	2	23
Simple wooden door	5	10	13
Strong wooden door	5	20	23
Steel door	10	120	35
Cinderblock wall	8	90	35
Chain	10	5	26
Handcuffs	10	10	30
Metal bars	10	15	30

* Figures for manufactured objects are minimum values. The GM may adjust these upward to account for objects with more strength and durability.

Item Hardness

Each object has hardness — a number that represents how well it resists damage. Whenever an object takes damage, subtract its hardness from the damage. Only damage in excess of its hardness is deducted from the object's hit points.

Item Hit Points

An object's hit point total depends on its size and what it is made of. When an object's hit points reach 0, it's ruined. Very large objects have separate hit point totals for their different sections.

Item Saving Throws

Unattended mundane (non-supernatural) items never make saving throws. They are considered to have failed their saving throws, so they always are affected by spells, for example. An item attended by a combatant (being grasped, touched, or worn) receives a saving throw just as if the combatant herself were making the saving throw.

Supernatural items always get saving throws. A supernatural item's Fortitude, Reflex, and Will save bonuses range from +2 to +20, depending on its power (GM's discretion).

An attended supernatural item either makes a saving throw as its owner or uses its own saving throw, whichever score is better.

Items' Special Conditions

Objects are immune to critical hits and to nonlethal damage.

Ranged Weapon Damage: Objects take only half damage from ranged weapons (except for damage from explosions and the like). Divide the damage in half before applying the object's hardness.

Energy Attacks: Objects take half damage from acid, fire, and lightning attacks. Divide the damage in half before applying the object's hardness.

Cold attacks deal one-quarter damage to objects.

Sonic attacks deal full damage to objects.

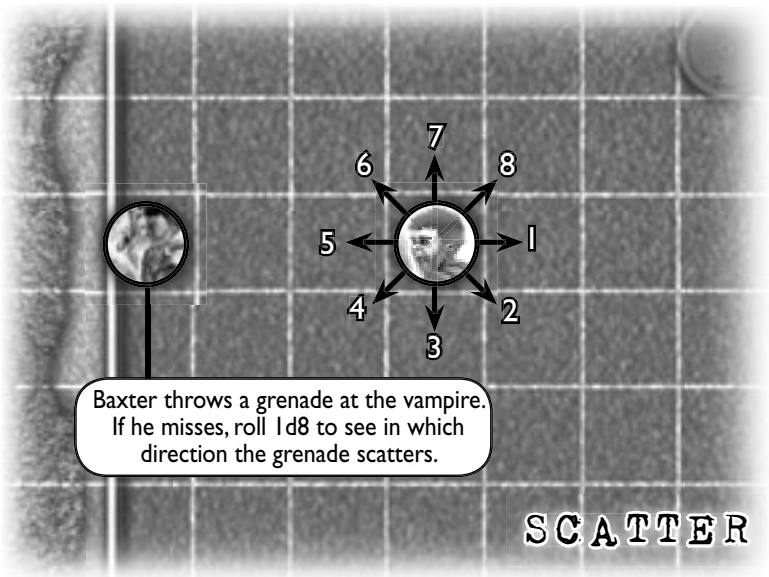
Ineffective Weapons: The GM may determine that certain weapons just can't deal damage effectively to certain objects. For example, you would have a hard time chopping down a door by throwing shuriken at it or cutting a rope with a chain.

Vulnerability to Certain Attacks: The GM may rule that certain attacks are especially successful against some objects. For example, it's easy to light a curtain on fire or rip up a piece of paper.

Grenade and Grenade-like Weapon Attacks

Grenadelike weapons splash or explode. Normally, they are thrown, like Molotov cocktails or bona fide grenades. A grenade-like weapon has an effect broad enough to hurt characters just by landing near them. Attacks with these weapons are ranged touch attack rolls.

If the attack roll misses, roll 1d6 to see how far away (in feet) the weapon lands from the target. Add +1 foot for each range increment between the attacker and the target. Roll 1d8 to determine the direction in which the object deviated:



1d8	Direction of Deviation
1	Long and straight
2	Long and to the right of target
3	To the right of target
4	Short and to the right of target
5	Short of the target
6	Short and to the left of the target
7	To the left of the target
8	Long and to the left of the target

Once you determine the weapon's actual landing spot, then figure the damage to all creatures that are within range of its blast radius.

Saving Throws

A saving throw (or "save") represents a character's attempt to avoid an undesirable result of someone else's action. Characters make saving throws, for example, when someone attempts to poison them, blow them up, or control their minds.

A saving throw roll is:

d20 + base save bonus + relevant ability modifier + other modifiers due to equipment, environment, circumstance, and the like = result vs. DC of save

The saving throw succeeds if the total of the die roll plus modifiers equals or exceeds the save's Difficulty Class.

Three different kinds of saves exist, each based on a different ability; the situation determines which type you attempt in any given circumstance.

Fortitude

Fortitude saves measure your ability to stand up to massive physical punishment or attacks against your vitality and health. Apply your Constitution modifier to your Fortitude saving throws.

Reflex

Reflex saves test your ability to dodge attacks. Apply your Dexterity modifier to your Reflex saving throws.

A character must have room to move in order to evade. A bound character or one squeezing through an area cannot make Reflex saves.

A Reflex save is indeed a reflex. You need not know that the attack is coming to make a Reflex save against it.

Will

Will saves reflect your resistance to mental influence and domination. Apply your Wisdom modifier to your Will saving throws.

Saving Throw Difficulty Class

The effect that triggered the saving throw attempt determines the save's Difficulty Class. Any effect that allows a save, such as a spell, indicates the necessary Difficulty Class, as well as the effects of saving successfully.

Vehicle Movement and Combat

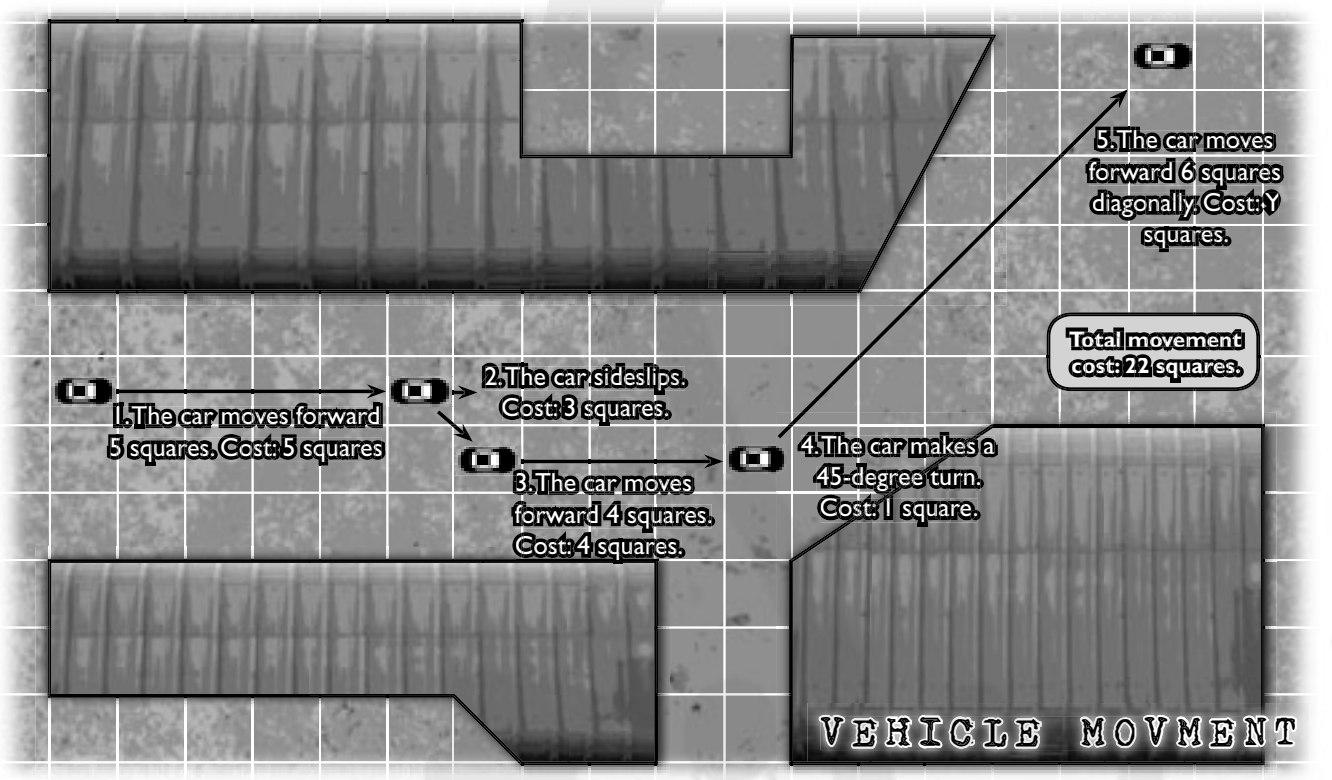
For simply traveling from point to point, the vehicle you use is largely a matter of personal style and finances. Skill checks are required only in extraordinary circumstances. These rules are primarily focused on ground vehicles — cars, trucks, and light military vehicles. The rules can be modified for boats, heavier armored vehicles, and aircraft.

Characters in Vehicles

A character in a vehicle fills one of several possible roles, which determines what he can do.

Driver: The driver controls the vehicle's movement. Most vehicles have only one position from where they can be driven, so the character seated there is the driver. Driving a vehicle is, at a minimum, a move action, which means that the driver may be able to do something else with his standard action. A vehicle can have only one driver at a time.

Copilot: A copilot can help the driver by taking an aid another action. The copilot must be seated in a location where she can see the road and advise the driver (in a car, this generally means the front passenger seat). Aiding the driver is a move action, leaving the copilot with a standard action each round to do something else. A vehicle can have only one copilot at a time. A copilot can also drive the vehicle if the driver cannot or chooses not to, provided a second set of controls exists at the copilot's seat (usually true in aircraft, but not ground vehicles).



Gunner: Some vehicles have built-in weapons. If such a weapon is controlled from a location other than the driver's position, a character can man that position and become the gunner. A vehicle can have as many gunners as it has gunner positions.

Passenger: All other personnel aboard the vehicle are passengers. Passengers have no specific role in the vehicle's operation, but may be able to fire weapons from the vehicle or take other actions.

Scale

The vehicle rules use two scales. If an encounter involves both vehicles and characters on foot, use character scale. If the scene involves only vehicles, and they're likely to move at much higher speeds than characters or creatures on foot, use chase scale.

Character Scale: Character scale is identical to the standard movement scale: You may carry it out on a grid in which each square equals 5 feet. In character scale, most vehicles are large enough to occupy multiple squares on the map grid. How many squares a vehicle occupies is specified on Table 6–13: Vehicles.

When moving a vehicle, count the squares from the vehicle's rear. When turning, pivot the vehicle on the rear square toward the square to which it is turning. When firing weapons, count squares from the location of the weapon.

In character scale, more than one ground vehicle cannot occupy the same square.

Chase Scale: In chase scale, each square of the grid represents 50 feet.

In chase scale, most commonly encountered vehicles occupy only one square. (Some especially large vehicles, such as ships or jumbo jets, might occupy more than one square.) More than one vehicle can occupy the same square. Vehicles in the same square are considered to be 20 feet apart for the purposes of determining range for attacks.

Vehicle Sizes

Vehicles use the same size categories as characters and creatures, as shown on Table 7–9: Vehicle Sizes. The vehicle's size modifier applies to its initiative modifier, maneuver modifier, and Defense. (The size modifier is already included in the vehicle statistics on Table 6–13: Vehicles)

TABLE 7–9: VEHICLE SIZES

Vehicle Size	Size Mod	Examples
Colossal	–8	Cruise liner, semi with trailer
Gargantuan	–4	Fighter jet, limousine, tank
Huge	–2	Runabout, SUV, van
Large	–1	Car, jet ski, motorcycle
Medium	+0	Bicycle

Facing and Firing Arcs

Unlike with characters, when dealing with vehicles, the vehicle's facing (the direction it's pointing) is important. Facing indicates the direction in which the vehicle is traveling (assuming

TABLE 7–10: VEHICLE SPEEDS AND MODIFIERS

	Character Scale		Chase Scale			
Speed Category	Movement*	Turn Number†	Movement*	Turn Number†	Defense Modifier	Check/Roll Modifier
Stationary‡	0	—	0	—	+0	—
Alley speed	1–20	1	1–2	1	+0	+0
Street speed	21–50	2	3–5	1	+1	–1
Highway speed	51–150	4	6–15	2	+2	–2
All-out	151+	8	16+	2	+4	–4

*The number of squares a vehicle can move at this speed.
†The number of squares a vehicle must move at this speed before making a turn.
‡A stationary vehicle cannot move or maneuver.

it's not moving in reverse). It can also determine which weapons aboard the vehicle can be brought to bear on a target.

A weapon built into a vehicle can by mounted to fire in one of four directions — forward, aft (rear), right, or left — or be built into a partial or full turret. A partial turret lets a weapon fire into three adjacent fire arcs (such as forward, left, and right), while a full turret lets it fire in any direction. For vehicles with weapons, a weapon's arc of fire is given in the vehicle's description.

Getting Started

Characters can enter most vehicles with a move action and start them with a second move action. Exceptions are noted in the vehicle descriptions.

Initiative

Two options exist for determining initiative in vehicle combat. First is individual initiative just as in normal combat, where each character rolls separately. This method is probably the best if most or all characters are aboard the same vehicle, but it can result in a lot of delayed or readied actions as passengers wait for drivers to perform maneuvers. An alternative is to roll initiative for each vehicle, using the vehicle's initiative modifier. This method is particularly appropriate when characters are in separate vehicles, since it allows everyone aboard the same vehicle to act more or less simultaneously.

Vehicle Speed

Vehicle speed is expressed in five categories: stationary, alley speed, street speed, highway speed, and all-out. Each of these speed categories represents a range of possible movement (see Table 7–10: Vehicle Speeds and Modifiers). Each round, a vehicle moves according to its current speed category.

Declaring Speed

At the beginning of his action, a driver must declare his speed category for the round. The driver can choose to go one category faster or slower than the vehicle's speed category at the end of the previous round. A stationary vehicle can change to alley speed in either forward or reverse. Most vehicles cannot go faster than alley speed in reverse.

Stationary: The vehicle is motionless.

Alley Speed: This speed is used for safely maneuvering a vehicle in tight spaces, such as alleys and parking garages. It tops out at about the speed a typical person can run.

Street Speed: The vehicle is traveling at a moderate speed, up to about 35 miles per hour.

Highway Speed: The vehicle is moving at a typical highway speed, from about 35 to 80 miles per hour.

All-Out: The vehicle is traveling extremely fast, more than 80 miles per hour.

Moving

On his action, the driver moves the vehicle a number of squares that falls within the vehicle's speed category.

Unlike characters, a vehicle cannot double move, run, or otherwise extend its movement (except by changing to a higher speed category).

Every vehicle has a top speed, included in its statistics on Table 6–13: Vehicles. A vehicle cannot move more squares than its top speed. This means that some vehicles cannot move at all-out speed, or even highway speed.

Count squares for vehicles just as for characters. Vehicles can move diagonally; remember that when moving diagonally, every second square costs two squares' worth of movement. Unlike with moving characters, a vehicle's facing is important; unless it changes direction, a vehicle always moves in the direction of its facing (or in the opposite direction, if it's moving in reverse).

The Effects of Speed

A fast-moving vehicle is harder to hit than a stationary one — but characters have a hard time controlling it and attacking from it.

As shown on Table 7–10: Vehicle Speeds and Modifiers, when a vehicle travels at street speed or faster, it gains a bonus to Defense. However, that speed brings with it a penalty on all skill checks and attack rolls that characters aboard the vehicle make — including Drive checks to control the vehicle and attacks made from it.

Driving a Vehicle

Driving a vehicle is a move action that the vehicle's driver takes. During his move action, the driver moves the vehicle

TABLE 7–11: VEHICLE MANEUVER AND STUNT REFERENCE

Simple Maneuvers

Maneuver	*Effect*	*Movement Cost*	*Special*
45-Degree Turn	Vehicle turns 45 degrees	1 square	Turn number*
Ram	Collide with something	—	Easier at character scale
Sideslip	Move 1 square forward, 1 square to the side	3 squares	

Stunts

Stunt	*DC*†	*Effect*	*Special*
Avoid hazard	varies‡	Cannot avoid structures	
Bootleg turn	varies‡	Change facing as desired; stop movement	Turn number*
Dash	15	Increase speed by 1 category	Once per round
Hard brake	15	Decrease speed by 1 or 2 categories	Once per round
Hard turn	15	Move half turn number, turn 45 degrees	—
Jump	varies‡	Jump over gap	—
Sideswipe	varies‡	Ram vehicle on your side	—

*The vehicle must move its turn number (for its speed) before attempting this maneuver or stunt.
† The DC of the Drive check needed to perform the stunt.
‡ See the stunt description.

a number of squares that falls within its speed category. The driver can attempt maneuvers to change the vehicle's course or speed. These maneuvers can be attempted at any point along the vehicle's route. The driver can choose to use his standard action to attempt additional maneuvers.

The two kinds of vehicle movement are simple maneuvers and stunts.

Simple Maneuvers: A simple maneuver, such as a 45-degree turn, is easy to perform. Each is a free action and the driver can take as many as he likes while he moves the vehicle. However, simple maneuvers cost movement — so a vehicle that makes a lot of simple maneuvers does not get as far as one going in a straight line. Simple maneuvers do not require the driver to make skill checks.

Stunts: Stunts are difficult and sometimes daring maneuvers that enable a driver to change his vehicle's speed or heading more radically than a simple maneuver allows, perhaps to avoid some horrible beast leaping from an alley. A stunt is a move action. The driver can attempt a stunt as part of a move action to control the vehicle, and attempt a second stunt in lieu of his standard action. Stunts always require Drive checks.

See Table 7–11: Vehicle Maneuver and Stunt Reference for a quick reference for the possible simple maneuvers and stunts.

Simple Maneuvers

During a vehicle's movement, the driver ("you" in the descriptions below) can perform any one of the following maneuvers.

45-Degree Turn: Any vehicle can make a simple 45-degree turn as part of its movement. The vehicle must move forward at least a number of squares equal to its turn number (shown on Table 7–10: Vehicle Speeds and Modifiers) before it can turn. Making a 45-degree turn costs 1 square of movement.

Ram: At character scale, you do not have to perform a maneuver to ram another vehicle — you need only to drive your vehicle into the other vehicle's square, and a collision occurs (see "Collisions and Ramming," below).

At chase scale, however, more than one vehicle can occupy the same square and not collide — so ramming another vehicle requires a simple maneuver. You move your vehicle into the other vehicle's square and states that you are attempting to ram. Resolve the ram as a collision, except that the driver of the target vehicle can make a DC 15 Reflex save to halve the damage to both vehicles.

Sideslip: You might wish to move to the side without changing the vehicle's facing; for instance, to change lanes. This simple maneuver, called a sideslip, allows a vehicle to avoid obstacles or weave in and out of traffic without changing facing. A sideslip moves a vehicle 1 square forward and 1 square to the right or left, and costs 3 squares of movement.

Stunts

Stunts are difficult maneuvers: The driver ("you" in the descriptions below) must make Drive checks to perform them successfully. Unsuccessful stunts often result in the vehicle ending up someplace other than where you intended. When this happens, the vehicle collides with any objects in its path.

Remember that the check/roll modifier from Table 7–10: Vehicle Speeds and Modifiers affects all Drive checks you attempt and all attack rolls the vehicle's occupants make.

Each stunt's description includes an explanation of the stunt, the DC to accomplish it, and what happens if the check fails. If a failure might result in you losing control of the vehicle, see "Losing Control," below.

Avoid Hazard: Vehicle combat rarely occurs on a perfectly flat, featureless plain. When a vehicle tries to move through a square occupied by a hazard, you must make a Drive check to avoid the hazard and continue moving.

Structures simply cannot be avoided. Also, if you cannot make a check (if you have used all your actions for the round in

performing other stunts, for example), you automatically fail to avoid the hazard. In such cases, a collision occurs.

DC: The DC to avoid a hazard varies with the nature of the hazard.

Hazard	DC
Caltrops	15
Oil slick	15
Structure	Cannot be avoided
Object	
Small (tire, light debris)	5
Medium (crate)	10
Large (pile of wreckage)	15

Failure: The vehicle hits the obstacle. For caltrops, this means the caltrops make an attack against the vehicle (see Chapter 6: Equipment, "Other Equipment," *Professional Equipment*). A successful attack punctures a tire, reducing the vehicle's top speed by a quarter and imposing a –2 penalty on Drive checks with the vehicle. The penalties are cumulative. A DC 15 Repair check removes a caltrop and repairs the damage.

An oil slick forces you to make a DC 15 Drive check to retain control of the vehicle.

Failing to avoid an object results in a collision with the object (see "Collisions and Ramming," below).

Bootleg Turn: By making a bootleg turn, you can radically change direction without turning in a loop. However, in so doing, the vehicle comes to a stop.

Before a vehicle can make a bootleg turn, it must move in a straight line at least a number of squares equal to its turn number. To make a bootleg turn, simply change the vehicle's facing to the desired direction. The vehicle ends its movement in that location, at stationary speed.

DC: The DC for a bootleg turn depends on the change in facing.

Facing Change	DC
45 degrees	5
90 degrees	10
135 degrees	15
180 degrees	20

Failure: Instead of facing the desired direction, the vehicle changes facing by only 45 degrees. Make a Drive check to retain control against a DC equal to the DC for the bootleg turn you attempted.

Dash: With a dash stunt, you can increase the vehicle's speed by one category. (This increase is in addition to any speed change made at the beginning of your action; if you increased speed at that time, you can accelerate a total of two categories in the same round.) The vehicle's total movement for the round cannot exceed the maximum number of squares for its new speed category. (The squares it has already moved before attempting the dash count against this total.)

DC: 15. You can succeed at only one dash per round.

Failure: The vehicle does not change speed categories.

Hard Brake: With a hard brake stunt, you can reduce the vehicle's speed by up to two categories. (This is in addition to any speed change made at the beginning of your action; if you reduced speed at that time, you can drop a total of three categories in the same round.) The vehicle's movement for the round ends as soon as it has moved the minimum number of squares for its new speed category. (If it has already moved that far before attempting the hard brake, it ends its movement immediately.)

DC: 15. You can succeed at only one hard break per round.

Failure: The vehicle does not change speed categories. Make a DC 15 Drive check to retain control.

Hard Turn: A hard turn allows a vehicle to make a turn in a short distance without losing speed.

A hard turn functions like a 45-degree turn simple maneuver, except that the vehicle needs to move forward only a number of squares equal to half its turn number (rounded down).

DC: 15.

Failure: The vehicle continues to move forward a number of squares equal to its turn number before turning, just as with a simple 45-degree turn. Make a DC 15 Drive check to retain control.

Jump: You can attempt to jump his or her vehicle across a gap in your path.

To make a jump, the vehicle must move in a straight line a number of squares equal to its turn number. If the vehicle doesn't have enough movement left to clear the gap, it must complete the jump at the start of its next turn.

DC: The DC for a jump depends on the width of the gap, modified by the vehicle's speed category.

Gap Width	Example	DC
1–3 ft.	Ditch	15
4–8 ft.	Culvert	20
8–15 ft.	Creek, small ravine	25
16–25 ft.	Narrow road, small pond	35
26–40 ft.	Wide road, small river	45
Vehicle Speed Category		**DC Modifier**
Alley speed		+10
Street speed		+5
Highway speed		+0
All-out		–5

Failure: The vehicle fails to clear the gap, and instead falls into it (or collides with the far side). Determine damage as for a collision (see "Collisions and Ramming," below).

A shallow gap (1 to 3 feet deep) is equivalent to a Medium object; the vehicle may be able to avoid taking collision damage from the failed jump by treating the far side as a hazard and then continue moving (see "Avoid Hazard," above).

A moderately deep gap (4 to 10 feet deep) is equivalent to a Huge object. The vehicle can drive out of the gap only if the walls are not too steep.

A deeper gap (11 feet or deeper) is equivalent to a Colossal object. The vehicle can drive out of the gap only if the walls are not too steep.

If the gap is filled with water, the vehicle takes only half damage from the collision with the ground. However, if the water is too deep or the bottom is too soft (GM's discretion), the vehicle might not be able to move.

Sideswipe: During a vehicle's movement, you can attempt to sideswipe a vehicle or other target, either to deal damage without fully ramming it or to cause another driver to lose control of her vehicle.

At character scale, a vehicle must be side by side with its target (occupying the square or squares directly to its side) and moving in the same direction. Attempting a sideswipe costs 1 square of movement.

At chase scale, the vehicle must be in the same square as its target and moving in the same direction. The sideswipe has no movement cost.

If the stunt is successful, the sideswiping vehicle and the target both take damage as if they had collided (see "Collisions and Ramming," below), except that the collision multiplier is 1/4, and the target (or driver of the target vehicle) can make a DC 15 Reflex save DC 15 to reduce the damage to both by half. If the target is another vehicle the driver must make a DC 15 Drive check at the beginning of her next action or lose control of the vehicle.

DC: 15. The DC is modified by the relative size and speed of the target.

Target Condition	DC Modifier
Each size category larger	–5
Each size category smaller	+5
Each speed category of difference	–2

Driver Options

A driver ("you") can perform the following actions in a round.

Choose the Vehicle's Speed: You may increase or decrease your vehicle's speed category by one (or keep it the same).

Optional Standard Action: You can use your standard action before moving the vehicle. If you do so, however, you will be limited to a single stunt during movement.

Movement: Move the vehicle any number of squares within the vehicle's speed category. Along the way, perform any number of simple maneuvers (limited only by their movement cost). You may also attempt a single stunt as part of the movement (or two, if you didn't take your standard action before moving).

Optional Standard Action: If you did not take a standard action before moving, and performed one or fewer stunts, you have a standard action left.

Failure: Both vehicles take damage as though the sideswipe attempt was a success. However, the other driver does not need to make a check to retain control.

Collisions and Ramming

A collision occurs when a vehicle strikes another vehicle or a solid object. Generally, when a vehicle collides with a creature or other moving vehicle, the target can attempt a DC 15 Reflex save to reduce the damage by half. The creature takes a penalty on this save depending on the vehicle's speed; the penalty is equal to its check/roll modifier, as listed on Table 7–10: Vehicle Speeds and Modifiers. A creature who fails this save falls prone (in addition to taking full damage).

Resolving Collisions

The base damage a vehicle collision deals depends on the speed and size of the objects involved. Use the highest speed and the smallest size of the two colliding objects and refer to Table 7–12: Collision Damage.

After finding the base damage, determine the collision's damage multiplier based on how the colliding vehicle struck the other vehicle or object. (For vehicles moving in reverse, consider the back end to be the vehicle's "front" for determining the collision multiplier.) Consult the bottom portion of Table 7–12: Collision Damage for a multiplier.

Once you determine the damage, apply it to both vehicles (or objects or creatures) involved in the collision. Both vehicles reduce their speed by two speed categories. If the colliding vehicle moved the minimum number of squares for its new speed category before the collision, it ends its movement immediately. If not, it pushes the other vehicle or object aside, if possible, and continues until it has moved the minimum number of squares for its new speed category.

The driver of the vehicle that caused the collision must make a DC 15 Drive check or lose control of the vehicle (see "Losing Control," below). The driver of the other vehicle must make a DC 15 Drive check at the beginning of his or her next turn or lose control of the vehicle.

Collision Example: A semi truck traveling at 60 miles per hour strikes Sylvia, who was standing on a highway draining the blood from a victim.

First, determine the die size by checking the highest speed of the two objects involved in the collision. Sylvia was just standing there (stationary), but the semi truck, at 60 mph, was traveling at highway speed. Thus, consulting Table 7–12: Collision Damage, you'll resolve the damage with d8s.

Then, determine the number of dice to roll by checking the smallest object involved in the collision. Definitely Sylvia in this case; she's Medium. Thus, consulting Table 7–12: Collision Damage, you'll roll 4 dice.

Finally, determine if the damage is multiplied due to the angle of impact. The vehicle struck a stationary object, so, consulting Table 7–12: Collision Damage, the multiplier is x1 (no multiplier.)

TABLE 7–12: COLLISION DAMAGE

Highest Speed	Damage Die Type
Alley speed	d2
Street speed	d4
Highway speed	d8
All-out	d12

Smallest Object or Creature Size	Number of Dice
Colossal	20
Gargantuan	16
Huge	12
Large	8
Medium	4
Small	2
Tiny	1
Smaller than Tiny	0

Colliding Vehicle's Target	Multiplier
A stationary object	x 1
A moving vehicle, striking head-on or 45 degrees from head-on	x 2
A moving vehicle, striking perpendicular	x 1
A moving vehicle, striking from the rear or 45 degrees from the rear	x 1/2
A vehicle being sideswiped (see the sideswipe stunt, above)	x 1/4

Thus, both Sylvia and the semi take 4d8 points of damage. Sylvia can attempt a DC 15 Reflex save to halve the damage she takes (and avoid being knocked prone). She takes a –2 penalty on this check, since the semi was moving at highway speed (–2 is the check/roll modifier for highway speed, as listed on Table 7–10: Vehicle Speeds and Modifiers). The semi's driver must make a DC 15 Drive check to retain control.

Damage to Vehicle Occupants

When a vehicle takes damage from a collision, its occupants may take damage as well. The base amount of damage depends on the cover the vehicle provides.

Cover	Damage
None	Same as damage vehicle takes
One-quarter	One-half damage vehicle takes
One-half	One-quarter damage vehicle takes
Three-quarters or more	None

Each of the occupants may make a DC 15 Reflex save to take half damage.

Losing Control

A collision or a failed stunt can cause a driver to lose control of his vehicle. In these cases, the driver must make a Drive check to retain control. If this check succeeds, the driver maintains control of the vehicle. If it fails, the vehicle goes into a spin. If it fails by 10 or more, the vehicle rolls. Remember that the check/roll modifier from Table 7–10: Vehicle Speeds and Modifiers applies on all Drive checks.

An out-of-control vehicle may strike an object or other vehicle. When that happens, a collision occurs (see "Collisions and Ramming," above).

Spin: The vehicle skids, spinning wildly.

At character scale, the vehicle moves in its current direction a number of squares equal to the turn number for its speed, then ends its movement. Once it stops, roll 1d8 to determine its new facing: 1, no change; 2, right 45 degrees; 3, right 90 degrees; 4, right 135 degrees; 5, 180 degrees; 6, left 135 degrees; 7, left 90 degrees; 8, left 45 degrees. Reorient the vehicle accordingly.

At chase scale, the vehicle moves 1 square and ends its movement. Roll to determine its new facing as indicated above.

Roll: The vehicle tumbles.

At character scale, the vehicle rolls in a straight line in its current direction for a number of squares equal to the turn number for its speed, then ends its movement. At the end of the vehicle's roll, reorient the vehicle perpendicular to its original direction of travel (determine left or right randomly).

At chase scale, the vehicle rolls one square before stopping and reorienting.

At either scale, a vehicle takes damage equal to 2d6 x the character scale turn number for its speed (use the turn number from character scale even at chase scale). The vehicle's occupants take damage equal to 2d4 x the character scale turn number for its speed (DC 15 Reflex save for half damage).

Hide and Seek

When being pursued, a driver can attempt a Hide check to lose the pursuer in heavy traffic, or a Bluff check to misdirect the pursuer before turning onto an off-ramp or a side street.

To make a Hide check, use the normal rules for hiding (see the Hide skill description in Chapter 3: Skills). The normal size modifiers apply, but because the driver is hiding among other vehicles, most of which are size Large or Huge, he gains a +8 bonus on the check. This use of the Hide skill can only be attempted in fairly heavy traffic; in lighter traffic, the GM might not allow it or might apply a penalty to the check.

A driver can use Bluff to make a pursuer think he is going a different direction from what he intends. Just before making a turn onto an off-ramp or side street, make a Bluff check opposed by the pursuer's Sense Motive check. If the driver succeeds, the pursuer takes a –5 penalty on any Drive check needed to make the turn to follow the driver. If the other driver can make the turn using only simple maneuvers and does not have to make a Drive check, the Bluff attempt has no effect.

Fighting from Vehicles

The following rules provide a further framework for combat involving vehicles.

Vehicle Combat Actions

Actions during vehicle combat are handled the same way as actions during personal combat. In general, a character can take two move actions, one move action and one standard action, or one full-round action in a round. Characters perform free actions normally, in conjunction with another action.

Free Actions: Communicating orders is a free action. Characters can perform as many free actions as the GM permits in a single round.

Move Actions: Changing position within a vehicle is usually a move action, especially if a character has to trade places with another character. If the character's movement is short and unobstructed, the character can do it as the equivalent of a 5-foot step. Otherwise, it requires a move action.

Standard Actions: Anyone aboard a vehicle can make an attack with a personal weapon, and drivers and gunners can make attacks with vehicle-mounted weapons controlled from their positions.

Full-Round Actions: Since the driver must use a move action to control the vehicle, he can't take full-round actions.

Attack Options

Firing a vehicle's weapon requires a standard action and uses the driver's or gunner's ranged attack bonus.

A driver with 5 or more ranks in the Drive skill gains a +2 synergy bonus when firing vehicle-mounted weapons while driving.

Some military vehicles are equipped with fire-control computers. These systems grant equipment bonuses on attack rolls with the vehicle-mounted weapons to which they apply.

Driving Defensively: Just as in melee combat, one can fight defensively while driving a vehicle, which grants a +2 dodge bonus to the vehicle's Defense and applies a –4 penalty on attack rolls made by all the vehicle's occupants.

Total Defense: A driver can choose the total defense action, which grants a +4 dodge bonus to Defense but does not allow the driver to attack (gunners and passengers take a –8 penalty on attack rolls). These modifiers last until the driver's next round of actions.

Full Attack: A driver cannot normally make a full attack, since controlling the vehicle requires a move action.

Gunners or passengers, however, can take full-round actions, since they don't have to use a move action (except, perhaps, to change positions in the vehicle). In general, taking a full attack action is useful only if a character has a base attack bonus high enough to get multiple attacks. A passenger can make multiple attacks with her own weapon. A gunner can make multiple attacks with one or more weapons controlled from her position.

Targeting Occupants

An attack made against a vehicle uses the vehicle's Defense, modified by its speed category. Attackers can choose instead to target specific vehicle occupants.

An attack against a vehicle occupant is made like any other attack. Remember, however, that a character in a vehicle gains bonuses to Defense from both the vehicle's speed and any cover it provides.

Cover

When a character fires from a vehicle, objects or other vehicles in the way can provide cover for the target.

Damaging Vehicles

All vehicles have hit points, which are roughly equivalent to a character's hit points. Like most inanimate objects, vehicles also have hardness. Whenever a vehicle takes damage, subtract the vehicle's hardness from the damage dealt.

When a vehicle is reduced to 0 hit points, it is disabled. Although it might be repairable, it ceases functioning. A vehicle that is disabled while moving drops one speed category each round until it comes to a stop. The driver cannot attempt any maneuvers or stunts except 45-degree turns.

A vehicle is destroyed when it loses hit points equal to twice its full normal total. A destroyed vehicle cannot be repaired.

Energy Attacks: Vehicles are treated as objects when subjected to energy attacks.

Exploding Vehicles: If the attack that disables a vehicle deals damage equal to half its full normal hit points or more, the vehicle explodes after 1d6 rounds. This explosion deals 10d6 points of fire damage to everyone within the vehicle (DC 20 Reflex save for half damage), and half that much to everyone and everything within 30 feet of the explosion (DC 15 Reflex save for half damage).

Repairing Damage

Repairing damage to a vehicle takes a full hour of work and a mechanical toolkit. (Without the toolkit, a character takes a –4 penalty on his Repair check; a tool reduces this penalty to –2.) At the end of the hour, make a DC 20 Repair check. Success restores 2d6 hit points. The character may continue to make repairs for as many hours as it takes to restore all of the vehicle's hit points. Extensive damage (vehicle disabled) requires a workshop (attempting repairs on such a vehicle with an advanced toolkit is also possible, but the character takes a –4 penalty on the attempt).

Humanity Points

The fate of humanity is grim: *creatures* stalk the shadows, the Midwest is a ruin, and the Unbidden still exist, somewhere, engaged in inscrutable activities. However, if anything is going to save the world from the forces arrayed against it, it's the inherent humanity in the individuals opposing them.

A character gains a humanity point when the GM rules she has done something particularly "human," which is to say, self-sacrificing, noble, or even heroic. Such an act shows that the character — even in the face of real horror, a horrific nature, or perhaps even a completely non-human nature — is hanging onto what once made her human, or — in the case of demons — learning and adapting to the world in which she now lives. In the case of the Awakened, these acts represent the ultimate humanity that they represent.

Humanity points are a reward for this kind of action. Humanity points can be used at the player's discretion to perform amazing — often otherwise impossible — actions.

Unlike most of the other rules in this chapter, humanity points require a considerable amount of GM adjudication and discretion. GMs with no interest in rewarding heroic acts or allowing PCs to perform acts beyond the rules should ignore this section.

Awarding Humanity Points

The key aspect to remember about humanity points is that awarding them to PCs, or not awarding them, is totally up to the GM. Some characters may never earn even a single humanity point, while others, over the course of the campaign, may earn many. Some campaigns may never use humanity points, while in others they are common. (Exception: Awakened characters always get humanity points, as specified in Chapter 2: Character, "Awakened.")

The GM is encouraged to be parsimonious with the humanity points. They should be awarded at the end or beginning of a game session, when experience points are dispersed. The exact rewards are up to the GM.

A character should never earn a humanity point performing an action in which he uses a humanity point.

Using Humanity Points

On his turn, *before determining the success or failure of an action*, a player can announce that he is using a humanity point to help accomplish the action. Normally, the humanity point adds a bonus of +20 to the action, if the roll of a d20 dictates its success or failure. However, exceptions exist, and characters have other uses for action points:

Special Attack Result

If you spend a humanity point on an attack roll, and the attack roll would have succeeded without the humanity point, the attack deals double damage *or* you make a "called shot," inflicting a special effect (in addition to normal damage) such as:

- A strike to a foe's eyes that blinds her for 1d10+4 rounds.
- A strike to a foe's head or other vitals that stuns her for 1d3 rounds.

• A strike to a foe's limb that renders it useless for 1d6 rounds.

Act Out of Sequence

You can spend a humanity point to act when it is not your turn. You can take a normal round's worth of actions out of the regular initiative sequence with no special bonuses. You then return to your normal initiative count, and get your normal actions at that time. (You act twice in the same round.)

Defensively

You can spend a humanity point when you are attacked by a physical attack, a spell, or some other threat. You gain a +1d20 luck bonus to Defense or on a saving throw. If you spend the humanity point on a saving throw for half damage or a partial effect, if you would have made the save without the help of the humanity point, you take no damage or ill effect at all.

If you roll a 1 on a save that carries an increased penalty if you roll a 1 (such as many disciplines), you can spend a humanity point to reroll.

Overcome Weakness

You can spend a humanity point to temporarily overcome a supernatural weakness. For example:

• A vampire can spend a humanity point to go for a week without spending Vitae to wake up.

• A vampire can spend a humanity point to survive in the sun for 1 minute without harm.

• A werewolf can spend a humanity point to enter hybrid form without waiting 10 minutes since his last time in hybrid form.

• A mage can use a humanity point to gain 10 components.

• A demon can use a humanity point to overcome its craving or bane for one day.

Avoid Death

If a die roll determines that you die, you can spend a humanity point to avoid death and instead suffer a great and debilitating injury determined by the GM — you gain a disfiguring scar, lose a hand, lose an eye, gain a limp, and so on. *This, and the reroll of a save on which you rolled a 1, is the only case when a humanity point can be used after the result of an action is determined.*

Break the Rules

You can spend a humanity point to make something work in a way the rules normally do not allow. This use requires careful GM adjudication. For example, you might try to use a humanity point not only to disarm a foe but to send the weapon sailing into the hand of a nearby ally.

The GM should still apply all normal circumstance modifiers to the PC's action. Actions using humanity points can still fail. The object of humanity points, more than anything else, is to represent the role of wild luck and karma in overcoming logical circumstance penalties to extremely difficult actions. They make the nearly impossible somewhat more possible — but still not a sure thing.

Dramatic Uses of Humanity points

The GM might want encourage the use of humanity points in dramatic ways rather than mundane ways. A mundane use of a humanity point might be:

• Using it to help make a simple attack roll.

• Using it to help make a simple skill check.

• Using it to help make a Spellcraft check when casting a spell.

Dramatic ways of using a humanity point include the following:

• Attacking a foe by swinging across a great hall on a rope attached to a chandelier.

• Firing a bullet (or throwing a knife) to cut the bonds of a bound ally in the middle of a fight.

• Popping open a lock in the middle of combat by banging on it just right.

Encourage players to use humanity points to attempt actions seen in a movie or read about in a story. The GM is justified in secretly increasing the bonus offered by the humanity point if the player chooses to use it in an interesting, fun, and dramatic matter.

Humanity Points for NPCs

GMs can also give humanity points to NPCs. They may even wish to invert the concept and award "inhumanity points" to characters who perform exceedingly inhuman acts.

A humanity point makes an NPC opponent far more dangerous than normal. GMs should consider granting an experience point bonus of +50% for defeating an opponent who uses a humanity (or inhumanity) point.

Humanity Points for Characters Above 1st Level

If the needs of the game require that a player create a character above 1st level, the character may have already earned a humanity point in his career. Assume that the character has a 10% chance per level that he has a humanity point. If above

"After attacking and killing its ninth victim, the dog was finally put down by two San Diego police officers who found it in the back of an undisclosed restaurant, after receiving a call from the proprietor. The officers report that more than 87 rounds of ammunition were discharged in the encounter. The corpse was immediately destroyed by the officers, although their report states that the dog stood four feet high at the shoulder, had a mouth like a shark, with two rows of teeth, and bony ridges running down its spine. These shocking claims are disputed by experts in the fields of biology and zoology, including Dr. Philip Huffman of the University of . . ."

— Michael Altamon, Hardline Investigations

10th level, he has 1 humanity point and has a 10% chance per level above 10th to have another.

Awakened have additional humanity points equal to half their level. (They gain a humanity point at each level, but use some of them.)

The Environment

Characters may face the following environmental hazards in their adventures.

Acid

Corrosive acids deals 1d6 points of damage per round of exposure except in the case of total immersion (such as into a vat of acid), which deals 10d6 points of damage per round. An attack with acid, such as from a hurled vial or a monster's spittle, counts as a round of exposure.

The fumes from most acids are inhaled poisons. Those who come close enough to a large body of acid to dunk a creature in it must make a DC 13 Fortitude save or take 1 point of Constitution damage. All such characters must make a second save 1 minute later or take another 1d4 points of Constitution damage.

Creatures immune to acid's caustic properties might still drown in it if they are totally immersed (see "Water Dangers," *Drowning*, below).

Cold Dangers

Cold and exposure deal nonlethal damage to the victim. The character cannot recover this nonlethal damage until she gets out of the cold and warms up again. Once a character is rendered unconscious through the accumulation of nonlethal damage, the cold and exposure deals lethal damage at the same rate.

An unprotected character in cold weather (below 40° F) must make a Fortitude save each hour (DC 15, + 1 per previous check) or take 1d6 points of nonlethal damage. In severe cold (below 0° F), characters must make this Fortitude save once every 10 minutes instead, unless they wear winter clothing, in which case the save is every hour. A character who has the Survival skill may receive a bonus on this saving throw and may be able to apply this bonus to other characters as well (see the skill description in Chapter 3: Skills). These frigid conditions are more common since the Intrusion, as the Conflagration churns supernatural and freakish weather into existence.

A character who takes any nonlethal damage from cold or exposure is beset by frostbite or hypothermia (treat her as fatigued). These penalties end when the character recovers the nonlethal damage she took from the cold and exposure.

Extreme cold (below –20° F) deals 1d6 points of lethal damage per minute (no save). In addition, a character must make a Fortitude save (DC 15, +1 per previous check) or take 1d4 points of nonlethal damage.

Ice Effects

Characters walking on ice must spend 2 squares of movement to enter a square covered by ice, and the DCs for Balance and Tumble checks increases by +5. Characters in prolonged contact with ice may run the risk of taking damage from severe cold (see above).

Darkness

Darkvision allows many characters and creatures to see perfectly well without any light at all, but characters with normal vision (or low-light vision, for that matter) can be rendered completely blind by putting out the lights.

In many cases, some characters or monsters might be able to see, while others are blinded. For purposes of the following points, a blinded creature is one who simply can't see through the surrounding darkness.

- Creatures blinded by darkness lose the ability to deal extra damage due to precision (for example, with a sneak attack).
- Blinded creatures are hampered in their movement, and pay 2 squares of movement per square moved into (double normal cost). Blinded creatures can't run or charge.

• All opponents have total concealment from a blinded creature, so the blinded creature has a 50% miss chance in combat. A blinded creature must first pinpoint the location of an opponent in order to attack the right square; if the blinded creature launches an attack without pinpointing its foe, it attacks a random square within its reach. For ranged attacks or spells against a foe whose location is not pinpointed, roll to determine which adjacent square the blinded creature is facing; its attack is directed at the closest target that lies in that direction.

• A blinded creature loses its Dexterity adjustment to Defense and takes a –2 penalty to Defense.

• A blinded creature takes a –4 penalty on Search checks and most Strength- and Dexterity-based skill checks, including any with an armor check penalty. A creature blinded by darkness automatically fails any skill check relying on vision.

• In many ways, a creature blinded by darkness treats other creatures as invisible (see "Special Abilities," *Invisibility*, below, for more information). For example, a creature blinded by darkness can make Listen checks to pinpoint the locations of opponents, can grope about to find them, and must pinpoint their locations to launch successful attacks (though they still have a 50% miss chance).

Electricity

Electrical hazards come in many forms, including stun guns, downed power lines, and electric security fences. The following table gives damage values for various electrical hazards based on relative voltage. A character can make a Fortitude saving throw to reduce the damage by half. If that character is not grounded or is otherwise insulated from the current, a successful save indicates he takes no damage.

Electricity Damage

Type	Examples	Dam	Fort DC
Jolt	Car battery	1d3	10
Low voltage	Fuse box, electrical socket	2d6	15
Medium voltage	Industrial transformer,	4d6	15
High voltage	Power line, lightning	8d6	20

Falling

Falling Damage: The basic rule is simple: 1d6 points of damage per 10 feet fallen, to a maximum of 20d6.

If a character deliberately jumps instead of merely slipping or falling, the damage is the same but the first 1d6 is nonlethal damage. A DC 15 Jump check or DC 15 Tumble check allows the character to avoid any damage from the first 10 feet fallen and converts any damage from the second 10 feet to nonlethal damage. Thus, a character who slips from a ledge 30 feet up takes 3d6 points of damage. If the same character deliberately jumped, he takes 1d6 points of nonlethal damage and 2d6 points of lethal damage. And if the character leaps down with a successful Jump or Tumble check, he takes only 1d6 points of nonlethal damage and 1d6 points of lethal damage from the plunge.

Falls onto yielding surfaces (soft ground, mud) also convert the first 1d6 of damage to nonlethal damage. This reduction is

cumulative with reduced damage due to deliberate jumps and the Jump skill.

Falling into Water: Falls into water are handled somewhat differently. If the water is at least 10 feet deep, the first 20 feet of falling deal no damage. The next 20 feet deal nonlethal damage (1d3 per 10-foot increment). Beyond that, falling damage is lethal damage (1d6 per additional 10-foot increment).

Characters who deliberately dive into water take no damage on a successful DC 15 Swim check or DC 15 Tumble check, so long as the water is at least 10 feet deep for every 30 feet fallen. However, the DC of the check increases by 5 for every 50 feet of the dive.

Falling Objects

Just as characters take damage when they fall more than 10 feet, so too do they take damage when falling objects hit them.

Objects that fall upon characters deal damage based on their weight and the distance they have fallen.

For each 200 pounds of an object's weight, the object deals 1d6 points of damage, provided it falls at least 10 feet. Distance also comes into play, adding an additional 1d6 points of damage for every 10-foot increment it falls beyond the first (to a maximum of 20d6 points of damage).

Objects smaller than 200 pounds also deal damage when dropped, but they must fall farther to deal the same damage. Use the table below to see how far an object of a given weight must drop to deal 1d6 points of damage.

Damage from Falling Objects

Object Weight	Falling Distance
200–101 lb.	20 ft.
100–51 lb.	30 ft.
50–31 lb.	40 ft.
30–11 lb.	50 ft.
10–6 lb.	60 ft.
5–1 lb.	70 ft.

For each additional increment an object falls, it deals an additional 1d6 points of damage.

Objects weighing less than 1 pound do not deal damage to those they land upon, no matter how far they fall.

Heat Dangers

Heat deals nonlethal damage that cannot be recovered until the character gets cooled off (reaches shade, survives until nightfall, gets doused in water, and so forth). Once rendered unconscious through the accumulation of nonlethal damage, the character takes lethal damage at the same rate. Since the Intrusion, nightmarish heat waves throughout America and Canada have become more common — and more dangerous.

A character in very hot conditions (above 90° F) must make a Fortitude saving throw each hour (DC 15, +1 for each previous check) or take 1d4 points of nonlethal damage. In severe heat (above 110° F), characters must make this Fortitude save once every 10 minutes instead.

Characters wearing heavy clothing or armor of any sort take a –4 penalty on their saves. A character with the Survival skill may receive a bonus on this saving throw and may be able to apply this bonus to other characters as well (see the Survival description in Chapter 3: Skills).

A character who takes any nonlethal damage from heat exposure suffers from heatstroke and is fatigued. These penalties end when the character recovers the nonlethal damage she took from the heat.

Extreme heat (air temperature over 140° F, fire, boiling water, lava) deals lethal damage. Breathing air in these temperatures deals 1d6 points of damage per minute (no save). In addition, a character must make a Fortitude save every 5 minutes (DC 15, +1 per previous check) or take 1d4 points of nonlethal damage. Those wearing heavy clothing or any sort of armor take a –4 penalty on their saves.

Boiling water deals 1d6 points of scalding damage, unless the character is fully immersed, in which case it deals 10d6 points of damage per round of exposure.

Catching on Fire

Characters exposed to incendiary grenades, bonfires, and some supernatural fires might find their clothes, hair, or equipment on fire. Spells with an instantaneous duration don't normally set a character on fire, since the heat and flame from these come and go in a flash.

Characters at risk of catching fire are allowed DC 15 Reflex saves to avoid this fate. If a character's clothes or hair catch fire, he takes 1d6 points of damage immediately. In each subsequent round, the burning character must make another Reflex save. Failure means he takes another 1d6 points of damage that round. Success means that the fire has gone out. (That is, once he succeeds on his saving throw, he's no longer on fire.)

A character on fire may automatically extinguish the flames by jumping into enough water to douse himself. Rolling on the ground or smothering the fire with cloaks or the like permits the character another save with a +4 bonus.

Those unlucky enough to have their clothes or equipment catch fire must make DC 15 Reflex saves for each item. Flammable items that fail take the same amount of damage as the character.

Lava Effects

Lava or magma deals 2d6 points of damage per round of exposure, except in the case of total immersion (such as when a character falls into the crater of an active volcano), which deals 20d6 points of damage per round.

Damage from magma continues for 1d3 rounds after exposure ceases, but this additional damage is only half of that dealt during actual contact (that is, 1d6 or 10d6 points per round).

A resistance to fire serves as resistance to lava or magma. However, a creature who takes little damage from lava might still drown if completely immersed (see "Water Dangers," *Drowning*, below).

Smoke Effects

A character who breathes heavy smoke must make a Fortitude save each round (DC 15, +1 per previous check) or spend that round

choking and coughing. A character who chokes for 2 consecutive rounds takes 1d6 points of nonlethal damage. Characters who do not need to breathe are immune to this effect.

Smoke obscures vision, giving concealment (20% miss chance) to characters within it.

Starvation and Thirst

Characters might find themselves without food or water and with no means to obtain them — resources are scarce, and competition violent, in the ruined towns in the Annihilation Zone. In normal climates, Medium characters need at least a gallon of fluids and about a pound of decent food per day to avoid starvation. In very hot climates, characters need two or three times as much water to avoid dehydration.

A character can go without water for 1 day plus a number of hours equal to his Constitution score. After this time, the character must make a Constitution check each hour (DC 10, +1 for each previous check) or take 1d6 points of nonlethal damage.

A character can go without food for 3 days, in growing discomfort. After this time, the character must make a Constitution check each day (DC 10, +1 for each previous check) or take 1d6 points of nonlethal damage.

Characters who have taken nonlethal damage from lack of food or water are fatigued. Nonlethal damage from thirst or starvation cannot be recovered until the character gets food or water, as needed — not even supernatural effects that restore hit points heals this damage.

Suffocation

A character who has no air to breathe can hold her breath for 2 rounds per point of Constitution. After this period of time, the character must make a DC 10 Constitution check in order to continue holding her breath. The save must be repeated each round, with the DC increasing by +1 for each previous success.

When the character fails one of these Constitution checks, she begins to suffocate. In the first round, she falls unconscious (0 hit points). In the following round, she drops to –1 hit points and is dying. In the third round, she suffocates.

Slow Suffocation: A Medium character can breathe easily for 6 hours in a sealed chamber measuring 10 feet on a side. After that time, the character takes 1d6 points of nonlethal damage every 15 minutes. Each additional Medium character or significant fire source (a torch, for example) proportionally reduces the time the air lasts.

Small characters consume half as much air as Medium characters. A larger volume of air, of course, lasts for a longer time.

Water Dangers

Any character can wade in relatively calm water that isn't over his head, no check required. Similarly, swimming in calm water only requires Swim skill checks with a DC of 10. Trained swimmers can just take 10. (Remember, however, that armor or heavy gear makes any attempt at swimming more difficult. See the Swim skill description in Chapter 3: Skills.)

By contrast, fast-moving water is more dangerous. On a DC 15 Swim check or a DC 15 Strength check, it deals 1d3 points of nonlethal damage per round (1d6 points of lethal damage if flowing over rocks and cascades). On a failed check, in addition to taking damage, the character must make another check that round to avoid going under.

Very deep water is not only generally pitch black, posing a navigational hazard, but worse, it deals water pressure damage of 1d6 points per minute for every 100 feet the character is below the surface. A Fortitude save (DC 15, +1 for each previous check) means the diver takes no damage in that minute. Very cold water deals 1d6 points of nonlethal damage from hypothermia per minute of exposure.

Drowning

Any character can hold her breath for a number of rounds equal to twice her Constitution score. After this period of time, the character must make a DC 10 Constitution check every round in order to continue holding her breath. Each round, the DC increases by 1.

When the character finally fails her Constitution check, she begins to drown. In the first round, she falls unconscious (0 hp). In the following round, she drops to –1 hit points and is dying. In the third round, she drowns.

It is possible to drown in substances other than water, such as sand, quicksand, fine dust, and silos full of grain.

Weather Dangers

Sometimes — especially close to the Intrusion Point — weather can play an important role in an adventure.

Rain, Snow, Sleet, and Hail

Bad weather frequently slows or halts travel and makes it virtually impossible to navigate from one spot to another. Torrential downpours and blizzards obscure vision as effectively as a dense fog.

Most precipitation is rain, but in cold conditions it can manifest as snow, sleet, or hail. Precipitation of any kind followed by a cold snap in which the temperature dips from above freezing to 30° F or below may produce ice.

Rain: Rain reduces visibility ranges by half, resulting in a –4 penalty on Spot and Search checks. It has the same effect on flames, ranged weapon attacks, and Listen checks as severe wind (see below).

Snow: Falling snow has the same effects on visibility, ranged weapon attacks, and skill checks as rain, and it costs 2 squares of movement to enter a snow-covered square. A day of snowfall leaves 1d6 inches of snow on the ground.

Heavy Snow: Heavy snow has the same effects as normal snowfall, but also restricts visibility as fog does (see below). A day of heavy snow leaves 1d4 feet of snow on the ground, and it costs 4 squares of movement to enter a square covered with heavy snow. Heavy snow accompanied by strong or severe winds may

result in snowdrifts 1d4x5 feet deep, especially in and around objects big enough to deflect the wind — a cabin or a large tent, for instance. There is a 10% chance that a heavy snowfall is accompanied by lightning (see *Thunderstorm*, below). Heavy snow has the same effect on flames as moderate wind (see below).

Sleet: Essentially frozen rain, sleet has the same effect as rain while falling (except that its chance to extinguish protected flames is 75%) and the same effect as snow once on the ground.

Hail: Hail does not reduce visibility, but the sound of falling hail makes Listen checks more difficult (–4 penalty). Sometimes (5% chance) natural hail (i.e., not that caused by the Nightmare Wave) can become large enough to deal 1 point of lethal damage (per storm) to anything in the open. Unnatural hail is often more dangerous. Once on the ground, hail has the same effect on movement as snow.

Storms

The combined effects of precipitation (or dust) and wind that accompany all storms reduce visibility ranges by three quarters, imposing a –8 penalty on Spot, Search, and Listen checks. Storms make ranged weapon attacks impossible, except for those with firearms, which have a –4 penalty on attack rolls. Storms automatically extinguish candles, torches, and similar unprotected flames. They cause protected flames, such as those of lanterns, to dance wildly and have a 50% chance to extinguish these lights. See Table 7–13: Wind Effects for possible consequences to creatures caught outside without shelter during such a storm. Storms are divided into the following three types.

Duststorm (CR 3): These desert storms differ from other storms in that they have no precipitation. Instead, a duststorm blows fine grains of sand that obscure vision, smother unprotected flames, and can even choke protected flames (50% chance). Most duststorms are accompanied by severe winds and leave behind a deposit of 1d6 inches of sand. However, there is a 10% chance for a greater duststorm to be accompanied by windstorm-magnitude winds (see Table 7–13: Wind Effects). These greater duststorms deal 1d3 points of nonlethal damage each round to anyone caught out in the open without shelter and also pose a choking hazard (see "Water Dangers," *Drowning*, below — except that a character with a scarf or similar protection across her mouth and nose does not begin to choke until after a number of rounds equal to 10 x her Constitution score). Greater duststorms leave 2d3–1 feet of fine sand in their wake.

Snowstorm: In addition to the wind and precipitation common to other storms, snowstorms leave 1d6 inches of snow on the ground afterward.

Thunderstorm: In addition to wind and precipitation (usually rain, but sometimes also hail), thunderstorms are accompanied by lightning that can pose a hazard to characters without proper shelter. As a rule of thumb, assume one bolt per minute for a 1-hour period at the center of the storm. Each bolt causes electricity damage equal to 1d10 eight-sided dice. One in ten thunderstorms is accompanied by a tornado (see below).

Powerful Storms

Very high winds and torrential precipitation reduce visibility to zero, making Spot, Search, and Listen checks and all ranged weapon attacks impossible (except those with firearms, which take –8 penalties). Unprotected flames are automatically extinguished, and protected flames have a 75% chance of being doused. Creatures caught in the area must make a DC 20 Fortitude save or face the effects based on the size of the creature (see Table 7–13: Wind Effects).

Powerful storms are divided into the following four types.

Windstorm: While accompanied by little or no precipitation, windstorms can cause considerable damage simply through the force of their wind.

Blizzard: The combination of high winds, heavy snow (typically 1d3 feet), and bitter cold make blizzards deadly for all who are unprepared for them.

Hurricane: In addition to very high winds and heavy rain, hurricanes are accompanied by floods. Most activity is impossible under such conditions.

Tornado: A tornado accompanies one in ten thunderstorms.

Fog

Whether in the form of a low-lying cloud or a mist rising from the ground, fog obscures all sight, including darkvision, beyond 5 feet. Creatures 5 feet away have one-half concealment (attacks by or against them have a 20% miss chance).

Winds

The wind can create a stinging spray of sand or dust, fan a large fire, heel over a small boat, and blow gases or vapors away. If powerful enough, it can even knock characters down (see Table 7–13: Wind Effects), interfere with ranged attacks, or impose penalties on some skill checks.

Light Wind: A gentle breeze, having little or no game effect.

Moderate Wind: A steady wind with a 50% chance of extinguishing small, unprotected flames, such as candles.

Strong Wind: Gusts that automatically extinguish unprotected flames (candles, torches, and the like). Such gusts impose a –2 penalty on ranged attack rolls (though not those with firearms) and on Listen checks.

Severe Wind: In addition to automatically extinguishing any unprotected flames, winds of this magnitude cause protected flames (such as those of lanterns) to dance wildly and have a 50% chance of extinguishing these lights. Ranged weapon attacks and Listen checks are at a –4 penalty; firearms attacks take a –2 penalty.

Windstorm: Powerful enough to bring down branches if not whole trees, windstorms automatically extinguish unprotected flames and have a 75% chance of blowing out protected flames, such as those of lanterns. Most ranged weapon attacks are impossible, and even firearms have a –4 penalty on attack rolls. Listen checks are at a –8 penalty due to the howling of the wind.

Hurricane-Force Wind: All flames are extinguished. Ranged attacks are impossible (except with firearms, which have a –8 penalty on attack rolls). Listen checks are impossible: All characters can hear is the roaring of the wind. Hurricane-force winds often fell trees.

Tornado (CR 10): All flames are extinguished. All ranged attacks are impossible (even with firearms), as are Listen checks. Instead of being blown away (see Table 7–13: Wind Effects),

TABLE 7–13: WIND EFFECTS

Wind Force	Wind Speed	Ranged Attacks Normal/Firearms	Creature Size*	Wind Effect on Creatures	Fort Save DC
Light	0–10 mph	—/—	Any	None	—
Moderate	11–20 mph	—/—	Any	None	—
Strong	21–30 mph	–2/—	Tiny or smaller	Knocked down	10
Small or larger	None				
Severe	31–50 mph	–4/—	Tiny	Blown away	15
Small	Knocked down				
Medium	Checked				
Large or larger	None				
Windstorm	51–74 mph	Impossible/–4	Small or smaller	Blown away	18
Medium	Knocked down				
Large or Huge	Checked				
Gargantuan or Colossal	None				
Hurricane	75–174 mph	Impossible/–8	Medium or smaller	Blown away	20
Large	Knocked down				
Huge	Checked				
Gargantuan or Colossal	None				
Tornado	175–300 mph	Impossible/impossible	Large or smaller	Blown away	30
Huge	Knocked down				
Gargantuan or Colossal	Checked				

* Flying or airborne creatures are treated as one size category smaller than their actual size, so an airborne Gargantuan monster is treated as Huge for purposes of wind effects.

characters in close proximity to a tornado who fail their Fortitude saves are sucked toward the tornado. Those who come in contact with the funnel cloud are picked up and whirled around for 1d10 rounds, taking 6d6 points of damage per round, before being violently expelled (falling damage may apply). While a tornado's rotational speed can be as great as 300 mph, the funnel itself moves forward at an average of 30 mph (roughly 250 feet per round). A tornado uproots trees, destroys buildings, and causes other similar forms of major destruction.

See "Conditions," below, for more information on creatures who are checked, knocked down, or blown away.

Special Abilities

Supernatural creatures can have a variety of special abilities.

Ability Score Loss

Various attacks cause ability score loss, either ability damage or ability drain. Points lost to ability damage return at the rate of 1 point per day (or double that if the character gets complete bed rest) to each damaged ability, and spells with Heal components offset ability damage as well. Ability drain, however, is permanent, though powerful spells with Heal components can restore even those lost ability score points.

While any loss is debilitating, losing all points in an ability score can be devastating.

- Strength 0 means that the character cannot move at all. He lies helpless on the ground.
- Dexterity 0 means that the character cannot move at all. He stands motionless, rigid, and helpless.
- Constitution 0 means that the character is dead.
- Intelligence 0 means that the character cannot think and is unconscious in a coma-like stupor, helpless.
- Wisdom 0 means that the character is withdrawn into a deep sleep filled with nightmares, helpless.
- Charisma 0 means that the character is withdrawn into a catatonic, coma-like stupor, helpless.

Keeping track of negative ability score points is never necessary. A character's ability score can't drop below 0.

Having a score of 0 in an ability is different from having no ability score whatsoever.

Some spells or abilities impose an effective ability score reduction, which is different from ability score loss. Any such reduction disappears at the end of the spell's or ability's duration, and the ability score immediately returns to its former value.

If a character's Constitution score drops, then he loses 1 hit point per Hit Die for every point by which his Constitution modifier drops. A hit point score can't be reduced by Constitution damage or drain to less than 1 hit point per Hit Die.

Some creatures — life-sucking beasts from the Nightmare Wave — can drain ability scores with attacks. Such creatures do not drain abilities from enemies when the enemies strike them, even with unarmed attacks or natural weapons.

ACTION NEWS

6:00 News
Draft 1

Reports continue to pour in from all over: strange things are happening in America, and particularly in Chicago. Tonight we'll examine some of these strange occurrences. We'll look at a report from our own South Side, where a man allegeadly vanished into thin air. Some are blaming him for a crime that occurred in the same area: a multiple homicide in an art museum. [redacted] those were not the only deaths in Chicago. Half a dozen are dead in the Palos Forest Reserve and look to have been torn apart by a large animal. Zookeepers say it must have wandered in from elsewhere, as their animals are all accounted for. [redacted] Moving out to America at large, speculation about the disaster in the central US abounds. [redacted] meteor strike theory that seems to be the most popular, but others, including those involving aliens and the Bible, also have supporters. We also have a clip from self-proclaimed "experimental physicist" Jamie Mauer, who discusses her theory that the event was caused by a parallel universe.

Blindsight and Blindsense

Some creatures have blindsight, the ability to use a nonvisual sense (or a combination of such senses) to operate effectively without vision. Such sense may include sensitivity to vibrations, acute scent, keen hearing, or echolocation. This ability makes invisibility and concealment (even magical darkness) irrelevant to the creature (though it still can't see incorporeal creatures). This ability operates out to a range specified in the creature description.

- Blindsight never allows a creature to distinguish color or visual contrast. A creature cannot read with blindsight.
- Blinding attacks do not penalize creatures using blindsight.
- Deafening attacks thwart blindsight if it relies on hearing.
- Blindsight works underwater but not in a vacuum.
- Blindsight negates displacement and blur effects.

Blindsense: Other creatures have blindsense, a lesser ability that lets the creature notice things it cannot see, but without the precision of blindsight. The creature with blindsense usually does not need to make Spot or Listen checks to notice and locate creatures within range of its blindsense ability, provided that it has line of effect to that creature. Any opponent the creature cannot see has total concealment (50% miss chance) against the creature with blindsense, and the blindsensing creature still has the normal miss chance when attacking foes that have concealment. Visibility still affects the movement of a creature with blindsense. A creature with blindsense is still denied its Dexterity bonus to Defense against attacks from creatures it cannot see.

Charm and Compulsion

Many abilities and spells can cloud the minds of characters and monsters, leaving them unable to tell friend from foe — or worse yet, deceiving them into thinking that their former friends are now their worst enemies. Demons and vampires are especially fond of convincing their victims to give themselves up "willingly." Two general types of enchantments affect characters and creatures: charms and compulsions.

Charm: Charming another creature gives the charming character the ability to befriend and suggest courses of actions to his minion, but the servitude is not absolute or mindless. Charms of this type include the charm effect of a Control component. Essentially, a charmed character retains free will but makes choices according to a skewed view of the world.

- A charmed creature doesn't gain any magical ability to understand his new friend's language.
- A charmed character retains his original mindset and morals, generally with the exception that he now regards the charming creature as a dear friend and gives great weight to his suggestions and directions.

• A charmed character fights his former allies only if they threaten his new friend, and even then he uses the least lethal means at his disposal as long as these tactics show any possibility of success (just as he would in a fight between two actual friends).

• A charmed character is entitled to an opposed Charisma check against his master in order to resist instructions or commands that would make him do something he wouldn't normally do even for a close friend. If he succeeds, he decides not to go along with that order but remains charmed.

• A charmed character never obeys a command that is obviously suicidal or grievously harmful to him.

• If the charming creature commands his minion to do something to which the influenced character would be violently opposed, the subject may attempt a new saving throw to break free of the influence altogether.

• A charmed character who is openly attacked by the creature who charmed him or by that creature's apparent allies is automatically freed of the spell or effect.

Compulsion: Compulsion is a different matter altogether. A compulsion overrides the subject's free will in some way or simply changes the way the subject's mind works. A charm makes the subject a friend of the caster; a compulsion makes the subject obey the caster.

Regardless of whether a character is charmed or compelled, he doesn't volunteer information or tactics for which his master doesn't ask.

Damage Reduction

Some supernatural creatures have the supernatural ability to instantly heal damage from weapons or to ignore blows altogether as though they were invulnerable. Wearing armor also grants damage reduction.

The numerical part of a creature's (or piece of armor's) damage reduction is the amount of hit points the creature ignores from normal attacks. Usually, a certain type of weapon can overcome this reduction. This information is separated from the damage reduction number by a slash. Damage reduction may be overcome by certain types of weapons (such as slashing or bludgeoning), or, in some rare cases, weapons with some other special quality. If a dash follows the slash (as is the case with armor), the damage reduction is effective against any attack that does not ignore damage reduction.

Whenever damage reduction completely negates the damage from an attack, it also negates most special effects that accompany the attack, such as injury-type poison, a critical hit's stunning, and injury-type disease. Damage reduction does not negate touch attacks, nor does it affect poisons or diseases delivered by inhalation, ingestion, or contact.

Attacks that deal no damage because of the target's damage reduction do not disrupt spellcasting.

Spells, similar abilities and energy attacks (even nonmagical fire) ignore damage reduction.

Sometimes damage reduction is instant healing. Sometimes damage reduction represents the creature's tough hide or body. In either case, characters can see that conventional attacks don't work.

If a creature has damage reduction from more than one source, the two forms of damage reduction do not stack. Instead, the creature gets the benefit of the best damage reduction in a given situation.

Darkvision

Darkvision is the ability to see with no light source at all, out to a range specified for the creature. Darkvision is black and white only (the creature cannot discern colors). It does not allow characters to see anything that they could not see otherwise — invisible objects are still invisible, and illusions are still visible as what they seem to be. The presence of light does not spoil darkvision.

Disease

One of the Nightmare Wave's more sinister effects was to increase the prevalence and deadliness of diseases throughout the world — though, of course, you are in more danger the closer you get to the Intrusion Point. When a character is exposed to a treatable disease, she must make an immediate Fortitude saving throw. The victim must make this roll when she comes into contact with an infectious carrier, touches an item smeared with diseased matter, consumes food or drink tainted with a disease, or suffers damage from a contaminated attack. If she succeeds, the disease has no effect on her — her immune system fights off the infection. If she fails the save, she takes damage after an incubation period; once per day thereafter, she must make a Fortitude save to avoid secondary damage. Two successful saving throws in a row indicate that the character has fought off the disease and recovers, taking no more damage.

The characteristics of some treatable diseases are summarized on Table 7–14: Diseases.

Type: The disease's method of delivery — ingested, inhaled, or via an injury — and the DC needed to save. Some injury

TABLE 7–14: DISEASES

Disease	Type	Incubation Period	Initial Damage	Secondary Damage
Anthrax	Inhaled/Injury DC 16	1d2 days	1 Con	1d4 Con*
Hantavirus	Injury DC 14	1 day	1d2 Str	1d2 Str* and 1d2 Con*
Necrotizing faciitis	Contact DC 13	1d6 days	1 Con	1d3 Con*
Pneumonia	Inhaled DC 12	1d4 days	1 Str	1d3 Str and 1d3 Con
Salmonellosis	Ingested DC 13	1 day	1 Str and 1 Dex	1 Str and 1d3 Dex
Small pox	Inhaled/Contact DC 15	2d4 days	1 Str and 1 Con	1d2 Str and 1d2 Con
West Nile virus	Injury DC 12	1d4 days	1 Dex and 1 Con	1d2 Dex and 1d2 Con*

*If you take damage, make a second saving throw to avoid 1 point being permanently drained (instead of damaged).

diseases can be transmitted by a wound as small as an insect bite. Most diseases that are inhaled can also be ingested (and vice versa).

Incubation Period: The amount of time before initial damage takes effect (if the victim fails her Fortitude save).

Initial Damage: The damage the victim takes after the incubation period.

Secondary Damage: The amount of damage the victim takes one day after taking initial damage, if she fails a second saving throw. She takes this damage each day the saving throw fails.

Healing a Disease

Use of the Heal skill can help a diseased character. Every time a diseased character makes a saving throw against disease effects, the healer makes a check. The diseased character can use the healer's result in place of her saving throw if the Heal check result is higher. The diseased character must be in the healer's care and must have spent the previous 8 hours resting.

Characters recover points lost to ability score damage at a rate of 1 per day per ability damaged, and this rule applies even while a disease is in progress. That means that a character with a minor disease might be able to withstand it without accumulating any damage.

Energy Resistance and Protection

A creature with energy resistance has the ability (usually extraordinary) to ignore some damage of a certain energy type (acid, cold, electricity, fire, or sonic) each round. Each resistance ability is defined by what energy type it resists and how many points of damage are resisted, such as fire resistance 10. Energy resistances of the same type do not stack, only the highest value applies (fire resistance 10 and fire resistance 20 only counts as fire resistance 20).

Example: A mage has fire resistance 10 from a spell. In round 1 a crazed cultist (who worships the Iconnu) with a flamethrower hits him for 20 points of damage; the fire resistance lets him ignore the first 10 points and he takes the remaining 10. In round 2 the cultist hits him for 15 points of fire damage (5 gets through his fire resistance), then a second cultist shows up with a flamethrower and toasts him for 20 more. As his spell has already protected him against 10 points of fire damage this round, he takes all 20 points from the second cultist's attack.

Energy Protection

Energy protection is a fixed amount (such as 50 points) of protection against an energy type, and as the creature takes damage of that type, the protection drops by that amount until it reaches 0. It is sometimes called "ablative" energy protection; it is usually the product of a spell or other supernatural ability.

Example: Same scenario as above, except the mage has fire protection 50 instead of fire resistance. In round 1 the cultist hits him for 20 points of damage; his fire protection absorbs all of this, leaving him with 30 points of fire protection remaining. In round 2 the cultist toasts him again for 15, reducing his available protection to 15. The second cultist blasts him for 20, reducing his protection to 0, and the mage takes the remaining 5 points of fire damage.

If a creature has energy resistance and energy protection, the energy protection resolves first. If the energy protection is exhausted, the creature's energy resistance applies to the remaining damage.

Evasion and Improved Evasion

These feats allow the target of an area attack to leap or twist out of the way.

If subjected to an attack that allows a Reflex save for half damage, a character with Evasion takes no damage on a successful save.

As with a Reflex save for any creature, a character must have room to move in order to evade. A bound character or one squeezing through an area cannot use evasion.

As with a Reflex save for any creature, evasion is a reflexive ability. The character need not know that the attack is coming to use evasion.

Characters cannot use the Evasion or Improved Evasion feat in medium or heavy armor. Some creatures have evasion as an innate quality and do not have this limitation.

Improved evasion is like evasion, except that even on a failed saving throw the character takes only half damage.

"And then the guy came at me, with, like, a machete or somethin'. A big knife anyways. He says to me, in a real calm voice, 'I saw you in my dreams. I can't allow you to see what goes on in my dreams.' Well, I think it goes without saying that I pissed my pants and then ran screamin' outa there. Anyone would have."

—Ron Davis, Chicago

Fast Healing

A creature with fast healing regains hit points at an exceptional rate. Except for what is noted here, fast healing is like natural healing.

At the beginning of each of the creature's turns, it heals a certain number of hit points (defined in its description). Fast healing works even for creatures who do not benefit from natural healing (like vampires).

Unlike regeneration, fast healing does not allow a creature to regrow or reattach lost body parts.

A creature that has taken both nonlethal and lethal damage heals the nonlethal damage first.

Fast healing does not restore hit points lost from starvation, thirst, or suffocation.

Fear

Fear is commonplace in the world now. In addition, spells, supernatural abilities (particularly Nightmare disciplines), and certain monsters can affect characters with powerful fear. In most cases, the character makes a Will save to resist this effect, and a failed roll means that the character is shaken, frightened, or panicked.

Shaken: Characters who are shaken take a –2 penalty on attack rolls, saving throws, skill checks, and ability checks.

Frightened: Characters who are frightened are shaken, and in addition they flee from the source of their fear as quickly as they can. They can choose the path of their flight. Other than that stipulation, once they are out of sight (or hearing) of the source of their fear, they can act as they want. However, if the duration of their fear continues, characters can be forced to flee once more if the source of their fear presents itself again. Characters unable to flee can fight (though they are still shaken).

Panicked: Characters who are panicked are shaken, and they run away from the source of their fear as quickly as they can. Other than running away from the source, their path is random. They flee from all other dangers that confront them rather than facing those dangers. Panicked characters cower if they are prevented from fleeing.

Becoming Even More Fearful: Fear effects are cumulative. A shaken character who is made shaken again becomes frightened, and a shaken character who is made frightened becomes

panicked instead. A frightened character who is made shaken or frightened becomes panicked instead.

Incorporeality

Some creatures lack physical bodies. Such creatures are insubstantial and can't be touched by mundane matter or energy. Likewise, they cannot manipulate objects or exert physical force on objects. However, incorporeal beings have a tangible presence that sometimes seems like a physical attack against a corporeal creature.

Incorporeal creatures can be harmed only by other incorporeal creatures or by spells and certain supernatural items. Supernatural abilities that do not rely on physical touch can affect them as well (which means most cants, disciplines, and rites can affect them). They are immune to all non-supernatural attack forms. They are not burned by normal fires, affected by natural cold, or harmed by mundane acids.

Even when struck by magic or another supernatural ability, an incorporeal creature has a 50% chance to ignore any damage from a corporeal source, unless that source is a force effect.

Incorporeal creatures are immune to critical hits. They move in any direction (including up or down) at will. They do not need to walk on the ground. They can pass through solid objects at will, although they cannot see when their eyes are within solid matter.

Incorporeal creatures hiding inside solid objects get a +2 circumstance bonus on Listen checks, because solid objects carry sound well. Pinpointing an opponent from inside a solid object uses the same rules as pinpointing invisible opponents (see "Invisibility," below).

Incorporeal creatures are inaudible unless they decide to make noise.

The physical attacks of incorporeal creatures ignore material armor. Characters do not got their armor's DR against incorporeal attacks, and incorporeal creatures' attacks are all touch attacks — they ignore Defense bonuses from things like natural armor (though you still get dodge and class bonuses against them).

Incorporeal creatures pass through and operate in water as easily as they do in air.

Incorporeal creatures cannot fall or take falling damage.

Corporeal creatures cannot trip or grapple incorporeal creatures.

Incorporeal creatures have no weight and do not set off traps that are triggered by weight.

Incorporeal creatures do not leave footprints and have no scent.

Invisibility

Unseen things move in the shadows. Some of them are indeed invisible.

The ability to move about unseen is not foolproof. While they can't be seen, invisible creatures can be heard, smelled, or felt.

Invisibility makes a creature undetectable by vision, including darkvision.

Invisibility does not, by itself, make a creature immune to critical hits, but it does make the creature immune to extra damage from sneak attacks.

A creature can generally notice the presence of an active invisible creature within 30 feet with a DC 20 Spot check. The observer gains a hunch that "something's there" but can't see it or target it accurately with an attack (he cannot "pinpoint" it). He doesn't even know what square it's on.

A creature who is holding still is very hard to notice (DC 30). An inanimate object, an unliving creature holding still, or a completely immobile creature is even harder to spot (DC 40). It's practically impossible (+20 DC) to pinpoint (determine in which 5-foot-by-5-foot area the creature stands) an invisible creature's location with a Spot check, and even if a character succeeds on such a check, the invisible creature still benefits from total concealment (50% miss chance).

A creature can use hearing to find an invisible creature. A character can make a Listen check for this purpose as a free action each round. A Listen check result at least equal to the invisible creature's Move Silently check result reveals its presence. (A creature with no ranks in Move Silently makes a Move Silently check as a Dexterity check to which an armor check

penalty applies.) A successful check lets a character hear an invisible creature "over there somewhere." It's practically impossible to pinpoint the location of an invisible creature. A Listen check that beats the DC by 20 pinpoints the invisible creature's location. He knows where it is, but it still has full concealment (50% miss chance) against his attacks.

Listen Check DCs to Detect Invisible Creatures

Invisible Creature Is . . .	DC
In combat or speaking	0
Moving at half speed	Move Silently check result
Moving at full speed	Move Silently check result –4
Running or charging	Move Silently check result –20
Some distance away	+1 per 10 feet
Behind an obstacle (door)	+5
Behind an obstacle (stone wall)	+15

A creature can grope about to find an invisible creature. As a standard action, a character can make a touch attack with his hands or a weapon into two adjacent 5-foot squares. If an invisible target is in the designated area, the touch attack has a 50% miss chance. If the touch attack succeeds, the groping character deals no damage but has successfully pinpointed the invisible creature's current location. (If the invisible creature moves, its location, obviously, is once again unknown.)

If an invisible creature strikes a character, the character struck knows the location of the creature that struck him (until, of course, the invisible creature moves). However, if the invisible creature has a reach greater than 5 feet, the struck character knows the general location of the creature but has not pinpointed the exact location.

Effects of Pinpointing: If a character tries to attack an invisible creature whose location he has pinpointed, he attacks normally, but the invisible creature still benefits from full concealment (and thus a 50% miss chance). A particularly large and slow creature might get a smaller miss chance.

If a character tries to attack an invisible creature whose location he has not pinpointed, the player chooses the space where his character directs the attack. If the invisible creature is there, conduct the attack normally (with a 50% miss chance). If the enemy is not there, the GM rolls the miss chance as if it were there, doesn't let the player see the result, and tells him that he missed. That way the player doesn't know whether the attack missed because the enemy is not there or due to the miss chance.

Other Invisibility Considerations: If an invisible character picks up a visible object, the object remains visible. One could coat an invisible object with flour to at least keep track of its position (until the flour fell off or blew away). An invisible creature can pick up a small visible item and hide it on his person (tucked in a pocket or in a jacket) and render it effectively invisible.

Invisible creatures leave tracks. They can be tracked normally. Footprints in sand, mud or other soft surfaces can give enemies clues to an invisible creature's location.

An invisible creature in the water displaces water, revealing its location. The invisible creature, however, is still hard to see and benefits from concealment.

A creature with the scent ability can detect an invisible creature as it would a visible one.

A creature with blindsight can attack (and otherwise interact with) creatures regardless of invisibility.

An invisible flashlight or lamp still gives off light, as does an invisible object with a light-emitting spell cast upon it.

Invisibility does not thwart many spells with Divination components.

Since some creatures can detect or even see invisible creatures, it is helpful to be able to hide even when invisible.

Low-Light Vision

Characters with low-light vision have eyes that are so sensitive to light that they can see twice as far as normal in dim light. Low-light vision is color vision.

Characters with low-light vision can see outdoors on a moonlit night as well as they can during the day.

Paralysis

Some creatures and spells paralyze their victims, immobilizing them through supernatural means. (Paralysis from toxins is discussed in the "Poison" section below.)

A paralyzed character cannot move, speak, or take any physical action. He is rooted to the spot, frozen and helpless. Not even friends can move his limbs. He may take purely mental actions, such as casting a still and silent spell.

A winged creature flying in the air at the time that it becomes paralyzed cannot flap its wings and falls. A swimmer can't swim and may drown.

Poison

When a character takes damage from an attack with a poisoned weapon, touches an item smeared with contact poison, consumes poisoned food or drink, or is otherwise poisoned, he must make a Fortitude saving throw. If he fails, he takes the poison's initial damage (usually ability damage). Even if he succeeds, he typically faces more damage 1 minute later, which he can also avoid with a Fortitude save.

One dose of poison smeared on a weapon or some other object affects just a single target. A poisoned weapon or object retains its venom until the weapon scores a hit or the object is touched (unless the poison is wiped off before a target comes in contact with it). Any poison smeared on an object or exposed to the elements in any way remains potent until it is touched or used.

Poisons are detailed in the Craft (chemical) skill description in Chapter 3: Skills.

Perils of Using Poison: A character has a 5% chance of exposing himself to a poison whenever he applies it to a weapon or otherwise readies it for use. Additionally, a character who rolls a natural 1 on an attack roll with a poisoned weapon must make a DC 15 Reflex save or accidentally poison himself with the weapon.

Poison Immunities: Creatures with natural poison attacks are immune to their own poison. Nonliving creatures (including vampires) and creatures without metabolisms are immune to poison. Some strange, supernatural creatures created by the Nightmare Wave or the Conflagration are also immune to poi-

son, although conceivably special poisons could be concocted specifically to harm them. Minions (creatures created by magic; see Chapter 8: Running the Game, "Antagonists and Supporting Characters," *Minions*) are immune to poison no matter their appearance and type.

Rays

Some supernatural effects create dangerous rays. All ray attacks require the attacker to make a ranged touch attack against the target. Rays have varying ranges, which are simple maximums. A ray's attack roll never takes a range penalty. Even if a ray hits, it usually allows the target to make a saving throw (Fortitude or Will). Rays never allow a Reflex saving throw, but if a character's Dexterity bonus to Defense is high, it might be hard to hit her with the ray in the first place.

Regeneration

You hack at a monster, but it just doesn't die. It lifts a tentacle with one clawed appendage and reattaches it to the stump.

Creatures with this extraordinary ability recover from wounds quickly and can even regrow or reattach severed body parts. All damage dealt to the creature is nonlethal damage, and the creature automatically cures itself of nonlethal damage at a fixed rate.

Certain attack forms, often fire and acid, deal damage to the creature normally; that sort of damage doesn't convert to nonlethal damage and so doesn't regenerate. The creature's description includes the details.

Creatures with regeneration can regrow lost portions of their bodies and can reattach severed limbs or body parts. Severed parts die if they are not reattached.

Regeneration does not restore hit points lost from starvation, thirst, or suffocation.

Attack forms that don't deal hit point damage ignore regeneration.

An attack that can cause instant death threatens the creature with death only if it is delivered by weapons that deal it lethal damage.

Scent

This ability lets a creature detect approaching enemies, sniff out hidden foes, and track by sense of smell. Werewolves use it to hunt victims in the inner city.

A creature with the scent ability can detect opponents by sense of smell, generally within 30 feet. If the opponent is upwind, the range is 60 feet. If it is downwind, the range is 15 feet. Strong scents, such as smoke or rotting garbage, can be detected at twice the ranges noted above. Overpowering scents, such as skunk musk, can be detected at three times these ranges.

The creature detects another creature's presence but not its specific location. Noting the direction of the scent is a move action. If it moves within 5 feet of the scent's source, the creature can pinpoint that source.

A creature with the Track feat and the scent ability can follow tracks by smell, making a Survival check to find or follow tracks. The typical DC for a fresh trail is 10. The DC increases or decreases depending on how strong the quarry's odor is, the number of creatures, and the age of the trail. For each hour that the trail is cold, the DC increases by 2. The ability otherwise follows the rules for the Track feat. Creatures tracking by scent ignore the effects of surface conditions and poor visibility.

Creatures with the scent ability can identify familiar odors just as humans do familiar sights.

Water, particularly running water, ruins a trail for air-breathing creatures. Water-breathing creatures that have the scent ability, however, can use it in the water easily.

False, powerful odors can easily mask other scents. The presence of such an odor completely spoils the ability to properly detect or identify creatures, and the base Survival DC to track becomes 20 rather than 10.

Sprint Healing

Sprint healing is a bit like fast healing. It appears in the format X/Y (for example, sprint healing 5/20). Each round at the beginning of your turn, you can choose to heal up to X hit points. (So, if you have sprint healing 5/20, you can choose to heal 0, 1, 2, 3, 4, or 5 hit points at the beginning of each of your turns.) However, you can recover no more than Y hit points per day in this manner. (No more than 20 hit points, in this example.)

Sprint healing is a subconscious decision on the *character's* part, which means the *player* can always choose to heal his character in this manner — even if the character is unconscious, dying, paralyzed, or otherwise incapacitated.

Tremorsense

A creature with tremorsense automatically senses the location of anything that is in contact with the ground and within range.

If no straight path exists through the ground from the creature to those that it's sensing, then the range defines the maximum distance of the shortest indirect path. It must itself be in contact with the ground, and the creatures must be moving.

As long as the other creatures are taking physical actions, including casting spells with somatic components (i.e., not a still spell), they're considered moving; they don't have to move from place to place for a creature with tremorsense to detect them.

Conditions

The following are all the conditions that may affect characters. If more than one condition affects a character, apply them all. If certain effects can't combine, apply the most severe effect.

Ability Damaged: The character has temporarily lost 1 or more ability score points. See "Special Abilities," *Ability Score Loss,* above, for more information.

Ability Drained: The character has permanently lost 1 or more ability score points. The character can regain these points only through supernatural means, such as a spell with a Heal component. See "Special Abilities," *Ability Score Loss,* above, for more information.

Blinded: The character cannot see. He takes a –2 penalty to Defense, loses his Dexterity bonus to Defense (if any), moves

at half speed, and takes a –4 penalty on Search checks and on most Strength- and Dexterity-based skill checks. All checks and activities that rely on vision (such as reading and Spot checks) automatically fail. All opponents have total concealment (50% miss chance) to the blinded character.

Characters who remain blinded for a long time grow accustomed to these drawbacks and can overcome some of them.

Blown Away: Depending on its size, a creature can be blown away by winds of high velocity. A creature on the ground that is blown away is knocked down and rolls 1d4 x 10 feet, taking 1d4 points of nonlethal damage per 10 feet. A flying creature that is blown away is blown back 2d6x10 feet and takes 2d6 points of nonlethal damage due to battering and buffeting.

Checked: The character is prevented from achieving forward motion by an applied force, such as wind. Checked creatures on the ground merely stop. Checked flying creatures move back a distance specified in the description of the effect.

Confused: A confused character's actions are determined by rolling 1d10 at the beginning of his turn.

Confused Creature's Actions

d10	Action
1	Attack the creature that caused the confusion with melee or ranged weapons (or close with the creature if attacking is not possible).
2	Act normally.
3–5	Do nothing but babble incoherently.
6–7	Flee at top possible speed from the creature that caused the confusion.
8–10	Attack nearest creature.

A confused character who can't carry out the indicated action does nothing but babble incoherently. Attackers are not at any special advantage when attacking a confused character.

A confused character who is attacked automatically attacks its attackers on its next turn, as long as it is still confused when its turn comes. A confused character does not make attacks of opportunity against any creature that it is not already devoted to attacking (either because of its most recent action or because it has just been attacked).

Cowering: The character is frozen in fear and can take no actions. A cowering character takes a –2 penalty to Defense and loses her Dexterity bonus (if any).

Dazed: The creature is unable to act normally. A dazed creature can take no actions, but has no penalty to Defense.

A dazed condition typically lasts 1 round.

Dazzled: The creature is unable to see well because of overstimulation of the eyes. A dazzled creature takes a –1 penalty on attack rolls, Search checks, and Spot checks.

Dead: The character's hit points are reduced to –S minus 1 (S equals his Con score) or his Constitution drops to 0. Dead characters cannot benefit from normal or supernatural healing. Some GMs may allow magic to return characters to life; see the "Raising the Dead" sidebar in Chapter 5: Magic.

Deafened: A deafened character cannot hear. She takes a –4 penalty on initiative checks, automatically fails Listen checks, and has a 20% chance of spell failure when casting spells with verbal components (i.e., not a silent spell). Characters who remain deafened for a long time grow accustomed to these drawbacks and can overcome some of them.

Disabled: A character whose hit points are between 0 and –M (M equals his Constitution modifier) is disabled. See "Death, Dying and Healing," above, for more information.

Dying: While some people these days say the entire world is dying, a dying *character* is unconscious and near death. She has less than –M hit points (M equals her Constitution modifier). See "Death, Dying and Healing," above, for more information.

Entangled: The character is ensnared. Being entangled impedes movement, but does not entirely prevent it unless the bonds are anchored to an immobile object or tethered by an opposing force. An entangled creature moves at half speed, cannot run or charge, and takes a –2 penalty on attack rolls and a –4 penalty to Dexterity. An entangled character who attempts to cast a spell must make a Concentration check (DC 15 + a value dependent on the spell's component cost, listed in the Concentration skill description in Chapter 3: Skills) or lose the spell.

Exhausted: An exhausted character moves at half speed and takes a –6 penalty to Strength and Dexterity. After 1 hour of complete rest, an exhausted character becomes fatigued. A fatigued character becomes exhausted by doing something else that would normally cause fatigue.

Fascinated: A fascinated creature is entranced by a supernatural effect. The creature stands or sits quietly, taking no actions other than to pay attention to the fascinating effect, for as long as the effect lasts. She takes a –4 penalty on skill checks made as reactions, such as Listen and Spot checks. Any potential threat, such as a hostile creature approaching, allows the fascinated creature a new saving throw against the fascinating effect. Any obvious threat, such as someone drawing a weapon, casting a spell, or aiming a gun at the fascinated creature, automatically breaks the effect. A fascinated creature's ally may shake her free of the spell as a standard action.

Fatigued: A fatigued character can neither run nor charge and takes a –2 penalty to Strength and Dexterity. Doing anything that would normally cause fatigue causes the fatigued character to become exhausted. After 8 hours of complete rest, fatigued characters are no longer fatigued.

Flat-Footed: A character who has not yet acted during a combat is flat-footed, not yet reacting normally to the situation. A flat-footed character loses his Dexterity bonus to Defense (if any) and cannot make attacks of opportunity.

Frightened: A frightened creature flees from the source of its fear as best it can. If unable to flee, it may fight. A frightened creature takes a –2 penalty on all attack rolls, saving throws, skill checks, and ability checks. A frightened creature can use special abilities, including spells, to flee; indeed, the creature must use such means if they are the only way to escape.

Frightened is like shaken, except that the creature must flee if possible. Panicked is a more extreme state of fear.

Grappling: Engaged in wrestling or some other form of hand-to-hand struggle with one or more attackers. A grappling character can undertake only a limited number of actions. He does not threaten any squares, and loses his Dexterity bonus to Defense (if any) against opponents he isn't grappling. See "Actions in the Round," *Action Descriptions*, above, for more information.

Helpless: A helpless character is paralyzed, bound, sleeping, unconscious, or otherwise completely at an opponent's mercy. A helpless target is treated as having a Dexterity of 0 (–5 modifier). Melee attacks against a helpless target get a +4 bonus (equivalent to attacking a prone target). Ranged attacks gets no special bonus against helpless targets. Characters can sneak attack helpless targets.

As a full-round action, an enemy can use a melee weapon to deliver a coup de grace to a helpless foe. An enemy can also use a firearm, provided he is adjacent to the target. The attacker automatically hits and scores a critical hit. (Characters with Sneak Attack also gets the sneak attack damage bonus against a helpless foe when delivering a coup de grace.) If the defender survives, he must make a Fortitude save (DC 10 + damage dealt) or die.

Delivering a coup de grace provokes attacks of opportunity.

Creatures that are immune to critical hits do not take critical damage, nor do they need to make Fortitude saves to avoid being killed by a coup de grace.

Incorporeal: Having no physical body. Incorporeal creatures are immune to all non-supernatural attack forms. They can be harmed only by other incorporeal creatures, spells or other supernatural effects. See "Special Abilities," *Incorporeality*, above, for more information.

Invisible: Visually undetectable. An invisible creature gains a +2 bonus on attack rolls against sighted opponents, and ignores its opponents' Dexterity bonuses to Defense (if any). See "Special Abilities," *Invisibility*, above, for more information.

Knocked Down: Depending on their size, creatures can be knocked down by winds of high velocity. Creatures on the ground are knocked prone by the force of the wind. Flying creatures are instead blown back 1d6x10 feet.

Nauseated: The character experiences stomach distress. Nauseated creatures are unable to attack, cast spells, concentrate on spells, or do anything else requiring attention. The only action such a character can take is a single move action per turn.

Panicked: A panicked creature must drop anything it holds and flee at top speed from the source of its fear, as well as any other dangers it encounters, along a random path. It can't take any other actions. In addition, the creature takes a –2 penalty on all saving throws, skill checks, and ability checks. If cornered, a panicked creature cowers and does not attack, typically using the total defense action in combat. A panicked creature can use special abilities, including spells, to flee; indeed, the creature must use such means if they are the only way to escape.

Panicked is a more extreme state of fear than shaken or frightened.

Paralyzed: A paralyzed character is frozen in place and unable to move or act. A paralyzed character has effective Dexterity and Strength scores of 0 and is helpless, but can take purely mental actions. A winged creature flying in the air at the time that it becomes paralyzed cannot flap its wings and falls. A paralyzed swimmer can't swim and may drown. A creature can move through a space occupied by a paralyzed creature, ally or not. Each square occupied by a paralyzed creature, however, counts as 2 squares.

Pinned: The character is held immobile (but not helpless) in a grapple.

Prone: The character is on the ground. An attacker who is prone has a –4 penalty on melee attack rolls and cannot use bows. A defender who is prone gains a +4 bonus to Defense against ranged attacks, but takes a –4 penalty to Defense against melee attacks.

Standing up is a move action that provokes an attack of opportunity.

Shaken: A shaken character takes a –2 penalty on attack rolls, saving throws, skill checks, and ability checks.

Shaken is a less severe state of fear than frightened or panicked.

Sickened: The character takes a –2 penalty on attack rolls, weapon damage rolls, saving throws, skill checks, and ability checks.

Stable: A character who was dying but who has stopped losing hit points is stable. See "Death, Dying and Healing," above, for more information.

Staggered: A character whose nonlethal damage is between his current hit points + his Constitution modifier (if positive) is staggered. A staggered character may take a single move action or standard action each round (but not both, nor can she take full-round actions).

A character whose current hit points exceed his nonlethal damage is no longer staggered; a character whose nonlethal damage exceeds his hit points + Con bonus becomes unconscious.

Stunned: A stunned creature drops everything held, can't take actions, takes a –2 penalty to Defense, and loses his Dexterity bonus to Defense (if any).

Unconscious: Knocked out and helpless. Unconsciousness can result from a variety of means, such as from nonlethal damage in excess of current hit points.

Dark Is Each Night's Knife

Peter McCain glanced at his watch as he sat in the car, stinking of cigarettes flicked out the window and coffee sipped from paper cups with plastic lids, impatiently waiting for his own death. Then, just as it did every day at 9:16 in the evening, death came. Today it was in the form of a heart attack. Three days ago, it had been a hit-and-run driver. The passenger side of his Honda Civic was still smashed in from that encounter.

By 9:30, however, Peter was alive again, and feeling fine. He was dead for such a short time that no one had even appeared to notice him lying in the driver's side of the car, lukewarm coffee spilled all over his sweatshirt.

He rubbed his aching chest and arm until the pain went away and then pulled off the wet shirt so that he was wearing only a T-shirt. It was cold, so he pulled his jacket out of the back of the car and put that on. He started up the car and drove around the city.

It had started just shortly after the huge meteor strike in the Midwest. Every night, at exactly 9:16, he died. Accidents, heart attacks, brain aneurisms . . . the list went on and on. He usually never stayed dead long enough for an ambulance to arrive, if one was called, but sometimes there was a lot of explaining to be done. At first, he was happy to be taken to a hospital, so someone could tell him what was happening to him, but each time the story was the same: he was fine, nothing was wrong, he just had a close call, or a false alarm, particularly bad indigestion or any of another dozen various explanations. There was never any trace of the wounds he had suffered, or the damage his death had inflicted upon his body. Even blood he had lost was gone. Clearly, the doctors were just grasping at straws to explain something that, in their minds, simply couldn't have happened. Soon, Peter learned to make sure he was alone in the evening, so he could die in peace. After then, he tried to figure out what was going on himself. So, he spent a great deal of time reading, and learned about something called the Nightmare Wave. Accounts varied drastically, but apparently after the meteor, unexplained events were happening everywhere. He was sure that his deaths were related to that, but he had no idea who he could go talk to for validation.

Right now, however, the fact that he died every evening wasn't the worst thing in Peter's life. Just last night he had learned that there was a werewolf after him.

It was sometime after 10 o'clock, and he was recovering from choking to death on a microwave burrito in his apartment.

At first, he heard the sniffing. Something like a big dog was sniffing around his door. He took a peek through the peephole, but he didn't see anything. There was a musky odor, though. He backed away from the door and had just about started to forget the whole thing when

the door fell in on him with a thunderous crash. The hinges had pulled right out of the frame, and the deadbolt and chain locks and pulled even more bits from the frame. It was a flimsy door, and even though it pinned Peter beneath it, he should have been able to throw it off him with ease. But he couldn't. Something large sat upon the door.

It was howling and growling like some kind of a beast. The dog?

Peter tried not to panic. He took a deep breath and tried to push the door (and whatever was atop it) off of him. It didn't budge.

Suddenly, the weight was gone — something had leapt off it and was now on the ground next to Peter. He saw four clawed feet. Yeah, it had to be a dog.

A huge dog, but a dog nonetheless. Why had it crashed its way in here? Peter knew nothing about animals. Did this kind of thing happen?

He pushed the door off him and rolled to his feet. His first thought was to run to where the remains of his burrito had been. Maybe some food would placate the animal.

Peter had barely reached his feet before he got a look at the beast and saw that it was no dog. Even someone utterly ignorant of canine breeds could see that. This wasn't a dog. It wasn't even an animal. It was nothing of this Earth. It was hairy, but the hair was long and stringy, poorly covering taut muscles stretched over a lanky, splayed frame. Its flesh was leprous and pallid, its face long, but its slavering mouth was far too large, and its scimitar teeth too long. Its toothy maw just should not be. Red eyes blazed like fiery hate. This was no product of evolution; it seemed more like something specifically engineered for terror and killing.

If that wasn't clear enough evidence that this was no normal animal, as Peter watched, the thing began to change. Its flesh contorted, its bones popped, its muscles stretched and flexed impossibly. Peter had no intention of waiting around to see what this thing was doing. He ran out of his apartment, screaming, but he feared that his screams would go unheeded — his neighbors had heard screams from his apartment before, usually a little after nine o'clock.

When Peter turned to look behind him, he saw that the creature had followed him, but now it ran on two legs. Its front legs were now massive arms ending in terrible claws like hooks. More man than beast

now, this glimpse first put the word "werewolf" into Peter's head. Could it be?

Clearly it was.

Peter ran. He made it down the single flight of steps with the beast-man right behind him. It was growling and howling, almost as if it was saying something. Was that "come back here" it said? "Peter, I am coming for you," he heard next. Peter was almost undone by the malevolence.

Through the front door of the apartment building, he ran out into the parking lot, well lit by lampposts, and saw a police car in the street, having pulled over another car.

"Help!" Peter yelled, running for the flashing red lights. Halfway there, he turned around to see his pursuer dejectedly slowing to a walk. He kept running. By the time he reached the police officer, the creature was nowhere to be seen.

He spent much of that night trying to explain what he had seen to the police at the station, without much luck. Peter thought at one point he saw a plainclothes officer standing across the room give a spark of recognition, as though that man had heard a story like this before, or seen it for himself, but Peter never got to speak to him. He endured a number of monster movie jokes, and eventually left. Terrified to go back to his apartment, he only went as far as the parking garage, got in his banged-up Civic and drove around the rest of the night.

There was something about the look the creature had given him, and what it had said in its resonating, growling voice that left Peter with no doubt that the creature was going to keep trying to kill him.

That night passed without sleep for Peter, but also without further attacks.

* * *

Peter finished his fast-food meal and tossed the wrappers in the back seat with the others. He sucked on the straw of his soda and came up with a plan. The only plan. The only way he was going to survive.

He had to die. But he had to die just right.

Earlier that day, he had seen a woman watching him outside the gun shop. After trying — and failing — to buy a handgun with no waiting period, Peter had walked around the strip mall the shop had been in, and saw a woman about 30 years old watching his every move. Peter was no fool. He knew that a woman like that wasn't staring at him because she was interested in him. She might have been a prostitute, except there was just something about her. Something that he had seen before.

He realized with a sudden intake of breath that the creature from the night before last wasn't a "beast-man" at all. It had been a beast-woman. The woman staring at him was actually that creature he had seen. Almost as if she could read his mind, she bared her teeth at him from across the parking lot.

Peter ran as fast as he could to his car. He glanced up as he fumbled with the keys and saw that the woman had not moved.

In the rearview mirror, as he drove away, he saw her laughing.

* * *

The timing for this had to be just right. He had bought a new digital watch just to make sure it would work out. Peter waited near his car, hiding behind a Dumpster in an alley. The only light came from a buzzing streetlamp down the block. He tried to keep his greasy meal down as he

crouched next to a dead cat, swarming with maggots.

Something moved near his car. It was a man, although Peter had no idea where the man had come from. He had just appeared out of the night. Peter couldn't make out much in the way of detail, but the man's build was slight. Peter checked his watch. 8:57.

Too early.

He held his breath. The man near his car looked around and then slipped away into the darkness again.

Peter waited. The man returned, and this time with a woman. Was it the woman from earlier that day? He couldn't see her well enough, but he guessed that it was. So there were two of them. He glanced at the time. 9:10.

Still too early.

Just a little longer, he told himself.

His legs were getting stiff from crouching, but he was too scared to move his position.

The two figures seemed to be talking, but he couldn't hear anything. 9:13.

Now they were coming down the alley, the woman in the lead. As she strode forward, she changed. She sprouted hair, and her shoulders broadened and stooped forward. Her face stretched forward and took on a bestial countenance. Peter got a glimpse of the man behind her — he expected to see him change too, but the transformation never came. However, his appearance was already disconcerting. Peter wondered if he was an albino due to how pale his skin was — the man was absolutely gaunt as well. And his eyes. His eyes were simply death.

They coming right for him.

"Come out, little man," the woman-creature purred.

This had better work.

Peter leapt from his hiding place.

"What do you want from me? Why do you want to hurt me?"

"Because you're you," she growled. "There's a war going on, and you don't even realize you're involved. And on the other side."

"We don't want to hurt you," the man said. "We want to kill you."

Peter was counting seconds. "Fine, go ahead."

With hideous inhuman claws, the beast-creature and the pale man fell upon Peter and rent him into a grisly mess.

"Another Awakened idiot dead," the man said when they had finished.

"Heh," she growled. "Only a few more million to go. I don't think this one even knew what he was."

"Most don't. Fucking children." He licked his fingers with soft suckling sound. "They don't know the first thing about the world they live in now. He has a strange tang to him, though."

"A strange smell," she said, nodding.

"I think he'd been touched by the Nightmare Wave somehow. Not that it saved him."

She changed back into her human form with the sound of bones squealing and muscles stretching. When she was done, she asked, "What time is it?"

The gaunt man knelt next to what was left of Peter and picked up his left forearm, his watch still clinging to the wrist. He glanced at it and then tossed watch and arm together into the Dumpster. "I don't know. It looks new, but the fool's cheap watch clearly runs fast. I'm sure it's not even nine yet."

HOT DOGS
BAXTER
LOVE

This chapter is for Game Masters. Some of it is geared toward newer GMs, or GMs new to this kind of roleplaying game, but even experienced GMs may find some useful information and advice.

The Role of the Game Master

Being the GM in a roleplaying game is a daunting undertaking. Equal parts mathematician, epic novelist and improvisational actor, the GM performs many different kinds of tasks in the game. First and foremost, though, he provides the basics of the story that drives all the action in the game and the setting that serves as a backdrop for everything that happens. These things together are "the campaign" and will be dealt with in detail in this chapter.

The GM also creates and controls all the non-player characters, from the minor characters of the story to the antagonists that work against the player characters, as well as all the faceless "extras" in the background, any who could, without warning, join in the story if the player characters decide to go talk to one, hunt one for blood and so on. Likewise, the player characters can — intentionally or not — ignore a non-player character the GM intended to be important. In other words, the GM creates the characters he feels he needs, but in the end, the players decide who the important characters are. Even the most interesting, well-fleshed-out non-player character has no existence until he or she interacts with the player characters.

The GM controls non-player characters in the same way the players control their own characters, but a GM will have dozens or even hundreds of non-player characters active in the game at any one time. Non-player characters take action initially, and then just react to the actions of the player characters. In other words, the demon shows up and sends its minions to attack the player characters. After that, however, its actions (or rather, its reactions) depend on what the player characters do. If they attack it, the demon fights back or flees. If they flee, the demon follows. And so on.

Each non-player character has his or her (or its) own motivation, personality and purpose in the story. Some work with the player characters, and some work against them; some ally with each other and some operate at cross-purposes. This means that quite often you'll be deciding the actions of characters who oppose one another, and you'll have to portray them both appropriately.

Lastly, of course, the GM manages the events of the story as he determines the success or failure of the characters' actions. He uses the rules as presented, obviously, but occasionally he needs to make a judgment call based on what he feels is appropriate and fair for all involved, and keeping in mind what is best for the story (sometimes the villain just needs to get away for the story to continue, although the players should never feel that the GM "cheated" just to make that happen). Ultimately, the GM alone possesses the authority to rule whether an action succeeds or fails in the game.

Creating a World of Darkness Campaign

A campaign, of course, is a series of adventures with the same characters. The different scenarios might be interrelated, but they don't have to be. At the heart of every campaign lies a story. It can be very simple or astonishingly complex, but it usually falls somewhere in between. The Game Master is the shepherd of that story, both guiding and following the players as their characters make their way through the fictional world. The campaign, then, is a story told in many parts, over the course of many sessions of the game.

During the course of the campaign, the player characters should become more powerful, and gain some level of notoriety and respect (or infamy and fear, if that's what they're about). This isn't a game about amassing wealth or lots of magic items or other "treasure." Instead, the player characters' rewards are influence, esteem and power. Money and material goods are more of a byproduct of such things. Just as important, the player characters' should also learn more about the setting, gaining access to secrets that few others have — although the characters might not necessarily like what they discover.

The First Adventure

This book provides the basics of the setting, but there is a great deal yet to flesh out for your individual campaign. Use the material found here, coupled with inspirations from the real world and your own imagination to create *your* World of Darkness campaign.

More Adventure Design Tips

The following are a few minor things to keep in mind while designing adventures for this game:

1. Don't design adventures in which very specific equipment is overly essential. The characters are the important thing, not what they own.

2. Don't "overdesign." A plot with too many mysteries, twists or unknowns just becomes frustrating.

3. Let the player characters do what they do best. Sometimes a werewolf just needs to defeat a gang of street toughs single-handedly, or tear a car in half. Don't deny him that.

4. Challenge the player characters, but also the players. Make the players come up with their own solutions to problems, and fighting or using supernatural powers shouldn't always be the right answer.

5. Learn what the player characters can do, and then design for that. If the player characters are great at gathering information, for example, require that they do it fairly often.

6. Learn what the players enjoy in a game. If one loves mysteries but another just likes to duke it out with foes, make sure to include both things as often as possible.

Start with a location, whether it's in the ruins of Minneapolis (Chapter 10), the dark streets of Chicago (Chapter 9) or someplace entirely different. Perhaps use a location with which you and your players have actual familiarity in the real world. The location for the beginning of the campaign should be interesting and moody — perhaps even a Nightmare Site. Use a wharf at night, with its smell of rotten fish and chill breezes. Use a stately Victorian house now fallen into disrepair, its walls covered with graffiti and the floors with used drug paraphernalia. Use the corporate law offices with their decadent mahogany and leather furniture, lit only by the glow of computer screens. Use these or anything else, but the setting should be in some way memorable.

Next come up with the story. It doesn't have to be an epic, or something worthy of a great novel. Really, all you need to begin is a hook — a mage wants to hire the player characters to find out what her rival is up to each night at the museum by the lake, or one of the player characters' non-player character friends has disappeared and the player characters need to follow the clues to find out what happened to him. The hook gets the player characters involved and starts the story going. It's best if you can tailor it to the player characters as much as possible, and since it's the first adventure, it might also need to provide a reason for the player characters to come together in the first place (more on both of those things below).

While the word "story" is used here, you don't want to plan out the scenario as a writer plots out a story, at least not exactly. A story is dictated entirely by the writer. He knows exactly how each scene moves to the next. You can't do that, because the players are going to be making at least some of those decisions.

Thus, the story needs to be one that is full of decision points for the players. You want the actions of the player characters to drive the story, not the other way around. This means, of course, that things might not go the way you planned, which is why it's always best to plan for many possible outcomes, and yet still keep your mind open for things to happen that you could have never predicted.

It's for the best to keep the first adventure small. For example, the player characters investigate the disappearance of a friend, discover that he's been abducted and by whom and go to his rescue. The story can, and probably should, be just that simple — probably only one or two game sessions long. The real purpose of the first adventure is to get the player characters together, and get the players used to their new characters. In this first scenario, the characters get to know one another, and establish relationships and roles within the group. It's also an opportunity for you to drop in a few veiled allusions to things yet to come. Perhaps a non-player character drops the name of a powerful mage who will eventually come to be the player characters' major nemesis, or possesses a syringe of a special drug developed by a pharmaceutical company run by a demon and secretly powered by the Nightmare Wave, all of which will become integral as the campaign progresses.

The Continuing Campaign

A campaign can be thought of as an episodic television show or an ongoing comic book series. Just as each episode more or less stands alone as a satisfying whole, each game session should be satisfying, too, with a nice mixture of roleplaying, action and some thinking or planning on the player characters' part. But just as the episodes in that television show, the sessions all flow into one another to create a larger story arc. Many story arcs often comprise a campaign (perhaps as many seasons of a program go to make up a television series), although sometimes the campaign itself is a single, long arc, although even then, it's usually the case that there are smaller arcs within the larger arc.

For example, a campaign begins with a mixed group (a werewolf, a vampire, a mage and an Awakened). The Awakened character's sister was murdered, and the group discovers the culprit was a demon named Astorath. They track it down, tracing it from one locale to the next. They kill its demonic allies and mage minions, but Astorath escapes. Then they go on a mission that takes them close to the Intrusion Point itself,

where they contend with many dangers, including a housecat granted intelligence by the Nightmare Wave as well as the power to consume Vitae with a glance, which is preying upon Broken vampires. A mage working for Astorath gets involved, and tries to capture the cat to bring it to her master. The player characters get the cat before the mage can succeed. Finally, the player characters get proactive and hunt Astorath down, and find its downtown Chicago lair. First they contend with some various minions, but eventually confront and defeat Astorath in a climactic fight at the campaign's end.

In the example, the struggle against Astorath was the campaign story arc, but within that arc were three others — the initial hunt for the murderer of the Awakened character's sister, the expedition to the Intrusion Point and the adventures in Chicago. To break things up here and there, the GM likely stuck in a few unrelated side adventures in each arc, and in-between the arcs themselves.

It's common for a campaign to have short side adventures or "interludes" that really have nothing to do with the rest of the adventures or any story arc. Sometimes these are entirely driven by the players, who decide to go see what's going on down at that lumber mill they passed by a few sessions ago, or seek out the player character mage's long-lost father. Or maybe they just take it upon themselves to go take a look at the Conflagration. The GM didn't originally plan for it, but he's got to roll with the punches.

Sometimes, though, a GM will just come up with a short scenario that seems interesting even though it has nothing to do with the rest of the campaign. Sometimes it's a change-of-pace scenario to break up the action, or even to give some relief in a particularly intense campaign with lighter fare.

Ultimately, if possible, the campaign should end on in incredible climactic encounter, the result of which brings closure to the most important issues of the campaign. Usually, this encounter is a major battle with the player characters' biggest enemy, but it can also be a non-violent encounter as well. Imagine, for instance, a dramatic final scene in which the player characters interrupt an elaborate ceremony to accuse a mage Hierarch's chief advisor of planning to assassinate his master. The advisor denies it all and calls forth magically created guardians to take the characters away, but just in time the player characters produce the key piece of damning proof, after striving to obtain that evidence for more than a year. The advisor is apprehended, and the player characters are victorious without making a single attack roll.

Preparing for the Game

The key to a good session is good preparation. Although you can't anticipate every action the player characters are going to take, you can plan for some of the most obvious. Preparation is mostly a mental exercise. You are roleplaying, in a way, by yourself, on a large scale. Basically, you say to yourself, "What would happen if the player characters did X?" And then, after you get an idea of what the answer will be, you say, "And then what if the player characters did Y?" You can take a few notes on what you think the answers are, and even draw a little diagram that will end up looking an awful lot like a flowchart.

Preparing for a contingency that doesn't happen isn't wasted time. You can still use that work at a later time. Say you prepare a whole part of the adventure where the player characters go talk to a wizened old mage who has useful information but is difficult and hard to win over, but the player characters decide to go somewhere else and get the information they need from another source. In an upcoming adventure, you can use the old mage as a source of possible information again, and now you've got the encounter all planned out already.

Preparing for the game often involves a lot of revising. You want to get the player characters to go to the airport next session, where they will encounter the demon as it gets ready to take off in its Lear jet. The players ignored the clues you left that would have directed them to the airport last session. Now you need to come up with some new way to get them to go to the demon's location. If that doesn't work, you might have to come up with a third means. And so on.

Think about what the player characters can do ahead of time. Try not to let them catch you off guard when they use a Vitae power or a spell to bypass the guards the vampire lord has posted outside his home. You can't predict everything they'll do — particularly with the open-ended magic system of the game — but you also shouldn't design an important encounter around convincing a non-player character of something when you know you've got a character with Dominate Disciplines in the game. Conversely, you want to use that knowledge to give your players a chance to use their characters' abilities. Maybe you *do* want to have an encounter with an obstinate non-player character just so that the player character can Dominate him.

The World of Darkness Group

A campaign is nothing without player characters. A strange group of misfits, the "typical" World of Darkness player character group, might include a vampire, two werewolves, a mage and an Awakened. How does such a group function?

It is probably best if the players are willing to overlook (or at least eventually overlook) the inherent prejudices the various types of characters have toward one another. The characters are already exceptions, most likely, in that they probably have resisted the will of the Iconnu. The characters have already rejected at least some of their nature. Plus, characters in the World of Darkness need to realize that survival and success rely on adaptation.

Smart characters will also quickly realize that not only is there strength in numbers, there's strength in diversity as well. Each character will have his or her personal forte, and should seem like an obvious asset to the group.

And in the end, the players (if not the characters) have to agree that the game is a social experience, that everyone needs to be involved and that it's everyone's job to make it so that that can happen. In other words, to play the game, you've not only got to have a character, but you've got to have a character who can work with the rest of the characters.

That doesn't mean that there can't be strife among the group. Sometimes strife and contention among the characters leads to fun

roleplaying situations. It's when the strife dissolves the group, either in game or out of game, that it causes problems.

The GM and the Player Characters

The GM should be very familiar with the characters. Not only in what they can do, but also in what interesting tidbits lie within their backgrounds, what their goals are and what motivates them.

Adventures can arise out of player character backgrounds. If the dead spirit portion of a vampire was once a cruel prison guard, a non-player character vampire who was one of the prisoners the guard mistreated might track him down for revenge. If a mage was once a member of a band, he might get an email from one of his old band-mates asking for help with a strange mystery. If an Awakened was once in the Special Forces, during that time he might have learned the location of a cache of stolen gold in the Middle East.

Adventures can also come from player character goals. In fact, they *should*. If a player character werewolf wants to lead his own pack one day, the road to achieving that goal should become an adventure. If another player character wants to learn whatever became of an old mentor, that should become an adventure as well. Finding out what the player characters' goals are is a way for you to learn exactly what kinds of adventures your players would like to participate in.

Of course, you can always throw them a curveball now and again. Just because a player says, "I want my character to become the head of the Chicago office of the IDA," doesn't mean that has to be easy. Plus, it might also turn out that once he finds what it takes, or what it means to hold that position, he might not even want it anymore. (The inner workings of the IDA might actually involve a sinister cabal one must pay homage to with a terrible sacrifice, or it might just mean a lot of paperwork and no more adventures.)

Of all the things about the characters, however, what motivates them is most important for the GM. If the player characters aren't interested in financial gain — an understandable thing in this particular setting — offering them a big reward as a way to get them involved in an adventure isn't going to work.

There are many ways to motivate player characters. The GM simply has to know what will work for his group specifically, at least for right now (because motivations change). For example, here are a dozen things that might motivate a group of player characters other than the obvious, "I'll pay you a lot of money."

1. A favor owed to them by a powerful individual that can be called upon at a later date.
2. Notoriety among a desired group.
3. Information on a topic of interest to them.
4. Some kind of magical secret or a supernatural item.
5. Sponsorship in an organization.
6. Clearing of their personal records (criminal, financial and so forth.)
7. Quid pro quo: You do an agreed upon task for me, I'll do an agreed upon task for you.
8. A recommendation offered to a third party on their behalf.

9. A needed password, key, code or map.

10. Showing up a rival: doing the task that a rival couldn't accomplish.

11. Sticking it to an enemy: doing the task hurts someone they don't like.

12. Fear.

You'll notice that the list doesn't include "because it's the right thing to do." A great many groups in the World of Darkness aren't going to be motivated by that at all. And the list doesn't even go into more personal motivations. Not every adventure needs to start off with someone asking the player characters to do something for them in exchange for something else. Many adventures come more organically than that. As the campaign progresses, one adventure just flows into another. In one, the player characters oppose a werewolf's plans to destroy the foundations of a skyscraper to make it collapse, and in the next, that werewolf comes after the player characters directly, whether they are "motivated" or not. A non-player character who helped the player characters a while back is suddenly in trouble, and the player characters go to help without even being asked. A campaign builds like a snowball. As things progress, in fact, there will likely be more for the player characters to do than they can get to.

Proactive Player Characters

The best thing that can happen in a World of Darkness campaign is that the player characters decide to take matters into their own hands. This usually happens later in the campaign, when the player characters have got a feel for things, and have learned who the significant non-player characters are and what they are up to. For example, after running afoul of a particular high-level vampire more than once, the player characters decide to track her down and destroy her once and for all. Or, after seeing a number of their friends destroyed in a gang war, the player characters take it upon themselves to end the conflict one way or another.

These situations encourage the players to not only figure out what they want to do but to formulate a plan to go about it. This requires the GM to be reactive, and deal with the players' choices, but he has the knowledge that the player characters are doing just what they want to be doing.

A reactive GM must be ready to occasionally make things up on the fly. It's hard to prepare for a session in which the player characters take the lead and go off on a self-directed mission. It's handy to have a notebook or a computer file in which you keep non-player character stats that you can just pull out what you need, or something that's very close, when the player characters' actions catch you unawares.

Of course, you can also have the player characters alert you to their plans ahead of time so that you can prepare for their proactive mission.

Non-Heroic Player Characters

In many games, it's assumed that the player characters will be nice guys. Altruistic heroes, even. But not necessarily in this one. The characters are vampires who need to drink blood to survive, mages who are aloof and arrogant and werewolves who thrive on destruction. Even those who choose to fight against

What Do the Player Characters Do?

So, the most important question to be asked is, what do the player characters actually do? Perhaps the easiest answer is that the player characters struggle against the Iconnu. But of course, they really don't. The player characters never meet the Iconnu. The player characters struggle against the Iconnu's desires, and the machinations that they have put into the play. In other words, the player characters fight against other vampires, werewolves, mages and demons.

From a broad perspective, the Iconnu and their servants are there to focus the player characters' actions and attention. The Iconnu are an obvious foe, and thus create obvious goals.

Many campaigns will virtually ignore the Iconnu. These games will generally deal with smaller topics. The antagonists might be a corporation or a rival werewolf pack. The characters in these campaigns will vie for influence and control in the shadowy underworld below the surface of normal society, where the creatures of darkness dwell. They will trade in power. They will betray and be betrayed. Some days will be a struggle for survival, while others will present grand opportunities. These campaigns force the players to develop their own goals.

For example, a vampire might want to become the lord of the region in which he dwells. A mage might want to learn new secrets of magic not yet discovered. A werewolf or a demon might want to destroy or chase away all of his kind from his designated territory and rule the humans left within it as an underworld king. An Awakened might want to slay the vampire who killed the Awakened's mother — any character, in fact, might be motivated by something in his backstory rather than by anything external. A character might ultimately do what he does fueled by past events, spurred on by revenge, love, lust, greed, guilt, indebtedness, fear, redemption, forgiveness or curiosity.

Character Death

Characters in this game are tough to kill, but it does happen. As the GM, you should decide up front how you are going to deal with this issue. Simplistically speaking, you have three options:

1. Let the dice fall as they may. If a player character dies, he dies, and the player will have to create a new character.

2. The GM fudges the rules, at least from time to time, to keep a player character from dying unless the character acted very foolishly.

3. The characters never die.

Obviously, option 1 is the harshest, and option 3 the most generous. The rationale for option 3 is that no one enjoys losing a character. It's just not fun. The counterpoint, however, is that the players may begin to feel like there's no challenge because they really can't "lose."

Any of the three options is a viable choice, but there is one more factor to consider: can magic bring a character back from the dead? Chapter 5 discusses this possibility, but the GM is fully within his rights to say that it's just not possible. The risk is, once a mage can restore the dead to life, players need no longer fear death. It's something every GM must consider and choose for his campaign.

the Iconnu might not be doing it for the greater good — it might be out of resentment for the Iconnu's actions, or just simply out of self-interest and self-preservation.

As previously mentioned, this means that you can't have someone yell for help and assume that will motivate the player characters, except out of curiosity at best. The player characters are very likely not heroes, and don't act heroically. Still, that doesn't mean that the player characters can't have their own code (whether one they developed, or one forced upon them). It doesn't mean they have to attack things wantonly without purpose or direction. It doesn't mean that they are raging maniacs. They might be — but that's not the only path they have before them.

Part of the roleplaying experience in this game is exploring what it means to be something literally inhuman — and thus, what does it mean to be human. How does a character cope with the needs and compulsions he feels, pulling him toward acts of murder and destruction, just to survive? Does he submit to them, or does he rise above them? Characters gain the opportunity to explore complex issues where nothing is clearly black or white, good or evil. In the shadows, everything is gray.

There are no "alignments" in the World of Darkness. Something that might seem "evil" to one person might actually be an act of kindness from another perspective. It's a complex and shadowy place where even the most noble must sometimes compromise their morality in the face of such horrors as the Intrusion, the Nightmare Wave and the Iconnu.

The entire group — players and GM alike — should determine what playing monstrous creatures means, and how that's going to affect play. Are you going to vividly describe acts of violence and depravity? Are murder, torture and similar acts going to be taken lightly? There are no right or wrong answers, but everyone in the group should be comfortable with the boundaries being explored. Some groups might want to rein in the more "mature topics" and play the game as an adventure movie. Others will embrace the darkness and see where it takes them.

The Intrusion Campaign

The Intrusion Point, with the surrounding Conflagration and Annihilation Zone, provides an obvious post-apocalyptic setting. This is a little different, however, because this is post-apocalyptic horror. There's danger amid the ruins, but it's a supernatural danger. The Nightmare Wave provides endless possibilities for strange events, creatures, people and places that a GM might want to insert in his campaign in addition to gun-toting survivalists, dangerous ruined facilities, encounters with an overbearing military presence and of course vampires, werewolves, demons and mages.

An Intrusion campaign usually starts out in the ruins of the Annihilation Zone, or with the player characters on their way there. Typically, particularly at the start, the campaign is very mission-oriented. The player characters are going to the site to investigate and learn more about the nature of the Intrusion, or to help establish order in the ruins or to serve as a direct counter to the Iconnu's servants at work in and around the Annihilation Zone.

Sometimes the adventures in an Intrusion campaign are focused purely on survival. The threat to the player characters' lives comes either from a lack of food, supplies or medical care, or from threats that rear their heads near the Intrusion, including lawless gangs, Iconnu-serving vampires, demons, werewolves and mages, or creatures and places spawned by the Nightmare Wave.

The events of an Intrusion campaign are often fairly straightforward and overt. There isn't much of an authoritative structure to rein in player character or non-player character actions. Even if the big fight topples a whole building, it probably doesn't matter. It was abandoned anyway. Characters can carry around M-16s and grenade launchers because who's around to notice? They drive in SUVs covered with jury-rigged armor plating and fire missile launchers at the cars chasing them down the empty highway at 100 mph. Adventures likely scream with action.

There's an obvious foe in the Intrusion campaign: the Iconnu and their servants. But if it's not clear at the beginning to the players, it should become clear very soon that the Iconnu can't be confronted. It's out of the scope of any campaign to defeat the Iconnu or to undo the effects of the Intrusion. It's just not that kind of game. The best the player characters can hope for is to secure the floodgates and hold back the tide. The only comfort offered by the nihilistic approach of how overwhelmingly powerful the Iconnu are is that we are so far beneath their notice that even after all they have done, they still aren't truly aware of our existence on any meaningful level. They simply cannot even comprehend taking us on directly.

Player characters may belong to the IDA, or frequently work alongside IDA agents. Being a part of this kind of organization is good for the player characters, because they gain support, equipment, information and other things they need. Even a place to rest between adventures. It's good for the campaign as well, because it offers a steady stream of missions for the player characters and a straightforward motivation for them to accept them.

Lastly, an Intrusion campaign offers a very good excuse for the GM to use the Nightmare Wave and its effects as often as he would like. Mysterious locales transformed into bizarre environments all their own, wandering packs of altered beasts, normal-looking people who now act in unexpected ways and haunted houses far larger on the inside than the outside — all these things and more are possible in this environment that is both familiar and completely alien all at the same time.

Intrusion Adventure Seeds

The following are some ideas for adventures in this sort of campaign:

1. A criminal gang leader in the Annihilation Zone has begun kidnapping survivors and forcing them into service, building him a fortress in the ruins of a small town.

2. A pack of werewolves on motorcycles terrorizes the countryside. They worship the Iconnu as gods and perform special cultic ceremonies before and after each raid the pack makes upon the various towns and survivor relocation camps.

3. Demons have infiltrated a military post on the border of the Annihilation Zone. They use their position to manipulate the frequency and location of patrols, and then charge people hefty fees for the ability to pass safely through the cordon.

4. In a small community in the Haunted Lands, nothing requiring electricity, gunpowder or gasoline can function, thanks to the Nightmare Wave. The residents who remain look upon it as a blessing from God and have taken up primitive arms to defend themselves.

5. A supernatural storm caused by the Intrusion traps a number of disparate people (and creatures) inside a building, where they must work together to survive — or fight it out until only a few are left standing.

6. Heavily armed vampires are luring scavengers to them with false promises of a large hidden cache of food, guns and other gear from before the Intrusion.

7. A demon has discovered a way to use stolen Vitae to create ghouls of his own, which he uses to hunt more vampires for still more Vitae.

8. A plague is spreading throughout the Annihilation Zone that affects even supernatural creatures. The plague is carried by a strange greenish mist that seeps across the land at night. People do anything to avoid to the mist and those who have come in contact with it.

9. A priest wanders out of the wasteland claiming to have walked through the Conflagration and survived, due to his faith. No one is sure whether or not to believe him, or if he really is what he seems.

10. Birds transformed by the Nightmare Wave attack in bloodthirsty flocks with the intent to kill whatever they find. The eggs these birds lay, however, contain a substance that can be used to restore the host of a vampire or werewolf back to her original state (getting rid of the possessing spirit forever).

The Shadows Campaign

A whole campaign might be run without any player characters going anywhere near the Intrusion Point. Such a campaign could take place anywhere in the world and would likely pertain mostly to the interaction of the secret people of the world: the vampires, werewolves and mages. The campaign could, occasionally, insert a Nightmare Wave effect now and again, but these would likely be somewhat rare.

For those familiar with the original World of Darkness setting, this is much more similar to that in scope and tone.

Much of the action should stress the secrecy involved. The player characters don't want their actions to reveal their true natures to the outside world. They don't want their actions to be discovered by their enemies. They don't want to be caught by the police (as their actions, even if mostly benevolent, are probably at least a little illegal). At the same time, the player characters might have to work to make sure that others like themselves aren't revealed to the world at large as well.

And conversely, much of the interaction with non-player characters will involve trying to find out *their* secrets.

Even more than in an Intrusion campaign, it's quite possible that the player characters are not the good guys in the classic sense. They may have only their own interests at heart. They may work for some influential non-player character such as a vampire lord, a werewolf pack leader, a Hierarch mage or a powerful and probably sinister organization, such as a large corporation, or even the Mafia. The characters' goals might involve climbing higher in the "organization" they belong to — not unlike in an organized crime story. (In fact, the organization might very well be, basically, a criminal enterprise involving supernatural beings.) They carry out missions for their superiors in return for pay, favors and prestige.

They could still be of a more heroic bent, however. Perhaps the organization they work for is on the side of the law (or at least has altruistic motives). Or perhaps the player characters work against the forces of darkness from the inside.

Player characters in the shadows might also just simply be trying to get by. Thrust into situations they probably never desired, they've got to figure out how best to survive now that they are werewolves, vampires and so on, and there are other similar creatures out there in the dark as well. The characters perform missions for money to live on, or to gain allies against the forces arrayed against them.

Other Campaign Ideas

There are other possible campaigns that the GM could run using this setting as well:

1. The All-____ Campaign. All the player characters are of the same character type. This campaign style is many people's favorite, as it makes the group more cohesive and makes adventures easier to plan.

2. The Police Campaign. All of the player characters are members of the police force interested in fighting crime. While most are Awakened, a few could secretly be supernatural creatures.

3. The Hunter Campaign. None of the player characters is one chosen character type. Instead, they specialize in finding and slaying that character type.

4. The Investigators Campaign. The player characters are all Awakened, and begin the game not aware of that fact or that supernatural creatures exist. This is all discovered over time, as they investigate strange occurrences and places.

5. The Fugitive Campaign. The player characters are all on the run. From the law, from the government, or from some powerful organization (or all three). They take part in various adventures as normal, but always with the threat of being discovered by whomever is after them.

The shadows campaign, as distinguished from the Intrusion campaign, involves more subtlety, both on the part of the player characters and the GM. This is a game in which things may seem normal, or like the real world, but the campaign actually takes place under the surface, where the dark reality is exposed. The world may seem very similar to our own — with news of the Intrusion and what it brings on existing in the background — but the player characters discover that it, in fact, is very different. As the campaign progresses, they find out just how different.

Adventures in the shadows deal with betrayals, jealousy, secrecy and deception. They center on minor differences — the clan a vampire belongs to, or the auspice of a werewolf becomes very important, signifying hidden allegiances and enemies rather than obvious ones. That said, an all-demon, all-mage, all-vampire or all-werewolf campaign perhaps makes more sense in a shadows campaign than in the more over-the-top Intrusion campaign.

Shadows Adventure Seeds

The following are some ideas for adventures in this sort of campaign:

1. Two powerful vampires struggle against one another for the right to call themselves lord of the region in which they live. All vampires in the city must choose sides or be caught in the crossfire. A powerful mage with a grudge works behind the scenes to bring them both down.

2. A drug developed by Dixon Pharmaceuticals has been "accidentally" released on the street. The drug enhances the physical capabilities of a normal person to virtually superhuman levels, but there are terrible side effects. The whole thing is actually a test to see if they can come up with a way to develop soldiers to stand toe-to-toe with vampires and werewolves.

3. The police are cracking down on what they believe to be organized crime, but what are actually the activities of vampires. The police's actions may reveal the vampires' presence in the city, making things very difficult.

4. A powerful Awakened non-player character has been placed in an insane asylum. A gang of werewolves is out to kill her while she's there, and someone's got to help.

5. The high infant mortality rate at St. Joan's Hospital is the result of a demon that requires the blood of the newborn and poses as a nurse.

6. A street gang turns out to be ghouls in the service of a vampire, kidnapping people to be sold to other vampires as food or servants (or both).

7. A Necromancer is promising to reunite people with lost loved ones, but the "resurrected" turn out to be horrific abominations that kill their families after a few days.

8. A reputedly haunted house is in fact the lair of rats that have been granted intelligence and telekinetic powers by the Nightmare Wave.

9. A player character is stalked by a hunter — an Awakened who specializes in tracking and killing a creature of the player character's type. But the hunter has been put on the player character's trail by another non-player character who feels wronged by the player character in some way.

10. A well-known werewolf alpha has called a truce among a number of warring packs, but a demon plans on subverting the alpha's cause through deception and temptation, ultimately framing him for an assassination at a meeting of various pack alphas.

Using the Nightmare Wave

The Nightmare Wave, in a way, is the "other shoe waiting to drop" in a World of Darkness campaign. In other words, while the setting may primarily focus on the sudden presence of vampires, werewolves, demons and mages, the setting also offers a way to create all manner of other strange and horrific situations. The Nightmare Wave should be used to create areas that seem (or in fact are) haunted. It is the source for strange and often unexplained phenomena — the kind that most people

would dismiss as nonsense. The Nightmare Wave can also be used to explain horrific events or inexplicable, malevolent actions on the part of what seemed like "such a quiet young man." (On the other hand, the Nightmare Wave should not be used as an excuse for all evil in the world.) Monster sightings, strange lights in the sky, axe murderers, areas where gravity or magnetism work differently, eerie noises, cannibalistic families, electronic voice phenomena, strange disappearances and people with bizarre mental powers can all stem from the effects of the Nightmare Wave.

The horror involved with the Nightmare Wave and its effects comes from a fear of the unknown, and the idea that anyone who pries too deeply into something he should not know may discover the truth, but that truth destroys him. (As Nietzsche is often quoted as saying, "If you gaze long into an abyss, the abyss will gaze back into you.") In other words, as much as we might not like it, a quest for knowledge is a bad thing. (Lovecraft wrote, "The most merciful thing in the world . . . is the inability of the human mind to correlate all its contents.") Too much knowledge is bad for you.

What's that strange music playing out behind the barn? Why does Terry seem to know what you're going to say even before you say it? What does Mrs. Brooks feed all those cats she has? Why does this old textbook have certain words printed in red (and what do they spell when you put them together and rearrange the letters)? What's that smell coming from the basement? The answer to all of these questions, in a World of Darkness, should be horrific and surprising.

The GM's insertion of the Nightmare Wave effect should always start with such a question, and then go from there. There should be the implication that there is important information that the player characters don't have. For example, the murmurs from the furnace in the office building seem to form words. It begins with, "Is the furnace is saying something?" But after that initial implication, it keeps going. "What's it saying?" This starts out as a mystery and drags the player characters who get involved down a deep, dark hole. The idea often then becomes, you can get to the very bottom of the hole, but do you want to? Wouldn't you rather climb out instead? When the player characters investigate the mystery to its end, they have no one but themselves to blame. It was their choice.

It's not just that the broken radio is playing a song, but why *that* song? It's not just that there's a creature made of dead rats in the warehouse, but what's it up to? It's not just that the people are gathering in the church at midnight, but what are those strange green books they're carrying?

Staging the Effects of the Nightmare Wave

The effects of the Nightmare Wave should rarely be obvious or straightforward. Even when there's obviously something strange going on, it may very well not be what it seems at first.

For example, a man guards his bedroom with a violent determination, because he knows that anyone who comes into the room will be drawn into his dreams the following night, where they will be trapped forever, body and soul. Anyone who visits him and sees the fanaticism with which he keeps people out of his bedroom might suspect that he hides something in there — maybe even the evidence of a hideous crime, or a kidnapped victim he is currently mistreating. The very act of investigating further into this mystery, even though potentially a heroic thing to do, leads people to their doom.

But that's horror for you. Horror mainly rewards heroism posthumously.

You're free, however, to flip this around sometimes as well. There's a secret out there, and if the player characters don't discover it, they are doomed. In this type of scenario, only the wise survive. The ignorant get the axe (perhaps literally). For example, after visiting a particular section of the library, the visitor is attacked by a swarm of venomous serpents wherever she sleeps the following night. The only way to prevent this is to read a particular book in that section — only careful deduction will allow the secret to be revealed.

It's usually best when the effects reveal themselves slowly. If the effect is not at all subtle — there is no gravity in the area, for example — put that effect in one room of a building. Allow the player characters to investigate other portions of the building first, and notice a few strange things here and there (see the section on hooks, below) before they wind up in the really strange room.

A final twist is often (but not always) called for in a Nightmare Site-related adventure or encounter to give it that final climax. For example, if the player characters find that everyone living on a particular farm feeds on the life force of other living things they touch — plants, animals, people — after dealing with a number of these energy-leeches, the characters discover that the family has been transferring the stolen life energy to the infant in the family, who has grown into a horrible monstrosity with supernatural powers and whose body only partially occupies our observable reality.

The Hook of a Nightmare Site

A Nightmare Site is a location where the rules are broken. Such locations are usually, but not always, static. A city bus where mysterious messages appear scrawled into the seats would be a Nightmare Site that moves. A woman cursed so that anyone coming near her is filled with a terrible rage would also be a "Nightmare Site" herself (and again, one that moves).

Something has to entice the player characters into get involved with a Nightmare Site, either to investigate its oddities or brave its dangers for some other reason. (Perhaps something or someone they desire lies within.) This "something" is the hook.

The most obvious hooks are rumors told by the people who live nearby. In other words, the player characters hear about the site through the grapevine. Maybe the player characters were asking around, looking for strangeness, or maybe they just overhear something. The rumors almost certainly contain as much (or more) false information as truth.

Certain character abilities and feats, such as Sensitive and Sense Nightmare Wave, can serve as hooks all by themselves. (Sensitive is so useful for this that you may consider giving it to one character in the group for free.)

Sometimes the hook of a Nightmare Site doesn't come until the player characters are already in the site. Many good Nightmare Site adventures occur when the characters enter an

Individuals Affected by the Nightmare Wave

Of course, not every effect of the Nightmare Wave was on a location, or even an object. Sometimes people were altered in ways that have no relation to their physical location. For example, Peter McCain dies every evening at 9:16, and then is immediately resurrected.

Individuals might be granted supernatural abilities by the Nightmare Wave. A child might be given the power of telepathy, or an old woman can suddenly walk through walls. But often there's a drawback — the telepathic child cannot speak, and the old woman finds that over time she loses the ability to interact with the material world at all.

Someone might be altered only in outlook, rather than physical ability. A woman is driven to eat her own flesh. A man cannot abide the sight of children and goes into a violent rage whenever they are near. A whole family prays each night to a strange alien god they believe hides behind the moon and demands blood sacrifices. These changes in personality virtually always drive the victim toward darkness and violence.

Or a person might just be cursed in some way. A young man might always know when someone around him doesn't like him, but never who or why. A musician can play beautiful music only when someone listening to him is going to die within the next 24 hours. Every man a certain woman is attracted to mysteriously disappears.

area unaware of its sinister nature. In such a case, the hook is the first clues that something is not quite right. For example:

1. There's an unnatural chill in the air, perhaps felt only by certain people.

2. One character hears ghostly whispering, but can't quite make out what it's saying.

3. Something a player character sets down isn't there when he goes to pick it up.

4. Characters notice a strange amount of static electricity in the area, with no discernable cause.

5. Shadows move in a way that should not be possible.

6. There's a prickling feeling on one character's skin, as though something with many legs is running across it.

7. A player character finds an object that she lost long ago, perhaps when she was a child.

8. A single character realizes that he has seen the place before — in a dream.

And so on. These don't have to be related to the main effect/story of the site. It's just a clue to alert the player characters that something's not right.

Creating the Effects of the Nightmare Wave

There are no limitations on the Nightmare Wave. It can bring back the dead, give life to inanimate objects, create whole new creatures and change existing creatures (physically, mentally or both). It can alter the laws of physics. The Nightmare Wave can change gravity, matter composition, speed or any physical properties of an object. It can destroy, but it can also create new things (or reconstitute something long gone). It can make short distances great, and it can create portals that lead from one part of the world to another with a single step.

This lack of boundaries means that the Nightmare Wave is an open license for inventiveness. Monsters in the basement, ghosts haunting the old house and cannibalistic restaurateurs are all fine scenario ideas, but with the Nightmare Wave you can get a lot stranger than just that if you want. Rather than just creating an adventure involving a haunted house, have the ghosts haunt an old gas station. The ghosts are two mechanics who have passed on, manifesting as swirling specters of gray smoke that tear the flesh and blood from victims, turning the smoke a grisly red. They can only be appeased and put to rest if someone reassembles the old ham radio they kept in the back and transmits the proper code out into the ether. The code and the frequency required can only be found in a book hidden in the trunk of a rusted car behind the station, guarded by a swarm of flies that attack anyone coming near by infesting their eyes. Anyone whose eyes are destroyed by the insects can still see, but they view only the past, during the time in which the two mechanics were alive.

(Notice also that in the example, the "theme" of the filling station isn't taken to the extreme — for doing so runs the risk of absurdity, which is funny, not horrific. Thus, the mechanics don't appear as humanoid creatures made of tires, and the old car isn't guarded by an animated gas pump squirting fuel. Such things are too easily devolved into comedy, not horror.)

The Nightmare Wave should not be used to give a player character "superpowers." Effects of the Nightmare Wave should almost always be overall indirect (rather than easily utilized), sinister, and ultimately detrimental. The Nightmare Wave doesn't give someone the ability to shoot blasts of fire, but it could give a character (probably a non-player character, probably one whom player characters would never suspect) the ability to subconsciously start fires whenever she senses that someone else

"Miss Chapelstone's body was identified using dental records, due to the fact that her body had, in the words of the coroner, been 'turned entirely and carefully inside out.'"
– Michael Altamon, Hardline Investigations

around her is angry or afraid, creating a vicious cycle in which her fires frighten people, which in turn creates more fires.

A few Nightmare Sites, however, can be developed so that a smart player character can take advantage of the changes, instead of always being a victim. For example, a Nightmare Site that is a bookstore where the books bleed real blood at times might reduce the cost of all Vitae powers by 1 (so an ability that costs one Vitae costs zero). Obviously, fighting a vampire is more dangerous in such a place, but a player character vampire can take advantage of the same aspect. But don't neglect to take such places to their natural conclusion — the bookstore would of course be the cause of vampiric wars, each one seeking to make it his own.

Such locales, sometimes designated as "set pieces," should be planned out in advance. When planning them, think about the kinds of things that will happen there, once the player characters arrive. If there's a fight there, what kinds of things will make the fight more interesting? For example, a pit with ledges for character to fall from, jagged broken boards positioned dangerously for characters to fall atop, hooks for hanging tools that can become dangerous weapons, powerful machinery that can pull characters in and mangle them in gears, pistons, fiery furnaces and so on.

The Rules of a Nightmare Site

It may be a strange thing to read in a rulebook, but when dealing with the Nightmare Wave, play fast and loose with the rules. There are no real rules for damage to specific body parts, for example, but that doesn't mean you shouldn't have an encounter with a ghoulish old woman who kidnaps victims and chops off their feet to make sure they don't run away.

A Nightmare Site could temporarily alter ability scores, character abilities, magic and so on. For example, the gravity might be very strong near a so-called haunted spot by the river in the woods. In that area, everyone is treated as "carrying" 150 extra pounds, so when consulting Table 2–2, most characters will likely be encumbered, and some might not even be able to move (the GM might let them move very, very slowly and take only a standard action each round).

In an isolated farmhouse, the dizzying vertigo caused by the swirling, kaleidoscopic lights might effectively reduce everyone's Dexterity by 6 and force Balance checks every round, and yet those mages who keep their feet find that those same lights provide them a constant stream of magical power, giving them an extra six component points each round (although if they are not used immediately, they are lost).

There are no right or wrong ways to handle a Nightmare Site. By its very definition, each should be unique, it should break the rules and it should be unexpected. The only thing to keep in mind is, unless there's a good reason not to, all characters — player characters and non-player characters alike — should be affected in the same ways by the site. Once in play, the Nightmare Site should have its own rules that it obeys, even if those rules are so strange and complex that none of the characters ever figures them out.

Intentionally Created Nightmare Sites

Sometimes a Nightmare Site wasn't created by "accident," or without intentional help. A character who has discovered some secret about the power of the Nightmare Wave or the Intrusion itself might know how to shape and change a location in some way to create a specific effect.

In the natural cave beneath a house on a seaside cliff, for example, spellcasting and all supernatural abilities are suppressed entirely, due to the runes scrawled on the wet cavern walls. This was created by the vampire hunter Sarah Gardner, who gained the secret of the runes' creation in a dream. In this case, it's not really the cave that is the direct effect of the Nightmare Wave, it's Sarah. But ultimately, the creation of the site is handled in exactly the same way.

Such sites are rare, as are the people who know the secrets involved, but they can create very interesting encounter areas.

Running a Horror Game

"You can pretend to be scared, but you can't actually be frightened by a game, right?" This is what some players say. It's up to you to prove them wrong.

Mood is everything. In this game, it's more important to establish a mood than to memorize every game mechanic. If you're the kind of GM who normally spends a great deal of time in a session looking up each rule and carefully adjudicating the balance of each character option, in this game dedicate more of that time and energy on establishing a mood.

Description

Devote a large amount of your prep time to thinking about how things the player characters will encounter look, how they sound — even how they smell (particularly if you've got werewolf player characters). In the game session, be ready to portray the locations with vivid description. In the World of Darkness, everything should be (obviously) darker than in the real world. Dirtier and dingier. For example, imagine the player characters are going to meet with a contact in the kitchen of a condemned restaurant. Describe the cockroaches as they cross the floor. Describe the smell of grease and sweat from the years of toil in the room. Make the players really feel what the place is like, and maybe even give them a vision of what the kitchen was like in its heyday — a harsh place of hard work, frightened illegal aliens and poor hygiene.

In fact, while preparing, try to choose encounter locales that allow you to provide new and interesting descriptions. The abandoned warehouse and back alleyway are fine, but what about a public library, at night, deep in the stacks? Or a meat-packing plant? An old children's hospital? The subway? These are all interesting places to describe and evocative places to stage encounters.

And don't neglect to provide locations that offer a nice counterpoint to the various dark and dismal locales. Clean and well-appointed locations can be just as sinister: The 48th floor of a massive corporate office building. A biotechnology laboratory. The city morgue. A gothic manor house.

Vivid description doesn't end at the setting. You need to provide visceral depictions of situations, people, objects, magical effects and anything else that comes up in the game. When the player characters are in a car chase, traveling 70 miles an hour down narrow city streets, what does that feel like? Describe to the werewolf's player exactly the kind of wounds he's leaving in the victim he slashes with his claws. Provide details for the player running a vampire for what it feels like to crave blood, and to finally have that need sated. And when the mage unleashes a powerful burst of magical energy, what does it look like? Is there heat? What does the mage feel?

In all cases, providing players with the details they need to really get immersed in the situation is the first step to setting the right mood.

Horrific Non-Player Characters

Describing important non-player characters is vital. Accentuate the scars, the pockmarks and the tiny beads of sweat on their upper lips. Include the little details that distinguish the non-player character — the oppressive amount of perfume she wears, the expensive gold and ebony ring on his finger, the duotone nail polish on her fingernails, the massive key ring on his belt, the odd bulge in her purse or the mysterious three-letter tattoo on his forearm. The more sinister or subtly suggestive the details, the better: the tiniest spatter of blood on the priest's hem, the dagger-shaped pin on the executive's tie or the strange looks or smiles given by the profession when she hears mention of something seemingly ordinary.

Portray your important non-player characters with careful skill. Give them memorable ways of speaking or physical ticks. While this is true of all major non-player characters, it's especially true of the horrific ones. A cannibal might like to lick his own fingers, while a vampire runs his tongue over his teeth almost constantly. Werewolves don't speak, they growl and snarl their words.

Lastly, in this game, focus on what makes the characters really different from those found elsewhere. A vampire isn't just some Transylvanian castle dweller in a black cape who turns into a bat; he's a creature of two commingled yet conflicting souls. A werewolf isn't half man/half wolf, but a fused being with the body of a human and the soul of an alien creature. When it comes to both player characters and non-player characters, accentuate these unique aspects of this particular setting. We use terms like vampire and werewolf for convenience, but don't lazily rest on the common definitions of those creatures from books and movies when describing them to players and portraying them in the game.

These aren't your father's vampires and werewolves.

Fights and Action

Of course, this is more than just a horror game. It's a game of sudden bursts of furious (and usually brutal) action. As mentioned previously, don't neglect to describe battles with visceral descriptions, although do keep in mind that your pacing needs to increase during such an encounter. No one wants to listen to a long description in the middle of a tense fight.

To distinguish a game like this from a typical hack-and-slash affair, step back from the action for a moment and really consider what it would be like before, during and after a battle involving vampires, werewolves, demons, mages and possibly heavy arms. Don't forget the smoke, the noise and the confusion. Consider the destruction inflicted. What are bystanders going to see and hear? How are they going to react?

In a World of Darkness game, where secrecy is a major concern and the shadows are where most characters lie, there should always be consequences for large, loud, flashy and destructive encounters. The police's untimely arrival and interference may not be a major threat, particularly to high-level characters, but it can be time-consuming, annoying and disruptive to the player characters' course of action. Most characters will learn to avoid such entanglements when possible, either by choosing their fights (and their fight locations) carefully, or by always having a quick escape plan for after the battle.

The only exception to this rule should be battles and action scenes that take place in the Annihilation Zone surrounding the Intrusion, where destruction and chaos are far more commonplace. In the ruins of Minneapolis, no one is going to be around to notice the automatic weapons fire and the magical exploding blasts of acid.

Control the Environment

The easiest way to set a mood is to control the playing environment. Dim the lighting when appropriate (as when the player characters are sneaking into an abandoned building at night). Play atmospheric music. Use a prop or two. (This isn't as hard as it sounds. If the player characters find a strange old book, have one at the ready that you find in the library. If they learn that an old rag doll possesses the spirit of a homicidal maniac, bring out your little sister's creepiest doll. And so on.)

If you really want to unnerve your players, there are other subtle, psychological tricks you can pull. For example, position your place at the game table so that you can see through an open doorway into another (preferably dark) room, but no one else can. As you run the game, very occasionally look into that room as if you heard something strange. Do this very briefly and don't draw too much attention to yourself — this is meant to be subtle. You can also modulate your voice so that you speak softly for much of a whole encounter (not so softly that the players can't hear you, but enough so that they really have to pay attention to hear what you have to say). Then, when some pre-planned event of a horrific nature occurs — such as the sudden appearance of a skinned corpse, a horrific demon or a trio of vampires — suddenly raise your voice to almost shouting. Don't let your players get comfortable. Comfortable people get relaxed. Get up, move around — get in their faces. Make them get up from the table and stand during a tense encounter.

These are just some of the little things you can do. But in addition to what you do, it's just as important to realize what not to do, or not to let your players do. Don't have the TV on in the background (unless you're doing it for a specific effect). Don't let the players interrupt the mood with lots of jokes or off-topic discussion (how much "lots" depends on you and your group of players). And lastly, don't let yourself get lazy: if you're not in the mood to portray the mood, end the session early.

How Do You Scare a Vampire?

It's a valid point to say that it's difficult have a horror game in which the player characters possess great power and are, in fact, supernatural creatures themselves. Even a mage, who's physically basically just a normal person, can just blast the hideous worm beast in the cellar with lightning, fire and whatever else he can dream up.

It's true that when playing up the horror of the setting you're best off having a group that is entirely (or just mostly) Awakened. But there are ways to make even the hearts of the overconfident vampires, werewolves and mages in the group quicken. Some things to consider:

1. Present a horrific threat that can't just be torn apart by werewolf claws or blasted by spells. An intangible ghost, for example, that can affect the player characters but can't be affected by them directly, can be terrifying, especially if its effects are devastating (ability score drain, aging and the like). In this scenario, the threat can only be defeated in a non-standard way. The ghost is put to rest only when its death is avenged or its body is found and properly buried. The thing to keep in mind here is that if nothing can ever be solved by the player characters with their cool abilities, the players are going to be very frustrated. The player characters should always have plenty of opportunities to do what they are good at.

2. The frights don't provide outright terror, and instead present a backdrop — it is the flavor of the setting, and sets the mood for the world in which the player characters (somewhat horrific themselves) dwell.

3. The horror isn't for the player characters' sakes. It's for the players. While a demon might not be terrified by being dropped into a worm-filled pool of sludge, describing it in vivid detail is going to give the player running the character the creeps, if only for a moment.

Gaining Levels

The measure of a character's overall power comes in the form of levels. A character who has experienced more danger and challenges is higher level than other characters. Higher-level characters have more skills, abilities and special powers, and are better prepared for dealing with and avoiding wounds, magic, poisons and other hazards.

"Level" is a game term; characters don't know what level they are and wouldn't identify themselves or each other by level any more than your friend might introduce himself as a "fifth-level banker," a "ninth-level painter" or a "17th-level nurse." Levels also don't have any correlation to how old a character is; a young but streetwise 10th-level character is just as likely as an old but naïve third-level character. Add in the supernatural elements (such as a teenage-bodied vampire with the spirit of a man who has been dead for 500 years) and you'll see that levels measure only a character's power, not his age, social status or many other things. This book may list a character's level before his type ("fifth-level vampire") or after his type ("Vampire 5th" or even "Vampire 5"); both ways of writing it mean the same thing.

As you play the game, the player characters will gain levels and get better at things. Progress is measured in experience points (XP). A player character gains experience points for overcoming challenges (defeating enemies in combat, solving mysteries, negotiating his way past guards and so on), good roleplaying or anything else the GM wishes to reward him for doing. The experience points needed to reach each new level appear in the following chart.

Level Benefits

Every time your level increases, many aspects of your character improve. Your character's level-based abilities are shown in the tables in Chapter 2: Character, which lists level by level what new benefits you get as a character of that type.

In addition to the benefits you get at every new level, you gain additional benefits every few levels; they don't have anything to do with your character type.

Feat: You gain a new feat at third level and every three levels thereafter (levels 3, 6, 9 and so on). Each character also begins the game with two feats (Awakened get a third bonus feat as well), as described below in the type descriptions in Chapter 2.

Ability Bonus: You gain a +1 bonus to a single ability score of your choice at fifth level and every four levels thereafter (levels 5, 9, 13 and 21). Each character also begins the game with one of these ability increases: +1 to any ability score of your choice (in addition to any ability bonuses the character's type grants), as described in the type descriptions in Chapter 2.

You gain these benefits whether you're a werewolf, vampire or some other kind of character. Because these benefits aren't based on your character type, they do not appear in the table for your character type in Chapter 2. (Though the bonus feats and ability increases do appear before the "Core Abilities" sections.) See Chapter 4: Feats and Abilities for more information on feats.

TABLE 8.1: EXPERIENCE AND LEVEL-DEPENDENT BENEFITS

Level	XP Needed	Feat	Ability Increase	Level	XP Needed	Feat	Ability Increase
1	0	First and second	First	11	78,000	—	—
2	2,000	—	—	12	91,000	Sixth	—
3	4,000	Third	—	13	105,000	—	Fourth
4	8,000	—	—	14	120,000	—	—
5	14,000	—	Second	15	136,000	Seventh	—
6	22,000	Fourth	—	16	153,000	—	—
7	34,000	—	—	17	171,000	—	Fifth
8	45,000	—	—	18	190,000	Eighth	—
9	55,000	Fifth	Third	19	210,000	—	—
10	66,000	—	—	20	231,000	—	—

Alternative Level Advancement — The Step System

A different way to track character progress is to use simple measurements called Steps. GMs award Steps instead of experience points; playing for a typical game session usually earns a reward of one or two Steps per character (though the GM may award more or less based on each character's progress). One Step per four hours of play time is about right.

A Step is the equivalent of one-fourth of a level. After gaining four Steps, a first-level character becomes a second-level character, and after gaining four more, he becomes a third-level character. Each time you gain a Step, you gain some (but not all) of the rewards of your character's next level.

Steps are an easy and fast way to measure your character's progress from one level to the next — they're mini-levels that let you improve your character after every game. Because you normally get at least one Step after each game session, you know that at the end of each game you can expect to improve your character a little bit, and after four games, you can expect to gain a level.

A character type's abilities for each level fall into four categories: Hit Dice/base attack bonus, Defense/saving throws, skill points and special. Every time you gain a Step, you choose one of these four categories of abilities from your next level. The next time you gain a Step, you choose one of the remaining three categories, and so on until your fourth Step, at which time you gain the fourth category of abilities and reach a new character level.

Example: Marcus and Exandra are first-level vampires. After the first night, their GM awards them one Step each. Marcus' player decides he want Marcus to be a little tougher in the next game and increases Marcus' Hit Dice and base attack bonus to those of a second-level vampire; all his other abilities are that of a first-level vampire. Exandra's player decides she wants Exandra to improve her sneakiness and increases her skill points to that of a second-level vampire; all her other abilities are that of a first-level vampire.

Not only do Steps let you learn something new after every session, they let you customize your character to make him or her unique. For example, even if Marcus and Exandra started out with exactly the same skills and abilities, they chose something different for their first new Step, so they end up slightly different.

It's a good idea to keep track of which of the four ability categories you choose for each step. A simple "ABCD" designation on your character sheet is an easy way to keep track — "A" means Hit Dice/base attack bonus, "B" is Defense/saving throws, "C" is skill points and "D" is special. Therefore, Marcus is now level 1A (he's first-level and has selected Hit Dice/base attack bonus for his first Step) and Exandra is level 1C (she's first-level and chose skill points for her first Step). When you reach a new level, erase these ABCD notes, as reaching a new level means you've gained all four categories (level 1ABCD means the same thing as level 2).

Even if you have made one, two or three Steps of progress toward your next level, your character still counts as your current level, not your next level. For example, a level 5ABC character counts as a fifth-level character for all level-based rules, such as when you gain your sixth-level feat or ninth-level ability score increase.

Why use the Step system? One of the fun things about roleplaying games is that your characters grow and improve just as a real person. Character levels represent this improvement over time, and high-level characters are very powerful compared to low-level characters. However, most people do not go from unskilled neophytes to masters of their craft in a short period of time; it would be unrealistic if you gained a level every time you played, like a novice martial artist gaining a black belt after a month of daily lessons! On the other hand, it's not as fun if your character doesn't improve *at all* after a month of play. Using Steps allows your character to grow at a reasonable pace so you experience the fun of improving your character without an unrealistic jump in power. And it's a lot easier than counting up hundreds or thousands of experience points.

Awarding Experience Points

"Gaining Levels," above, discusses level advancement for characters and indicates the number of experience points (XP) a character needs in order to gain each level. This section discusses how and when to award experience points to the characters.

Overcoming Challenges

Characters gain experience points primarily through overcoming challenges. The most direct sort of challenge is to defeat an opponent in combat. The number of experience points a character gains when he defeats a foe depends on the number of characters involved in the fight and the Challenge Rating (CR) of the opponent. A Challenge Rating is equal to the level of an opponent.

A foe provides experience points equal to 300 times its CR. Table 8–2: Experience Points by CR, summarizes these numbers. After you determine this number, divide the value by the number of player characters (and non-player character allies) involved in the fight. The result is the amount of experience points each character gains.

For example, a party of four player characters defeats a second-level vampire (CR 5). By consulting Table 8–2 (or by multiplying 5 by 300), you determine that the creature provides 1,500 experience points. The party divides the experience points evenly, meaning they each gain 375 experience points.

This system is designed under the assumption that heroes gain levels after about 13 encounters with monsters of Challenge Ratings equal to their level.

TABLE 8–2: EXPERIENCE POINTS BY CR

Monster's CR	XP Provided	Monster's CR	XP Provided
1	300	11	3,300
2	600	12	3,600
3	900	13	3,900
4	1,200	14	4,200
5	1,500	15	4,500
6	1,800	16	4,800
7	2,100	17	5,100
8	2,400	18	5,400
9	2,700	19	5,700
10	3,000	20	6,000

Other Ways to Overcome Foes

Sometimes, the player characters don't kill an opponent, but overcome by some other means the challenge the opponent represents. Perhaps they bypass a guard via stealth or diplomacy. They might subdue and capture a Nightmare Wave-spawned creature or force their long-time nemesis to flee. In these cases, even though the player characters do not slay their enemies, the characters still earn experience points as if they had killed them. Characters can use a variety of tactics and still gain appropriate rewards.

Exceptions to the Experience Points Rules

A foe with a Challenge Rating that is more than 5 less than the character's level provides no experience for that character. For example, if a group of seventh-level player characters slays a first-level demon, they get no experience points. If an eighth-level vampire and a second-level mage defeat a first-level demon, however, the mage gets experience points, although the vampire will not.

Generally, characters should not face opponents with a CR more than 5 higher than their level, as such an encounter would likely to be too deadly.

If the player characters overcome a challenge with a CR 4, 5 or 6 higher than their average level, they may deserve extra experience points, especially if they use clever tactics. Feel free to award as much as double a foe's normal experience points if a group of much lower-level characters defeats it.

Other Challenges

Other challenges, such as traps, natural hazards and Nightmare Sites, also have Challenge Ratings. These challenges provide experience points based on their CR. Overall, the CR of such challenges is up to you. When in doubt, assign the challenge a CR equal to the player characters' level. Anything that can keep the player characters from achieving their goal, no matter what that goal is, can be considered a challenge if you so wish it. Any of the following could be a challenge, for example: a magical barrier, a rockslide, a terrible storm, a reluctant informant, a haunted mirror, a disease or a pit with poisoned spikes. Anything that proves to be no challenge at all should not earn any experience points for the characters, but be aware that something that is easily overcome because the players came up with a good plan or rolled really well *is* a challenge. The distinction is important. If it could have been a problem if the player characters hadn't handled it just right, it counts as a challenge.

When to Give Out Experience Points

Award experience points at the end of an adventure, or when the player characters rest.

Encounter Level

In addition to the CRs of individual foes, an encounter — whether it be a single foe, a group of foes, a trap or any other challenge — has an overall Encounter Level (EL). An encounter's EL gives you a good idea of how difficult it is to overcome. If a party of four player characters faces an encounter with an EL equal to their hit dice, they should triumph over it, but the encounter should drain the party somewhat. An encounter's EL is the best yardstick to determine whether or not it is an appropriate encounter for the player characters. Remember that characters who have already faced several encounters are weaker than those at full power, so an ordinarily average encounter might prove deadly in such circumstances.

A single foe has an EL equal to its CR. Groups of foes have higher ELs. A good rule of thumb is that an encounter with two monsters with the same CR has an EL equal to their CR

+2. (For example, two CR 4 werewolves encountered together have an EL of 6.)

Awarding Experience Points for Other Actions

If you like, you can award experience points for actions or events other than overcoming specific challenges. Be watchful that you don't give out too many experience points. Characters probably should not be gaining levels any faster than once per four game sessions.

Goal Rewards

When the player characters reach a goal they have set out to achieve, you might grant them additional experience points as a reward for its successful completion. Such rewards should generally be about the same number of experience points provided by a monster with a CR equal to the heroes' average level. This kind of reward is particularly useful if the adventure did not involve a lot of direct action or combat (which tend to result in high experience points awards, but aren't always the only behavior you want to reward).

Roleplay Rewards

Similar to goal rewards, roleplay rewards are useful to reward activities other than obvious physical actions or fighting. In this case, you reward characters experience points for the players roleplaying their character well, holding interesting in-game discussions or even delivering a particularly good line of dialogue. An appropriate roleplay reward is 50 x the character's level. Depending on the kind of scenario involved, you may offer such a reward once per session, or even two or three per session.

Ignoring Experience Points

Alternatively, you can ignore experience points altogether and simply allow player characters to increase in level when it seems appropriate to you. Or you can use the Step system presented above.

Antagonists and Supporting Characters

Player characters run into a variety of other characters and creatures as they move through the World of Darkness. From the poor businessman who falls prey to player character vampires to the Awakened the characters try to protect to the guard dogs that challenge the characters' entry into secure military compounds, these characters, animals and supernatural creatures affect the story in important ways.

Statistics for these sample characters and creatures, including minions created through magic, appear below. Specifically, this section includes the following creatures:

Animals: Grizzly bear, crocodile, gorilla, police horse, lion, snakes (constrictor and viper), wolf

Humans: Average human, educated human, trained human, elite human

Minions: Minor minion, lesser minion, greater minion, superior minion, minion templates

Supernatural Characters: Awakened, demon, vampire, werewolf

Each such creature has a few lines of important statistics that contain all the information you need to run the creature in a normal encounter — values such as its Defense, attack bonus, damage and special abilities that could affect combat. The ⛊ symbol represents defensive information, such as hit points and Defense; the 🖙 symbol represents attack information, such as its attack bonus and how much damage the creature deals.

Below these few lines are larger stat blocks that contain *all* of the creature's statistics, including its ability scores, saves, skills and feats. Feats marked with a superscript "B" are bonus feats.

A creature's space and reach are five feet unless otherwise specified.

Animals

Normal, mundane animals are common in the World of Darkness. While grizzly bears don't (generally) walk city streets, player characters in urban environments may have to deal with guard dogs, mounted police officers or animals made strong and strange by the Nightmare Wave. Characters in the wilderness may face more exotic and dangerous creatures. Use the following animal statistics as they are, modify them to create Nightmare-altered monsters, or use them as guidelines for designing your own strange beasts.

Some of the animals have racial bonuses to certain skills; these are skill bonuses the animal gets automatically for being that kind of animal. For example, lions are good at moving silently. These bonuses always apply and are included in the total bonus for that skill (you don't need to add them; they appear for your information only). Note that creatures with climb or swim speeds have a +8 bonus on Climb or Swim checks; these bonuses are also already figured into their skills.

An animal might have an asterisk after a skill entry, which indicates that the animal gets an additional bonus to that skill under certain circumstances. For example, crocodiles get a bonus on Hide checks when they're in the water. The value of the bonus and when it applies is listed at the end of the animal skills and feats entry. Because these bonuses do not always apply, they are not included in the animal's skill bonus. (You need to add it when circumstances warrant it.)

Bear, Grizzly

Bear, Grizzly: Init +1, Spd 40 ft.; ⛊ hp 51, Def 15, touch 10, flat-footed 14; 🖙 Atk +11 melee (1d8+8, claw), Full Atk+11 melee (1d8+8, 2 claws) and +6

Giant Animals

An easy way to design a monstrous animal (something the Nightmare Wave might create) is to increase its size. To enlarge a creature, apply the following changes to its statistics.

Old Size	New Size	Str	Dex	Con	Natural Defense Bonus	Size Modifier
Tiny	Small	+4	–2	Same	Same	–1
Small	Medium	+4	–2	+2	Same	–1
Medium	Large	+8	–2	+4	+2	–1
Large	Huge	+8	–2	+4	+3	–1

"Size modifier" is the size penalty applied to the animal's Defense and attack rolls.

All of these modifiers stack; if you increase a creature from Medium to Large and then Large to Huge, the creature gets all the modifiers for both changes.

You can also reverse the process to make smaller creatures. (For example, changing a Medium creature to Small decreases Strength by –4, increases Dexterity by +2 and so on.)

See Table 7–6: Size Categories to determine the animal's new space and reach.

melee (2d6+4, bite); improved grab (claw; Grp +16); Space 10 ft.

Bear, Grizzly: CR 4; Large animal; HD 6d8+24, hp 51; Init +1; Spd 40 ft.; Def 15, touch 10, flat-footed 14; Base Atk +4; Grp +16; Atk +11 melee (1d8+8, claw), Full Atk +11 melee (1d8+8, 2 claws) and +6 melee (2d6+4, bite); Space 10 ft.; SA improved grab; SQ low-light vision, scent; SV Fort +9, Ref +6, Will +3; Str 27, Dex 13, Con 19, Int 2, Wis 12, Cha 6.

Skills and Feats: Listen +4, Spot +7, Swim +12; Endurance, Run, Track. Grizzly bears have a +4 racial bonus on Swim checks.

SA—Improved Grab (Ex): If a grizzly bear hits with a claw attack, the grizzly bear can attempt to start a grapple as a free action without provoking an attack of opportunity.

Crocodile

Crocodile: Init +1, Spd 20 ft., swim 30 ft.; hp 22, Def 15, touch 11, flat-footed 14; Atk/Full Atk +6 melee (1d8+6, bite or 1d12+6, tail slap); improved grab (bite; Grp +6).

Crocodile: CR 2; Medium animal; HD 3d8+9, hp 22; Init +1; Spd 20 ft., swim 30 ft.; Def 15, touch 11, flat-footed 14; Base Atk +2; Grp +6; Atk/Full Atk +6 melee (1d8+6, bite); SA improved grab; SQ low-light vision, hold breath; SV Fort +6, Ref +4, Will +1; Str 19, Dex 12, Con 17, Int 1, Wis 12, Cha 2.

Skills and Feats: Hide +7*, Listen +4, Spot +4, Swim +12; Skilled (Listen and Spot), Skill Focus (Hide). *A crocodile has a +4 racial bonus on Hide checks in the water. A crocodile can lie in the water with only its eyes and nostrils showing, gaining a +10 cover bonus on Hide checks.

SA—Improved Grab (Ex): If a crocodile hits with a bite attack, the crocodile can attempt to start a grapple as a free action without provoking an attack of opportunity.

SQ—Hold Breath (Ex): A crocodile can hold its breath for a number of rounds equal to four times its Constitution score before it risks drowning.

Gorilla

This stat block represents a typical mountain gorilla. For a baboon, chimpanzee or other smaller ape, decrease size to Medium.

Gorilla: Init +2, Spd 30 ft., climb 30 ft.; hp 30, Def 14, touch 11, flat-footed 12; Atk +7 melee (1d6+5, slam), Full Atk +7 melee (1d6+5, slams) and +2 melee (1d6+2, bite); Space/Reach 10 ft./10 ft.

Gorilla: CR 2; Large animal; HD 4d8+12, hp 30; Init +2; Spd 30 ft., climb 30 ft.; Def 14, touch 11, flat-footed 12; Base Atk +3; Grp +12; Atk +7 melee (1d6+5, slam), Full Atk +7 melee (1d6+5, 2 slams) and +2 melee (1d6+2, bite); Space/Reach 10 ft./10 ft.; SQ low-light vision, scent; SV Fort +6, Ref +6, Will +2; Str 21, Dex 15, Con 14, Int 2, Wis 12, Cha 7.

Skills and Feats: Climb +14, Listen +6, Spot +6; Skilled (Listen and Spot), Toughness.

Horse, Police

Horse, Police: Init +1, Spd 60 ft.; hp 22, Def 14, touch 10, flat-footed 13; Atk +4 melee (1d4+3, hoof), Full Atk +4 melee (1d4+3, 2 hooves) and -1 melee (1d3+1, bite); Space 10 ft.

Horse, Police: CR 1; Large animal; HD 3d8+9, hp 22; Init +1; Spd 60 ft.; Def 14, touch 10, flat-footed 13; Base Atk +2; Grp +9; Atk +4 melee (1d4+3, hoof), Full Atk +4 melee (1d4+3, 2 hooves) and –1 melee (1d3+1, bite); Space 10 ft.; SQ low-light vision, scent; SV Fort +6, Ref +4, Will +2; Str 16, Dex 13, Con 17, Int 2, Wis 13, Cha 6.

Skills and Feats: Listen +4, Spot +4; Endurance, Run.

Determining Creature CR

The Nightmare Wave has tainted many creatures, and at some point, the player characters are going to run into such creatures. If you create new creatures to challenge your players (such as a wolf that breathes fire, or a tiger with iron skin), you'll need a way to determine the creature's CR. The best option is to compare the new creature to the sample creatures in this book, find one about the same power level and use its CR. If you can't find anything compatible, divide the new creature's Hit Dice by 2 to get a rough CR. If the creature has a strong special attack or defense, add 1 to the CR, and if the attack or defense is especially powerful, add 1 more. Typical "strong" special attacks are improved grab (initiating grapples without provoking attacks), poison or fiery breath (fire damage in an area). Typical strong defenses are a +10 natural bonus to Defense, fire immunity, fast healing 10 or damage reduction 5/–. If you are just adding one of these attacks or defenses to one of the sample creatures (such as an ape with poison), increase its CR by 1.

Awakened, demons, mages, vampires and werewolves have CRs equal to their Hit Dice (level +3).

Lion

Lion: Init +3, Spd 40 ft.; hp 32, Def 15, touch 12, flat-footed 12; Atk +7 melee (1d4+5, claw), Full Atk +7 melee (1d4+5, 2 claws) and +2 melee (1d8+2, bite); improved grab (bite; Grp +12), pounce, 2 rakes (+7, 1d4+2); Space 10 ft.

Lion: CR 3; Large animal; HD 5d8+10, hp 32; Init +3; Spd 40 ft.; Def 15, touch 12, flat-footed 12; Base Atk +3; Grp +12; Atk +7 melee (1d4+5, claw), Full Atk +7 melee (1d4+5, 2 claws) and +2 melee (1d8+2, bite); Space 10 ft.; SA improved grab, pounce, rake 1d4+2; SQ low-light vision, scent; SV Fort +6, Ref +7, Will +2; Str 21, Dex 17, Con 15, Int 2, Wis 12, Cha 6.

Skills and Feats: Balance +7, Hide +3*, Listen +5, Move Silently +11, Spot +5; Run, Skilled (Listen and Spot). Lions have a +4 racial bonus on Balance, Hide, and Move Silently checks. *In areas of tall grass or heavy undergrowth, the lion's Hide bonus improves to +12.

SA—Improved Grab (Ex): If a lion hits with a bite attack, the lion can attempt to start a grapple as a free action without provoking an attack of opportunity. If the lion wins the grapple check, the lion establishes a hold on its opponent and can use its rake ability starting on its next turn.

SA—Pounce (Ex): If a lion charges a foe, the lion can make a full attack that round, including two rake attacks (even if it doesn't grapple).

SA—Rake (Ex): A lion can use its two rear claws to attack a grappled opponent. Each has a +7 attack bonus and deals 1d4+2 hit points of damage. A lion cannot use rake on the same round it starts a grapple (though it can rake every round thereafter as long as it maintains the grapple).

Snake, Constrictor

These statistics represent a boa constrictor or python about 10 feet long. For an anaconda, increase the animal's size to Large or Huge.

Snake, Constrictor: Init +7, Spd 20 ft., climb 20 ft., swim 20 ft.; hp 19, Def 15, touch 13, flat-footed 12; Atk/Full Atk +5 melee (1d3+4, bite); constrict 1d3+4, improved grab (bite; Grp +5).

Snake, Constrictor: CR 2; Medium animal; HD 3d8+6, hp 19; Init +7; Spd 20 ft., climb 20 ft., swim 20 ft.; Def 15, touch 13, flat-footed 12; Base Atk +2; Grp +5; Atk/Full Atk +5 melee (1d3+4, bite); SA constrict 1d3+4, improved grab; SQ scent; SV Fort +4, Ref +6, Will +2; Str 17, Dex 17, Con 13, Int 1, Wis 12, Cha 2.

Skills and Feats: Balance +11, Climb +14, Hide +10, Listen +7, Spot +7, Swim +11; Skilled (Listen and Spot), Improved Initiative, Toughness. Snakes have a +4 racial bonus on Hide, Listen and Spot checks and a +8 racial bonus on Balance checks. Snakes use either their Strength or Dexterity modifier for Climb checks, whichever is higher.

SA—Constrict (Ex): When grappling, a constrictor snake deals 1d3+4 points of damage on a successful grapple check.

SA—Improved Grab (Ex): If a constrictor snake hits with a bite attack, the constrictor snake can attempt to start a grapple as a free action without provoking an attack of opportunity.

Snake, Viper

These statistics represent a cobra, black mamba or rattlesnake about six feet long. For larger types such as the king cobra, increase the animal's size to Medium. For smaller types (such as most other venomous snakes), decrease the animal's size to Tiny.

Snake, Viper: Init +7, Spd 20 ft., climb 20 ft., swim 20 ft.; hp 4, Def 17, touch 14, flat-footed 14; Atk/Full Atk +4 melee (1d2–2 plus poison, bite); poison (DC 10, 1d6 Con/1d6 Con).

Snake, Constrictor: CR 1/2; Small animal; HD 1d8, hp 4; Init +7; Spd 20 ft., climb 20 ft., swim 20 ft.; Def 17, touch 14, flat-footed 14; Base Atk +0; Grp -6; Atk/Full Atk +4 melee (1d2–2 plus poison, bite); SA poison; SQ scent; SV Fort +2, Ref +5, Will +1; Str 6, Dex 17, Con 11, Int 1, Wis 12, Cha 2.

Skills and Feats: Balance +11, Climb +11, Hide +11, Listen +7, Spot +7, Swim +6; Improved Initiative, Weapon

Finesse[B]. Snakes have a +4 racial bonus on Hide, Listen and Spot checks and a +8 racial bonus on Balance checks. Snakes use either their Strength or Dexterity modifier for Climb checks, whichever is higher.

SA—Poison (Ex): A viper snake has a poisonous bite that deals initial and secondary damage of 1d6 Con (Fort save DC 10 negates). The save DC is Constitution-based. (The save DC is 10 + 1/2 the snake's Hit Dice + the snake's Constitution bonus.)

Wolf

Theses statistics represent a typical wild European or North American wolf, but you can also use them for any large trained canine such as a guard dog or police dog. For typical domesticated pets or smaller canines such as coyotes, decrease the animal's size to Small.

Wolf: Init +2, Spd 50 ft.; ⛊ hp 13, Def 14, touch 12, flat-footed 12; 🔫 Atk/Full Atk +3 melee (1d6+1, bite); trip (bite; trip +1).

Wolf: CR 1; Medium animal; HD 2d8+4, hp 13; Init +2; Spd 50 ft.; Def 14, touch 12, flat-footed 12; Base Atk +1; Grp +1; Atk/Full Atk +3 melee (1d6+1, bite); Space/Reach 5 ft./5 ft.; SA trip; SQ low-light vision, scent; SV Fort +5, Ref +5, Will +1; Str 13, Dex 15, Con 15, Int 2, Wis 12, Cha 6.

Skills and Feats: Hide +2, Listen +3, Move Silently +3, Survival +1*, Swim +12; Track[B], Weapon Focus (bite).
*Wolves have a +4 racial bonus on Survival checks when tracking by scent.

SA—Trip (Ex): If a wolf hits with a bite attack, the wolf can automatically attempt to trip the opponent (+1 check modifier) as a free action without making a touch attack or provoking an attack of opportunity. If the attempt fails, the opponent cannot react to trip the wolf.

Humans

While the player characters are the stars of the World of Darkness, they are greatly outnumbered by the teeming billions of humanity. Individually, most humans are weak compared to a player character and are easy prey for vampires, werewolves and stranger creatures.

Use these statistics for normal humans. For example, you might use them when the player characters confront humans in combat or must protect a human as part of a scenario.

Average Human

These statistics represents a typical adult with no exceptional skills or training such as a cashier, common thug, ditch-digger, paparazzi, vagrant and so on. A typical bystander who isn't at all important to the evening's plot (but might soak up a stray bullet or provide blood for a hungry vampire) is an average human.

Average Human: Init +0, Spd 30 ft.; ⛊ hp 4, Def 10, touch 10, flat-footed 14; 🔫 Atk/Full Atk +0 melee (1d3 nonlethal, unarmed strike).

Average Human: CR 1/3; Medium humanoid (human); HD 1d8, hp 4; Init +0; Spd 30 ft.; Def 10, touch 10, flat-footed 10; Base Atk +0; Grp +0; Atk/Full Atk +0 melee

(1d3 nonlethal, unarmed strike); SV Fort +2, Ref +2, Will +0; Str 10, Dex 10, Con 10, Int 10, Wis 10, Cha 10.
Skills and Feats: Craft (any one) +4, Knowledge (any one) +5, Listen +3, Profession (any one) +5, Spot +3; Skilled (Listen and Spot), Skilled (Craft and Profession).

Educated Human

These statistics represents an adult with significant schooling and nonphysical expertise such as a doctor, lawyer or scientist; you can also use these stats to represent someone more skilled than the average human but not as combat-ready as a trained human (see below). An educated human may have additional equipment according to her profession; for example, a biologist probably has access to a lab or at least a laptop computer.

Educated Human: Init +1, Spd 30 ft.; hp 9, Def 11, touch 11, flat-footed 10; Atk/Full Atk +1 melee (1d3 nonlethal, unarmed strike).

Educated Human: CR 1/2; Medium humanoid (human); HD 2d8, hp 9; Init +1; Spd 30 ft.; Def 11, touch 11, flat-footed 10; Base Atk +1; Grp +1; Atk/Full Atk +1 melee (1d3 nonlethal, unarmed strike); SV Fort +3, Ref +4, Will +1; Str 10, Dex 12, Con 10, Int 12, Wis 12, Cha 10.
Skills and Feats: Computer Use +4, Knowledge (any two) +6, Profession (any one) +6, Research +7, Search +5; Skilled (any two Knowledge), Skilled (Research and Search).

Trained Human

These statistics represents an adult with significant physical training, such as an FBI agent, police officer or soldier; you can also use these stats to represent a physically hardy person such as an athlete. These people are tougher than a typical human but are still no match for a supernatural being. A trained human may have additional equipment according to her profession; for example, a police officer carries a radio and may have a shotgun or armored vest in her squad car.

Trained Human: Init +5, Spd 30 ft.; hp 11, Def 11, touch 11, flat-footed 10; Atk/Full Atk +2 melee (1d3+1 nonlethal, unarmed strike) or +2 ranged (2d4, pistol).

Trained Human: CR 1; Medium humanoid (human); HD 2d8+2, hp 11; Init +5; Spd 30 ft.; Def 11, touch 11, flat-footed 10; Base Atk +1; Grp +2; Atk/Full Atk +2 melee (1d3+1 nonlethal, unarmed strike) or +2 ranged (2d4, pistol); SV Fort +4, Ref +4, Will +0; Str 12, Dex 12, Con 12, Int 10, Wis 10, Cha 10.
Skills and Feats: Climb +3, Computer Use +1, Jump +3, Listen +4, Pilot +4, Profession (any one) +3, Spot +4; Improved Initiative, Skilled (Listen and Spot).

Elite Human

These statistics represent an adult with superior physical training and experience in armed confrontation or combat, such as military Special Forces, police SWAT or the Secret Service; you can also use these stats to represent a person who is physically superior due to chemical or supernatural means (such as a steroid-boosted athlete). These people are able to hold their own against the supernatural at least for a short while.

An elite human usually has additional equipment, particularly weapons, armor and communication devices or scanners. They usually operate in well-coordinated groups.

If the elite human's primary weapon is something other than a pistol, his Weapon Focus feat is for that alternative weapon; for example, a military sniper has Weapon Focus (Sniper Rifle) instead of Weapon Focus (Pistol). He may have a different skill or feat selection based on his specialty; for example, a black ops soldier has ranks in Move Silently and Hide rather than Computer Use and Pilot, while a Navy SEAL has ranks in Demolitions and Swim rather than Computer Use and Jump.

Creating Humans

The sample humans presented here should serve most of your purposes. If you would like to create other humans, they have d8 Hit Dice and three skill points per Hit Die (with quadruple skill points for their first Hit Die) plus their Intelligence modifiers. They have two feats for their first Hit Die and an additional feat for their third Hit Die and every three Hit Dice after that. Their base attack bonus is equal to half their Hit Dice (rounded down). Their Fortitude and Reflex save bonuses are equal to 2 + half their Hit Dice, and their Will save bonuses are equal to one-third their Hit Dice. They do not receive a class bonus to Defense.

A human's CR is equal to half his Hit Dice. Humans with particularly dangerous equipment (like assault rifles and frag grenades) have CRs equal to half their Hit Dice +1.

Normal humans do not have skill foci; they simply have access to a number of skills based on their education and lifestyle.

Some humans, because of their training, receive Improved Unarmed Strike as a bonus feat.

However, the exact values are usually not particularly important, and you don't need to spend hours crunching numbers just to create a particular human by following the rules to the letter. If you like, you can simply assign numbers for skills, base attack bonus and the like as you see fit. Compare your creation to other humans (and other creatures) to determine whether her CR should be greater or lower than half her Hit Dice.

Elite Human: Init +6, Spd 30 ft.; ♥ hp 13, Def 12, touch 12, flat-footed 10; 🔫 Atk/Full Atk +3 melee (1d4+2, unarmed strike) or +4 ranged (2d4, pistol).

Elite Human: CR 1; Medium humanoid (human); HD 3d8, hp 13; Init +6; Spd 30 ft.; Def 12, touch 12, flat-footed 10; Base Atk +2; Grp +3; Atk/Full Atk +3 melee (1d4+2, unarmed strike) or +4 ranged (2d4, pistol); SV Fort +3, Ref +5, Will +2; Str 12, Dex 15, Con 11, Int 12, Wis 13, Cha 10.

Skills and Feats: Climb +5, Computer Use +2, Jump +5, Listen +7, Pilot +4, Profession (any one) +6, Spot +7; Improved Initiative, Improved Unarmed Strike[B], Skilled (Listen and Spot), Weapon Focus (pistol).

Minions

Minions are supernatural servants created wholly by magic or by magic influencing mundane materials. Animated and sustained by magic, mages typically use minions in battle. Minions are loyal to the one who created them — barring supernatural intervention, they never turn against you.

Minions have limited intelligence; they can understand human speech (reacting to commands in one human language you know) but cannot speak intelligibly. When you conjure a minion, you decide if it is a humanoid or beast, though this choice does not affect its abilities (even its ability to resist a bull rush).

Humanoid minions look passably human (male or female), though close scrutiny reveals minor flaws such as drooping brows, webbed fingers, a hunched posture and so on; a person unschooled in magic might think the minion was deformed or mildly disfigured in an accident. Humanoid minions tend to resemble a person of your race and coloration; Icelandic mages conjure pale blonde-haired minions, while Native American mages conjure minions with straight black hair and rich brown skin. You decide if the minion appears naked or clothed (in a simple one-piece garment) and its gender (or lack thereof).

Beast minions look like any animal with which you are passingly familiar; in the modern day, most people know what a horse, wolf, tiger or velociraptor looks like, though if you haven't seen such a creature in person (including seeing a stuffed specimen or sculpture) it doesn't look quite right. As with humanoid minions, close scrutiny reveals incongruous details, though only someone very familiar with that kind of animal recognizes the errors. Beast minions can look like just about anything, such as spiders, snakes, dolphins, octopuses and fish.

You can circumvent any of the above limitations by using magic, either by adding components to the conjuring spell or after you conjure the minion. For example, you can increase a minion's Intelligence to near-average (human) levels, at which point it can speak (though it still doesn't have much to say), or make a sex slave minion by increasing its Charisma or make a minion-doppelganger of yourself or another person using cosmetic shapechanging or illusion. You can give the minion unusual powers (flight, darkvision, fire resistance and so on) just as you can with any other creature, except you can add these components to the conjuring spell instead of creating these effects as a separate spell (though you can of course grant the minion these abilities after you create it).

By default, a minion can make one attack per round. The statistics for the default minions list this as a bite attack, but the attack is whatever is appropriate for the creature; a giant scorpion minion attacks with its tail, a bull minion gores with its horns, a humanoid with a punch (treat as an armed attack, as if the humanoid had Improved Unarmed Strike) and so on. Regardless of the physical origin of the attack, the minion deals the damage listed in the stat block. (In other words, you are not penalized for choosing a minion's form that in nature is less effective than a highly-evolved predator.) If you want a minion to have special abilities not listed in the default minion's stat block (including extra attacks per round appropriate to its apparent shape), you have to build them with spell components. Your vampire minion isn't automatically resistant to critical hits, your beast-form werewolf minion doesn't automatically get sprint healing, your scorpion minion doesn't automatically have poison and your tiger minion doesn't automatically have sharp claws to go with its teeth.

A minion acts on your turn (it has its own initiative bonus but it applies only if the minion enters combat when not near you, such as if it is guarding something while you are away). You do not have a telepathic link to it (unless you build a spell for that purpose) so you must order it verbally or with clear nonverbal cues; for example, in a combat situation, you can direct a minion to attack a specific target as long as you can clearly identify that target to the minion (such as by pointing). If you don't direct it to do anything and you are in combat, the minion attacks the closest enemy (using your definition of "enemy" — the minion can't detect if a supposed ally is actually planning to betray you). You don't need to direct the minion every round; the minion follows its most recent order, though not mindlessly — it doesn't follow a fleeing enemy over a cliff if it can't fly. A minion is somewhat like a well-trained, smart dog: aware enough to react to a surprise attack, able to open normal doors and so on, but not able to drive a car or fire a pistol unless you enhance its abilities with magic.

Minions are sustained by magic and are barely alive in the conventional sense. Though they have blood and internal organs and even bleed if wounded, they don't need to breathe, eat or sleep. A minion has no qualms about following a target to the bottom of a lake or standing still for hours at a time (subject to the Duration of the spell that conjured it, of course). They are immune to poison. Even though a minion might bleed, it provides no sustenance to vampires.

Minion Statistics

Minions come in four general types: minor, lesser, greater and superior.

Minor Minion: Init +2, Spd 30 ft.; ♥ hp 16, Def 15, touch 12 flat-footed 13; 🔫 Atk/Full Atk +5 melee (1d6+3, bite).

Minor Minion, Conjured Creature: CR 2; Medium animal; HD 3d8+3, hp 16; Init +2; Spd 30 ft.; Def 15, touch 12, flat-footed 13; Base Atk +2; Grp +4; Atk/Full Atk +5 melee (1d6+3, bite); SV Fort +4, Ref +5, Will +2; Str 15, Dex 15, Con 13, Int 3, Wis 8, Cha 3.
Skills and Feats: Listen +3, Spot +4; Weapon Focus (bite).

Lesser Minion: Init +3, Spd 30 ft.; ♥ hp 48, Def 18, touch 13, flat-footed 15; 🔫 Atk/Full Atk +8 melee (1d8+4, bite); Power Attack.

Lesser Minion, Conjured Creature: CR 4; Medium animal; HD 6d8+24, hp 51; Init +3; Spd 30 ft.; Def 18, touch 13, flat-footed 15; Base Atk +4; Grp +7; Atk/Full Atk +8 melee (1d8+4, bite); SQ darkvision; SV Fort +8, Ref +8, Will +3; Str 17, Dex 17, Con 17, Int 3, Wis 12, Cha 3.
Skills and Feats: Listen +5, Spot +6; Power Attack, Toughness, Weapon Focus (bite).

Greater Minion: Init +2, Spd 30 ft.; ♥ hp 98, Def 18, touch 11, flat-footed 16; 🔫 Atk/Full Atk +12 melee (2d6+7, bite); Combat Reflexes (+2 attacks), Power Attack; Space/Reach 10 ft./10ft.

Greater Minion, Conjured Creature: CR 7; Large animal; HD 10d8+60, hp 105; Init +2; Spd 30 ft.; Def 18, touch 11, flat-footed 16; Base Atk +7; Grp +16; Atk/Full Atk +12 melee (2d6+7, bite); Space/Reach 10 ft./10 ft.; SQ darkvision; SV Fort +12, Ref +9, Will +4; Str 21, Dex 15, Con 21, Int 3, Wis 12, Cha 3.
Skills and Feats: Listen +7, Spot +8; Combat Reflexes, Power Attack, Toughness, Weapon Focus (bite).

Superior Minion: Init +2, Spd 30 ft.; ♥ hp 150, Def 20, touch 11, flat-footed 18; 🔫 Atk/Full Atk +16 melee (2d8+9, bite); Combat Reflexes (+2 attacks), Power Attack; Space/Reach 10 ft./10ft.

Superior Minion, Conjured Creature: CR 10; Large animal; HD 14d8+98, hp 161; Init +2; Spd 30 ft.; Def 20, touch 11, flat-footed 18; Base Atk +10; Grp +20; Atk/Full Atk +16 melee (2d8+9, bite); Space/Reach 10 ft./10 ft.; SQ darkvision; SV Fort +15, Ref +11, Will +5; Str 23, Dex 15, Con 23, Int 3, Wis 12, Cha 3.
Skills and Feats: Listen +7, Spot +8; Cleave, Combat Reflexes, Power Attack, Toughness, Weapon Focus (bite).

Minion Templates

Templates are quick and easy ways to customize minions. A minion template is just a few quick adjustments to a minion's statistics, giving the effect and feel of the appropriate minion without a ton of work.

A mage can summon a minion with a template by paying extra components for every template she wants the minion to have. A demon with the Conjure Demonic Minion cant always creates a minion with the demon template (and no other templates). A demon with the Husk Minion cant or a scourge demon with the Murderous Recharge cant always creates a minion with the zombie template (and never any other templates).

You can add as many templates as you can afford to build into the conjuring spell as long as they do not contradict each other (GM's discretion). For example, you can't make a minion a zombie and a skeleton (a creature can be either a skeleton or a zombie, not both), but you could make a skeleton fire elemental minion (which might look like a skeleton made of fire or a skeleton surrounded by fire).

You can't add a particular template more than once to the same minion — you can't put the fire elemental template on a minion twice to be really good at fire.

The harmless template has priority over other templates. For example, if you make a minion with the skeleton and harmless templates, it's a harmless minion even though it looks like a skeleton (fun at Halloween parties!).

All templates are approximately the same power; choosing a template for a minion is just a matter of what sort of advantages and disadvantages you need at the time. A template modifies a minion's appearance as you see fit and as appropriate to the template; for example, a demon minion could be a sexy succubus, a groveling imp or your stereotypical "devil" with cloven hooves, goat horns and a tail.

Air Elemental Template: Immune to poison and cold. Attack deals +1d6 cold damage. Darkvision. +20 bonus to speed. Fly at its (modified) ground speed (perfect maneuverability). An air elemental typically looks like a tornado.

Demon Template: Immune to poison. Acid resistance 10, cold resistance 10, fire resistance 10. +4 bonus on damage rolls. +4 bonus on saves against spells and supernatural abilities. Darkvision.

Earth Elemental Template: Immune to poison and acid. +5 natural bonus to Defense. Improved Bull Rush. Darkvision. –10 penalty to speed. An earth elemental typically looks as if it is made of earth and stone; when still, an earth elemental looks like a statue.

Fire Elemental Template: Immune to poison and fire. Attack deals +1d6 fire damage. Attacking it with natural weapons or unarmed attacks deals 1d6 fire damage to the attacker. Darkvision. +10 bonus to speed. Cold vulnerability (takes double damage from cold). A fire elemental looks like an animate flame or a "special effect" of a creature made of fire; it can stand perfectly camouflaged within fires of its size or larger.

Harmless Template: The minion is unable to directly cause harm — it cannot attack, use weapons, drop rocks on people from a rooftop and so on, but it could push a button that detonates a bomb. If attacked, a harmless minion does not retaliate (which makes it a good decoy for unintelligent enemies, as it lets its opponent chew on it until it expires).

Skeleton Template: Immune to mental attacks (including charm and compulsion effects), cold, poison and critical hits (treat a critical hit as a regular hit; no Con damage or stunning). Damage reduction 5/bludgeoning. Darkvision. When lying still, a skeleton looks like any other (dead) skeleton.

Water Elemental Template: Immune to poison and electricity. +5 natural bonus to Defense. Darkvision. Swim speed equal to its ground speed +20. A water elemental looks like a free-standing wave.

Zombie Template: Immune to mental attacks (including charm and compulsion effects), poison and critical hits (treat a critical hit as a regular hit, no Con damage or stunning). +10 hit points. Damage reduction 5/slashing. Darkvision. Can take only a single move or attack action each round. (A zombie can move and attack in the same round if it charges.) When lying still, a zombie looks like any other dead body in the same state of decomposition.

Supernatural Characters

Sometimes you need a quick supernatural character or two as opponents for the player characters to combat or for people who need their help. Chapter 2 presents first-level supernatural characters, while below are fifth-level characters who can provide player characters with more of a challenge. They represent the same characters as those in Chapter 2, but advanced to fifth level.

Typical Awakened

Awakened: Init +1, Spd 30 ft.; ● hp 60, Def 15, touch 15, flat-footed 14; defender's mindset; Uncanny Dodge; ⌐■ Atk +8 ranged (2d6, auto pistol) or +8 melee (1d4+1, unarmed strike), Full Atk +8/+3 ranged (2d6, auto pistol) or +6/+1 ranged (3d6, auto pistol double tap) or +8/+3 melee (1d4+1, unarmed strike); Point Blank Shot.

Typical Awakened 5: CR 8; Medium humanoid (human); HD 8d8+24, hp 60; Init +1; Spd 30 ft.; Def 15, touch 15, flat-footed 14; Base Atk +6; Grp +8; Atk +8 ranged (2d6, auto pistol) or +8 melee (1d4+1, unarmed strike), Full Atk +8/+3 ranged (2d6, auto pistol) or +6/+1 ranged (3d6, auto pistol double tap) or +8/+3 melee (1d4+1, unarmed strike); SQ Skill focus (Climb), stalwart dedication*; SV Fort +6, Ref +5, Will +9; Str 13, Dex 13, Con 14, Int 14, Wis 15, Cha 10.

Skills (Might, Intellect) and Feats: Balance +10, Appraise +7, Climb +13, Computer Use +11, Concentration +11, Drive +4, Heal +11, Jump +10, Knowledge (occult) +11, Research +11, Swim +10; Improved Unarmed Strike, Point Blank Shot, Semi-automatic Weapon Proficiency[B], Toughness, Uncanny Dodge[B].

Humanity Points: 5

* The bonuses for stalwart dedication are already figured into the Awakened's statistics.

Typical Demon

Demon: Init +1, Spd 30 ft.; ● hp 60, Def 15, touch 15, flat-footed 14; demon traits; ⌐■ Atk +10 melee (1d8+4, claw), Full Atk +10 melee (1d8+4, 2 claws); scourge demon traits (attitude change DC 19, fear DC 19); cants (Battle Claws, Husk Minion, Mindbite); 12 max Anima, 1 Anima/round; Cleave, Improved Sunder, Power Attack.

Typical Demon (Scourge) 5: CR 8; Medium demon; HD 8d10+16, hp 60; Init +1; Spd 30 ft.; Def 15, touch 15, flat-footed 14; Base Atk +6; Grp +10; Atk +10 melee (1d8+4, claw), Full Atk +10 melee (1d8+4, 2 claws); SA cants, scourge demon traits (attitude change DC 19, fear DC 19); SQ demon traits; SV Fort +5, Ref +4, Will +8; Str 19, Dex 12, Con 14, Int 13, Wis 14, Cha 12.

Skills (Spirit) and Feats: Bluff +9, Diplomacy +9, Gather Information +4, Listen +5, Intimidate +9, Search +4, Sense Motive +10, Spot +10; Cleave, Improved Sunder, Power Attack.

Cants: Battle Claws, Husk Minion, Mindbite.

Anima: 12 max; 1/round.

Typical Mage

Mage*: Init +2, Spd 30 ft.; ⛊ hp 44, Def 14, touch 14, flat-footed 12; Defensive Move, Diehard; 🔫 Atk/Full Atk +4 melee (1d3 nonlethal, unarmed strike); gnosis (Blood Magic, Summoner (zombie)), spells (159 components).

Typical Mage (Necromancer) 5: CR 8; Medium humanoid (human); HD 8d6+16, hp 44; Init +2; Spd 30 ft.; Def 14, touch 14, flat-footed 12; Base Atk +4; Grp +4; Atk/Full Atk +4 melee (1d3 nonlethal, unarmed strike); SA spells; SQ ongoing spells; SV Fort +3, Ref +5, Will +8; Str 10, Dex 14, Con 12, Int 20, Wis 14, Cha 8.

Skills (Intellect) and Feats: Concentration +9, Knowledge (occult) +13, Listen +10, Research +11, Spellcraft +11, Search +13, Sense Motive +6, Spot +10; Defensive Move, Diehard, Toughness.

Gnosis: Blood Magic, Extra Components, Summoner (zombie).

Components: 159.

*These statistics represent the mage without bonuses from spells; she usually has an ongoing "Armor" spell (giving her a +4 natural bonus to Defense).

Typical Vampire

Vampire: Init +4, Spd 30 ft.; ⛊ hp 52, Def 20, touch 20, flat-footed 16; vampire traits; 🔫 Atk/Full Atk +10 melee (1d4+4, bite) or +10 ranged (1d10, zip gun); sneak attack +2d6; disciplines (Celerity, Cloak of Night, Touch of Shadow); 12 max Vitae, 1 Vitae/round.

Typical Vampire (Nosferatu) 5: CR 8; Medium humanoid (vampire); HD 8d8+16, hp 52; Init +4; Spd 30 ft.; Def 20, touch 20, flat-footed 16; Base Atk +6; Grp +10; Atk/Full Atk +10 melee (1d4+4, bite) or +10 ranged (1d10, zip gun); SA disciplines; SQ vampire traits; SV Fort +8, Ref +10, Will +7; Str 18, Dex 19, Con 15, Int 10, Wis 12, Cha 8.

Skills (Stealth) and Feats: Demolitions +3, Disable Device +3, Forgery +3, Hide +12, Move Silently +12, Open Lock +7, Sleight of Hand +7; Skilled (Hide and Move Silently), Sneak Attack (x2).

Disciplines: Celerity, Cloak of Night, Touch of Shadow.

Vitae: 12 max; 1/round.

Typical Werewolf

Werewolf: Init +2, Spd 30 ft.; ⛊ hp 38, Def 16, touch 16, flat-footed 14; werewolf traits; 🔫 Atk/Full Atk +14 melee (1d6+6, club); Cleave, Combat Reflexes (+2 attacks); rites (Alien Speed, Crushing Blow, Sand in the Eyes); 13 max Essence, 1 Essence/round.

• **Werewolf, Hybrid Form:** Init +4, Spd 30 ft.; ⛊ hp 42, Def 18, touch 18, flat-footed 14; Fort +8, Ref +5; werewolf traits; 🔫 Atk/Full Atk +16 melee (1d6+12, bite) and +11 melee (1d6+4, 2 claws); Cleave, Combat Reflexes (+4 attacks); rites (Alien Speed, Crushing Blow, Sand in the Eyes); 13 max Essence, 1 Essence/round.

• **Werewolf, Beast Form:** Init +3, Spd 40 ft.; ⛊ hp 42, Def 17, touch 17, flat-footed 14; Fort +8, Ref +4; werewolf traits; 🔫 Atk/Full Atk +14 melee (1d8+9, bite); Cleave, Combat Reflexes (+3 attacks); rites (Alien Speed, Crushing Blow, Sand in the Eyes); 13 max Essence, 1 Essence/round.

Typical Werewolf (Rahu) 5: CR 4; Medium humanoid (werewolf); HD 8d12+24, hp 76; Init +2; Spd 30 ft.; Def 16, touch 16, flat-footed 14; Base Atk +8; Grp +14; Atk/Full Atk +14 melee (1d6+6, club); SA rites; SV Fort +7, Ref +3; Str 22, Dex 14, Con 16, Int 12, Wis 10, Cha 8.

Skills (Might) and Feats: Climb +8, Jump+8, Listen +3, Search +3, Sense Motive +3, Spot +3, Swim +8; Cleave, Combat Reflexes, Power Attack.

Rites: Alien Speed, Crushing Blow, Sand in the Eyes.

Essence: 13 max; 1/round.

CHICAGO CITY OF DARKNESS

This chapter offers a setting for **Monte Cook's World of Darkness** games. Chicago is far enough away from the Intrusion that the city remains intact, and its citizens continue their daily waltz of work and play, joy and murder. Yet the dance does not continue in precisely the same way as before, for Chicago lies in the Haunted Lands, and a new chord runs through the music.

On the surface, life proceeds much as it once did, but citizens of all stripes have noticed an increase in *weird things*. Already a city rife with rumors and urban ghost stories, more and more such stories now appear in Chicago, and more and more people believe them. What once happened to a friend of a friend now happens to a friend — or to you. The sunlight seems paler, the nights darker and the streets more dangerous. Even some of the hardest ghetto criminals are afraid to venture into certain areas when the clouds hide the moon, for they know that no matter how tough they are, the things dwelling in the shadows can crack them like babies' skulls.

Beneath Chicago's darkening surface, a secret war takes place. Vampires and werewolves slink through the streets, impersonating their victims or striking from the shadows. Some feed indiscriminately, some eradicate those who know of their existence and most search for the Awakened. Demons sit at the center of complex plots that destroy the truth and topple pillars that uphold the world. Thousands of people are involved in complex webs of thralls, Vinculums and supernatural addiction. Mages move unseen, fulfilling their own goals or those of their secret societies. Even stranger *things* occasionally appear, dragging unfortunate souls to burbling, tentacled deaths.

The IDA and like-minded forces battle against these predators. Werewolves who would preserve the world clash with those who would destroy it. Demons find their lairs invaded by determined Awakened. Magic duels shake the walls of abandoned subway tunnels.

GM's Note — Purpose of the Setting

This chapter provides a setting that bears a strong resemblance to the real, modern world. Chicago is similar to our world, save that vampires, werewolves, mages and demons skulk in the shadows and wage their war to end reality. Though the conflict is intense and vital, most people are aware of it only in the shallowest sense. They continue their lives in relative normalcy, though *weird things* occur often, people disappear in the night and rumors of bloodsuckers and beasts are rampant. Chicago is a city of darkness.

Chicago serves as an excellent backdrop for a typical campaign. Though the horror is there, it hides beneath the surface. Chicago is close enough to the Intrusion Point that the city feels the Nightmare Wave's effects, but not so close as to be a haunted wasteland (like Minneapolis) or so far away as to be virtually immune to the Intrusion's effects. Typical Chicagoans go about their lives as if nothing is different, and a few even believe that nothing *is* different. The majority, though, have at least an inkling that *something* has changed, and though they don't quite know what, they know that it is malefic. An unseen shadow eclipses the sun. If you are familiar with the original **World of Darkness,** Chicago's feel and tone is similar.

Chicago provides player characters a chance to battle enemy vampires, werewolves and other supernatural creatures but still have access to modern resources. The city also allows for a game that blends stealth, puzzle-solving, mystery, combat and any other sort of adventure you'd care to incorporate; a game set in Minneapolis would tend to focus on combat and survival instead. In addition, Minneapolis is isolated, while characters in Chicago still feel connected to the rest of the world.

Throughout this chapter, in addition to descriptions both general and specific, are hints, suggestions and hooks for you (the GM) to use (or ignore) in your campaign.

Chicago Overview

Chicago is the third-most populous city in America, with 2.9 million people in the city limits and 9.4 million in the Chicago Metropolitan Area. It has long been a city of opportunity and vice, with a reputation for crime of such sordid and horrid stripes that it outstrips New York. Many of Chicago's streets have never been safe to walk at night, and since the Intrusion, they are even deadlier.

History

Chicago began life as a small frontier town that grew up around Fort Dearborn, which white men erected in hostile Native American territory. The city took its name from the nearby Chicago River.

Chicago gained a reputation for sin and hubris early, and has made passing attempts at grandeur. In 1871, the infamous Great Fire torched much of Chicago, allowing it to rebuild in splendor where

there was once squalor. Chicago was America's foremost city for a time, and in 1893 hosted the World's Columbian Exposition, an affair of such a grandiose nature that it drew almost half America's population.

Chicago soon went back downhill. The bulk of its money came from agriculture and meatpacking, and a truly staggering number of animals were slaughtered within the city's borders every year. Employees and butchers dumped blood and offal and spoiled meat into the Chicago River, which joined a variety of other refuse, from human sewage to industrial chemicals. In time, the Chicago River became so polluted that scabs of blood formed across its surface, and even after the city spent $40 million to reverse the river's flow, no fish could live within it. National laws forced the city to clean up the river to some extent in the 1970s, but it remains a decidedly unhealthy waterway.

Now, Chicago remains a city of crime and vice. The South Side is one sprawling ghetto with few oases. The city has long been a center for the Mob and other forms of organized crime, and today is no exception. The wealthy live on the North Side, the money market of the Loop sits in the center and the winding el connects it all.

Locations in Chicago

Chicago, the largest city in Illinois, sprawls across several miles of the Lake Michigan shore. At Chicago's core is the Loop, Chicago's busy downtown. South of the Loop, the city fades into the poverty and desolation of the South Side. North of the Loop, the city is densely settled with residential areas punctuated by more commercial neighborhoods, extending all the way up to the city's northern border.

Nearly all of the city's hip or desirable locations are located within a mile or two of the lake. The farther west you travel, the blander the city becomes until it fades into the western suburbs, the bedroom communities with little history and less character, where the city's mid-level managers, accountants and bureaucrats live. Connecting all of these areas is the city's public rail system, the CTA, commonly called the el.

The information in the following descriptions is general; more specific information (including statistics for non-player characters and creatures the player characters might encounter) appears below, under "Encounters and Encounter Areas."

The El

Chicago is known for its train system, the el or "L," which is short for "elevated train," even though two-thirds of the system's tracks are below ground. The el has more than 100 miles of track and carries passengers to all parts of the city, including both major airports and 40 suburbs.

The square elevation platforms on which the tracks sit are familiar sights all over the city. They're enormous, crude affairs of rusting metal that slice through neighborhoods like knives.

One of the first lessons new residents learn is to avoid the el at night. The el is fine during the day when it's the province of bankers, lawyers and secretaries on their way to and from work. By night, though, say after 9 P.M., the el steadily becomes a no-man's land where vagrants, gangs and criminals have free

reign. Teams of transit cops make their rounds of the trains, usually with dogs in tow sniffing for drugs or explosives, but any criminal who pays attention can figure out their routines and evade them with a little effort.

If the el system were a neighborhood, it would have the highest murder rate of any neighborhood in the city. Pushing victims onto the tracks as a train approaches is a popular form of murder in Chicago.

The Loop

The Loop is Chicago's downtown, where the really tall buildings are. It is the rich, gray urban core of the city, the center to which all other neighborhoods orient themselves.

The area is called the Loop because the el tracks make a big loop around the downtown area, effectively wrapping it in a rusty iron ribbon. All in all, the Loop encompasses one fairly solid square mile of skyscrapers, all of which try to grab a little more heaven than their neighbors. The Sears Tower, not long ago the world's tallest building, is here, as is the Hancock Building, presiding like royalty over Chicago's skyline.

The Loop is ultimately a place of cold, hard commerce. It's a place where winning is paramount, and success means reaping the biggest profits — and it does a fine job. Chicago's economic side began life with meatpacking and agribusiness, but it has long since evolved other interests: advertising, banking, aerospace and many other business ventures. These efforts supply vast sums of cash to CEOs, presidents and executive vice presidents, making them some of the wealthiest people in the country.

The Chicago River

Flowing through the heart of the Loop is the Chicago River, perhaps the most tainted and unnatural waterway in the United States (aside from, now, the Mississippi; see Chapter 10). The twisted, slow-moving Chicago River has branches and tendrils meandering all through the Chicago area, including the North Branch, the South Branch and the Main Stem. The modern Chicago River also incorporates 52 miles of constructed waterway.

Navy Pier

Jutting out into Lake Michigan is Navy Pier, a tourist trap of international proportions. If people see only one thing in Chicago, it's likely to be the Pier and its exhibition halls, museums, theaters and mall stores. The big advantage of Navy Pier is that nothing really ever happens there. Hundreds of cops work tirelessly to see to that. Navy Pier is entirely sterile and devoid of substance, like one big real-world episode of Sesame Street, a Potemkin village set up by the Chicago Chamber of Commerce to assure small-town tourists that cities aren't the scary, filthy places they've always heard about. Instead, people get to stroll arm-in-arm by the big ships that are moored here, licking ice cream cones and feeling, probably for the only time in their lives, as if they're in a Norman Rockwell painting.

The South Side

Once, in the 20th century's early decades, the South Side was Chicago's affluent core, full of the conspicuously rich strolling down its avenues and boulevards in front of lavish Victorian row houses. Sixty years of steady decline have brought drastic change. Today the South Side is composed of several square miles of gang-infested ghettos. If someone were looking for a handy one-word descriptor for the area, "squalid" works nicely, as does "dangerous." All that's left of the South Side's rich heritage is street after street of beautiful stone Victorian homes that have fallen into graceless ruin. These once-beautiful homes are now rat-infested, rundown and abandoned. Many of these have already been deemed dangerous and demolished (because they're collapsing or for other, less explicit reasons), and these places have been the setting for many, many crimes, from theft and extortion to rape and murder.

A good 70% of Chicago's murder rate gets racked up in the South Side. To most Chicagoans, this statistic means "stay out." To criminals, it means "come here to do your dirty work." The South Side is a playground for the desperate and malicious. Missing persons, when they're carefully chosen, aren't missed down here for a long time, and can easily go unmissed. Unless circumstances insist otherwise, the cops are likely to attribute most South Side deaths to one of four categories: drug deals gone bad, gang violence, poor pimp-whore relations or domestic disputes gone too far.

The farther south and west you go in the South Side, the worse things get. The farthest southwest neighborhood is Riverdale, and it's so polluted from the heavy industry of the early 20th century that it's no longer safe to live there, although the desperately poor still do.

The squalor isn't absolute, evenly divided or inescapable. Small, manicured neighborhoods exist on the Near South Side that are bastions of civility, order and commerce within the larger blightscape of the South Side. The neighborhoods just south of the Loop are rapidly becoming chic, and many have made the transition from dangerous to edgy to hip in record time. Other neighborhoods in the area, such as Bronzeville and SoLo (South Loop), have developed stable commercial districts and are showing signs of making a comeback. Farther South, the University of Chicago and the surrounding Hyde Park comprise another island of sanity, though the nearby ghettos force a constant, low-grade tension on the residents.

The farther south you travel, the worse it gets, and Chicago's south suburbs are truly nasty places — all the way to Gary, Indiana. If the Loop is Chicago's premier setting for world-class business transactions, the south suburbs are the place to go for the under-the-table, hush-hush deals. Whatever evil you need committed, there's someone down here desperate, hungry or strung-out enough to do it — for the right price, of course. And the right price isn't always measured in dollars.

The North Side

North of the Loop is a mile-wide border running up Lake Michigan to Chicago's northern limits. This busy expanse of land is where much of Chicago's life (and nightlife) takes place. Much of this area is densely populated with residential communities linked by well-lighted commercial strips. In the several large neighborhoods crammed into this area is Chicago's primary concentration of up-and-coming 20-somethings, bohemian enclaves, young families and established yuppies. This is where they

work and play, drink and party, live and breed. There are some who say that while the Loop is the center of Chicago's financial existence, the North Side is the center of Chicago's *life*.

As you continue moving up the coast, the real North Side gives way to even more affluent suburbs. These are the places of manicured lawns and white-washed mansions, the homes of CEOs, doctors, lawyers and trophy wives. Northwestern University is here, too, boasting a reputation as one of the finest — and most expensive — schools in the nation.

Chicago and the Paranormal

Not all is as it seems in Chicago. Vampires, werewolves, mages and demons occupy its back alleyways, nightclubs and businesses. The Nightmare Wave has created some particularly bizarre locations in the greater Chicago area, keeping a number of IDA agents busy.

The Chicago Metropolitan Area includes almost 10 million individuals. The population numbers in the descriptions below apply to the Chicago Metropolitan area; to determine the number actually within the city limits, you might divide the figure by 5 to come up with an approximate population.

The Awakened are by far the most populous of Chicago's shadow cultures, though they still constitute less than 1% of Chicago's population. The other paranormal groups— demons, mages, vampires and werewolves — together have a population about equal to that of the Awakened. Demons are *much* rarer than the other varieties.

Some of these paranormals have broken from the Iconnu's control; some even fight against the Iconnu. This fact means that the Awakened and their allies outnumber their enemies. However, the conflict is not nearly so simple; most of the Awakened have no knowledge of their powers, their importance or the danger they're in, and so are easy pickings for the Iconnu's agents. The Awakened population declines every day — though the IDA fights a losing battle to Awaken more people and increase their number. In truth, the Unbidden servants outnumber those who fight them.

Chicago's boardrooms have had an influx of the supernatural lately, as most characters realize that finances are an easy path to power. Demons, vampires and mages all have their hands in corporate power struggles, making the population of the paranormal much higher in these circles than in the city as a whole — perhaps as much as 10% or 20%. For the most part, the paranormals are aware that their fellow paranormals battle against them for monetary control, and the struggles among businesses (and their executives) have become much stranger over the past year.

The information in the following descriptions is general; some of these locations are described more fully and with greater detail (including additional statistics for non-player characters and creatures the player characters might encounter) below, under "Encounters and Encounter Areas."

The Awakened

Number: Unknown; perhaps 150,000

Headquarters: None

Some Important Characters: Roger Delany and Anna Volchenko, leaders of the Nine Choirs

Chicago's Awakened tend to be more aware of their predicament than Awakened elsewhere — or are terminally asleep. The Intrusion Defense Agency does its best to discover Awakened and alert them to both their danger and their importance; the Iconnu's various agents do *their* best to discover the Awakened and rip out their organs. The Iconnu's servants have slain approximately 2,000 Awakened in Chicago; most of these fell in the first few months after the Intrusion. Chicago's records show a spike in murder and unexplained deaths during that time, but so much was happening in the city and in the nation that no one paid too much heed to it.

The IDA has discovered 3,000 Willful Ones in Chicago. About half of these — those the IDA deems able to cope with the knowledge and the danger both psychologically and physically — the IDA has informed of the truth. Many Awakened who listen to the IDA (and believe them) join forces, providing a much-needed influx of new agents.

The Awakened who can't handle the truth are both a liability and a resource for the IDA. The IDA maintains its best surveillance on the unknowing Awakened, but the agency's numbers are too small to provide the constant vigil the agency would like. The IDA knows that these poor souls are targets for the Iconnu's agents — but they are also people who keep the world from collapsing.

Based on what the IDA knows of Awakened around the globe (which is some, but not as much as it would like), the IDA estimates that about 150,000 Awakened reside in the Chicago area — which means the agency has yet to find a huge number of them.

The IDA's job has been more difficult lately, for some of the Iconnu's agents — possibly under the leadership of a canny demon — have realized that the agency keeps tabs on some Awakened. IDA agents must be especially cautious when on their surveillance systems; in a number of cases, monsters ripped the unfortunate Awakened to shreds shortly after the agents left. The IDA is considering moving all of the Willful Ones the agency can find to safer areas, but doing so would cause a stir in the community.

The Awakened whom the IDA have yet to discover fall into several categories. Most feel that something is "different" now, but they do not know what. Some feel a sense of power. Some experience peculiar sensations when they pass certain areas or see certain "people." However, they do not know what these things mean, and the majority simply live their lives as they always have — though they spend more time looking over their shoulders and into shadows, as does every citizen of Chicago. They are managers, gas station attendants, students and debutantes. They are mostly alone, unaware of their importance or the threat to their lives — but a few are *not* alone.

The Nine Choirs

Anna Volchenko was a Russian immigrant living illegally in Chicago, making her living as a waitress. Ten months ago, she realized something was special about her when she felt a strange tickle in the back of her mind every time she passed a certain convenience store. She'd never felt that way before, and the store seemed a bit darker and more strangely proportioned that it had in the past. She mentioned her feelings to her friend Roger Delany, who nodded in pretended understanding and went on his way . . . and had a similar experience when he passed the same convenience store, just to *see*. It was exactly as Anna had said. The experience unnerved Roger. Shaking, he rang Anna's doorbell at three in the morning, and together they walked to that convenience store. The feeling was stronger than ever, and the two resolved to learn what they could of their newfound power. If the two of them could feel this, if they were special in this way, others must be as well. They resolved to find these others.

They began looking closely at everyone they encountered, especially around that convenient store. Due to this scrutiny, a couple of months after their discovery, Anna and Roger noted the strange behavior of their local Chinese food deliveryman. They followed him to his house after a particularly suspicious delivery, hoping to find another individual like them. What they found instead was a newly born werewolf, attempting to sort himself out.

Though the werewolf didn't quite know what was happening to him, his instincts kicked in when he noticed two forms skulking around his house.

Fortunately, Anna carried Mace. After a battle that raged around the house for several minutes, she disabled the werewolf, and Roger killed it with a wood axe.

They looked at each other. They realized that their lives — the world — was different now. Not only were they somehow special, but *beasts* now inhabited the bodies of humans. Maybe they had done so all along.

Anna and Roger were both Roman Catholic, and after their battle with the werewolf, religion colored their thoughts. The night after the clash, Anna claimed to have had an epiphany in which she discovered that she and Roger were repositories of angelic power. They were chosen as God's soldiers, empowered on Earth to battle the forces of Lucifer — and they had already defeated one of his soldiers.

The two were careful, but over time, they found others like them. Calling themselves the Nine Choirs in reference to the mythological organization of angels, Anna and Roger's group now numbers more than 200 Awakened.

In addition to being a Roman Catholic and an illegal immigrant, Anna was also a communist, and so has had a great deal of experience keeping her activities and meetings secret. These skills now serve her well. The Nine Choirs has an elaborate system of secrets and rituals — handshakes, code words, gestures — to communicate and ensure that no one infiltrates their organization. They are especially wary of Lucifer's agents sneaking in and discovering them.

The Nine Choirs come from many different ways of life, from bag lady to millionaire. They know about the Intrusion Defense Agency, but want nothing to do with it. Anna is suspicious of the U.S. government, plus the agency works *with* the Devil's children, mistakenly believing that some vampires and werewolves would turn on their infernal master. Truly, demons and devils have tongues of honey.

"The only good werewolf is a dead werewolf. But you've got to know what you're doing to get them there."
—Anna Volchenko, Nine Choirs

The IDA, in turn, is aware of the Nine Choirs and has made several overtures to bring the lot of them into the agency. When the Nine Choirs refused for the third time, the IDA gave up, leaving a standing offer that the Choirs are always welcome to join the IDA or come to the agency if they need help or protection. Theresa Fitzsimons, head of the IDA in Chicago, is disgusted with the Nine Choirs and refuses to waste any more time or resources on them. They, after all, are not the enemy.

In some ways, the Nine Choirs is what the IDA would be if it had only a couple of hundred members, all of which were Awakened. The Nine Choirs seek knowledge about their enemies, and that was one item they *did* accept from the IDA. The Choirs don't believe all that bunk about the "Iconnu" (though some believe that the Iconnu are demon lords in Lucifer's service), and they have their suspicions about the origins of vampires, mages and all the rest, but the Nine Choirs *do* possess a great deal of IDA-gathered information on these creatures. The Nine Choirs know how to fight vampires; they know the weaknesses of werewolves, the powers of mages and the nature of demons.

Typical Nine Choirs Member: Init +3, Spd 30 ft.; hp 33, Def 15, touch 15, flat-footed 13; +7 ranged (2d6, auto pistol) or +5 ranged (3d6, auto pistol double tap).

Nine Choirs Member, Awakened 3: CR 6; Medium human; HD 6d8+6, hp 33; Init +3; Spd 30 ft.; Def 15, touch 15, flat-footed 13; Base Atk +4; Grp +5; Atk/Full Atk +7 ranged (2d6, auto pistol) or +5 ranged (3d6, auto pistol double tap); SQ skill focus (Sense Motive), stalwart dedication*; SV Fort +6, Ref +5, Will +10; Str 10, Dex 14, Con 13, Int 14, Wis 18, Cha 10.

Skills (Intellect, Spirit) and Feats: Appraise +7, Concentration +6, Heal +9, Knowledge (occult) +15, Listen +11, Research +7, Search +7, Sense Motive +16, Spot +11; Great Fortitude, Semiautomatic Weapon Proficiency, Skill Focus (Knowledge (occult)), Skilled (Listen and Spot).

Humanity Points: 3

* The bonuses for stalwart dedication are already figured into the Nine Choirs member's statistics.

Demons

Number: Unknown; perhaps 8,000

Headquarters: None

Some Important Characters: Michael Mills, head of the Information Syndicate

Chicago is a demon's paradise. The city was already full of corruption, greed, deceit and doubletalk before the Intrusion; demons latch onto these facets with skill and vigor.

Though they are few in number, demons are in some of Chicago's most powerful positions. No one, not even other demons, knows how far their tendrils spread. Rumors at the IDA say demons control Chicago's two wealthiest businesses. They undoubtedly have many hands in organized crime, which was already in full bloom in the Windy City. The IDA believes that demons are now at the heads — or are powers behind the thrones — in almost every crime ring in Chicago.

Demons are the slipperiest creatures for the IDA to nail; they are also the rarest of the paranormal creatures now infesting Chicago. Thus, the IDA considers it no small victory when a demon

Player Characters and the Nine Choirs

The Nine Choirs is an ambiguous organization, and you have many opportunities for involving it in the player characters' lives.

Some player characters may wish to join the Nine Choirs. That's fine, as long as the player characters are all Awakened and pass through an inordinate number of "secret" initiation rituals. As members of the Nine Choirs, the player characters hunt the Iconnu's agents and avoid the IDA's bureaucracy. Running a campaign in which the player characters are all members of the Nine Choirs is a fine idea if everyone wants to play Awakened — especially militant Awakened.

The player characters might find themselves opposing the Nine Choirs. The society sees all demons, mages, werewolves and vampires as evil, so members of the Nine Choirs might attack the player characters, believing (correctly or not) that they serve the Iconnu. Alternatively, the player characters may have to protect innocent supernatural creatures from the Nine Choirs' wrath.

The Nine Choirs also offers opportunity for diplomacy and infiltration. The IDA might ask the player characters to convince the Nine Choirs to join the agency as a subbranch. Both the IDA and the Iconnu's agents would like to know more about the Nine Choirs and would pay good money to an informer on the inside.

falls — whether or not it was by the agency's hand. The IDA has several plots in the works to take down the few demons it has discovered, and numerous others to confirm suspected demons. The IDA is coming close to identifying a dozen or so demons that occupy the corporate boardrooms in Chicago's most lucrative businesses; in a couple of cases, the demons control the companies outright.

Chicago's demons have many weapons at their disposal. Networks of thralls and servants, both normal and supernatural, inform their demon masters of goings-on and serve as assassins, thugs, spies and general troubleshooters. Secrecy and misdirection also figure largely in demonic arsenals; demons do not reveal themselves unless they must. Perhaps the most powerful weapon at the demons' disposal is money, which in Chicago can buy anything.

Due to demons' nature, many have multiple identities and thus run a variety of tangled plots.

The Information Syndicate

If anyone were aware of the truth, the world could take comfort in the fact that one of the most powerful demons in Chicago is not in service to the Iconnu. However, it is certainly not their enemy, either.

This demon goes by many names, as all demons do, but in its preferred disguise, he is Michael Mills: a solid man in his late 30s, with a friendly face and a firm handshake.

The Michael Mills demon is addicted to money. He loves the things it can buy, the foremost of which is power over others. He lords this power in any way he can: being chauffeured to places in fancy cars, kicking everyone out of a restaurant because he wants "complete privacy," dropping in to outbid homebuyers just as their offer is about to go through and similar petty tactics. He takes particular pleasure in bringing people up to his penthouse — often prostitutes, but anyone goes if he offers her enough money — and forcing them to perform progressively more degrading acts for increasing sums of money until they are left with nothing but disgust at themselves. He may or may not pay them (or make them his thralls) when it's all over. He has no reputation to maintain, after all — he can become someone else whenever he wishes.

To acquire his wealth, Michael started and leads the largest information network in Chicago. Hundreds, if not thousands, of people work for him, from drug-pushers to fellow supernatural creatures. They work for him because he rewards them — with cash and whatever forms of debauchery they enjoy — and because those who betray him die particularly gruesome deaths, which he captures on digital video and then circulates.

Anyone can go to Michael's Information Syndicate, and many people — and other creatures — do. The Syndicate's specialty is the paranormal, since that's currently a hot sector for people with money. The Information Syndicate also knows just about everything about important people, from when the CEO eats his breakfast to what the vice president was doing on his vacation.

Player Characters and the Information Syndicate

Anyone who needs information goes to the Information Syndicate, and the player characters might fall into this category at various points in their career. They might chafe at doing so, considering that the organization is undoubtedly vile and rumors say an evil supernatural creature runs it, but their options are limited. The Syndicate's agents might demand especially high prices or dubious services in exchange, knowing how the player characters would squirm at the price.

The player characters have other options for getting involved with the Information Syndicate as well. The Syndicate offers fine rewards for those who supply it with new information; if the player characters are particularly mercenary, they could line their pockets by spying and infiltrating for Michael Mills. On the other hand, they might seek to dismantle the Syndicate, or destroy Mills and take his place at the organization's head. Perhaps they are concerned with a particular individual who is in thrall to the demon.

The police, the IDA and the Iconnu's various agents all go to the Information Syndicate and pay dearly for its knowledge. A request goes through one of Michael's various stooges and makes its way to him. Michael then searches through his vast information stash, which is stored on more than a dozen hard drives and includes images, videos, audio files and the like. The information then filters, on a CD in a sealed envelope, back to the one who made the request by any of a variety of means.

The Information Syndicate is accurate and fast, but it is also expensive. Though the fact that Michael Mills runs the Syndicate is a secret, and the fact that he is a demon is an even bigger secret, rumors say that a paranormal creature heads the organization, which makes the IDA loathe to go to it for help. The Iconnu's agents currently attempt to determine the identity of the creature behind the Syndicate, hoping they can convince him to do a favor for them, but to no avail.

"I like money. I like it for what it can get me. And I just like it for its own sake."
— Michael Mills, Information Syndicate

Mages

Number: Unknown; perhaps 60,000

Headquarters: None

Some Important Characters: Kelly Frost, Hierarch of Enchanters; the Preacher, Secret Master of the Strangers; Chariot and Justice, members of the Bastion's Arcanum; Jason Green, head of the Pentagram

Mages in Chicago are a wild card force in an already chaotic city. More than 60,000 dwell in Chicago, and most of these hold no allegiance to either the Iconnu or those who fight them — most mages use their power for whatever they like. As a group, they do not take sides in the shadow war, and thus are an unreliable source of power you might find aimed at you or, if you're lucky, at your enemies.

Most who know about the secret conflict in Chicago believe that mages are the most powerful force within it — powerful, but not unified. The demons are not plentiful enough to have similar pull, the vampires are often too distracted by their own needs and wants, the werewolves are too simple and the Awakened too unaware; mages are only one of these things: similar to vampires, mages are distracted by their own desires. When a mages tries to get what he wants, the ripples spread out much further than when a vampire does the same.

Magic runs as a deep and strong undercurrent in Chicago. In addition, some of the most powerful mages in the world — powerful both in terms of sheer magical puissance and in influence — reside in Chicago. Some paranormals have taken to calling it the City of Magic for this reason.

Many of Chicago's mages use their power to further personal goals. For a good number, this means attaining money, and they do so in a variety of ways. Some subtle, kindly mages use their magic merely to brighten a few of Chicago's window displays. Others use magic to draw customers into their shops; some approach people on the street and compel them to buy things, from cell phones to clumps of dirt. Others use the less subtle means of magically coercing people into giving them money. Mages can control minds or implant suggestions, or they might use magic for blackmail or extortion. Many mages, especially those who were criminals before the Intrusion, simply become burglars and thieves, casting spells to overcome guards and security systems and to slip away from pursuit — or lay the blame elsewhere.

Other mages use their power to achieve different ends. If they have the proper knowledge, a mage can get almost anything he wants: sex, drugs, the love of his high school sweetheart, the body he always wanted, revenge against the jerk who rear-ended him, tickets to the Blink 182 show and whatever else he can imagine.

Mages invariably use magic to ease their way to wherever they like to be. Most have learned to be subtle in their endeavors; those who were too overt drew unwanted attention and are now no longer around or have changed their ways.

Kelly Frost

Perhaps Chicago's most important mage is Kelly Frost — indeed, Kelly is one of the most important mages in the world. Once a dabbler in the occult specializing in palm reading, Tarot and psychic speeches over the phone, Kelly has become something more. She has become the world's foremost Enchanter. She is one of the Hierarchs, whom all mages acknowledge as the leaders of their Paths.

Though Kelly has great power, she rarely uses it. She spends her time researching and practicing magic, hoping to unlock more of its secrets. All other concerns are but background noise compared to the symphony of her true passion. Mages occasionally approach her home, a middle class house in the North Side, for advice or to share information. She receives them with a friendly smile, but always seems distracted. The few creatures who have thought to destroy her either never return from her house or become some of her staunchest defenders.

Kelly Frost*: Init +5, Spd 30 ft.; ♥ hp 81, Def 17, touch 17, flat-footed 16; ongoing spells; 🔫 Atk +9 melee (1d3 nonlethal, unarmed strike), Full Atk +9/+4 melee (1d3 nonlethal, unarmed strike); gnosis, spells (411 components).

Kelly Frost, Mage (Enchanter) 15:* CR 18; Medium human; HD 18d6+18, hp 81; Init +5; Spd 30 ft.; Def 17, touch 17, flat-footed 16; Base Atk +9; Grp +9; Atk +8 melee (1d3–1 nonlethal, unarmed strike); Full Atk +8/+3 melee (1d3–1 nonlethal, unarmed strike); SA spells; SQ ongoing spells (various); SV Fort +8, Ref +11, Will +13; Str 8, Dex 12, Con 10, Int 24, Wis 14, Cha 13.

Skills (Intellect) and Feats: Concentration +21, Knowledge (occult) +30, Knowledge (popular culture) +23, Listen +22, Research +28, Search +26, Sense Motive +21, Spellcraft +33, Spot +20; Great Fortitude, Improved Initiative, Lightning Reflexes, Skill Focus (Spellcraft), Skilled (Knowledge (occult) and Spellcraft), Toughness.

Gnosis: Component Focus (Divination), Curse Magic, Dutiful Attention, Extra Components, Occultation, Practiced Quickening, Rune Scribe, Sympathist.

Components: 411

* These statistics represent Kelly without bonuses from spells; she usually has half a dozen ongoing spells of various sorts (defensive, preemptive and the like) on her person.

The Strangers in Chicago

The Strangers have a large presence in Chicago; about 20,000 of Chicago's mages are Strangers. They see themselves as the Unbidden's *true* servants, the ones who hold the vision of what the Iconnu would like to see happen to the world. The Strangers believe that they understand what demons, vampires and werewolves, tied too closely to the Iconnu, cannot. The Strangers occasionally make use of these other paranormals, but prefer to trust to their own.

The Strangers' mission is to topple the pillars of the world: destroy the Awakened. The Strangers' magic is a potent weapon to do so, and the IDA and similar forces despair of protecting the Willful Ones. Chicago's Strangers are powerful, organized and driven; rumors say that one of the Strangers' mysterious leaders, a Secret Master, dwells in Chicago. The Strangers call this individual the Preacher, seeing him — or her or it, no one knows — as the vessel through which the will of the Unbidden flows. The Preacher never communicates directly with his followers, but rather sends them messages in Chicago's independent newspapers, graffiti on the South Side's brick walls, instructions in Chinatown's fortune cookies and even light-dark codes in the windows of Chicago's office buildings.

The Strangers are the greatest threat to Chicago's Awakened. Of course, the Bastion opposes the Strangers at every turn.

The Bastion in Chicago

The Bastion has a presence in Chicago, but its numbers are small compared to both unaffiliated mages and the Strangers: no more than 10,000. A hefty number, but nowhere near what they need. Most Bastion mages in Chicago are occupied with attempting to preempt the Strangers' movements — a strategy that irks some, who feel the Bastion needs to *act* rather than *react*. The Bastion attempts to intercept and interpret the Strangers' Secret Master's messages, but the codes are complex and the methods of delivery many. Still, the Bastion confronts the Strangers occasionally, and at least once a month, the newspapers report new outbreaks of gang warfare, military tests, unexplained phenomena and other events that translate to "magic battles" for those in the know.

Chicago is vital to the Bastion's efforts. The Strangers here are strong, and some of their plots that originate in Chicago reach across the nation. To oppose the Preacher and his followers, two members of the Bastion's Arcanum live in the city — the mage holding the tarot of the Chariot and the mage holding the tarot of Justice. Just as the Secret Masters, these mages keep their identities hidden, so the other Bastion mages simply refer to these two as Chariot and Justice. They communicate with their followers via secret messages and intermediaries and, some believe, directly, though cloaked in magical disguises. Their directives often seem pointless, but when combined with other mages' missions and over the course of time, reveal themselves as complex plots that foil the Strangers. Some say Chariot and Justice spend their time searching for clues to the Preacher's identity, planning to find and slay the Stranger master.

Some Bastion mages take a more proactive effort against the Strangers — and against other enemies of the Awakened. These mages strike out and oppose these creatures directly, blasting them

apart with fire or melting their minds. These mages tend to have less discretion in their activities, and often invite police attention — or attention of a more dangerous sort. Other Bastion mages look at these members with wariness, but some admire their active stance.

The Pentagram

When the Iconnu Intruded into Earth's reality, some wannabe "mages" found that their spells actually worked. The old rituals of the Australian aborigines, the nature-based Wiccan rites and complicated Houdon curses actually bore fruit. In Chicago, most people attempting to practice "magic" were Satanists. When they discovered that they actually *could* cast spells, many of them fled back to their homes, shivering. Others quietly put their blasphemous tomes away and pretended as if nothing had happened. Many, though, embraced this new power. Not until after they discovered that other mages could also cast spells did they realize their success was due to some outside influence, rather than their faith or skill.

Many of these Satanists have joined forces and formed a group called the Pentagram, with membership at just over 100. Most of these mages have the same backgrounds as other Satanists; the only change is that they can actually accomplish spells. Most are young — many in their teens — and come from troubled pasts. For a good dozen of them, the first thing they did when they realized their power was to kill their parents. Most dress in Goth or punk attire, with black clothing, eye shadow, cloaks, chrome jewelry and the like.

Though young and inexperienced, the Pentagram is not stupid. A deal of research and months of observation and experimentation has convinced them that their power comes not from the Devil or even these "ungods" they've heard some people talking about; rather, it is a side effect of the disaster in the central United States. Some remain Devil-worshipers, but most have switched their allegiance solely to themselves, their power and the Pentagram.

The Pentagram doesn't have a clear goal; right now, its members mostly experiment to see what their magic can accomplish and use their spells to attain personal desires. They are almost all Warlocks, and a good number are personality mages. Many experiment on each other; magically coercing their fellows into sexual acts is particularly popular. The organization resembles an adolescent group with shared interests — the cast and crew of a large high school play, for example, or a sports team, or a fraternity or sorority. The members associate out of camaraderie and shared interests rather than out of a coherent goal.

The Pentagram's leader is Jason Green, a 17-year-old who walks around in felt top hats and black trench coats. Unsurprisingly, the Pentagram is cliquish, and Jason's three friends Stacey Allen, Mitch Roberts and Tiffany "Tiff" McCallister make up a sort of ruling cabinet. The four are a bit older than most of the other members and, they hope, more mature. They try to maintain a direction for the group; Jason excelled in school, despite his rebellious nature, and organizes the group's findings. He wants the Pentagram to become a powerful force in Chicago, but doesn't know how to go about doing so.

The Pentagram is only marginally attached to mage society. Most of Chicago's other mages view the Pentagram with amusement tinged with caution: they are a bunch of punk kids with missile launchers. The Pentagram knows that plenty of other mages exist, and even knows of the Strangers and the Bastion — though information does not percolate well through the group. For the most part, the Pentagram operates on its own, struggling along and, like the bulk of its membership, not really knowing what it's trying to do.

Player Characters and the Pentagram

Since the Pentagram doesn't have a clear goal, the player characters might interact with it in numerous ways. They might offer the group direction, approaching Jason Green with information (or something else of value) if he directs the Pentagram to accomplish something for the player characters. The player characters might clash with the Pentagram, as the kids are less than discreet about how and on whom they perform their experiments. The player characters may also deal with the Pentagram diplomatically, hoping to convince them to take sides in the war against the Unbidden.

Typical Pentagram Mage*: Init +1, Spd 30 ft.; hp 33, Def 13, touch 13, flat-footed 12; Atk/Full Atk +5 ranged (1d10, zip gun); gnosis, spells (102 components).

*Pentagram Member, Mage (Warlock) 3**: CR 6; Medium human; HD 6d6+12, hp 33; Init +1; Spd 30 ft.; Def 13, touch 13, flat-footed 12; Base Atk +3; Grp +4; Atk/Full Atk +5 ranged (1d10, zip gun); SA spells; SV Fort +3, Ref +3, Will +5; Str 13, Dex 12, Con 13, Int 10, Wis 10, Cha 18†.

† This Pentagram member is a personality mage — he uses his Charisma modifier instead of his Intelligence modifier for spells and magic.

Skills (Spirit) and Feats: Concentration +8, Knowledge (occult) +7, Listen +3, Research +3, Search +3, Sense Motive +3, Spellcraft +11, Spot +3; Skill Focus (Spellcraft), Toughness, Weapon Focus (zip gun).

Gnosis: Component Focus (Damage), Summoner (demon).

Components: 102

* These statistics represent a Pentagram mage without bonuses from spells; if they expect trouble, they usually have a couple of defensive spells active (Unliving Vigor is popular, as is Armor).

The Intrusion Defense Agency

Number: About 1,000 field agents and 2,000 support personnel

Headquarters: The Chicago IDA Field Office (described below under "Encounter and Encounter Areas")

The IDA's Bounty

The Intrusion Defense Agency knows that some individuals — especially supernatural individuals — are willing to fight against the Iconnu's servants but, for one reason or another, do not wish to join the IDA. Although the IDA deputy directors would prefer to have such characters under their direct control, they are happy for whatever help they can get. Occasionally they join forces or provide other aid to these vigilantes.

In Chicago, the IDA is experimenting with a new program: the agency pays a bounty for destroyed Iconnu agents. The exact rules and procedures are up in the air, but the IDA demands proof of the being's defeat (often a head or body). The IDA also asks for proof that the victim was working for the Unbidden, though, in practice, the IDA pays for any paranormal creature it doesn't recognize as *not* serving the Iconnu.

Payment varies. The IDA has a set reward for vampires, werewolves and mages, and pays more for demons. The IDA pays for obscure, Nightmare-spawned monsters on an individual basis. The IDA also pays for information the agency does not already possess. Since the IDA is already strapped for resources, the bounty isn't exceptional, but sometimes it's enough to convince people to fight the good fight out of mercenary reasons, if not to save the world. Sometimes the IDA pays in material other than cash, as well.

In game terms, this bounty, and the IDA's other policies, mean that player characters might be able to procure illegal or dangerous resources they otherwise could not (such as rocket launchers and poison). It might also allow them some leeway when toting around illegal items; the IDA can deputize them, granting them a temporary license to wield machineguns (or whatever) "for public defense." The extent to which the IDA does this, and its leniency with this sort of thing, is up to you.

This bounty program is a secret one, and most outside the agency are unaware of its existence. (Chicago's police department would piss its pants over such measures.) However, the IDA ensures that important individuals know of the program, and the agency walks in with government bureaucracy if the Chicago PD attempts to step on the IDA's toes. It takes pains to spread the word among the few who battle the Iconnu (or might be willing to do so if given the proper inspiration) — especially the Awakened (including the Nine Choirs), the Broken, the Calm, rogue demons and mages of all stripes, especially those of the Bastion. The IDA doesn't keep the program secret from the Iconnu's servants, either; the IDA wants them to know they're in trouble.

Some Important Characters: Theresa Fitzsimmons, David Nguyen and Abigail O'Donnel, deputy directors; Baxter Love, Gareth, Sadhvi Iyer and Mephistopheles, field agents

The IDA's official headquarters is in Washington, but its de facto base of operations is in Chicago (see "Encounters and Encounter Areas," *IDA Field Office*, below, for specifics). The IDA places great emphasis on Chicago: it is by far the largest metropolis in the Haunted Lands, and its history of vice and complicated criminal networks make Chicago an excellent place for vampires, demons and other paranormal creatures to work their ill will. Chicago is an important city for the United States; to some degree, Washington believes that if the IDA can succeed here, it can succeed anywhere (though its use of "success" is ill-defined). In addition, Chicago has perhaps the largest concentration of paranormal creatures anywhere in the world. This large population means the IDA also deploys its largest force in the Windy City, both in an attempt to control the monsters and because this city seems the best place to learn more about them (with the possible exception of the Conflagration).

The IDA has about 1,000 field agents in Chicago, though that number is woefully low compared to the number of hostile vampires, werewolves, demons and mages running around. Unfortunately, the IDA is too new, and the requirements to be a field agent too high, for them to do much about the disparity. Still, the IDA desperately seeks recruits — though potential new agents must pass a variety of tests and navigate a forest of red tape before they can officially join. The IDA is paranoid that its enemies will infiltrate the organization. However, despite these precautions, high-ranking agents have a habit of "deputizing" helpful allies, making them honorary agents while the paperwork goes through.

IDA agents in Chicago work to counter the movements of vampires, werewolves, demons and mages loyal to the Iconnu. The IDA takes a dim view of paranormal creatures who consider themselves independent, and keep

The Player Characters as IDA Agents

Running a campaign in which the player characters are IDA agents is often a good idea, especially in Chicago. Many players enjoy the structure of being within an organization, and the IDA offers an excellent way to introduce the group to new adventures: their superior simply assigns them a mission. In addition, the player characters belong to a group in which they are free to display their paranormal nature — where, in fact, their paranormal nature is valued (if sometimes distrusted). The IDA also offers a convenient way to connect player characters of various types. The agency can simply assign a werewolf, vampire, mage and Awakened to the same team, and your campaign is ready to go.

an eye on such creatures in case they do anything to upset the peace. Almost 700 of the IDA's agents in Chicago are paranormal creatures themselves (mostly Awakened), and these agents all work in the field, using their expertise to preempt and defeat their kin on the other side.

Organization

In addition to its field agents, the IDA has a large number of administrators working to maintain the organization in Chicago and elsewhere. All information relevant to the Intrusion, the Nightmare Wave, magic, strange creatures or other paranormal (or possibly paranormal) activities pass through Chicago. Such reports are sometimes on their way to Washington and sometimes come from Washington. The IDA's director, Michael Duran, believes that any information the IDA might be able to use against the Iconnu's servants should enter the Chicago headquarters' databanks. As a result, Chicago's IDA agents are perhaps the best-informed people on the planet in regard to supernatural happenings.

Three deputy directors run the Chicago's IDA forces. Two, Abigail O'Donnel and David Nguyen, control the administrative aspects. Deputy Director Theresa Fitzsimmons is in charge of the field agents and officially in charge of the Chicago branch as a whole, making her perhaps the most influential individual in the entire IDA.

IDA field agents in Chicago usually work in teams of three to four. These groups are somewhat independent, given initiative to act on their own. Theresa expects them to fulfill the following missions, roughly in order of importance:

1) Stymie the works of the Iconnu's agents, hopefully by eliminating them.

2) Find and protect the Awakened and inform them of their importance.

3) Identify previously unknown paranormal creatures.

4) Gather information on the paranormal.

5) Perform damage control for paranormal disasters.

6) Catalogue Nightmare Wave effects.

7) Recruit new members, with a special emphasis on bringing supernatural beings (including the Awakened) into the fold.

8) Wake up normal humans, turning them into Awakened. IDA agents are to perform this "service" only on people they judge physically and psychologically able and willing to battle the Unbidden.

The IDA agents' job is obviously a big one. Often, Theresa and the other ranking field agents dole out more specific missions. These range from performing surveillance on a suspicious business executive to unraveling a demon's complex plot web to assassinating a powerful vampire.

Player Character IDA Agents

Player character IDA agents answer to Theresa Fitzsimmons. She makes intelligent use of all her resources, including fellow agents. She sends the player characters only on those missions she thinks appropriate for their talents and skill level. She might send a more experienced agent to guide them on their first few missions, and might assign another agent to the team if the party lacks a certain capability. When they first join her group, Theresa and the other agents keep a canny eye on the player characters and she sends them on one or two training-wheels missions; after the player characters prove themselves, she allows them more free rein.

Player character agents have limited access to the IDA's resources. Though the IDA is a branch of the government and has a large budget and high-tech equipment, the agency's resources are inadequate for its job and are spread thin. Thus, the agency cannot simply give the player characters anything they like. In general, you should simply use your best judgment to determine what the player characters can requisition; the more dangerous and important the mission is to the IDA, the more expensive (and illegal) are the items available. Handguns and phone taps are almost always okay, but the IDA is unlikely to dole out rocket launchers and flamethrowers unless it assigns the player characters to roast a nest of werewolves or something similar.

Theresa Fitzsimmons

Theresa Fitzsimmons is the de facto leader of the IDA in Chicago, making her one of the most powerful personages within that organization.

Background: Theresa comes from an influential family. Her mother was a senator (a Democrat from Massachusetts) for many years, and her father was Secretary of the Interior for eight years. Her family's prestige and influence allowed her to choose her career path, and her parents wanted her to get a government job. So Theresa joined the Central Intelligence Agency.

Theresa did well in the CIA, but her superiors were afraid of reprisals from her parents if they gave her dangerous undercover assignments. Theresa bounced among desk jobs for 10 years, gaining experience and skill and proving a natural at administration, but she was frustrated in her attempts to be in the field. Finally, she demanded a field mission or she'd quit the agency.

The CIA complied (having covertly cleared the assignment with her parents first), sending her to Iraq to gather intelligence. She did well, but the constant exposure to human brutality made her sick. After three years, she decided she'd had enough.

Returning to the States, Theresa resumed her administrative jobs at the CIA and rose higher and higher up the ladder. When the Intrusion came, she was a natural choice for her current position. The fact that her father, who had been visiting his brother in North Dakota, died in the event lends a personal edge to her determination. Theresa enjoys this assignment; she's much happier with a clear enemy than when she had to juggle various political interests.

Appearance: Theresa is a fit woman of about 40 years, with long, blonde hair and a narrow nose. She comes across as fairly compassionless and extremely serious. Everything is a crisis to her, but not because she overreacts — she ignores everything but crises. She dresses in stylish blazers and skirts, though she rarely takes the time to don makeup or jewelry these days.

Theresa: Init +1, Spd 30 ft.; ♥ hp 9, Def 11, touch 11, flat-footed 10; 🔫 Atk/Full Atk +1 melee (1d3 nonlethal, unarmed strike) or +2 ranged (2d6, auto pistol).

Theresa Fitzsimmons: CR 1/2; Medium humanoid (human); HD 2d8, hp 9; Init +1; Spd 30 ft.; Def 11, touch 11, flat-footed 10; Base Atk +1; Grp +1; Atk/Full Atk +1 melee (1d3 nonlethal, unarmed strike) or +2 ranged (2d6, auto pistol); SV Fort +1, Ref +4, Will +4; Str 10, Dex 12, Con 10, Int 16, Wis 14, Cha 14.

Skills and Feats: Computer Use +8, Diplomacy +9, Knowledge (occult) +10, Research +8, Sense Motive +7; Iron Will, Skilled (Diplomacy and Knowledge (occult)).

Nightmare Sites

Chicago is in the Haunted Lands, which means the city feels the Nightmare Wave's effects in subtle ways. Citizens now consider numerous locations around the metropolis haunted, and these places display strange properties that highlight the truth of these beliefs. Trees weep blood, manholes swallow stray animals and screaming human faces adorn brick walls. Part of the IDA's job is to help ensure that these places don't pose a threat for Chicago's citizens and don't scare them too badly; however, as thinly stretched as the IDA is, it has time to control only those areas that are overtly deadly. Most people know to avoid these places, anyway.

Chicago has long been a city of rumor and ghost stories, and in some locations, the Nightmare Wave has made these tales reality. Ghostly visions haunt those who stray near the post office where a murderer's mansion once stood. "Decorative" Egyptian hieroglyphics become alive and dance strange rituals across the walls. Pale shapes move in darkened window panes.

The prevalence of Nightmare Sites — and the predations of werewolves, vampires and the like — mean that Chicago's citizens are more wary than normal. Though they try to go about their lives as normal, they find themselves returning home before dark and double-checking the bolts. Young people go out in large groups rather than alone. The stories are varied — those you hear from your friends as well as those on television and in the newspaper. The Internet brims with tales of the paranormal in Chicago, and numerous sites attempt to catalogue the events and places and, in some cases, link them to paranormal rumors across the globe. Rare is the Chicagoan who doesn't know that *something's not right anymore*, and a good number have discreetly packed their bags and left town.

Some specific Nightmare Sites are described below, under "Encounters and Encounter Areas."

Vampires

Number: Unknown; perhaps 40,000

Headquarters: Nominally Jonathan Stark's penthouse apartment in the Gold Coast.

Some Important Characters: Jonathan Stark, Prince of Chicago

Just as the other paranormal creatures, vampires thrive in Chicago. Many flock to the South Side, where feeding is plentiful, their fear spreads easily and one more missing person might raise eyebrows but doesn't invite thorough police attention. The ghettos also provide familiar ground for vampires' wicked souls. Since vampires can pass for humans more easily than werewolves can, and have more self-control, many vampires also inhabit more affluent neighborhoods.

Chicago offers such rich ground for vampires that many of them forget the Covenant. A higher percentage of Broken live in Chicago than elsewhere. Though they feel no connection to the Iconnu, the Broken do not fight against the Iconnu, either. The vampires spend their days in blood-drinking debauchery, preying upon the poor and forgotten. Many vampires hunt in Chicago's nightclubs, where they

don't kill their victims, but rather leave them unconscious and in pain — when they wake up, the symptoms are almost identical to a hangover or the aftereffects of a drug binge.

Plenty of vampires *do* remain loyal to the Iconnu, though, and carry out their mission as spies and assassins. These vampires search for Chicago's Awakened and slay them when they find them — covertly, of course. Most vampires who flaunted their power have fallen by now, leaving only the canny and circumspect. When they find a target that is more heavily defended than the standard, sitting-duck Chicago citizen, they bring their information to their fellow vampires, who together organize an attack.

Chicago's vampires work with each other, having a society of some complexity. The criminal souls within them often chafe at authority and prefer independence, but they are creatures of two *human* souls, and humans are social animals. A vampire's feeding habits naturally invite suspicion, leading to power in numbers. In Chicago, with the increased presence of the IDA and other enemies, vampires find it even more valuable to work together.

Still, their society, such as it is, is far from flawless. Most vampires spend a great deal of time trying to gain power and territory or simply satisfying their thirst. However, they know in their blood that the Covenant is foremost.

Jonathan Stark, Lord of the Vampires

In the short year since vampires came to be, one has risen above the rest in the Chicago area. This is Jonathan Stark, perhaps the most powerful vampire in the city. He is certainly the most influential, having placed himself above and at the center of vampire society. Thousands of vampires answer to him, and numerous other supernatural creatures and a horde of humans also serve him. Stark maintains his kingdom through cunning, ruthlessness, connections, intimidation and simple manpower.

Stark calls himself the Prince of Chicago. He holds court in a penthouse apartment in the Gold Coast — one of Chicago's richest neighborhoods. Stark acquired the apartment when one of his latest victims "donated" it to him. Security surrounds Stark, as his power is making him more visible and therefore more vulnerable. Even the Chicago Police Department hears rumors of this "Prince of Chicago," supposedly the head of a large organized crime syndicate. The IDA knows of Stark's claims but does not know the whereabouts of his sanctum — and would probably be unable to penetrate it even if it did.

Loyal to the Iconnu, Stark's first priority is the Covenant. He considers himself one of the Unbidden's foremost servants. Though he recognizes their alien nature, he has convinced himself that the Iconnu intend to remake the world, and that Earth's new inhabitants will all be vampires, werewolves and demons. He believes that by organizing his forces to destroy the Awakened he not only accelerates the approach of this new world but also cements his place as one of its future rulers.

Deep inside, Stark realizes that his plans and beliefs might be wrong; that he is assigning human, comprehensible motives to beings that are inherently *in*comprehensible. Yet the pull of the Covenant is too strong for him to do anything else, and he must rationalize his actions somehow.

Player Characters and the Prince of the Vampires

Player characters have several potential reasons to become involved with the Prince of the vampires.

Perhaps the most obvious way in which the player characters might deal with Jonathan Stark is to oppose him. The threat he poses to the Awakened is one of the greatest in Chicago, eclipsed only by the Strangers, and eliminating him would be a solid blow against the Iconnu's agents. (Of course, other vampires would probably pick up the pieces of his kingdom, but his destruction would slow them down.) The IDA would love to have Stark's head on a platter and heart on a stake, though he is a big fish indeed. The agency might send particularly powerful groups against him. It also offers an enormous bounty for his elimination.

Yet player characters — especially those who do not work for the IDA — can approach Stark for other reasons. Stark is powerful and influential as a source of aid and resources. Even player characters who oppose the Iconnu might feel they have no choice but to go to Stark for aid. Perhaps he has access to a particular resource they cannot get anywhere else. Stark trades favors freely — though the services he asks in return are less than pleasant.

The player characters might request an audience with the Prince of the vampires to swear allegiance. He controls a sizeable portion of the supernatural creatures loyal to the Iconnu; if the player characters fall into this category, they might wish for a rich and powerful patron. Stark can offer missions and incentives to player characters who don't mind working to further the world's downfall. On the other hand, maybe the player characters just *pretend* to bend the knee to Stark as part of a larger plan

Stark sees vampires as the most effective agents to eliminate the Awakened, and uses them as such. Vampires are certainly powerful enough to slay individual humans and Awakened (especially Awakened who do not realize their potential), and their stealth keeps them from alerting the IDA or more mundane authorities. Vampires far outnumber Stark's other agents, with the possible exception of normal humans.

Stark has a number of werewolves in his network as well; though he sees them as loose cannons, they prove effective if he aims them properly. He thinks demons are too cunning for their own good, but his kingdom couldn't function without the dozen of them that oversee the connections and work plots. Stark's most important lieutenant is a demon.

Mages are not part of Stark's image of the upcoming utopia, so he is suspicious of them. Nevertheless, he can't ignore that they have their usefulness, and so he employs a few.

Jonathan Stark

Jonathan Stark, the Prince of Chicago, rules much of the city's vampire population.

Background: Dwight Blackwell was a certified public accountant at a giant accounting firm in the Loop. He had a wife and one son, who was in high school. His life was comfortable, but bland and routine. Every weekday he went to work at eight, left at six, fought traffic until arriving home at seven, ate dinner, then watched a couple of hours of television before going to bed and repeating the same schedule the next day. On weekends, he played golf, went out with his wife or puttered in his vegetable garden.

Jonathan Stark was a minor lord in England in the 1300s. He was a cruel and vengeful man who exploited his power, taking pleasure in taxing his serfs and watching them starve while he sat by the fire in his small castle. Unfortunately for his serfs, the times were just right for that sort of despot, and Stark lived to the ripe old age of 62 before dying of syphilis.

One year ago, Stark's soul arrived on earth and obliterated Dwight Blackwell almost entirely.

The current Jonathan Stark remains power hungry and corrupt, but also retains Dwight's knowledge of the modern world, general intelligence and understanding of finance. Stark assimilated the current situation quickly, saw the road he must take to regain some measure of his old power and took it. His rise through the vampire ranks was swift, not in the least because he enjoyed his newfound undead might and practiced his skills whenever he got the chance.

Appearance: Dwight's once-pudgy body is now slender; his once-plump cheeks hollow. Stark's black hair, gray at the temples, is slicked back in a style he remembers from his former life. He dresses in black suits with red ties — the modern equivalent of a lord's robes. Knickknacks from the Dark Ages fill his residence, and his understandable interest in English history means his rooms brim with books on the subject.

Jonathan Stark: Init +6, Spd 30 ft.; ♥ hp 78, Def 21, touch 21, flat-footed 19; Evasion, Uncanny Dodge; Disciplines (Resilience), vampire traits; Atk +11 melee (1d4+3, bite) or +11 ranged (2d6, auto pistol); Full Atk +11 melee (1d4+3, bite) or +11/+6 ranged (2d6, auto pistol); Sneak Attack +1d6; Disciplines (Command DC 25, Mesmerize DC 25); 31 max Vitae, 3 Vitae/round.

Jonathan Stark, Vampire (Ventrue) 9: CR 12; Medium human (vampire); HD 12d8+24, hp 78; Init +6; Spd 30 ft.; Def 21, touch 21, flat-footed 19; Base Atk +9; Grp +9; Atk +11 melee (1d4+3, bite) or +11 ranged (2d6, auto pistol); Full Atk +11 melee (1d4+3, bite) or +11/+6 ranged (2d6, auto pistol); SA Disciplines; SQ vampire traits; SV Fort +10, Ref +10, Will +11; Str 14, Dex 15, Con 15, Int 17, Wis 16, Cha 16.

Skills (Spirit) and Feats: Appraise +6, Bluff +18, Concentration +5, Diplomacy +18, Gather Information +6, Intimidate +18, Knowledge (occult) +18, Knowledge (streetwise) +10, Research +6, Sense Motive +11; Evasion, Improved Initiative, Skilled (Diplomacy and Sense Motive), Sneak Attack, Uncanny Dodge.

Disciplines: Blood Potency (x2), Command, Mesmerize, Resilience.

Vitae: 31 max; 3/round

Werewolves

Number: Unknown; perhaps 30,000

Headquarters: None

Some Important Characters: Bruno Callsworth, head of the Calm-Killers

Chicago news agencies have reported an increase in violent murders in the past year. Since these reports coincide with other reports of violence, death and general weirdness, few people pay the stories much special attention — but those who do discover a disturbing trend. The slain individuals appear to have been torn apart by large, ravenous animals. People are whispering the word "werewolf" more and more these days (along with other words such as "vampire" and "magic"), and even Lieutenant Andrew Schumacher, the homicide detective tasked with investigating this particular strain of murders, now believes the rumors.

Just as Chicago's vampires, the city's werewolves are circumspect in their predations. Those who truly could not control themselves met early deaths at the hands of the IDA or more conventional forces. Newspaper reports speak of a number of "large animals, which presumably migrated from Canada," that were slain over the course of a few months, starting about a year ago. Of course, a good percentage of these "dead" werewolves picked themselves up sometime later and fled back into the concrete jungle, a bit wiser for the experience.

Most of Chicago's werewolves live in the South Side. These neighborhoods allow them to indulge their instincts with relative impunity; murders occurred often in the ghettos before the Intrusion, and the police have their hands full with all sorts of other problems.

The werewolves' instincts tell them to hunt and kill, and so they do. They take the easy kills, the ones that won't invite much suspicion: hikers in the Palos Forest Preserve. Vagrants. The homeless. Chicago's streets were always dangerous; now, they are deadly.

The Calm-Killers

The Calm-Killers is a pack of six werewolves who feel the Iconnu's instincts strongly, but bend them to their own purposes. These creatures kill people whenever they think they can get away with it, but they have a special hatred for the Calm. The Calm, werewolves who flaunt the Unbidden's control, some of whom even turn against their creators, enrage the Calm-Killers. Plus, the Calm-Killers get an additional thrill out of hunting and killing fellow werewolves; they are more dangerous by far than the human cattle that are the Calm-Killers' standard fare. Indeed, a couple of Calm-Killers have fallen to their "victims'" claws and teeth over the past year, forcing the pack to initiate new members.

Bruno Callsworth leads the Calm-Killers. Intimidation and fear work well to keep the other werewolves in line, but he is also fair, and on a number of occasions, his leadership has prevented the pack from falling to its enemies. Bruno is huge; he was a professional bodybuilder before the animalistic werewolf spirit inhabited him.

The other Calm-Killers are not quite as deadly as Bruno, but are more than adequate for the job. Usually, the Calm-Killers wander Chicago alone or in pairs, picking off weak creatures. They meet at Bruno's ramshackle house in the South Side every evening. If any of them have detected any of the Calm during the day (and managed to avoid flying into a rage on the spot), they mention it here. The pack then strikes forth, all six of them, to find and kill the traitor. Even a werewolf is easy prey to six of his fellow werewolves.

Of course, the Calm-Killers have no problem eliminating their target's friends, as well.

Typical Calm-Killer: Init +1, Spd 30 ft.; hp 85, Def 15, touch 15, flat-footed 14; werewolf traits; Atk +15 melee (1d8+7, claw); Full Atk +15 melee (1d8+7, 2 claws); rites (Attunement, Partial Change, Savage Rending, Silver Jaws); 12 max Essence, 1 Essence/round.

• **Calm-Killer, Hybrid Form:** Init +3, Spd 30 ft.; hp 94, Def 17, touch 17, flat-footed 14; Fort +10, Ref + 7; werewolf traits; Atk +17 melee (1d6+10, bite); Full Atk +17 melee (1d6+10, bite) and +13 melee (1d8+5, 2 claws); rites (Silver Jaws); 12 max Essence, 1 Essence/round.

• **Calm-Killer, Beast Form:** Init +2, Spd 40 ft.; hp 94, Def 16, touch 16, flat-footed 14; Fort +10, Ref +6; werewolf traits; Atk/Full Atk +15 melee (1d8+7, bite); rites (Attunement, Partial Change, Savage Rending, Silver Jaws); 12 max Essence, 1 Essence/round.

Calm-Killer, Werewolf (Rahu) 6: CR 9; Medium human (werewolf); HD 9d12+27, hp 85; Init +1; Spd 30 ft.; Def 15, touch 15, flat-footed 14; Base Atk +9; Grp +14; Atk +15 melee (1d8+7, claw); Full Atk +15 melee (1d8+7, 2

"My friend, what you do not comprehend is that no matter who — or what — we are, some of us are meant to rule and others, such as you, are meant to serve."
—Jonathan Stark, Prince of Chicago

Player Characters and the Calm-Killers

The most direct way the player characters might come into contact with the Calm-Killers is if the evil werewolves attack the characters — which is especially likely if at least one of the player characters is a member of the Calm. This encounter can take place anytime and anywhere you'd like to add some action to the game. Be careful, though, as the encounter can be a deadly one.

Yet the player characters' interactions with the Calm-Killers do not need to be violent. Perhaps the player characters track a rogue werewolf — she is not loyal to the Iconnu, but she certainly doesn't work against them, either. If the player characters give them some information, the Calm-Killers are more than willing to go after such a creature. Of course, the Calm-Killers intend to slay her, so if the player characters just want to *find* her, they may have a difficult time on their hands.

claws); SA rites; SQ werewolf traits; SV Fort +9, Ref +5, Will +4; Str 21, Dex 13, Con 16, Int 8, Wis 12, Cha 10.
Skills (Might) and Feats: Climb +14, Hide +4, Jump +8, Move Silently +4, Swim +8; Power Attack, Improved Natural Attack (claw), Weapon Focus (claw), Weapon Specialization (claw).
Rites: Attunement, Partial Change, Savage Rending, Silver Jaws.
Essence: 12 max; 1/round

Encounters and Encounter Areas

The above descriptions under "Chicago Overview" and "Chicago and the Paranormal" provide overviews and general information about some of the locations and forces in Chicago. The areas described below are more detailed, containing enough information for you to run encounters in these areas and with these characters. Of course, you are welcome to change and alter them as you see fit.

Baxter's Gang

Baxter Love, an Awakened, has been with the IDA since the beginning. He realized his power early, when he defeated a pair of nascent vampires who attacked him on his way to the el. Baxter has since gained a reputation as one of the most street-smart and experienced IDA field agents, having spent more time combating the Iconnu's minions than just about anyone else.

Over several months after the IDA's creation, Baxter gathered several important characters around him, forming one of the most versatile and effective teams in the IDA's arsenal. These individuals became known as Baxter's Gang, and one member of each of the paranormals was represented in it: Sadhvi Iyer the mage, Sylvia White the vampire, Gareth the werewolf (who had no last name he acknowledged) and a rogue demon that went by many names, most commonly Mephistopheles.

Baxter's Gang accomplished some of the most dangerous and important missions in the IDA's short history. They didn't restrict their movements to Chicago, though that's where they started; the group visited many other cities as well, including Minneapolis. These characters have become some of the most famous in the IDA; established agents tell stories about Baxter's Gang to new recruits. Of course, they have only a year's worth of stories, but they make more.

For their part, Baxter and his cronies put on a show of gruffness and a "what's the big deal?" attitude, but most of them enjoy the attention. However, they all continue to do their jobs, and several of them are far from the heroes some would have them be. Gareth, Sylvia and Mephistopheles help the IDA out of currently shared goals: "The enemy of my enemy is my friend." Everyone in the group knows that, should the Iconnu's agents ever be defeated, the members of Baxter's Gang may end up killing each other.

Of course, each member of Baxter's Gang has had enough experience fighting the Unbidden's minions that none of them believe "defeating" the Iconnu is possible. And most of them grudgingly become more attached to, and respectful of, their companions.

In recent months, Theresa Fitzsimmons has partially dissolved Baxter's Gang, considering each member too experienced and valuable to be stashed in the same place. The members now lead newer field agents on missions or undertake solo adventures. Sylvia White has moved to the Twin Cities, where she is one of two deputy directors in charge of the IDA's activities there. Despite the dissolution of their group, the members occasionally get together for the really big jobs.

Baxter Love

Baxter Love, an Awakened, is one of the IDA's most experienced field agents.

Background: Baxter was born into a lower-middle-class Chicago family that was much like other lower-middle-class Chicago families. As a teenager, he grew tired of school and his routine life, so he ran away. Far away: to England. There, under a false identity, he joined the Royal Marines. He was with the Marines for five years. He learned combat in many types of terrain, but specialized in urban warfare. After a few years, Baxter grew tired of the force and left, reassuming his true identity.

Baxter traveled south to the continent, partly to evade any British authorities that might be looking for him and partly because he just felt like it. He traveled Europe for over a decade, taking a variety of jobs; he was particularly fond of being a po-

lice officer, and served in that capacity in Spain, Portugal and Greece. His other careers included brick layer, street performer, receptionist, bouncer, bodyguard and waiter.

Eventually, Baxter wondered what things were like back in the States. He returned to America and to his parents, who had thought him dead. They were overjoyed to see him, but their lives had worsened since he had left; they had spent much of their money on efforts to find him. Why he never simply wrote them a letter, he didn't know. Baxter felt guilty, and resolved to help rebuild his parents' bank account. He got a job in Chicago's Police Department and enlisted in the Army Reserves.

Shortly after that, the Unbidden came. Baxter felt *different*, not knowing why, but feeling somehow more special, more at peace, than at any point in his past.

Unknown to Baxter, when the Chicago PD ran its standard background check on him, it discovered a trail that led to several aliases he had used in Europe. The police department passed this information up the ladder, and authorities in Washington told the police department to accept him. After Baxter joined the force, several government agencies had been keeping an eye on him.

When the Intrusion occurred, a woman named Theresa Fitzsimmons appeared at Baxter's apartment and offered him a job. He accepted, and became one of the IDA's first field agents — and one of the best. He also became one of the first recognized Awakened. He funnels most of the money he earns back to his parents.

Baxter has had more direct experience with the supernatural than just about anyone in the world. Fighting against vampires and demons and such, he has come to realize the truth: the battle against the Unbidden is almost hopeless. Even if the IDA and its allies somehow defeat all of the Iconnu's agents, how can they hope to defeat the Iconnu themselves? Baxter's tough-guy personality reflects this cynicism, but it also reflects a spark of hope. Baxter supposes that, as long as he continues to protect the Awakened and shoot werewolves full of silver bullets, the smart guys are out there in think tanks, and maybe, if we're all really lucky, they'll figure something out.

Physical Appearance: Baxter is a gruff and grizzled veteran of the supernatural shadow war. He usually dresses in loose cargo pants, appreciating the pocket space. Scraggly hair hangs to his ears, and he has a brush of stubble across his face. His eyes are blue and bright and his smile hard. His body and face are covered with numerous scars from his battles.

Baxter Love: Init +7, Spd 30 ft.; hp 89, Def 24, touch 24, flat-footed 18; defender's mindset; Improved Evasion, Improved Uncanny Dodge, Supernatural Toughness; Atk +16 melee (1d4+3/19–20, knife) or +20 ranged (2d6+2/19–20, auto pistol) or +18 ranged (3d6+2/19–20, auto pistol double tap) or +20 ranged (4d6, frag grenade); Full Atk +16/+11/+6 melee (1d4+3/19–20, knife) or +20/+15/+10 ranged (2d6+2/19–20, auto pistol) or +18/+13/+8 ranged (3d6+2/19–20, auto pistol double tap) or +20 ranged (4d6, frag grenade); Point Blank Shot, Precise Shot.

Baxter Love, Awakened 14: CR 17; Medium human; HD 17d8+17, hp 89; Init +7; Spd 30 ft.; Def 24, touch 24, flat-footed 18; Base Atk +12; Grp +16; Atk +16 melee (1d4+3/19–20, knife) or +20 ranged (2d6+2/19–20, auto pistol) or +18 ranged (3d6+2/19–20, auto pistol double tap) or +20 ranged (4d6, frag grenade); Full Atk +16/+11/+6 melee (1d4+3/19–20, knife) or +20/+15/+10 ranged (2d6+2/19–20, auto pistol) or +18/+13/+8 ranged (3d6+2/19–20, auto pistol double tap) or +20 ranged (4d6, frag grenade); SQ defender's mindset, sense Nightmare Wave, skill focus (Hide, Knowledge (occult), Move Silently), skill mastery (Climb, Hide, Move Silently, Tumble), stalwart dedication*; SV Fort +10, Ref +15, Will +13; Str 17, Dex 22, Con 13, Int 12, Wis 14, Cha 12.

Skills (Might, Stealth) and Feats: Climb +24, Demolitions +22, Drive +15, Hide +30, Knowledge (occult) +25, Move Silently +30, Navigate +6, Pilot +11, Repair +6, Swim +14, Tumble +27, Use Rope +11; Evasion, Improved Critical (auto pistol), Improved Evasion, Improved Uncanny Dodge, Point Blank Shot, Precise Shot, Quick Draw, Semiautomatic Weapon Proficiency, Supernatural Toughness, Uncanny Dodge, Weapon Focus (auto pistol), Weapon Specialization (auto pistol).

Humanity Points: 14

*The bonuses for stalwart dedication are already figured into Baxter's statistics.

Bitternight Asylum

In the northern suburbs stands a large complex of white buildings surrounded by a high electric fence. Security personnel in white uniforms patrol the beautifully landscaped grounds. A single sign near the gate simply says "Bitternight Clinic," but everyone who knows about it —a select group, to be sure —refers to it as "Bitternight Asylum." The entire facility is clearly very newly built.

Purporting to be a cutting-edge mental health facility using experimental pharmaceutical treatment regimes for otherwise untreatable patients, Bitternight Asylum is actually nothing of the kind. Sponsored by Dixon Pharmaceuticals, itself a division of a much larger multinational conglomerate, Bitternight is an experimental facility designed for experimentation upon what they refer to as ISEs: Intrusion Spawned Entities.

The staff of Bitternight Asylum is well acquainted with the existence of vampires, werewolves, demons, mages and the Awakened. Examples of each have been captured and placed within the facility to examine, test, experiment upon and even dissect. The staff members hope to learn how their "patients" can do the things they do, where their origins lie and if it is conceivably possible to artificially synthesize any of their abilities and bestow them upon other subjects. The staff members also experiment with ways of hurting or killing those that are particularly difficult to harm: vampires, werewolves and demons. So far, the staff has not been successful other than to catalogue the established weaknesses and strengths of their subjects. Their attempts to create their own vampires and werewolves have failed rather spectacularly, with the resulting abominations destroyed immediately, if they did not die horribly on their own.

And they have not yet *begun* to understand the art of magecraft.

Still, Dixon seeks more subjects. Their moles in the police department, FBI and IDA suggest where and when they can find what they are looking for, so that they can subdue a new test subject and take her back to the facility in their high-tech white vans. Their agents use sophisticated weaponry and an aerosol spray (developed by Dixon) that can render a vampire, werewolf or demon unconscious (DC 22 Fort save or fall unconscious for 2d10 minutes). It's a derivative of this same substance that keeps most of their imprisoned subjects docile in captivity despite the terrible procedures they undergo (DC 22 Fort save or be rendered helpless for 1d3 hours). The substance, called Intrusion ESSence (Entity Subdual Spray), is extremely expensive and rare due to the difficulties in its manufacture so it is used very sparingly, and supplies are guarded closely. It does not work on animals or humans, including Awakened and mages.

Dr. Christine Cinder runs Bitternight Asylum. While at work, she is as cold and clinical as it is possible to be and still be human; in her off-duty time, she has a creative recreational life of sex clubs, S&M parlors and a variety of illegal activities. Her connections at Dixon, however, mean that she has access to secretive, exclusive establishments usually reserved for the very rich in which to indulge herself without fear of the law or much of anything else.

The Divine Sepulcher

Rosehill Cemetery is a historic and beautiful enclave in Chicago's North Side. The cemetery has long been known for its mysteries, such as striking edifices dedicated to people with no known history. In fact, Rosehill contains so many unanswered questions that most visitors simply pass them by without wondering.

In the middle of the cemetery is one particular monument, tall, and long forgotten and often ignored by passersby. They pay no attention to the foreign words engraved on its surface.

Those in the know, however, look upon the monument and see that the foreign letters are not in fact letters, but are symbols of an eldritch nature. The monument is covered with these glyphs. The only English words on its surface read, "Here lies the greatest of us."

This monument marks the grave of Margaret Thandee, one of the greatest mages of modern times. She died in the late

1800s, and her disciples carved a mausoleum for her in Rosehill Cemetery. Few know of this, and even fewer know how deep the mausoleum runs. Some say it has tunnels and rooms that spread throughout Rosehill, skirting the other graves and resting places — or perhaps incorporating them. Others say that the mausoleum is *deep*, that the entrance shaft extends down 30 or 50 or 100 feet, and it is here, beneath the other graves, that the catacombs begin. None knows for sure, for since Margaret Thandee's death, only a few people have known of the secret hatch in the monument's base, been able to find and open it and been brave enough to enter. Those two or three who have entered emerged after a brief time, leaving much of the mausoleum unexplored.

Some whisper that the structure is haunted. Others say that Margaret Thandee faked her death and now dwells below. Some rumors say that the mausoleum is laid out in some arcane pattern meant to accomplish some magical feat, and that Margaret Thandee's bones are important components and are scattered throughout the complex.

Whatever the truth, the mausoleum is now even more mysterious. When the Intrusion occurred, the monument — now called the Divine Sepulcher — took on an aspect of mystical power, and the depths of this power have not been fully plumbed. The monument is a site of veneration and interest among all mages, as well as others.

The Effects

The Divine Sepulcher is an object of eldritch puissance. When mages within 500 feet of the sepulcher cast spells, if they succeed on their Spellcraft checks by 15 or more, they do not lose components (the spells are free). This effect is even more pronounced closer to the sepulcher; within 100 feet, a mage must exceed the Spellcraft DC by only 10. While touching the sepulcher or in its depths, he must exceed it by only 5.

The Depths

No one knows what secrets dwell within the depths of the sepulcher, and the truth (or untruth) of the various rumors is for you to decide. Perhaps the tunnels swarm with creatures: skeleton or zombie minions given life from the bodies interred beneath the surface. Stranger creatures are possible as well. Perhaps a secretive cabal of Necromancers dwells below, and the minions serve them — or combat them. Otherworldly magical and supernatural effects are also possible, and many rumors hint that once-powerful magical artifacts are hidden below, given new potency by the Nightmare Wave.

IDA Field Office

The Intrusion Defense Agency's Chicago headquarters is in a multistory skyscraper in the Loop. The IDA offices span 17 floors at the top of the tower, and security measures are tight. The IDA realizes that many supernatural creatures — especially demons and mages and, to a lesser extent, vampires — can pose as humans and have other abilities that increase their stealthy natures. The agency is paranoid about being infiltrated.

Characters seeking to enter the IDA's offices first go through routine security screenings involving metal detectors and security guards. At night, the doors are locked, and electronic security measures and security guards — many of them paranormals — ensure that nothing gets in. In fact, the offices are rarely vacant, and even in the wee hours of the night and on weekends, support personnel man the desks and field agents arrive to leave reports or receive missions.

The IDA's supernatural security is more vigorous. Five mages are devoted entirely to security, and at least one of them is on duty at all times. This mage casts spells to detect supernatural intruders, decloak those who enter in disguise and erect magic security alarms throughout the complex.

Files and information are locked in secure databases. Multiple passwords and fingerprint scanners (requiring *warm, living* fingers — except in a few, vampire-specific cases — to activate) protect the computers. Fingerprints and retinal scans are required to take the elevators to the 16th and 17th floors, where the agency's most valuable people and information are housed — including the three deputy directors.

A few agents on loan from the CIA, FBI and NSA also have offices in the IDA's headquarters, lending what support they can.

See "The Intrusion Defense Agency," above, for more information about the IDA in Chicago.

IDA Security Guard: Init +5, Spd 30 ft.; hp 11, Def 11, touch 11, flat-footed 10; Atk/Full Atk +2 melee (1d6+1 nonlethal, sap) or +2 ranged (2d6, auto pistol).

IDA Human Security Guard: CR 1; Medium humanoid (human); HD 2d8+2, hp 11; Init +5; Spd 30 ft.; Def 11, touch 11, flat-footed 10; Base Atk +1; Grp +2; Atk/Full Atk +2 melee (1d6+1 nonlethal, sap) or +2 ranged (2d6, auto pistol); Space/Reach 5 ft./5 ft.; SV Fort +1, Ref +4, Will +0; Str 12, Dex 12, Con 12, Int 10, Wis 10, Cha 10.

Skills and Feats: Intimidate +5, Listen +7, Spot +7; Improved Initiative, Skilled (Listen and Spot).

IDA Mage Security Guard*: Init +1, Spd 30 ft.; hp 58, Def 14, touch 14, flat-footed 13; +5 ranged (2d6, auto pistol); gnosis, spells (197 components).

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*IDA Mage Security Guard, Mage (Enchanter) 6**: CR 9; Medium human; HD 9d6+27, hp 58; Init +1; Spd 30 ft.; Def 14, touch 14, flat-footed 13; Base Atk +4; Grp +4; Atk/Full Atk +5 ranged (2d6, auto pistol); SA spells; SV Fort +4, Ref +5, Will +9; Str 8, Dex 12, Con 13, Int 19, Wis 16, Cha 10.

Skills (Spirit) and Feats: Computer Use +14, Concentration +13, Knowledge (occult) +18, Listen +14, Research +7, Search +7, Sense Motive +6, Spellcraft +18, Spot +13; Skilled (Listen and Spot), Skilled (Knowledge (occult) and Spellcraft), Toughness (x2).

Gnosis: Component Focus (Damage), Component Focus (Divination), Extra Components (x2).

Components: 197

*These statistics represent a mage without bonuses from spells; when on duty, they enhance their perceptive and (sometimes) combative potential.

The Moonlit Road

South May Street runs through South Chicago; one branch in particular extends from about 50th Street to about 74th

Street. Locals have learned to be careful of this street. A rash of disappearances and brutal killings has occurred on this street over the past six to 10 months; never in nearby neighborhoods, never even on side streets, but always along South May Street. A handful of folks, however, know that the street is perfectly safe (or, at least, as safe as any street in the South Side), except for a certain time of the month. South May Street is a Nightmare Site, and on or about the 22nd of each month, for one night, the street's weird properties exert themselves.

On that haunted night, no matter how overcast the sky or new the moon, moonlight bathes South May Street. Werewolves nearby — in a radius perhaps as large as 10 miles — feel drawn to the area. They can resist the urge, but few choose to do so.

Once on the Moonlit Road, werewolves find that they have a powerful degree of control over their savage fury. Even when sorely tested, they can retain their self-control and avoid flying into the rages for which they are known. However, if they *do* indulge their instincts, they find that their rages are particularly brutal and uncontrollable. They are stronger and faster and tougher than normal, and they destroy everything — with one exception: they can curb their violence in regard to other paranormals, if the werewolves wish.

The unfortunates who live along South May Street huddle awake in their beds all night, or hold shotguns with shaking hands, listening to the sounds of growls and screams and shattering glass.

The morning after the Moonlit Road's transformation, South May Street resembles a Middle Eastern war zone. Bodies and, more commonly, pieces of bodies are scattered across the road and sidewalk. Cars are torn and slashed, with great rents in their sides. Many are turned on their sides or upside down. Telephone poles bear gouges or are broken completely. Power lines lie on the ground, sparking. (The area's power has been intermittent for months.) Even concrete is smashed, looking as if pounded with a diamond-hard fist. An arm lies on a Dumpster. A leg dangles upside down from a fire escape. Blood glimmers on the ground.

Most werewolves now know of the Moonlit Road, and they use it for a number of purposes. Many werewolves travel to the Moonlit Road to feel temporary control over their rages. They know that no matter the provocation, even in hybrid form they will remain in control of their facilities. It is a feeling few of them get in any other way.

Because the Moonlit Road offers relief from savagery, many werewolves come here to conduct business, especially with other werewolves, and especially with other werewolves with whom they are on unfriendly terms. If striking a deal with an enemy or agreeing to a ceasefire seems like a good idea, a werewolf is wise to conduct such negotiations on the Moonlit Road — for if he does so at another time, he might forget his purpose and fling himself at his rival.

Other werewolves come here because they enjoy the extra strength the place gives them during their rages. They might come to fight other werewolves. Werewolves are consummate hunters and killers, and many werewolves wish to test themselves against each other. The Moonlit Road offers a chance to do so, and has become an informal arena for werewolf to fight werewolf.

Other creatures come to the Moonlit Road as well; rumors of the strange place have trickled among the various supernatural communities. Anyone seeking a werewolf knows he can find one here. It is also a place to hold discussions with werewolves and know that they at least have the ability to keep themselves from ripping their friends apart. Thus, demons, vampires, mages and even the occasional Awakened come to the Moonlit Road to find and speak with werewolves, or even just to observe their terrible rages. Of course, such people have to be exceedingly careful, for the Moonlit Road is full of werewolves on rampages.

Due to these factors, the Moonlit Road is a bizarre spectacle for those brave enough to look upon it. Pale light washes over the ghetto neighborhood. The street is filled with werewolves, some of them transformed, some of them still appearing as humans, all of them moving and muttering and shouting. Fights break out even as a pair of shirtless figures nearby engages in a harmless wrestling match or negotiate or fuck. Bestial shrieks come from the sidewalks, where wolves in hybrid form rip cars off doors or tear fire escapes to scrap metal. Cloaked figured wade among the throng, keeping a wary eye on all sides, seeking something.

Effects of the Moonlit Road

Werewolves on the Moonlit Road experience the following benefits:

- Changing form is always a free action and requires no Will save or Essence.
- Werewolves can remain in hybrid form for as long as they wish. They can freely change to and from hybrid form without needing to wait 10 minutes between changes.
- The hybrid form's bonuses to Strength, Dexterity and Constitution double: Werewolves in hybrid form gain +8 to Strength and Dexterity and +4 to Constitution (instead of +4 and +2).
- Werewolves in hybrid form gain damage reduction 5/silver.
- Werewolves in hybrid form are not enraged and do not suffer rage-related drawbacks. They can speak normally and use all their skills, rites and feats. They are not restricted to moving and attacking; they can act however they wish.
- Every time a werewolf shifts into hybrid form, he gains a bonus rite. He can select the rite, but he must meet all its normal prerequisites. He retains the rite for as long as he remains in hybrid form. If he later assumes hybrid form again on the Moonlit Road (whether or not on the same night), he can select a different rite or the same one.
- The first time a werewolf changes form on the Moonlit Road each night, he regains one Essence.

Telemott's Creatures

In Chinatown is a shop called Telemott's Emporium. An old bald Chinaman with the decidedly un-Chinese name of Telemott runs the place, selling curios and Chinese herbs to the few tourists and fewer locals who wander into his store.

Few know that Telemott has a basement full of monsters.

Even fewer know that Telemott is a demon.

If Telemott suspects a patron is a paranormal, or if a character introduces himself as such (and a few supernatural creatures show up every month, seeking Telemott for his most infamous service), the old man offers to let them "see the back room," where, he says, he keeps his really valuable merchandise. His joints pop as he rises, hobbling on a cane, and leads his patron through a series of narrow wooden corridors and down creaking stairs until they come to a cement room in the basement. The only things here are racks of empty shelves — and a hole in the floor.

Strands of mucus dangle in the hole. It leads into darkness. A foul stench comes from within.

If someone asks what's down there, Telemott responds, "Creatures." His eyes glitter. "Test your mettle? It is rewarding." His faux Chinese accent is thick. "One thousand dollars." Telemott often demands other, more esoteric forms of payment — or favors — as well.

The Tunnels

Telemott's cellar is a Nightmare Site; the hole leads to a series of wet tunnels that may or may not be sewers and may or not actually physically fit in the space beneath Telemott's Emporium. Some knowledgeable mages speculate that these tunnels are extra-dimensional: their own little world that individuals can access only through the hole in the floor.

The tunnels below are dark. Mucus hangs from the ceiling and coats the walls. Streams and rivers of greenish liquid run through them. The air is putrid. Nightmare-twisted bugs — beetles, centipedes, roaches and spiders — scamper away or take shelter behind vivid toadstools. Holes, four feet wide, are knocked in the walls in various places at varying heights.

Many things in the tunnels are dangerous. The mushrooms release spores. The liquid is diseased. The bugs carry poison. Yet the most dangerous things of all have no name, and are called simply Telemott's Creatures.

Telemott's Creatures are wormlike, four feet thick and full of muscle. Numerous insect-like legs sprout at odd angles in scattered places along their bodies, allowing them to pull themselves through narrow tunnels. Long, powerful arms ending in scythe-like bone claws protrude from their bodies as well, and their mouths, which occupy the entire front of their bodies, are lamprey-like circles of slashing teeth — rows upon rows of teeth, dripping with mucus.

No one, except perhaps Telemott, knows exactly what Telemott's Creatures can do. Their abilities change by the telling. Some say their teeth are poison; others that they can spew toxic mucus. Some tales say they spin webs, some that they burrow in the ground and some that the stench they exude dampens supernatural effects and weakens bodies.

Whatever the case, Telemott's Creatures are fearsome and horrific. Nevertheless, those who know of them pay good money — and other sorts of currency — to descend into Telemott's basement and hunt them.

Telemott's Creatures possess a number of strange organs imbued with supernatural power. Paranormal creatures can ingest these organs to augment their power; the organ and benefit depend upon the type of supernatural creature, as shown on the table below. The effects stack, and the benefits last for one day.

Supernatural Creature	Organ	Benefit
Awakened	Green and heart-like	The bonus from stalwart dedication increases by +1.
Demon	Purple and spongy	The demon can spend one Anima to gain a +2 deflection to Defense for 10 minutes (maximum +6).
Mage	Yellow, lemon-like and mucus-covered	The mage can add three Damage components to any spell she casts for free.
Vampire	Bluish, quivering and baseball-sized	When the vampire uses Vitae to enhance her Str, Dex or Con, the bonus increases to +6 (instead of +4).
Werewolf	Brown and excreting slime	The werewolf gains one Essence whenever he kills a living creature with at least half as many Hit Dice as himself.

Finding and carving out the organs is not always easy. Telemott's Creatures all possess different anatomies, so on one specimen the green, heart-like organ might be protruding from the skin, while on another, the organ is buried beneath layers of muscle and fat and tissue that spews acid when cut.

Also, eating the organ is not without its dangers. The things are truly disgusting, and carry disease as well.

Consuming an organ takes five minutes. Each minute, the character must make a DC 20 Fortitude save to keep from vomiting, which ruins the process completely. If a character makes each Fortitude save, he must make a sixth Fortitude save to avoid catching a horrible, painful disease. If he fails, he takes a point of Constitution damage immediately. The disease progresses similar to anthrax (see Chapter 7: Playing the Game, "Special Abilities," *Disease*), though the DCs are 20. This disease is supernatural in origin. Creatures reduced to 0 Constitution die, then return to life 12 hours later, make their way to Telemott's basement and become one of his creatures. Destroying the body eliminates this possibility.

Telemott's Other Services

To most, Telemott simply sells the permission to hunt his creatures for a few hours. He has some sort of control over them, and by an act of will can make the creatures in the tunnels stronger or weaker. He usually doesn't bother to do so, but if payment is particularly cheap or valuable, or if he particularly likes or dislikes the client, he might use this power. He uses it himself when he descends into the tunnels to restock his supply of organs, allowing him to harvest them easily. Telemott always has plenty of purple, spongy organs lying around, allowing him to spend Anima to gain a deflection bonus to Defense whenever he likes.

Telemott offers additional services to demons and to a handful of select others. Most demons know he is one of them, and a few other creatures, most of them powerful and all of them willing and able to keep secrets — people such as Jonathan Stark and, perhaps, the Strangers' faceless master — also know the truth. Telemott is willing to hear offers and proposals from these people. Telemott

Knowing About Telemott

Few people — paranormal or otherwise — know much of anything about Telemott. Characters can make the following checks to discover some information.

Gather Information

- DC 15: A shop called Telemott's Emporium sees some weird clientele.
- DC 20: Telemott sells other things besides what he has in his display room, for those who know how to ask.
- DC 25: Some people who have gone into Telemott's Emporium have not returned.

Knowledge (popular culture)

- DC 15: Something is weird about a shop called Telemott's Emporium.
- DC 20: Some people who have gone into Telemott's Emporium have not returned.

Knowledge (streetwise)

- DC 25: The man calling himself Telemott, of Telemott's Emporium, is more than he appears.
- DC 30: Telemott is a supernatural creature.
- DC 40: Telemott is a demon.

has no loyalty to the Iconnu, but he doesn't care much for the Awakened, either, and wouldn't mind if the world burned — he just doesn't want to be working for anyone but himself.

Telemott's primary service is his control over his creatures. In addition to controlling their strength, he can take one or two or three of them from the tunnels and send them elsewhere. He might hire them out as mercenaries to a fellow demon or as temporary guard beasts for the Prince if he suspects an ambush. Telemott demands rich payment for these services, usually in the form of organs harvested from other paranormals.

Some suspect that Telemott's natural form is that of Telemott's Creatures, and he somehow created them with the power of the Nightmare Site in which he dwells.

Telemott's Creature: Init +2, Spd 30 ft.; ⛊ hp 98, Def 18, touch 11, flat-footed 16; 🖙 Atk +15 melee (2d6+8, claw); Full Atk +15 melee (2d6+8, 2 claws) and +10 melee (2d6+4, bite); Combat Reflexes (+2 attacks), Power Attack; Space/Reach 10 ft./10ft.

Telemott's Creature: CR 7; Large animal; HD 10d8+60, hp 105; Init +2; Spd 30 ft., burrow 10 ft.; Def 18, touch 11, flat-footed 16; Base Atk +7; Grp +19; Atk +15 melee (2d6+8, claw); Full Atk +15 melee (2d6+8, 2 claws) and +10 melee (2d6+4, bite); Space/Reach 10 ft./10 ft.; SA creature abilities; SQ creature abilities, darkvision; SV Fort +12, Ref +9, Will +4; Str 27, Dex 15, Con 21, Int 3, Wis 12, Cha 3.

Skills and Feats: Listen +7, Spot +8; Combat Reflexes, Power Attack, Toughness, Weapon Focus (bite).

SA/SQ—Creature Abilities: Telemott's Creatures are rumored to have any number of abilities, as indicated above. You can use these statistics as a base and give the creature one to three other abilities, as well; adding abilities increases the creature's CR, probably by 1 or 2. See the "Determining Creature CR" sidebar in Chapter 8: Running the Game, "Antagonists and Supporting Characters" for how to determine the creature's new CR. Remember that Telemott can also make his creatures weaker or stronger overall.

Throne of the Vampires

Jonathan Stark (see "Chicago and the Paranormal," *Vampires*, above) has assumed the role of Prince of Chicago, directing most of Chicago's vampires who are loyal to the Unbidden. Stark lives in a penthouse apartment in Chicago's wealthy Gold Coast suburb; some have taken to calling this place the Throne of the Vampires. Stark is there fairly often, but also travels into the city to encourage his underlings and see personally to his plans.

The apartment is on the 16th floor of a building called the Gold Tower. Stark keeps the location of his throne secret, so only a handful of individuals knows where he lives. Stark

usually meets his business associates and "subjects" in the city, using a variety of nightclubs, board rooms, hotels, parks and other areas as his offices.

In addition to secrecy, Stark has a number of other security measures. Throughout the Gold Coast, vampires and human agents, some of them thralls, slink. They report suspicious activity to the Gold Tower, and should a clear frontal assault be evident (i.e., SWAT team vans appear), they find their weapons and serve as a first line of defense.

About half the Gold Tower's staff — doormen, receptionists and the like — are vampires. These vampires are highly trained, highly experienced and highly loyal. In addition to screening visitors to ensure they pose no threat, they are Stark's security guards.

Stark also has two bodyguards who are always at his side or guarding his door, whether he is in his apartment or out in Chicago's streets. These two are Maggie Bench, a vampire, and Victor Lane, a werewolf. These bodyguards are two of the deadliest beings in Chicago, and have been loyal to Stark since his rise to power. In addition, if Stark can be said to have friends, Maggie and Victor fill that role. Though Stark certainly considers himself a higher caliber than his bodyguards, he views them the same way he viewed his foremost military captains in the Dark Ages.

Stark also has a "personal mage" to provide magic protection. This woman is Susan Knightly, and she has erected a number of magic wards, alarms and surveillance throughout the Gold Tower and the surrounding neighborhood. Susan was once a Bastion mage, but Stark has smashed her will and personality. She is now a sniveling wretch, serving Stark out of a combination of vampiric domination and fear for her husband, whom Stark keeps locked somewhere and tortures when Susan displeases him or when he just feels like it. He hasn't even bothered to subject her to a Vinculum.

Stark has a number of more traditional security measures as well. Spy cameras and listening devices are scattered throughout the Gold Coast, and heavily within the Gold Tower. A pair of real, human security guards stands in front of the Gold Tower's doors and walk its halls. Though they don't know what Stark is, the vampire carefully chose them for their military experience and ability to be bribed and coerced. The guards know that, should a real threat befall Stark, they are allowed to kill without warning and the rich Stark (whom they know as "Buster Bright") will cover them.

THE EDGE OF THE NIGHTMARE

Similar to Chapter 9, this chapter offers a setting for **Monte Cook's World of Darkness** games — but this one is very different from Chicago and most other places in the world. In the ruins of a major city — Minneapolis, Minnesota — a handful of beleaguered survivors struggle to subsist. The force of the Intrusion (and subsequent aftershocks and weather and tectonic turmoil) tore the city apart. Minneapolis also suffered the full brunt of the Nightmare Wave ripping through it.

GM's Note — Purpose of the Setting

Chapter 9 offers a setting similar to the real, modern world. Chicago is much as it always was, though now replete with hauntings and a supernatural war churning in the shadows. People take the el to work and sit down to dinner with their families, either not knowing or ignoring the fact that vampires prey upon anyone they like. Chicago is a city of darkness.

Minneapolis is a city of ruin. The purpose of this chapter is to provide you with a post-apocalyptic horror setting different from other World of Darkness settings. The citizens of Minneapolis — if either of those words still applies — do *not* continue life normally. They live in the burnt-out, haunted ruins of a former metropolis. Buildings are toppled. Pavement is split and heaves in great piles. Nowhere is a window intact. Gun-toting street gangs, hard-eyed survivors and grim soldiers control the streets. Competition for resources is fierce.

Through this post-apocalyptic mayhem, the horror element runs like a flaming wire: vampires, werewolves and mages hunt each other and the Awakened through the rubble. Government agents appear on the scene to research the phenomena or carry out secret agendas. The Nightmare Wave's aftereffects make the entire place seem unreal, as bizarre occurrences — cars driving themselves, tentacled beasts gurgling in basements, streets with no end, people with no faces — are more commonplace than anyone cares to admit.

Of course, there's nothing stopping you from using both Minneapolis and Chicago in the same campaign. In fact, juxtaposing the two would make a wonderful dichotomy and offer different types of play experiences for the group.

Throughout this chapter, in addition to descriptions both general and specific, are hints, suggestions and hooks for you (the GM) to use (or ignore) in your campaign.

The Shattering of the Cities

One year ago, Minneapolis was one of the largest metropolises in the central United States. Together with its twin city, St. Paul, across the Mississippi River, the area was home to national parks, research centers, one of the largest university campuses in America and manufacturing plants for electronics and computer components, and was a gateway to both the wild north (full of outdoor recreation opportunities) and the American West (still resonating with vestiges of its former romance). Four hundred thousand people lived in Minneapolis proper, and the larger Minneapolis metropolitan area was home to three million souls.

Now, the landscape is a devastated ruin. The Twin Cities are broken and jagged skeletons thrusting up from a shattered system of former highways and buildings. Tens of thousands of people died when the Intrusion hit, and many more were evacuated later. No one is sure exactly how many people remain in the metropolitan area, but estimates range from 50,000 to 200,000. Of these, most congregate in the former cities, especially the Twin Cities, and especially the ruins of Minneapolis. Death and horror crawl through the ruins on dreadful, clicking legs, and the survivors must band together if they hope to continue being survivors.

Before the Intrusion — Minneapolis History

Before Minneapolis existed, Native Americans of the Sioux tribe controlled the area and much of what is now Minnesota. Eventually, the Chippewa arrived from the east, and the two tribes became fierce enemies. Later, white settlers appeared in the area, and, over several hundred years, reduced both tribes to small, embittered reservations through the standard tactics of violence, diplomacy and business.

Minneapolis started life in the 1840s, when lumberjacks from Maine arrived in the area, attracted by its plentiful lumber. They set up shop on the western side of the Mississippi, where the nearby river and St. Andrews Falls could power their waterwheels. The town grew and merged with the burgeoning town of St. Andrews across the river, becoming Minneapolis. ("Minneapolis" means "water city" in a hodgepodge of Sioux ("minne") and Greek ("polis").)

Over time, Minneapolis grew into a major industrial center. The surrounding area provided excellent farmland and grazing areas for dairy cows and hogs. More recently, Minneapolis was an important manufacturer of electronics and computer components. Now, of course, Minneapolis produces nothing but horror stories.

The Intrusion — The Ravaging of the Twin Cities

One year ago, a ground-level pinpoint 150 miles to Minneapolis's west became the site of an extra-dimensional incursion. Ruin, both physical and metaphysical, shot from the Intrusion Point. Everything around the point in a 150-mile radius is utterly lifeless. Minneapolis hunches just beyond this line, and is the closest city of any meaningful size to the Conflagration.

When the Intrusion occurred, everything within the Conflagration — a sphere 300 miles in diameter — was annihilated. Air and earth vanished. The result was violent, wild earthquakes and weather patterns that ripped from the Intrusion Point with the speed of vacuum.

Some say the earthquakes were the first to hit the Twin Cities, and they started big. The land bucked and shook. Buildings shuddered, their windows shimmering and then exploding as supports buckled. Roofs fell inward. The huge cement pillars holding aloft eight-lane superhighways cracked, shifted, and tons of concrete collapsed, crushing thousands throughout the metropolitan area. Chandeliers and other objects crashed and flew. Shards of glass sliced through the air like razor wire. Cars swerved and screeched, slamming into each other or flipping off the roads.

According to survivors, it lasted anywhere from one to two minutes and was equivalent to a magnitude 6 earthquake on the Richter scale. As the average earthquake lasts only 30 to 40 seconds, this was enough time to cripple Minneapolis's infrastructure. About half the buildings suffered extensive damage; perhaps 10% of the buildings in the Twin Cities area were entirely destroyed.

That was the first wave. The second, which came mere minutes later, was worse. The earth shook as if the cities were toy blocks on a stretched and shaking bedspread. Buildings collapsed in great clouds of dust and flying rubble. Telephone poles and electric lines went down, sparking innumerable fires. Office buildings tipped to their sides like drunks, crashing into each other, bringing each other down. In at least two places, the earth cracked and crumbled inward as magma bubble to the surface, swallowing solitary buildings or entire city blocks.

Then the storm came. The sky turned dark as black clouds boiled from the west. Rain sheeted from them, but it was no

ordinary rain — at times it was boiling hot and acidic, scalding skin, melting eyes and scarring stone; at other times it was frigid, colder than any rain should be, piercing flesh like needles. Lightning and wind joined it. Some experts estimate that more than 6,000 distinct lightning strikes hit the Twin Cities area over the two-day period while the freakish storms raged. Hurricane-force winds uprooted trees and flung rubble through the air. At any given time, one could look across the broken cityscape and see at least three separate black funnels reaching from the sky: tornadoes that heaved wrecked cars, bodies and chunks of destroyed buildings throughout the city.

At the same time, the Nightmare Wave ripped through the city in an unseen tidal surge of reality-warping energy. The world will probably never know how many people died from the Nightmare Wave alone, rather than its effects on the weather, but survivors recount some of the stories of its effects. A man staggered shrieking into the torn street, then his heart exploded, sending blood across a nearby child; where the blood struck, the child's skin smoked, and she screamed. A standing wall began to flow like slow liquid, curving over, entrapping the people seeking shelter behind it and absorbing them, amoeba-like, into its bulk. (Their screaming faces are still visible in its otherwise unblemished surface.) In one intersection, every raindrop that struck the ground jumped into the air as a ruby-red, inch-long beetle, wings buzzing, black eyes searching. The swarm consumed hundreds of people, stripping away skin and flesh but, bizarrely, leaving every nerve perfectly intact, before the insects vanished — hopefully for good. (But hope is a forlorn and broken commodity these days.)

Those who survived did so through a combination of luck, quick thinking and heroism. Innumerable nameless heroes were born that day: the woman who broke open the lock on the university's bomb shelter. The man who fended off the dripping, furred creatures while his children escaped to the basement. The fire marshal who single-handedly saved 16 people from a burning building before a falling power line electrocuted him. The survivors remember these people, and draw strength from their memories.

Many survivors took shelter underground, in basements, which protected them from the worst of the weather. Bomb shelters and similar locations also saved lives. Yet most of the survivors lived because, two days (an eternity) later, when the wind and rain finally let up, when the lightning stopped, when the earth ceased its shuddering and the sky turned an odd greenish color, they emerged from the rubble, looked around and realized they were still alive.

Of course, the terror wasn't over — but the most violent of it (at least to date) had ended. The Conflagration still churns freakish and deadly weather patterns into existence. A 300-mile-diamater scoop of rock is missing from the Earth's crust and mantle, which causes tectonic activity that shakes the Twin Cities with some regularity. The Nightmare Wave caused irrevocable changes in people and things in Minneapolis. The city is now a horror-filled land, where machine-gun fire and unearthly howls rend the night, where the breath at your back is almost as warm as your blood, where your eyes never play tricks on you — the world plays tricks on your eyes.

After the Intrusion— The Fallout

Understandably, the Intrusion caused a great deal of confusion in the government, and even more so in the citizens. Despite this fact, various government systems organized quickly to move to the disaster area — though no one yet knew what it was. (At the time, many experts believed what is now the leading theory: a meteor strike.) The military, the Red Cross, the National Guard, police, and firefighters from surrounding states and other relief organizations mobilized and moved toward the Intrusion. They soon realized they could not penetrate the Conflagration, and thus moved around it. As the scope of the damage became evident, more and more forces joined the efforts; eventually, overseas troops returned to the United States and the government placed reserves on active duty.

The president declared the Twin Cities — and other urban centers in what would later be called the Annihilation Zone — a disaster area. He ordered it evacuated. The military commander in charge of the efforts in Minneapolis was Colonel Nadine Julliard, a career army servicewoman.

The Search

Shattered roads, broken landscapes, devastated weather and unnatural occurrences made travel difficult. Colonel Julliard's troops arrived in the ruins of Minneapolis three days after the Intrusion. The survivors had begun to pick themselves up and scrounge for supplies. Julliard set up shelters and medical supply areas. Search teams combed the ruins.

The teams found thousands of survivors, but they also found other things — things that made no sense. Wolf-men erupted from the shadows. Troops woke from their sleep to discover one of their number dead from exsanguination. Explosions occurred at random. Grotesque creatures, described fully only in after-action reports, attacked the soldiers. Other, subtler occurrences beset Julliard and her troops as well: Private Juarez could not remove the image of a hummingbird's carcass from her mind. Sergeant Stoughton emerged from a building screaming in terror, gibbering, all intelligent thought and understandable discourse fled from him. One squad discovered the bodies of a young family whose flesh had melted and merged with the asphalt.

These attacks and horrific experiences were not what the soldiers expected. Julliard and her troops had believed they were arriving at the scene of a great meteor impact to lend aid and evacuate the survivors. In the three days it took them to arrive, they experienced their own share of strangeness and heard disturbing rumors (and saw the Conflagration, flickering like firelight in the night) but nothing prepared them for what they found — or what found *them* — in the rubble of the Twin Cities.

Some soldiers went mad. Many fled or hid. Some even fled into the Conflagration, with disastrous results. Bravo Company — 150 troops — mutinied and refused to venture into the ruins. They stated that they would remain in one place and provide a base camp, but would not subject themselves to, in the words of Captain Don Masters, "any more of this fucked-up shit that killed Wilson and Hernandez."

Coping with the Blow

Colonel Julliard realized she had a second objective, after rescuing the survivors: figure out what the hell was going on. She radioed Washington to report on events and to request additional orders. Her superiors came to the same conclusions, and dispatched scientists and other experts who might shed light on the strange events. In the meantime, Julliard was to focus her efforts on finding, aiding and evacuating the survivors — but if her people encountered any more of these horrific creatures and events, they were to document them and learn as much about them as they could.

The search for survivors continued for over a week. One man who distinguished himself during this time was Lieutenant Colonel Jackson Killian, who commanded Second Battalion. Killian has the distinction of being the first man to slay and return to his superior a werewolf, which attacked his squad in the streets. Killian slew the beast with a spray of submachine gun fire. After leaving the body with the experts, Killian returned to the ruins, where he killed a pair of vampires to save a refugee. A couple of days later, Killian and several other members of Second Battalion stood their ground against a three-story monster, spewing slime and dragging tentacles, while the rest of the platoon fled to safety. Everyone assumed that the monster had killed Killian and the other heroes, but two days later, Killian dragged himself back to camp with a fractured leg.

Evacuating the survivors proved difficult. The roads were treacherous and mostly unnavigable; the back country was better, but not by much. Even all-terrain vehicles made laborious progress. Helicopters were the fastest method, but shifting weather patterns and abrupt changes in wind direction and speed made the flights nauseating at best, lethal at worst. Estimates are that 5,000 refugees and 300 army service people died attempting to escape Minneapolis. (These numbers include only those involved in actual evacuation efforts; hundreds of deserters undoubtedly perished as well.)

Colonel Julliard showed remarkably adept organization and inspiration during this process. Rather than lambasting the mutinous Bravo Company for its disobedience, she gladly accepted their offer to guard the base camp. She made stirring speeches about courage in a time of horror and uncertainty. She emphasized that her troops were the only people standing between America and the horrific things that emerged from the ruins and from the Conflagration. She slept little and traveled into the ruins often, commanding squads and platoons, locating survivors and supplies and clashing with the werewolves, vampires, monsters and freakish occurrences that haunted the ruins. Lieutenant Colonel Killian became one of her most trusted junior officers during the evacuation, as he was one of the only people who seemed unfazed by the otherworldly events crashing around them.

The Dissidents

As Julliard, Killian and the rest moved among the ruins, they encountered something they did not expect: a large number of people didn't *want* to evacuate.

Their motives varied. Some didn't trust the military. Others remained because they cared for Minneapolis, even in its beleaguered and blasted state. Some stayed because their friends or loved ones wanted to stay. Some were fascinated by the Conflagration: they wanted to *see* this new thing, or be the first to contact the aliens or discover if the strange "magic" emanating from the Conflagration could cure their problems.

Yet the majority stayed because they thought they would *prefer* life in the ruins. These were tough and usually violent men and women who enjoyed the lawlessness — in this place, might made right, and they were mighty. They banded into gangs and scrounged for weapons. They carried metal bars and lengths of chain. They pulled rifles and handguns from the wreckage of hunting stores, police stations and gun shops. Worse, they took automatic weapons, grenades and other military equipment from the bodies of Julliard's soldiers. Armed and dangerous, the gangs patrolled the ruins, clashing with rival gangs for supplies and strong-arming others into doing what they wanted.

Killian's word for these people — all the people who wanted to remain in Minneapolis — was "fuckwads." In her official dispatches to the Pentagon, Julliard referred to them as "dissidents," and the name stuck. The non-violent dissidents — those misguided people who wanted to stay in Minneapolis for some benign reason — played havoc with the army's evacuation efforts by fleeing and hiding from troops who attempted to help them. The gangs were worse: They fired upon the soldiers. They ambushed them. In addition to struggling against the beasts from the Intrusion, the Nightmare Wave's grotesque effects, collapsing buildings, bizarre weather and arbitrary earthquakes, Julliard's troops traded bullets with the people they were trying to help.

A Resolution

The major evacuation efforts lasted 47 days, but the efforts continue even today. Somewhere in those ruins are people who *want* to escape, but are afraid to leave their hiding places for any of a variety of understandable reasons. Tens of thousands of dissidents slink through the rubble, fighting with

"We do what we have to in order to survive. I don't know what it's like out there in the rest of the world, anymore, and frankly I don't care. This is my home, and I'll go to my death defending it."
—Margaret Noldner, Minneapolis "dissident"

each other over supplies or territory or just for fun, or carrying on their private agendas in whatever fashion they like. Ironically, the region has *attracted* some people — not a lot, but some — who find the lawlessness appealing. Approximately 3,500 additional dissidents have arrived, having slipped past the military barricades.

Julliard's relief efforts evacuated more than 200,000 people, and she played host to government agents and experts and kept her troops together in the face of ghastly creatures and harrowing experiences not of this world. Her service was exceptional.

A few days after the bulk of the survivors had been evacuated, Julliard was adjusting her operational parameters due to new orders from the Pentagon — strengthening barricades, organizing patrols and the like. A large street gang, almost 100 strong, attacked the army's base camp; a man calling himself "Warlord Bruce" led the gang. The gang was surprisingly stealthy, well organized and well armed for a group of dissidents, and snuck past most of the camp's defenses by creating distractions and cutting electrical cables. Thus, when gunfire erupted in the heart of the camp, few were expecting it. The troops defeated the gang, but the slaughter on both sides was terrible. At the end, nearly all the dissidents and more than 50 soldiers lay in bloody heaps. Among the dead was Colonel Nadine Julliard, who was shot point-blank in the back of the head. Rumors say Warlord Bruce killed Julliard; many say he took her prisoner, marched her to the supply tent to discover whatever it was that he wanted, then shot her in cold blood. Whatever the truth, the valiant Colonel Julliard was dead, and Warlord Bruce was one of the few who escaped.

In the aftermath, Lieutenant Colonel Mel Randolph took over at base camp, but only until Jackson Killian arrived from a patrol in the ruins. When Killian learned of Julliard's death, something shifted within him. His smile fell away, and it never returned. He never again played poker with his troops, or offer even his previous tiny amount of wiggle-room for screw-ups.

Killian seized control of base camp and the entire brigade, thereby assuming Julliard's command. He forced the other ranking officers into obedience with shouts, threats and the force of his growing reputation. The troops *wanted* to follow Killian; he was a *hero*. Killian swiftly resumed Julliard's work organizing patrols and increasing the barricades. Shortly thereafter, orders and a promotion arrived from the Pentagon, making Killian's command official.

Both Julliard and Killian were awarded Distinguished Service Medals for their roles in Minneapolis, making them two of the few officers below general rank to receive this award. Julliard's was awarded posthumously, of course.

More information on the current state of the military in the Twin Cities appears below, under "The Ruins of Minneapolis," *Martial Law*.

The Ruins of Minneapolis

The Twin Cities are now a ruined, post-apocalyptic landscape.

Weather and Climate

Before the Intrusion, Minneapolis was cold. The temperature averaged 74° F in the summer and 14° F in the winter.

The Intrusion and the ensuing unnatural weather patterns changed the area's temperature somewhat, but the general climate holds true. The difference is that, often, the weather takes an unexpected twist. Sometimes, different areas of the city experience different weather. A ferocious heat wave may strike Minneapolis, while St. Paul, across the river, suffers under a deluge of ice and snow. Still, when the strange weather dies away, the old climate returns, at least to a degree.

Minneapolis experiences a large amount of precipitation, both rain and snow. Before the Intrusion, average annual precipitation was 32 inches. (For comparison, Seattle, one of the nation's soggiest cities, averages 38 inches, and Orlando, in the thunderstorm capital of the United States, averages 48.) Average precipitation hasn't changed, and a good amount of rain, snow, sleet and hail still falls on the city — but the citizens are more afraid of it now.

The closer one gets to the Conflagration, the stranger and more drastic the weather. See "At the Edge of Oblivion," below, for more information.

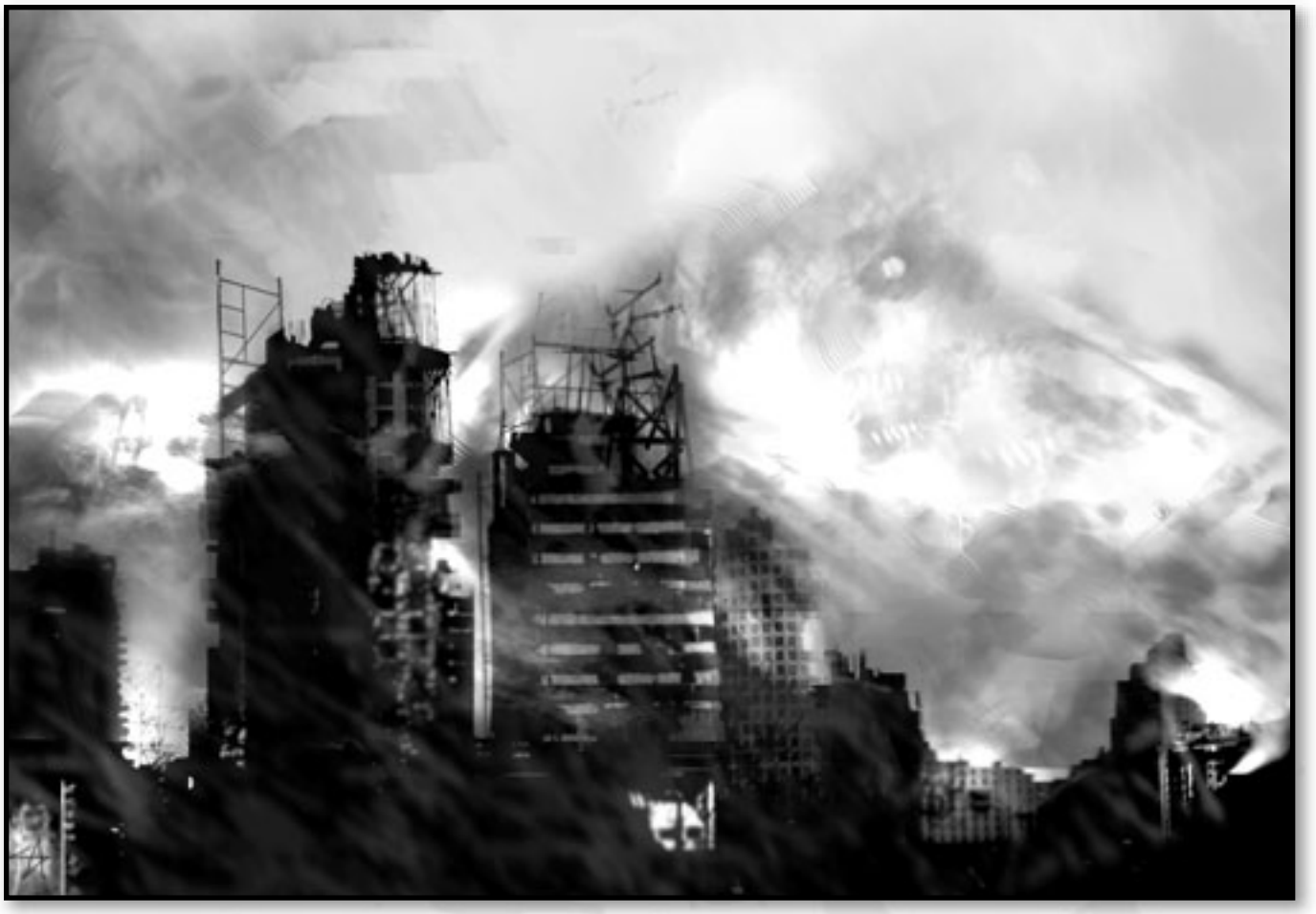
The Minneapolis Metropolitan Area

Minneapolis is at the center of a large metropolitan area. This area, which was once densely populated and is now a landscape of ruined buildings, shattered roads and human remains, is approximately 20 miles in diameter. It includes Minneapolis and St. Paul and many smaller cities, including Bloomington, once the fifth-most-populous city in Minnesota.

Major highways in Minnesota include I-94 (runs south into downtown Minneapolis and then east; formerly connected Minneapolis and St. Paul), I-394 (runs to downtown Minneapolis from the west), I-35 (primarily a north-south route) and I-494 (a belt route that encircles the Twin Cities and crosses Bloomington). These and other major streets run through the area. Now, most are clogged with frozen and wrecked vehicles, rubble and debris. Still, they provide the most expedient means of getting from place to place. Moving through them isn't easy, though; treat the entire area as trackless for movement purposes (see Table 7–4: Terrain and Overland Movement).

Some roads, especially those in downtown Minneapolis and St. Paul, are clear or relatively clear. Colonel Killian has cleared some of these areas, and the dissidents have made efforts to clear others. Most major streets see at least occasional patrols from the military or street gangs, so they tend to be clear of hostiles (people hostile to the patrolling group) as well as rubble. Still, the shattered asphalt and lingering debris are obstacles; treat these cleared areas as roads rather than highways for movement purposes (see Table 7–4: Terrain and Overland Movement).

As in any other metropolitan area, neighborhoods in Minneapolis ranged from posh residential districts to ghettos to red light districts to industrial parks. Minneapolis was also a green area: trees lined its streets, and many are still standing. Numerous lakes and parks are scattered around the area (more on these below, under "Locations in the Twin Cities," *Lakes and Parks*).



Several rivers cut through the devastated metropolis, including the Mississippi River (north-south; see "Locations in the Twin Cities," *The Mississippi River*), the Minnesota River (southwest-northeast) and Minnehaha Creek (east-west).

Martial Law

The military has a strong presence in the city. In fact, due to the chaos and lawlessness of the area — which persists today — both Minneapolis and St. Paul are under martial law. The ranking commander of the forces in the region is Colonel Jackson Killian. Colonel Killian has served in the Minneapolis region since the Intrusion, and has commanded its armed forces since Colonel Nadine Julliard fell to dissidents. In the 11 months since Killian took control, he has come to rule over the city as if it were his own private fiefdom. Reports of indiscretions and conduct unbecoming have reached Washington more than once, but the truth is that no one is willing to go in and do anything. Killian and his troops are right at the edge of the Conflagration, whereas the majority of the military is many miles further back. As more and more scientific reports come in detailing the Conflagration's continuing danger, Killian becomes more and more important to the Pentagon as the only ranking officer willing to enter the area and maintain order among troops that would otherwise likely flee.

Colonel Killian has tanks and armored transports, helicopters and more than 1,000 troops in his command. Nevertheless, they are spread thin throughout the Twin Cities and the surrounding metropolitan area. They use the Metrodome as their staging area and field command headquarters.

The Laws

The area's state of martial law means that Colonel Killian can impose whatever rules he likes. He prefers mandatory evacuation, but after a fruitless year attempting to do so, he and his superiors have given up in disgust. If people want to stay in this area, they can. However, Killian does not tolerate much, and if his troops capture a dissident (still their term for anyone in the ruins who isn't a government agent), they are more likely to ship him out of town than perform any other sort of punishment.

Killian has declared a mandatory 8:00 curfew, though few people obey it. If his soldiers encounter anyone in the streets after 8:00, they ship her to base camp.

Killian has suspended the constitutional right to bear arms in Minneapolis. Any non-military person with anything more dangerous than a knife is in violation of the martial laws and sent to the Metrodome. Since many "innocent" people in the area must arm themselves purely for protection against street gangs and trigger-happy soldiers, this statute means that plenty of people who do not pose a danger to the military or each other see the inside of the Metrodome.

A variety of other crimes, some major and some minor, also exist under Killian's rule:

• Insulting soldiers, either verbally, in writing (graffiti), or via body language.

• Hoarding certain resources (including medical and electronic supplies), rather than giving them to the military.

• Consorting in any peaceful way with "monsters." Monsters include crazy things that emerge from the Conflagration or are created from the Nightmare Wave. They also include werewolves, vampires, mages and demons, though those associated with the IDA (or other government body) are excepted.

• Disposing of bodies in any way other than cremation. The military has had a number of unfortunate incidents with corpses.

Punishment for all crimes begins with a trip to the Metrodome. Depending on the severity of the crime, the danger or disrespect the perpetrator shows, or the mood the current crimes officer, punishment ranges from a slap on the wrist (rare) to forced evacuation to Eau Claire, Wisconsin, or Rochester, Minnesota (common) to being shipped in a prison truck to overflowing federal prisons elsewhere in the United States (fairly common). To date, Killian and his troops have simply executed 221 prisoners whom they announced were especially dangerous. Hundreds more have died in firefights with the armed forces. In many cases, these "firefights" involved the soldiers smashing in doors and laying down fire without attempting to determine the nature of the occupants.

Relations

Due to the harshness of the military occupation and the general brutality of life in Minneapolis, relations between Killian's soldiers and the other people in the ruins are not good. Everyone is suspicious of everyone else. People blame soldiers for atrocities and acts of cruelty, only some of which are actually the fault of the military. The military in turn blames the people for the continued lawlessness and increasing death toll. Minneapolis is a battleground: soldiers, street gangs and horrors clash among the ruins.

Military Organization

Killian's battalion includes about 1,100 troops.

• The battalion is divided into five companies, each with around 200 troops. A captain commands each company. The first of these companies is Headquarters and Headquarters Company (HHC), which includes Killian's staff; it is also called Alpha Company. Bravo, Charlie and Delta Companies consist mainly of infantrymen. Killian's combat support company, called Echo Company, includes trained scouts and mortar sections as well as other armored support. Echo Company controls the allocation of tanks, armored transports, helicopters and the men who crew them. Echo Company's commander, Captain Aileen Forebush, assesses need and organizes the logistics of these resources.

• Each company is divided into six platoons of about 32 soldiers each. A lieutenant commands each platoon; a platoon sergeant assists the lieutenant. Each platoon often has a number of support units — tanks, transports, helicopters, ATVs and the like — attached to it from Echo Company or simply as part of their standard equipment. The lieutenant chooses how to allocate these resources.

• Each platoon is organized into about five squads, each with five or six soldiers. A squad, commanded by a sergeant or corporal, is the smallest group of soldiers that function in Minneapolis. They patrol the ruins, keeping order, or engage in any number of special operations.

Statistics and Armament

See "Encounters," *Military Encounters*, below, for statistics for individual soldiers.

At the Edge of Oblivion

Minneapolis is close enough so that you can see the Conflagration — in fact, the Conflagration cuts off a tip of the Minneapolis metropolitan area. Those looking to the west from downtown Minneapolis see a vast churning of energy and matter, dominating the horizon and extending up to the clouds — or where the clouds should be. The Conflagration's strange light silhouettes the broken wreckage of office buildings and collapsed highways. Because the Conflagration frequently flares with flame and energy, people here are more accustomed to calling it the Skyfire.

Approaching the Conflagration is not only a striking experience of sight but also of sound. Thunder, crackling energy and the howling of something perhaps more than mere wind are common enough sounds, but those standing near it have reported far stranger things — roaring beasts, whirring motors, whispered secrets, crying children or their own names repeated over and over, to name a few.

The Conflagration churns up powerful storms and strange weather with increasing frequency. Strong winds and lightning storms occur almost twice as often now, although average precipitation has not changed.

Drastic changes in temperature also occur in the region, which makes the bizarre weather patterns worse. Tornados and hail are also more common. Occasionally, the odd weather takes even weirder turns, with frogs and fish falling from the sky, red rain or unexplained gray blobs suddenly carried aloft on the wind.

Intrusion-spawned weather sometimes has strange, Nightmare Wave-like effects accompanying it. Sometimes a storm is a mobile Nightmare Site. Storms in the past, for example, have cut off mages' access to spells and increased the intensity of the vampires' thirst for fresh blood. Another made women in the area become murderous maniacs, while another raised the dead in every cemetery over which it passed.

Earth tremors — minor quakes — are still fairly common, but unlike the atmosphere, the ground is slowly stabilizing. The earth is learning to adapt and accommodate, even as the air bristles and chafes with greater irritation.

People and the Skyfire

The Conflagration stirs various feelings in Minneapolis's "citizens." Some seek to study the phenomenon — government and private agents arrive in the Twin Cities for just that purpose. Others see it as a profound, perhaps divine event and seek to

understand it or glean insights into the world. Others are afraid of it and rightfully superstitious; they avoid looking at it.

The proximity of the Conflagration and the power of the Nightmare Wave when it passed through the Twin Cities mean that the area brims with other strange phenomena. Beasts — some formerly human, others clearly not of this earth — dwell throughout the ruins, but more make their homes near the Conflagration because people avoid the area. Werewolves, vampires and demons sometimes come to the edge of the Conflagration under some mistaken assumption that they can commune with the Iconnu here. Mages come as well, usually to see if their spells become more powerful. (They don't.)

Entering the Skyfire — or even getting close to it — is a bad idea (see Chapter 1: A World in Darkness, "The Intrusion," *The Conflagration*). Most sane people have figured this out by now, and few folks approach any closer than a mile or two.

The closest military outposts to the Conflagration are a mile and half from it; five of these are staggered in a loose arc around the perimeter. A squad mans each outpost. Killian's troops watch the Conflagration to make sure nothing emerges from it, watch the city to make sure nothing comes at them and watch each other to make sure they don't grow new eyeballs. They shoot anyone and anything that tries to enter the Conflagration, having learned through painful experience that, while people *usually* don't emerge from the Skyfire, when they do, they're often, bigger, meaner and much harder to kill.

These military outposts are collectively called the Skyfire Watch. While the job is exceedingly dangerous, it has a mystique. Only the toughest and bravest men and women are worthy to man the Skyfire Watch, and thus the assignment is prestigious. More people volunteer to fill the positions than positions exist. Scientists have recommended that Killian rotate the troops here every week or two to avoid excessive exposure to "Conflagration radiation," but Killian usually lets the troops stay here for as long as they like.

Moving Elsewhere

Adventures in and around Minneapolis aren't confined to the downtown, or even metropolitan, area. Characters might find themselves moving away from the city for any of a number of reasons.

Moving North — Northeastern Minnesota

Northeastern Minnesota is rugged wilderness territory. Forests, lakes, streams and general rugged terrain are common — though the elevation never rises much more than 2,000 feet. In the south are scattered groves of ash, black walnut, elm, maple and oak. The trees gradually move closer together as one moves north, becoming true forest. In the north, aspen, balsam fir, pine, spruce and white birch grow. The Mississippi River (tainted; see below) runs through the area.

In the summer and the surrounding spring and autumn months, the northern forests were a riot of color and animal activity. For much of the year, they were cold and snowy places, making travel even more treacherous. The Intrusion and subsequent events devastated large tracts of land, but the destruction isn't nearly as bad as in populated areas. White-tailed deer, black bears, elk, moose and timber wolves roam the wilderness. The Nightmare Wave has changed some of these into intelligent and/or sadistic monsters; others grew bizarre appendages or died — either outright or slowly. Those within five miles of the Mississippi are the most affected by these changes.

Towns and cities are scattered about northeastern Minnesota as well. Several highways, including I-35 and US-169, cut through the forests. US-10 leads northwest out of Minneapolis and 70 miles later runs into the remains of St. Cloud, much of which lies in the Conflagration. Only a few crazies still live in St. Cloud, as the city is partially *inside* the Conflagration. Most of the (very few) survivors fled elsewhere in the country, into Minnesota's backwoods, or to Minneapolis.

Further north, large lakes such as Mills Lacs Lake (100 miles north of Minneapolis), Leech Lake and Lake Winnibigoshish (both 40 miles northwest of Mills Lacs) break up the woodland. Leech Lake and Lake Winnibigoshish are very close to the Conflagration, and little lives around them. They are within the Chippewa National Forest, which also houses the Leech Lake Indian Reservation. A few hearty Native Americans attempt to remain in their ancestral lands here, but to little avail.

To the far north and east of the state is Arrowhead Country (so called because that area of the state is shaped like an arrowhead). Superior National Forest occupies a huge chunk of this area, on the Canadian border. Also bordering the national forest is Lake Superior, the most sizeable lake closest to the Intrusion Point. One arm of the lake is well within the Annihilation Zone. On Superior's shore is Duluth, once the third-most-populous city in Minnesota (after Minneapolis and St. Paul). Duluth was one of the busiest US-Canadian ports in the country. Now, Duluth is in better shape than Minneapolis but is still within the Annihilation Zone, and life there isn't easy. Most of its residents have fled.

All of northeastern Minnesota, with the exception of the furthest points on the arrowhead, are in the Annihilation Zone.

Moving East — Wisconsin

Few people lived in western Wisconsin before the Intrusion, and now even fewer reside there. Traveling east from Minneapolis, scoured and broken I-94 runs through a wilderness of scattered woods, plains, small lakes and creeks. The U.S. government attempts to make this portion of I-94 more navigable in order to facilitate movement between the Twin Cities and Eau Claire, Wisconsin, 100 miles to the east. Eau Claire rests on the edge of the Annihilation Zone but still boasts a sizeable population. It and Rochester, Minnesota, are the two closest cities of appreciable size to Minneapolis, and they serve as bases for military and relief operations as well as checkpoints before evacuees move elsewhere. Camps of refugees along the side of I-94 are fairly common these days, though many lie abandoned, their inhabitants mysteriously missing.

Moving South — Southeastern Minnesota and Iowa

Moving south from Minneapolis is much like moving east. The country is mostly wilderness, with cracked highways connecting towns that are like miniature versions of the conflicted Twin Cities area. I-35 twists straight south from Minneapolis, while US-52 runs southeast to Rochester, Minnesota.

Rochester is similar to Eau Claire, Wisconsin, in that it serves as a de facto military base and a center for relief and evacuation efforts. In addition, Rochester includes the Mayo Clinic, a world-famous medical center. Though the clinic, like everything else, was devastated when the Intrusion struck, efforts from the military, National Guard, relief services and volunteers have made the Mayo Clinic again serviceable and the primary medical facility for the wounded and sick. (Though, of course, many patients don't survive the trip to Rochester.) The Mayo Clinic also serves as a frontline research facility for scientists and other experts studying the Intrusion and the things that now exist in our world because of it.

Characters who move further south find themselves in Iowa, where nothing but once-fertile farmland awaits them. The area is open and vacant; the few people living here have long since left or perished. Not much of interest is in Iowa until one arrives at the large city of Waterloo, 220 miles from Minneapolis. Waterloo doesn't offer much help, as it is still squarely within the Annihilation Zone and is little better than Minneapolis.

Moving West — The Conflagration

The Conflagration occupies the western half of Minnesota — which means the western half of Minnesota no longer exists. The Conflagration begins about 10 miles from the Minneapolis city center, so it swallowed pieces of suburbia and bedroom communities. For more information on the Conflagration, see "At the Edge of Oblivion," above.

Locations in the Twin Cities

Minneapolis and the surrounding region included many important areas. Some of these are still standing, at least to some degree. All are potentially interesting locations for encounters. The information in the following descriptions is general; some of these locations are described more fully and with greater detail (including statistics for non-player characters and creatures the player characters might encounter) below, under "Encounters and Encounter Areas."

Downtown Minneapolis

Downtown Minneapolis is on the Mississippi's west bank and faces a waterfall called the Falls of St. Anthony. (The falls are even more majestic after the Intrusion, with multi-colored sparkles in the air around them. Unfortunately, similar to the rest of the Mississippi, they're cursed.) A shopping center eight blocks long, called Nicollet Mall, once occupied the heart of downtown; a mighty office building called the Investors Diversified Services (IDS) Center faced the mall. Raised, enclosed bridges connected the IDS tower and several nearby buildings in what was called the Skyway System.

In the Intrusion, the IDS tower collapsed, falling forward onto Nicollet Mall. The skyways shattered. The area is now in complete ruin. However, the lure of salvageable goods from the mall draws many people here, and it is a scene of much gunfire in and among the rubble as gangs clash with each other, with other survivors, and with the military (the Metrodome is not far).

Downtown Minneapolis is also home of Hennepin Avenue, which is largely clear of debris. Demons stalk the street, however; see "Encounters and Encounter Areas," *Monsters of Hennepin Avenue*, below.

Downtown St. Paul

Similar to Minneapolis, downtown St. Paul had an extensive Skyway System. This was a series of raised, enclosed bridges that connected many buildings and spanned almost five miles. (It was the nation's longest such system.)

Unlike the ruins of downtown Minneapolis, portions of St. Paul's Skyway System are still intact. Sagging, dangerous bridges connect sagging, dangerous buildings. The bridges offer excellent sniper and lookout points. At least three rival groups control this area: the Guns (with their headquarters in St. Paul's capitol building at the head of Wabasha Street), the St. Paul Saints and the Benjamins, a fairly peaceable group of survivors that nevertheless defends itself against the street gangs' depredations.

Fort Snelling

In 1819, the U.S. Army established a temporary fort south of the present-day Twin Cities. In 1820, under Colonel Josiah Snelling, the army built the fort as a permanent structure and, in 1825, renamed it Fort Snelling. Before the Intrusion, the fort gave reenactments and presentations of what life was like in the 1920s.

Fort Snelling is in ruins now, devastated by the Intrusion. However, the earthquakes caused a section of land near the fort to cave in, revealing a heretofore unknown series of cellars in and around Fort Snelling. The cellars are labyrinthine, more catacombs than basements, with several levels and approximately two miles of winding tunnels. A violent group called the Skyfire Sabers controls the site and guards it viciously. The Sabers think they can find valuable resources in the secret tunnels, though so far, they claim, they've uncovered only wooden derelicts.

Yet no one knows what they might have really found. Since the Skyfire Sabers keep all intruders away from the fort, no expert has yet caught a glimpse of the tunnels or the artifacts the Sabers have unearthed. Rumors say that the tunnels contain relics from the 1850s and even earlier — some going back dozens, maybe hundreds of years before white men settled the land. Whispers of Native American burial grounds and similar tales abound. One story says that the Skyfire Sabers have discovered several cannons and/or other artillery pieces from the Civil War era and currently attempt to bring them back into service.

One rumor concerning the new discovery in Fort Snelling is not often whispered but is perhaps the most disturbing: the secret tunnels are not newly uncovered pieces of history at all. They are new creations, spawned by the Nightmare Wave. If this rumor is true, then the relics and the tunnels may be more dangerous than anyone guesses.

The Guthrie Theater

The Guthrie Theater in Minneapolis once presented excellent dramatic performances. Now, the roof has collapsed, and the building is mostly a ruin. However, the back entrance, though twisted and narrow, offers entry into what's left of it. The backstage area is a hurricane disaster area, with props, costumes, makeup and other theatrical accoutrements strewn everywhere. The stage is still accessible from backstage, though the lighting rails have fallen and splintered the surface.

The Nightmare Wave affected the Guthrie Theater in a strange way. One large storage area contained most of the theater's costumes and associated props. Now, anyone who dons a costume from this area assumes the personality and mannerisms of the character for whom the costume was designed — the person *becomes* that character, though he still possesses general information about the modern world and the state of Minneapolis. Even after the costume is removed, the person remains that character.

Such an event is the equivalent of death, a near total loss of self, so most people steer clear of the Guthrie Theater. Some suspect that other hauntings abound in it as well, and anyway someone has already made off with all the salvageable shop equipment and tools. However, the theater proves a popular spot for the suicidal. The depressed or desperate, instead of taking their lives, can simply become somebody else. Their past lives become like distant memories, or like stories told about somebody else.

Lakes and Parks

Minnesota is the land of lakes, with almost 1/20th of the state's surface area composed of lakes. Minneapolis has the moniker "City of Lakes" for a similar reason: before the Intrusion, Minneapolis had 22 lakes within its city limits. Public parks surrounded many of these. Now, many of the lakes are dried or worse, but some are important sources of fresh (or apparently fresh) water.

Lakes are, of course, excellent places for a "monster in the lake" plot. They're also good places for interesting combat, as the water interferes with movement and offers tactical choices. Some lakes have small islands within them, and some have a few intact paddleboats close by.

Parks offer opportunities for quasi-wilderness encounters. Some of Minneapolis's parks, such as Theodore Wirth Park in east Minneapolis, which covers 740 acres, are so large that they have wooded areas (or, at least, formerly wooded areas) for hiking and cycling. Fort Snelling State Park, just to the southeast of the (former) city limits, is even larger.

The Metrodome

The Hubert H. Humphrey Metrodome played host to several sporting events, including the Minnesota Twins baseball team. Half of the Metrodome's roof collapsed during the Intrusion, but other than that the building remains surprisingly intact. Its relative stability and large size make it an ideal place for Colonel Jackson Killian to practice staging maneuvers.

The Metrodome is the center of martial law in Minneapolis. The Metrodome and the surrounding few blocks comprise one of the most peaceful areas in the city. Military patrols, barricades and other defensive measures radiate from the Metrodome, and Killian drills his troops mercilessly about the necessity of avoiding surprise. He doesn't want the dissidents to claim another colonel's life.

The Mississippi River

The Mississippi has its origin in northern Minnesota, in ignominious Lake Itasca, about 200 miles northwest of Minneapolis. By the time the river reaches the Twin Cities, the river is wide and mighty, and for years served as an important waterway to power Minneapolis's machinery and send goods to the southern United States. The Mississippi bisects the Twin Cities, with Minneapolis on the west side and St. Paul on the east.

The Mississippi is cursed. The Nightmare Wave left its effects heavy in the river's sluggish water, and now the Mississippi is like a remnant of the Nightmare Wave. The river carries hauntings and paranormal occurrences out of Minnesota and into the rest of the United States. Five miles to either side of the river, even as it empties into the Gulf of Mexico far from the Intrusion Point, experience Nightmare Wave-like effects as if they were in the Annihilation Zone.

In Minneapolis, this fact means that the areas around the Mississippi are even more dangerous than the rest of the city. Due to the profusion of Nightmare Sites — some say that the entire river and its shores is one giant Nightmare Site — the military is reluctant to enter these areas. Thus, they are prime spots for the dissidents, of both the violent and non-violent varieties.

Everyone knows that drinking the Mississippi's water is a bad idea. Stories abound of people who have done it, then fallen to ill. One man turned inside out. A woman regressed in age until she was a baby, then shot forward to old age, then back to baby; she yo-yo'd back and forth, each shift taking approximately one minute, screaming (or crying or croaking) the entire time, until someone put her out of her misery. Now, everyone who isn't crazy avoids even getting wet from the Mississippi.

Before the Intrusion, 20 bridges crossed the river within the Minneapolis city limits. Now, only one of those bridges — Cedar Avenue Bridge — is intact. The bridge is a constant battleground, with the military and two lawless groups, the Trolls and the Society for the Preservation of Minneapolis (SPM), vying for control. The bridge changes hands almost daily. It is an important site because it is one of the only places where someone can easily cross the Mississippi. Numerous makeshift bridges and ferry services also exist along the river's length.

Numerous parks, both large and small, line the shores of the Mississippi. Now, most of these serve as campsites for street gangs or other survivors.

Residential Districts

As in every city, residential districts in Minneapolis and St. Paul run the gamut from affluent to ghetto. Some of them are in worse shape than others, though none escaped unscathed. All of them serve as important areas for survivors. People clear out rooms and houses to make their homes; some even live in their own former homes. Other buildings are too ruined to be much use as shelter, but contain potential resources that see looters and scavengers poking through rubble while their compatriots stand alert with automatic rifles. Of course, some houses and streets are home to stranger things — they are Nightmare Sites that warp reality, or bloodthirsty vampires, werewolves and worse lair in them.

The Science Museum of Minnesota

This facility in St. Paul once offered science and technology exhibits. Now, it is completely devastated. A street gang called the Bulldozers, headed by the notorious Warlord Bruce, is encamped here, hoping to find useful resources in the ruins. So far, they haven't found anything worthwhile.

The University of Minnesota

The University of Minnesota, located in Minneapolis on the Mississippi, is enormous. It is one of the three largest university campuses in the United States. Most of the university lies on the Mississippi's west side, while a small portion lies on the east. The two sides are no longer connected, as the bridges have collapsed into the river. When the river runs low, a makeshift bridge of partially submerged rubble becomes available, but it is perilous.

As the Mississippi now divides the campus, the locals distinguish between the western university and the eastern university. The western university, which is by far the largest, is a war zone. Rival groups and the military struggle for resources. The university has many such resources that spark this conflict, from food in the cafeteria and a number of semi-functional water pipes to computer and electronic equipment, books, building materials and domestic supplies in the dormitories. The university's proximity to the haunted Mississippi means that creepy and horrific events often interrupt the battles and terrify, maim or kill searchers.

Colonel Killian's forces have established a permanent camp in the university's main quadrangle. Captain Don Masters oversees Bravo Company (the company that disobeyed Colonel Julliard's orders during the evacuation), which is stationed here and is in charge of the surrounding area. Assignment to Bravo Company is more a punishment than anything else.

In contrast to the western university, the eastern university across the Mississippi sees little human traffic. That's because a *thing* has taken over its buildings and grounds. No one knows what it really looks like, but rumors say it dwells underground and sends muscled, purplish tentacles smashing through floors and emerging from heating ducts to grab and crush intruders. Supposedly, you can hear its heartbeat in the ground and pulsing in the walls from anywhere on the eastern university's campus. If you're really quiet and there's no gunfire in the background, you can hear and feel the heartbeat from up to a half mile away.

The university creature has claimed more than 20 scavengers who have attempted to search the buildings for supplies. Some reports say that these people are not actually *dead,* just *changed,* as numerous reports of shambling, lurching figures moving in the dead windows imply their continued existence. They have not attempted to escape or contact their former friends, however.

Factions in the Twin Cities

Factions in the Twin Cities fall into three broad categories: the military, the dissidents and everyone else. The dissidents is a larger and more varied group than many imagine, and includes both people rightfully called criminals (the looters and murderers who revel in the lawlessness and outlaw state of the ruins) and people who remain in the area for other reasons and have little desire for violence — but find it a necessity.

The Military

Number: About 1,100

Headquarters: The Metrodome (described above under "Locations in the Twin Cities")

Some Important Characters: Colonel Jackson Killian, overall commander; Captain Aileen Forebush, commander of Echo Company; Captain Adhra Keel, commander of Alpha Company; Captain Don Masters, commander of Bravo Company; Captain George Oliver, commander of Delta Company; Captain Juan Valdez, commander of Charlie Company

Colonel Killian commands a battalion of about 1,100 troops. His men maintain a military presence in the area and clash regularly with the street gangs and monsters prowling the ruins. Killian's mission is twofold: keep a semblance of order in the region and be a primary point of intelligence for the strange things occurring around the Intrusion Point. Both facets of his mission prove difficult, and Killian has grown ever more bitter, brutal and unmoving in his command. Most of his troops share this feeling, though only a handful — one to 200 — have served with him since the Intrusion.

Killian and his troops clump everyone else in the Twin Cities into one of two categories: dissidents and other government agents. Other government agents are experts from Washington, personages from the Pentagon on occasional visits, IDA agents and similar individuals. The military has to play nice with these people, though they usually do so only grudgingly, seeing the interlopers as wet-behind-the-ears pansies who have no idea what they're getting into.

Everyone else is a dissident. Over time, the military has come to treat both the violent and non-violent kind the same way: as enemies. Violent and deadly encounters cement this feeling. Now, the military has little mercy or patience. Soldiers tend to shoot first and drag the bodies

back to the Metrodome to answer their questions.

Of course, the military also deals with stranger things. The troops here all know what vampires, werewolves, mages and demons are; the troops even know a good deal about their capabilities. Such information is confidential, but considered vital for effective combat and survival in the Twin Cities. Some troops even know what Awakened are, having picked up the concept from conversations and scattered words with IDA agents, officers and captured werewolves and vampires. Few of the troops, however, are aware of the Iconnu or the extent of the threat facing the world.

Colonel Killian

Colonel Jackson Killian commands the armed forces in the Twin Cities.

Background: Jackson grew up in New York, in a middle-class neighborhood with middle class parents. The military is a family business for the Killians; Jackson's father, Robert, and mother, Mary, were both in the armed forces before they retired and worked with a private firm. Jackson's grandmother — General Rosa Killian — is still in the military, in fact, though only in a part-time, consultative capacity. (She lives in Washington and makes occasional visits to the Pentagon when they ask for her advice.)

A turning point in Jackson's life came when his childhood friend, Bernard Smith, was beaten almost to death in an act of racist violence. The two were 16, and the perpetrators made Jackson watch — though he escaped the incident with only a few bruises and a black eye. Jackson was furious, even more so when the perpetrators faced only the shallowest of justice (a $200 fine and 40 hours of community service). Bernard was changed after that, and he and Jackson drifted apart.

Due to his past, Colonel Killian has little tolerance for the random violence that now occurs in Minneapolis. He is especially incensed at violence against innocent people, but over time his belief in the existence of innocent people has deteriorated. When his commanding officer, Colonel Nadine Julliard, met her death at the hands of a dissident street gang only a couple of months following the Intrusion, Killian saw an echo of Bernard's beating. This incident leached most of the remaining hope and humanity from Killian's embittered soul.

Appearance: Colonel Killian is an African American man in his mid-30s. His hair is cut in the standard military buzz, and his posture is excellent. He wears a cross on the same chain as his dog tags, though in recent months, every time he sees the cross he wonders at its significance.

Killian: Init +7, Spd 30 ft.; hp 33, Def 12, touch 12, flat-footed 9; DR 2/–; Atk/Full Atk +5 melee (1d6+3, bayonet) or +7 ranged (2d10, assault rifle) or +5 ranged (3d10, assault rifle double tap) or +6 ranged (4d6, frag grenade).

Colonel Jackson Killian: CR 4; Medium humanoid (human); HD 6d8+6, hp 33; Init +7; Spd 30 ft.; Def 12, touch 12, flat-footed 9; Base Atk +3; Grp +5; Atk/Full Atk +5 melee (1d6+3, bayonet) or +7 ranged (2d10, assault rifle) or +5 ranged (3d10, assault rifle double tap) or +6 ranged (4d6, frag grenade); SQ damage reduction 2/– (light armor); SV Fort +6, Ref +8, Will +3; Str 14, Dex 17, Con 13, Int 12, Wis 13, Cha 18.
Skills and Feats: Diplomacy +13, Listen +12, Intimidate +13, Spot +12; Armor Proficiency, Improved Initiative, Improved Unarmed Strike[B], Semiautomatic Weapon Proficiency, Skilled (Listen and Spot), Weapon Focus (assault rifle).

"Since I am pretty much goddamned Jesus around here, I'd say you're pretty goddamned lucky that I got your best interests in mind, wouldn't you, fuckwad?"
—Colonel Jackson Killian

Captain Don Masters

Captain Don Masters commands Bravo Company.

Background: More and more, Don questions his reasons for entering the military. Originally, he joined out of a sense of patriotism and because it sounded like more fun than college. Don found that he was good at the job, so he worked hard and became an officer. He enjoys serving his country — but he hates bureaucracy, and that, combined with too much emotion when it comes to the troops under his command, is his downfall.

Masters sees assignment to Minneapolis as beyond the call of duty. The U.S. Army was to maintain a presence in foreign areas and, if the shit really hit the fan, to march in war alongside tanks, helicopters and a variety of other support systems. They'd enter a hostile area only *after* the Air Force had already bombed the fuck out of it. That's what modern warfare was about. The automation, the technical superiority of the United States — all of it meant that there was less loss of life all around and wars should, theoretically, resolve much faster.

Fighting crazy monsters from other realities is not what Don had in mind, and he balks. He balked especially after two of his troops were torn apart — slowly, screaming horribly the entire time — by a six-armed, clawed creature composed of shadow and quills like a puffer fish. (Don fancies he still hears the screams, echoing over the ruins.) Their bullets just bounced off the thing — as did the shrapnel from their grenades, and the nerve gas might as well have been air freshener. In what became one of the most infamous incidents in the battalion's history, Don refused to send his troops back into the ruins to face something like that. Some called it Treason; others called it Standing Up for What You Believe In, or Not Letting People Die Needlessly.

Whatever the case, though Colonel Julliard seemed willing to let the matter slide, Colonel Killian is not. Captain Masters now commands one of the most harrowing details in Minneapolis: the haunted and embattled University of Minnesota.

Appearance: Captain Masters is around 40. He is lax about military discipline as long as his troops are loyal and do their jobs, and he serves in one of the most dangerous areas of the city, so his uniform and body are often in need of a wash and a haircut. Masters has been an amateur bodybuilder since high school and has torn the sleeves off most of his shirts, allowing people to be impressed by his muscular arms. In addition to his own dog tags, he carries those of the soldiers he watched the monster slaughter — Anthony Wilson and Penny Hernandez — which he retrieved on a solo, unauthorized mission hours after their deaths.

Masters: Init +5, Spd 30 ft.; hp 27, Def 10, touch 10, flat-footed 9; DR 2/–; Atk/Full Atk +6 melee (1d6+6, bayonet) or +4 ranged (2d10, assault rifle) or +2 ranged (3d10, assault rifle double tap) or +3 ranged (4d6, frag grenade).

Captain Don Masters: CR 3; Medium humanoid (human); HD 4d8+8, hp 27; Init +5; Spd 30 ft.; Def 10, touch 10, flat-footed 9; Base Atk +2; Grp +6; Atk/Full Atk +6 melee (1d6+6, bayonet) or +4 ranged (2d10, assault rifle) or +2 ranged (3d10, assault rifle double tap) or +3 ranged (4d6, frag grenade); SQ damage reduction 2/– (light armor); SV Fort +6, Ref +5, Will +1; Str 18, Dex 12, Con 14, Int 8, Wis 11, Cha 15.

Skills and Feats: Diplomacy +13, Intimidate +13; Improved Initiative, Improved Unarmed Strike[B], Semiautomatic Weapon Proficiency, Weapon Focus (assault rifle).

The Dissidents

The people voluntarily living among Minneapolis's ruins fall into two varieties: criminals and everyone else. The lawless and violent nature of the ruins — where might makes right, you can shoot guns at U.S. soldiers, and God-knows-what cool stuff hides under the rubble — attracts many. These people band together to form gangs, though they call themselves by a variety of names. Gang warfare riddles the streets, with groups clashing over resources, territory and just for fun.

Other "dissidents" are not necessarily violent people, though violence becomes a necessity to defend themselves from the street gangs, monsters and even misguided soldiers. However, they prefer to avoid confrontation. Their motivations vary: Some want to remain near their former homes or loved ones, others are fascinated with some aspect of the Intrusion, and others have stranger motives. These people also usually gather in groups in order to survive.

The Bulldozers

Number: About 50

Headquarters: The Science Museum of Minnesota (described above under "Locations in the Twin Cities")

Some Important Characters: Warlord Bruce, head of the Bulldozers; Elizabeth Drake and Xian Yong-Shin, Bruce's lieutenants; the Monster, a frightening member of the group

"You'd be surprised what you can find if you look hard enough."
—Larry Myers, scavenger

The Bulldozers is one of the most brutal and well-organized street gangs. They owe most of their efficacy to a man who calls himself Warlord Bruce.

Warlord Bruce is perhaps the most infamous outlaw in the Twin Cities. He won notoriety when he led a large gang — the Gangrene Rippers — in a sneak attack on the U.S. troops stationed in Minneapolis and personally gunned down Colonel Nadine Julliard. Bruce lay low for a while, then came forward and used his infamy and forceful presence to take control of another gang (which involved slaying its leader, Lizard Lilly) and renaming it the Bulldozers. Bruce is canny and charismatic and has a knack for outfitting his gang with fine equipment.

Bruce has also made an effort to recruit vampires, werewolves and mages into his ranks. Though the creatures are suspicious of humans (and tend to think of them as cattle or ants rather than sentient beings), Bruce offered them positions of power in the gang and promises that he will help them hunt the Awakened, about which he displayed a surprising knowledge.

Bruce's diplomacy and bargaining skills have drawn about half a dozen supernatural creatures into the gang. Among these is a creature Bruce and the rest of the gang simply call "the Monster," as it's a giant, slug-like being with tendrils and tentacles that continuously sprout and withdraw from its form. It is capable of limited speech and limited intelligence. Though frightening, it obeys Bruce and kills only the gang's enemies (in horrific ways).

The gang includes about 50 members and claims the remains of the Science Museum of Minnesota. The gang has been there for a month or so, digging and searching, for Warlord Bruce says something important is buried in the rubble. So far, the gang has found nothing to justify their continuing efforts, but Bruce makes an appearance every week or so to give pep talks and replenish food, booze and weapons. What he does with the rest of his time is anyone's guess.

The truth is that Warlord Bruce is not a man at all — it is a demon. "Warlord Bruce" is its most-used and most famous guise, but it takes others as it moves about the city. A couple of its other alter-egos are also well-known: it is Mitch the Snitch, an important and seedy information broker, and it is Amanda Rymes, resourceful survivor in a small group based in Brooklyn Park (a suburb to the north). The demon takes its natural form fairly often, scouring the ruins in search of human — especially Awakened — prey.

Even Bruce's two lieutenants in the Bulldozers — the vampire Elizabeth Drake and the mage Xian Yong-Shin — don't know the truth about him.

"Warlord Bruce": Init +0, Spd 30 ft.; ● hp 68, Def 16, touch 16, flat-footed 16; demon traits; 🔫 Atk +9 ranged (2d10, assault rifle); Full Atk +9/+4 ranged (2d10, assault rifle); Point Blank Shot, Precise Shot; cants (Thrallsight DC 28, Thrallslave DC 28); 22 max Anima, 2 Anima/round.

"Warlord Bruce," Demon (Tempter) 9: CR 12; Medium demon; HD 12d8+24, hp 68; Init +0; Spd 30 ft.; Def 16, touch 16, flat-footed 16; Base Atk +9; Grp +9; Atk +9 ranged (2d10, assault rifle); Full Atk +9/+4 ranged (2d10, assault rifle); SA cants; SQ demon (tempter) traits; SV Fort +7, Ref +7, Will +10; Str 10, Dex 10, Con 14, Int 14, Wis 15, Cha 22.
Skills (Spirit) and Feats: Bluff +23, Diplomacy +26, Disguise +9, Gather Information +19, Intimidate +21, Knowledge (streetwise) +6, Perform (oratory) +21, Sense Motive +12, Sleight of Hand +3; Lightning Reflexes, Point Blank Shot, Precise Shot, Skill Focus (Diplomacy), Skilled (Bluff and Diplomacy).
Cants: Demonic Will, Infernal Pact, Tortuous Memory, Thrallsight, Thrall Slave.
Anima: 22 max; 2/round

Bulldozer: Init +5, Spd 30 ft.; ● hp 11, Def 11, touch 11, flat-footed 10; 🔫 Atk/Full Atk +2 melee (1d6+1, bayonet) or +2 ranged (2d10, assault rifle) or +2 ranged (4d6, frag grenade).

Typical Bulldozer: CR 2; Medium humanoid (human); HD 2d8+2, hp 11; Init +5; Spd 30 ft.; Def 11, touch 11, flat-footed 10; Base Atk +1; Grp +2; Atk/Full Atk +2 melee (1d6+1, bayonet) or +2 ranged (2d10, assault rifle) or +2 ranged (4d6, frag grenade); SV Fort +4, Ref +4, Will +1; Str 13, Dex 12, Con 12, Int 8, Wis 13, Cha 9.
Skills and Feats: Listen +8, Search +6; Improved Initiative, Skilled (Listen and Search).

Mogley's Crew

Number: About 25
Headquarters: None
Some Important Characters: Tim Mogley, head of Mogley's Crew

Mogley's Crew is a typical street gang roaming the remains of Minneapolis and St. Paul. The statistics below are appropriate for most other violent dissidents in the Twin Cities.

Mogley's Crew has changed names numerous times in its young life. Every time it changes leaders, the name changes as well. The gang began life as Wally's Crew, then was Shantika's Crew, then Wallace's Crew, Diana's Crew, Kevin's Crew and now Mogley's Crew. The guy in charge this week is Tim Mogley, a toad-like man with lips like a fish, hair like a duckling and a disposition like the serial killer he is: patient, brutal, calculating and charming. He is the model of antisocial behavior discussed in psychology textbooks.

Tim Mogley was stuck in the Minneapolis State Prison before the Intrusion. He, along with a handful of other inmates,

escaped in the chaos. Some of them banded together to form Wally's Crew, though Wally didn't last long. Mogley waited, biding his time until everyone who wanted a shot at leader had taken it. Kevin Workman was confident that he had eliminated all worthwhile opposition when he took over — then Mogley shot him dead without a second thought.

The couple of dozen members in Mogley's Crew view their leader with wariness and confusion, as the man doesn't seem like he should be able to heft a handgun, much less maintain leadership over rowdy street thugs. Nevertheless, Mogley's brutal tactics and merciless nature have earned the gang, if not success, then at least survival. The members stick together as they roam, taking out smaller groups by virtue of numbers rather than skill or arms. The gang has only a handful or firearms among its members, so they beat their opponents to death or unconsciousness with whatever handy, club-shaped pieces of detritus they can find.

The gang has a reputation for raping its victims, both men and women, if it catches them alive. Mogley doesn't participate in such activities, but he doesn't discourage it, either. He spends much of his time sitting on piles of rubble, cleaning his nails with an iron filing, staring at them through glasses that make his eyes too big.

Mogley's Crew Member: Init +1, Spd 30 ft.; hp 13, Def 11, touch 11, flat-footed 10; Atk/Full Atk +2 melee (1d6+1, club) or +2 ranged (1d10, zip gun).
Typical Member of Mogley's Crew: CR 1; Medium humanoid (human); HD 2d8+4, hp 13; Init +1; Spd 30 ft.; Def 11, touch 11, flat-footed 10; Base Atk +1; Grp +2; Atk/Full Atk +2 melee (1d6+1, club) or +2 ranged (1d10, zip gun); SV Fort +4, Ref +4, Will +1; Str 13, Dex 12, Con 12, Int 8, Wis 13, Cha 9.
Skills and Feats: Search +6, Survival +8; Skilled (Search and Survival), Toughness.

The Wardens of the Skyfire

Number: About 250

Headquarters: Irving Elementary, a school near the Conflagration

Some Important Characters: Arthur Cooper, head of the Wardens

Arthur Cooper was a real estate agent living in Falcon Heights (a St. Paul suburb) when the Intrusion came. His wife, Julie, and his two children were killed when a parking structure collapsed in downtown Minneapolis.

Some would tell you that the experience drove Arthur mad. And perhaps understandably. According to most accounts, he wandered aimlessly through the ruins of the Twin Cities for weeks, after which he encountered a newly created vampire who attempted to feed upon Arthur. Arthur's grief (and madness) turned to resolve and action. He struggled with his attacker and eventually dragged him into the sunlight, destroying him.

Arthur then got it into his head that the Skyfire, as the survivors called the Conflagration, was a gateway to Hell. Literally. He swore to defend the world against the invading forces from beyond.

Joining the Wardens of the Skyfire

The Wardens of the Skyfire are eager for new recruits. Unfortunately for most player characters, the Wardens hate supernatural creatures such as vampires, werewolves and mages, and kill them immediately. Over the past six months or so, the Wardens have gotten very good at identifying these creatures even when they assume human guise, so even if such a player character managed to bluff his way into their ranks, she wouldn't last long.

Humans have a good chance of joining the Wardens, and the Awakened, which the Wardens hold in something akin to awe, have an excellent chance. The Wardens see the Awakened as something *divine* to help them in their struggle against hell: the Awakened are angels, or angels possessing the bodies of humans, or humans infused with the power of God, or humans of such inner strength that they tap into Heaven in the same way that demons and vampires tap into Hell or *something*.

The recruitment process is relatively easy. A couple of Wardens interview a potential candidate, and assuming they don't sense any deception, he's in. They hand him a rifle and tell him what to do. Though the process seems painless, existing Wardens keep a close eye on recruits for at least three months; they are paranoid about a supernatural creature — especially a demon or its human agents (witting or not) — infiltrating their organization.

Opposing the Wardens of the Skyfire

Player character vampires, werewolves, mages and demons are likely to run afoul of the Wardens of the Skyfire. The Wardens do not believe that such creatures can be on their side, and so attempt to kill them. The Wardens know these supernatural creatures are powerful, so the Wardens use ambushes and numbers to overpower them. They are also savvy to the creatures' weaknesses, and attempt to lure vampires into the sun and riddle werewolves with silver bullets. The Wardens are not particularly dogged, however, and if the invaders vacate their territory, the Wardens remain wary but do not pursue them across the ruins.

Over time, Arthur gathered a group of like-minded individuals and called it the Wardens of the Skyfire. This ragtag tribe of survivors grew more adept at survival in the ruins as well as fighting against the supernatural. They hate vampires and werewolves and have a special enmity for demons. The group looks upon mages as traitors who "walk with the devil." Despite such philosophies, the Wardens are not a particularly religious group. Their view of Hell, demons and Satan (whom they assume is behind it all) is pragmatic. In their experience, the struggle isn't about religion, faith, philosophy or even God anymore. It's about survival. It's not about belief, sin or accepting saviors; it's about what it takes to blow away a werewolf.

Today, the Wardens are a large group of experienced, well-armed survivors spread throughout much of the city's western portion. They conduct patrols, mainly keeping a vigil against creatures coming out of the Skyfire. They also attempt to keep non-Wardens from getting too close. Willing to get even closer to the Conflagration than the military, these patrols monitor the very edge of the Skyfire. No one understands it better than they do — not metaphysically, but pragmatically. They know its signs and its sounds, and what they mean. They know that when the Conflagration flares in a particular way, it's going to bring a creature into the world.

"Back to the fires of Hades, you Jesus-hating, communist son of hellfire! God himself has granted me the power to kick your Satanic ass all the way back to perdition!"
—Arthur Cooper, The Wardens of the Skyfire

The military resents and fears the Wardens, thinking of them simply as overly armed, uncontrolled civilians (an anathema to martial law). The Wardens, in turn, have no respect for the military and its authority.

The Wardens kill vampires, werewolves, demons and mages on sight. A Warden feels justified in killing someone merely suspected of being a "hellchild" as they call them. They cannot afford to take chances, and they err on the side of unfortunate mistaken killings. Arthur is attempting to perfect some tests to determine whether or not someone is hellchild, but so far his attempts are in vain.

The Wardens of the Skyfire have supporters outside the ruins. Word has got out that a group of survivors is "fighting back," and some people (such as the Nine Choirs in Chicago, who feel a kinship with the Wardens) donate food or goods (or cash to buy food or goods), and a few Wardens spend their time shuttling back and forth out of the ruins, dodging military blockades to keep a line of supply.

Despite this sporadic outside aid, the Wardens get many of their supplies from scrounging. Canned and boxed food found in suburban pantries is still clearly edible, even after all this time, and they can obtain tools, gasoline and even weapons in this way as well. Their scrounging teams have to go further and further with each foray, but the Twin Cities have a lot of suburbs. The Wardens can even find new members by recruiting survivors who choose to remain or outsiders who make it this far on their own.

Arthur: Init +2, Spd 30 ft.; ♥ hp 22, Def 12, touch 12, flat-footed 10; 🔫 Atk/Full Atk +2 melee (1d4/19–20, knife) or +4 ranged (2d6, auto pistol) or +2 ranged (3d6, auto pistol double tap).

Arthur Cooper: CR 3; Medium humanoid (human); HD 5d8, hp 22; Init +2; Spd 30 ft.; Def 12, touch 12, flat-footed 10; Base Atk +2; Grp +2; Atk/Full Atk +2 melee (1d4/19–20, knife) or +4 ranged (2d6, auto pistol) or +2 ranged (3d6, auto pistol double tap); SV Fort +5, Ref +6, Will +5; Str 10, Dex 14, Con 12, Int 11, Wis 14, Cha 16.

Skills and Feats: Diplomacy +11, Knowledge (occult) +10, Perform (oratory) +13; Improved Initiative, Iron Will, Semiautomatic Weapon Proficiency.

Warden: Init +1, Spd 30 ft.; ♥ hp 13, Def 11, touch 11, flat-footed 10; 🔫 Atk/Full Atk +0 melee (1d4–1/19–20, knife) or +2 ranged (2d8, rifle).

Typical Warden of the Skyfire: CR 1; Medium humanoid (human); HD 2d8+2, hp 11; Init +1; Spd 30 ft.; Def 11, touch 11, flat-footed 10; Base Atk +1; Grp +0; Atk/Full Atk +0 melee (1d4–1/19–20, knife) or +2 ranged (2d8, rifle); SV Fort +4, Ref +4, Will +3; Str 8, Dex 12, Con 12, Int 12, Wis 13, Cha 10.

Skills and Feats: Knowledge (occult) +6, Sense Motive +8, Spot +8, Survival +6; Iron Will, Skilled (Sense Motive and Spot).

Other Groups

A few people who do not rightly belong to the military or to the dissidents also wander the ruins. The most noteworthy are the IDA's agents, but others exist as well.

The Intrusion Defense Agency in Minneapolis

Number: 52

Headquarters: A Bank of America in downtown Minneapolis

Some Important Characters: Marcus Jonathon and Sylvia White, deputy directors; Agent Goopy, field agent

A number of IDA teams operate in the Twin Cities, primarily gathering information but also, when the opportunity arises, ridding the world of some of the Iconnu's agents. Technically, the IDA in Minneapolis works in conjunction with Killian's military, though in reality the two groups have little love for each other. Killian's orders regarding the IDA say that he is to provide them with "full support," but other than that the wording is murky. The military sees the IDA agents as demanding elitists, while the IDA sees the military personnel as ignorant brutes. Thus, each takes pleasure at inconveniencing the other, purely out of spite.

A pair of agents oversees the IDA's affairs in Minneapolis. These two deputy directors are the human Marcus Jonathan and the vampire Sylvia White, recently transferred from Chicago to provide a check on Marcus's increasingly overenthusiastic measures. Though both Marcus and Sylvia anticipated hating the other, after a couple of weeks to work out the kinks, they developed a friendly and effective working relationship.

Marcus's energy is almost frenetic; he wants to send teams everywhere, too close to the Conflagration, *into* the Conflagration, to see what happens; he wants to raid a supposed vampire nest as soon as it's discovered and send his people into the field before proper support and equipment arrives. In contrast, Sylvia takes her time with everything. She gathers as much intelligence as possible before sending agents to undertake a mission, and she errs on the side of caution. Together, their combined strategies prove more effective than either on its own.

Fifty-two IDA agents, not including Marcus and Sylvia, operate in the ruins of the Twin Cities. Thirty of these are normal humans. Eleven are Awakened. Four are mages, four are werewolves and three are vampires. The last is a solitary rogue demon that goes by so many different names that in a fit of frustration and after seeing its true form for the first time, Sylvia dubbed it "Agent Goopy." The name stuck, though everyone is careful not to use it within the demon's earshot; Sylvia is reasonably confident the demon remains unaware of its moniker.

Though Agent Goopy is a member of the IDA, its membership is provisional. The demon — a scourge demon — joined under the understanding that the IDA would provide it with weapons and other resources it needed to carry out missions of its choosing, all of which involve finding and killing the Iconnu's agents. Though the demon reports findings and successes to Marcus and Sylvia, their power over it is limited to suggesting its next victim.

IDA agents in Minneapolis operate in teams of three to six. Most engage in fieldwork, gathering intelligence on the Conflagration, Nightmare Sites, supernatural creatures and anything else they can find related to the paranormal. They also keep tabs on the varying factions at work in the ruins, though they are careful to keep their heads down and their noses out of any conflict, especially those between Colonel Killian's troops and

the dissidents. Violence against the Iconnu's agents is either carefully planned in advance or a surprise for at least one of the parties. Sylvia encourages her agents not to act too rashly.

In addition to the agents in the field, eight agents remain at the headquarters, disseminating information and remaining in contact (as best they can) with the IDA headquarters in Chicago. As Internet, cell phone and satellite connections are unreliable at best, information-runners travel via helicopter between the cities two or three times a week. The IDA headquarters in the Twin Cities is in the first floor of a ravaged Bank of America in downtown Minneapolis, not far from the Metrodome.

The IDA agents in Minneapolis — especially Marcus Jonathan and Sylvia White — are some of the best-informed people on the planet on topics such as vampires, mages, werewolves, demons, the Nightmare Wave, the Intrusion and the Iconnu. They are some of the few people who know a good portion of the truth (as much as anyone knows) and are aware of the scope of the threat.

IDA Agent: Init +5, Spd 30 ft.; hp 11, Def 11, touch 11, flat-footed 10; Atk/Full Atk +2 melee (1d4+1, pistol whip) or +2 ranged (2d6, auto pistol).

Typical IDA Field Agent: CR 1; Medium humanoid (human); HD 2d8+2, hp 11; Init +5; Spd 30 ft.; Def 11, touch 11, flat-footed 10; Base Atk +1; Grp +2; Atk/Full Atk +2 melee (1d4+1, pistol whip) or +2 ranged (2d6, auto pistol); SV Fort +4, Ref +4, Will +0; Str 12, Dex 12, Con 12, Int 10, Wis 10, Cha 10.
Skills and Feats: Knowledge (occult) +7, Spot +7; Improved Initiative, Skilled (Knowledge (occult) and Spot).

The Sadists

Number: About 50

Headquarters: A mansion in St. Paul's Summit Avenue

Some Important Characters: The Marquis de Sade, head of the Sadists

Many vampires reside in the Twin Cities. One in particular carries on his unlife in St. Paul. This creature is not associated with the Iconnu or with the IDA, and he is one of the few vampires with the distinction of carrying the soul of a historical figure. He is Donatien Alphonse François, the Marquis de Sade, and he holds court in a half-collapsed mansion in St. Paul's historic Summit Avenue.

Up until recently, the marquis ruled all the vampires in the Twin Cities; the Minneapolis metropolitan area was his vampiric fiefdom, and he was its lord. However, six months ago, a number of vampires under his rule acted on a suspicion. They confronted him about his relative inactivity regarding the hunting and elimination of the Awakened; de Sade seemed more concerned with learning about the modern world and collecting humans for his experiments. The marquis laughed at his detractors, revealed that he had never had any intention of following the Covenant and had his loyal vampires slay them. The story got out.

Now, the Marquis de Sade resides in the same mansion from which he ruled the Twin Cities. Of course, another vampire has arisen to rule over the many vampires who still

follow the Covenant in the area. These vampires, loyal to the Iconnu, hate de Sade but are too frightened of his power to confront him. De Sade treats the Iconnu's lackeys as beneath his notice, and so the two vampiric factions function in the same area, killing each other when they get the opportunity but generally avoiding each other.

De Sade is intensely interested in the modern world and the advances in psychology and medicine. He could care less about the struggles between the Broken and the Iconnu; his interests lie elsewhere. De Sade's depraved soul possessed the body of Dr. Emile Le Vaughn, a psychiatrist and psychologist. The combined personalities contribute to de Sade's fascination with the human body — in particularly the nervous system, and in particular the brain.

Vampires bring several captive humans to de Sade's mansion every week. De Sade performs horrific experiments on these pour wretches, testing pain responses and cutting open skulls to examine still-living brains. The twisted marquis has a variety of clamps, bolts, tools and other implements of torture throughout his mansion. The cries emanating from within — which often deteriorate from human shrieks to animal bellows as the marquis slices away pieces of brain — echo across the surrounding blocks. Of course, in this city of screams, most don't pay them much heed.

Several dozen vampires are loyal to de Sade. A number of other creatures also pay him fealty, including a handful of werewolves and mages and even the odd demon. These characters hold the marquis in awe due to his fame in history. Most also share his interest in learning about the modern world and about human anatomy. Some share de Sade's interest in pain, while others capture humans and perform their own experiments, which concern anything from disease to isolation to sex.

The marquis's followers call themselves the Sadists, and the title proves apt. Most of the people living in the Twin Cities know of the Sadists by now, and keep far away from them.

Typical Sadist: Init +4, Spd 30 ft.; ♥ hp 44, Def 20, touch 20, flat-footed 16; Evasion, Improved Evasion, Uncanny Dodge; Disciplines (Celerity, Cloak of Night, Touch of Shadow), vampire traits; 🔫 Atk +8 melee (1d4+3, bite) or +10 ranged (2d6, auto pistol); Full Atk +8 melee (1d4+3, bite) or +10/+5 ranged (2d6, auto pistol); Disciplines; 11 max Vitae, 1 Vitae/round.

Sadist, Vampire (Mekhet) 5: CR 8; Medium human (vampire); HD 8d8+8, hp 44; Init +4; Spd 30 ft.; Def 20, touch 20, flat-footed 16; Base Atk +6; Grp +8; Atk +8 melee (1d4+3, bite) or +10 ranged (2d6, auto pistol); Full Atk +8 melee (1d4+3, bite) or +10/+5 ranged (2d6, auto pistol); SA Disciplines; SQ vampire traits; SV Fort +7, Ref +10, Will +5; Str 14, Dex 19, Con 12, Int 14, Wis 8, Cha 13.
Skills (Intellect) and Feats: Appraise +5, Concentration +4, Heal +4, Hide +12, Knowledge (behavioral sciences) +10, Knowledge (earth and life sciences) +8, Move Silently +12, Research +7; Evasion, Improved Evasion, Uncanny Dodge.
Disciplines: Celerity, Cloak of Night, Touch of Shadow.
Vitae: 11 max; 1/round

Encounters and Encounter Areas

The above descriptions under "Locations in the Twin Cities" provide overviews and general information about some of the locations in Minneapolis and St. Paul. The areas described below are more detailed, containing enough information for you to run encounters in these areas. Of course, you are welcome to change and alter them as you see fit.

The Ghost House

"There's a house that haunts the area around the Intrusion," a survivor in the wasteland might tell you. "It moves around, appearing here and there. Don't go in there, man. You'll never come out."

It is, in fact true that an old three-story house in the site of the Intrusion wasn't actually destroyed. Instead, it was transferred to the Annihilation Zone, where the house insinuates itself into existing neighborhoods, or just stands out alone in a lonely stretch of highway. In either case, the house is always in good condition, although quiet. There are sometimes lights on inside the house at night. The house remains in the same location for only 1d4 days.

Should anyone knock on the door (or just walk right in), they are welcomed by the residents, the Andersons. They are a friendly family (Mom, Dad and the two kids) who love visitors. Anyone coming into the house and interacting with the Andersons, however, must make a DC 20 Will save. Characters who are successful need not make a save again unless they leave and come back in. Failure means that the character suddenly believes himself to be an Anderson, and that he lives in the house. He will not willingly leave the house under any circumstances, and will attempt to get others to stay as well. If forcibly removed from the house, the victim works tirelessly to return.

The only way to convince the character that he does not belong in the house lies in the old family Bible displayed prominently in the living room. In it are the names of the Anderson family, dating back a dozen or more generations. Showing the victim that he is not in the genealogy list breaks the "spell."

The actual Andersons in the house are merely lifeless constructs created by the house to use as lures. They never change, and no matter what are always friendly and good natured. Any real person in the house when it transfers to another location is lost forever.

The Haunted Car Lot

Before the Intrusion, a large Roseville car dealership called Johnson Motors offered a vast lot of both new and used automobiles. (Roseville is a suburb north of St. Paul.) In the panic immediately following the Intrusion, many of the cars were stolen by opportunistic looters as well as those simply seeking a means of escape.

No one ever saw the looters or fleeing thieves again. The Nightmare Wave transformed all the cars of the Johnson Motors lot.

The Johnson Motors establishment consists of a large, single-story structure that served as showroom and office, as well as a parts-and-service area. A vast car lot surrounds this huge structure, which is now partially collapsed (mainly the showroom and office portions).

About two dozen cars are still on the lot. Half of these are obviously inoperable. Some hang partly within a massive crack that opened in the north end, swallowing cars like a gaping smile that stretches the lot. A few more have been stripped, with even their tires missing. The rest though — about a dozen cars, some new and some used, of various makes and models — wait to be driven off, covered in a bit of dust and debris, a few with cracked windshields or scratched exteriors, but otherwise in good working order.

Each car is horribly cursed. You can invent whatever curses you like for them, and/or you can use the following.

1. 2001 Silver Toyota Echo. This car appears to run fine — so fine, in fact, that despite its empty gas tank and the two missing tires on its left side, it clips along well, allowing a smooth ride for its passengers. The car runs so smoothly, in fact, that it seems to run itself: it grants a +2 equipment bonus on Drive checks.

However, whenever a creature leaves the car, the creature feels suddenly tired, and the car looks particularly inviting. A creature that exits the car, no matter how long or short a time it has been inside, takes two points of Constitution drain. Reentering the car restores one of these lost points, but if the creature exits again, it again loses that point and takes two additional points of Constitution drain.

After the car has been idle for 24 hours, it drives itself back to the car lot and parks in its assigned spot.

2. 2002 White Ford Escape. As soon as the ignition starts, the locks click down, the windows roll up and an airtight seal forms around all openings. The air in the car hisses away through an unseen opening. Then the car sits there; it does not move, even though it has gas in its tank. A character in the car has about a minute of air before he must hold his breath (see Chapter 7: Playing the Game, "The Environment," *Suffocation*).

The car's windows and exterior are supernaturally reinforced. The windows have hardness 10 and 20 hit points (the windshield has 40 hit points), with a break DC of 25.

3. 1988 Blue Ford Escort. This car looks as if it belonged to an impoverished college student. It appears to run fine but for a few minor bumps and hiccups natural for an old car. However, unbeknownst to the driver (i.e., the GM should keep this information secret), the car imposes a –4 penalty on Drive checks. In addition, if the driver ever rolls a natural 1 on a Drive check, the car explodes, dealing 20d6 points of damage to its occupants (DC 25 Reflex half) and 10d6 points of damage to everything within 30 feet (DC 25 Reflex half).

4. 1988 Silver Chevy Astro Van. Any foreign object (or creature) inside this car when the sun goes down takes 20d6 points of damage per round until the object or creature is utterly disintegrated.

5. 2004 Purple P.T. Cruiser. Anyone inside this car feels fantastic — so good, in fact, that she receives a +1 morale bonus on all skill checks, ability checks, attack rolls, damage rolls and saves. However, time works strangely inside the car; people within age one year for every hour they spend inside. Other objects and items are subject to this time lapse as well, so a suddenly rotten apple might tip off a victim to his peril (the GM might allow a DC 20 Spot check to notice a telling sign).

6. 1994 Black Nissan Maxima. This car runs fine, but after it reaches highway speed (see Chapter 7: Playing the Game, "Vehicle Movement and Combat"), it cannot decelerate — even if it runs out of gas.

7. 1991 Green Mercury Villager. The interior and exterior surfaces of this car are covered with a paranormal contact poison. A character touching such a surface with bare skin risks the poison — initial damage none, secondary damage 1d4 Con, Fort DC 17. Since the poison deals no initial damage, a victim risks poisoning himself numerous times (once every round) before he realizes something is wrong.

A DC 20 Spot check or DC 10 Search check allows a character to notice the liquid sheen on the car's surfaces.

8. 2008 White Volkswagen Golf. This car is clearly the best in the lot. The car still looks brand new, despite the chaos: it is gleaming white, appears freshly washed and all its windows are intact.

The car runs on gas, though not particularly well — its maximum speed is 35 mph, and it imposes a –2 penalty on Drive checks. However, the car runs much better on blood: the car can achieve speeds of up to 100 mph and provides a +2 equipment bonus on Drive checks. If the car is filled with pure human blood, its top speed is 120 mph and it provides a +4 equipment bonus on Drive checks. Whether running on gas or blood, the car gets 40 miles to the gallon.

Anyone sitting in the driver's seat when the ignition is on has an inkling about the car's secret thirst. The character also feels compelled to keep this knowledge secret, and must make a DC 18 Will save to discuss it with another. After making such a save, the character need not make the save again to discuss the issue with the same party — though anyone told the information must make a Will save to pass it on. If the save fails, the character cannot discuss the car's thirst with that character for 24 hours, when he can make another attempt.

9. 1984 Brown Buick Skylark. This car is clearly a piece of junk, but it seems to run okay. If it is off the lot when the moon is up, though, all werewolves within one mile feel drawn to the car (DC 10 Will save to resist). Once they see the car, they feel similarly compelled to kill its passengers.

10. 2008 Gold Mercedes-Benz SLK280 Roadster. This luxury car runs just fine, but has a penchant for hitting pedestrians. On the driver's turn, if the car has a chance of colliding with a Small or larger living creature, the car jerks in that direction and speeds up; the driver must make a DC 20 Drive check to retain control. If he fails, the car accelerates as much as possible and rams the creature. The Reflex save to reduce the damage has a DC of 25 (rather than 15).

After the car hits a creature, it is sated for one minute; the driver retains control for this time, even if another likely creature appears.

11. 2006 Red Hummer A1 Alpha Wagon. This fine car has only a few nicks, half a tank of gas, and runs fine. A demon in the car loses one Anima each minute; a vampire loses Vitae and a werewolf loses Essence at the same rate. Each time a creature loses an Anima, Vitae or Essence in this way, he can make a DC 20 Will save to realize the fact.

A creature reduced to 0 Anima, Vitae or Essence takes four points of Constitution drain each round as the car feeds instead on their life force.

A creature aside from a demon, vampire or werewolf takes two points of Constitution drain each minute.

An Awakened is immune to these effects.

Military Encounters

Killian's soldiers patrol Minneapolis; the smallest group in which they operate is a squad of five or six soldiers. Squads move about the ruins, carrying out Killian's orders and furthering the military's various mission objectives. Months of fighting, ambushes and horror make the troops jumpy and trigger happy; these days they are likely to shoot first at anything suspicious.

Squads range out across the city, but they are increasingly frequent the closer you get to the Metrodome. A group of characters wandering around Minneapolis likely encounters a squad of soldiers at some point.

Killian also has a number of fortified areas in key locations throughout the city. These fortifications, composed of rubble, salvage and military-issued materiel, provide the soldiers with cover in varying degrees (see Chapter 7: Playing the Game, "Combat Sequence," *Cover and Concealment*). Small fortifications are sometimes staffed by groups as small as squads; more sizeable fortifications serve as headquarters for platoons (composed of five squads — about 32 soldiers total). A platoon usually has some sort of vehicular support depending on its mission. A platoon tasked with keeping watch over a wide area probably has a helicopter at its disposal. A platoon near hostile territory might have a tank or armored personnel carrier. (See Chapter 6: Equipment for vehicle statistics.)

The military presence in Minneapolis consists of five companies, each with around 200 soldiers. Companies rarely function as a single unit these days, instead splitting into platoons (which then split into squads). Only in large, pre-planned missions does an entire company move out together.

Soldier: Init +2, Spd 30 ft.; ♥ hp 19, Def 11, touch 11, flat-footed 9; Defensive Move; DR 2/–; 🔫 Atk/Full Atk +2 melee (1d6+1, bayonet) or +3 ranged (2d10, assault rifle) or +1 ranged (3d10, assault rifle double tap) or +3 ranged (4d6, frag grenade).

Typical Twin Cities Soldier: CR 2; Medium humanoid (human); HD 3d8+6, hp 19; Init +2; Spd 30 ft.; Def 11, touch 11, flat-footed 9; Base Atk +1; Grp +2; Atk/Full Atk +2 melee (1d6+1, bayonet) or +3 ranged (2d10, assault rifle) or +1 ranged (3d10, assault rifle double tap) or +3 ranged (4d6, frag grenade); SQ damage reduction 2/– (light armor); SV Fort +5, Ref +5, Will +1; Str 12, Dex 14, Con 14, Int 10, Wis 11, Cha 8.
Skills and Feats: Listen +5, Spot +5, Survival +5; Armor Proficiency, Defensive Move, Improved Unarmed Strike[B], Semiautomatic Weapon Proficiency.

Tactics: When a squad patrols or mans a fortification, the squad is extremely wary. If anything suspicious occurs (such a soldier hearing something nearby or spotting a hidden creature), the squad shouts an alarm, and the soldiers take cover. They shout at the supposed creature to show itself. If they get no response, they repeat this command several times; after the fourth time, they hurl a grenade into the area (after warning that they will do so). If the grenade explodes and no one shouts in pain or comes running out, the soldiers assume it was all just their imagination (a fairly common occurrence) and move on.

If they receive a response, they *prefer* to resolve the situation peacefully, but they are suspicious and edgy, and if the other party doesn't cooperate, the soldiers are prone to start shooting. If the other party *does* cooperate, the soldiers' normal course of action is to confiscate their weapons (and other valuable supplies) and take them to their nearest headquarters; from there, the guests are usually transported to the Metrodome, where the Brass decides what to do with them. Normal, cooperative citizens are smacked on the wrist and told to get the hell out of Minneapolis (and the Annihilation Zone). The military doesn't like supernatural creatures and the soldiers give them a hard time, but unless such characters give them an excuse to stake them through the hearts, the soldiers turn them over to the local IDA authorities.

Monsters of Hennepin Avenue

Survivors in Minneapolis report frequent sightings of creatures on Hennepin Avenue in downtown. These creatures move like men and women and from a distance might pass as men and women, but are, with certainty, not men and women — not human men and women, in any event.

Most of these tales are just fragments. They're stories heard from a friend of a friend, or are based on brief encounters. Still, they were enough for Colonel Killian to send a team in to investigate a month ago, but it found nothing.

The soldiers found nothing only because the creatures they sought were not yet ready to be found. A contingent of demons has come to make the City Center Shopping Center into their new lair. The rumors, fear and uncertainty are all weapons in their carefully orchestrated plan. It is not because they were careless that witnesses reported sights or feelings of inhumanity; it is because the creatures wished it so.

The demons carefully release bits of their frightening natures to passersby to foment fear and rumor. A demon "couple" walks down the street, arm-in-arm, seemingly perfectly normal — except for the odd ways their knees bend. The kid standing at the end of the block blinks, wondering if he's imagining things. A demon disguised as a beleaguered survivor approaches a human, and they have a brief conversation about places where they might find supplies. During the conversation, the demon stands too close, and once or twice its eyes change from apparently human eyes to something snake-like and definitely inhuman.

The demons here number seven in total, and they are even more arrogant than most demons. They believe that they do not need the help — even the manipulated, unwitting help — of werewolves, vampires, mages or other demons. These demons can accomplish their goals by themselves, allowing human uncertainty and fear — already heightened due to the devastated nature of the Twin Cities — to create the chaos and eventual bloodshed they crave.

The demon in charge calls itself Asmodeus more often than not. While it is confident and self-assured, it is also an intelligent

leader and a master diplomat. It values the ideas and opinions of its fellow demons, and the small cadre functions more like a council than a team with a single leader. Still, Asmodeus is their master, and it casts the final and telling vote.

Asmodeus has just implemented the second phase of its plan: survivors skulking around Hennepin Avenue go mysteriously missing. The demons grab these people, of course. Most of the captives the demons simply kill and consume. Others the demons drive mad over days or weeks of mental and physical torture, then release back into the city to spread their terror. Still others the demons capture and subdue, take to some dark place elsewhere in the city and leave. These people, if they are especially fortunate, wake up none the worse for wear, wondering how they got here.

Of course, the demons kill any Awakened they find.

Survivor Trading Post

Not a combat or horror encounter area, the Survivor Trading Post is a gathering place for "dissidents" remaining in Minneapolis. Located in a suburban Applebee's, the Trading Post is a pub, a diner and a sort of general store. Money is accepted, but barter is often preferred.

The proprietor of the Trading Post is Sarah Lanning. Though tough, she isn't Awakened. She does, however, have Harold, a fifth-level werewolf bodyguard, around for protection if she needs it. Sarah knows a great deal about Minneapolis pre- and post-Intrusion, including most of the individuals and organizations mentioned in this chapter. She even knows a fair bit about the Iconnu.

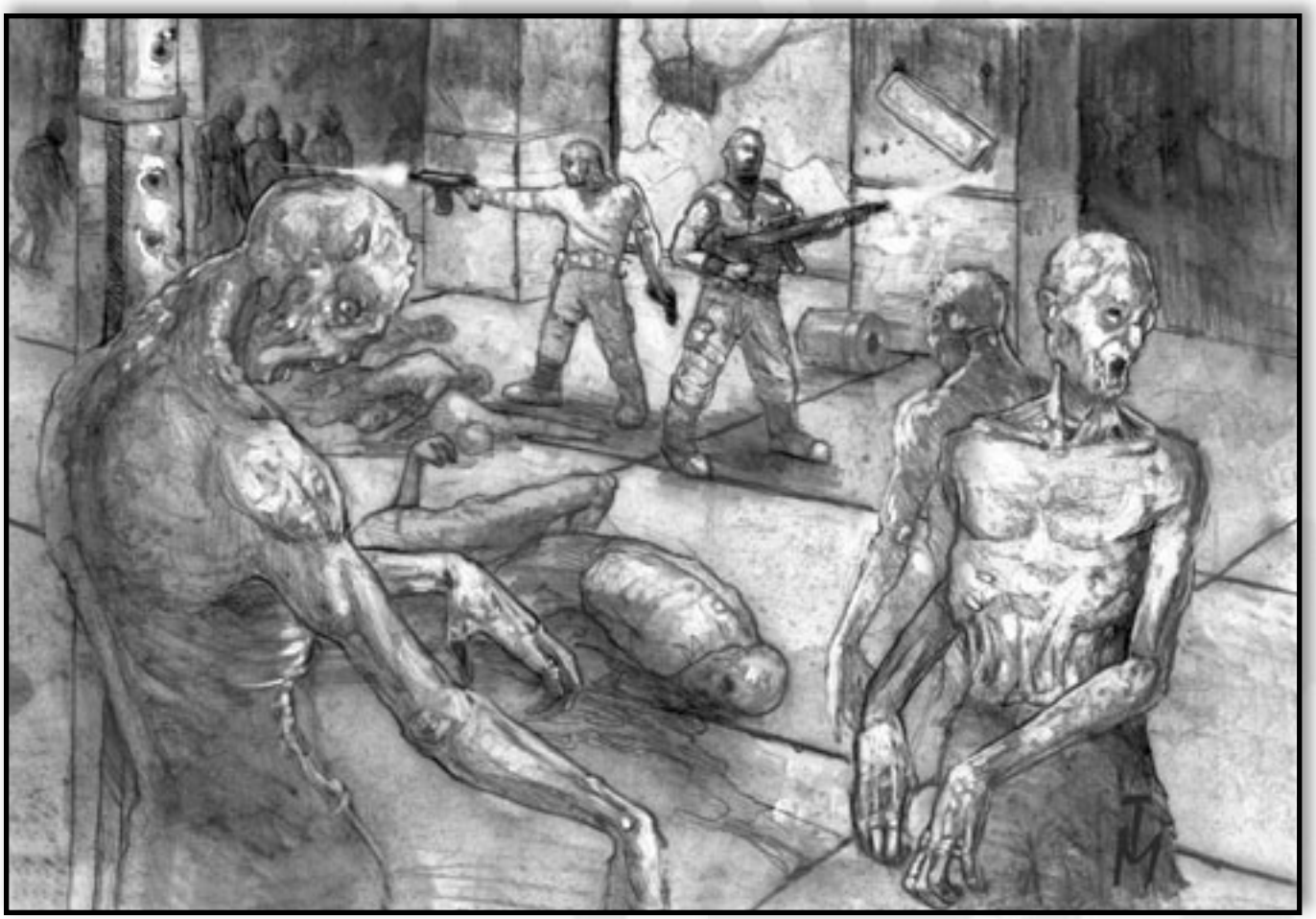
The Survivor Trading Post is open only at night, to keep a low profile. The last thing Sarah wants is for a military patrol to see some activity around the Applebee's and raid the place. Scavengers (and thieves) sell and trade their finds here, meaning that Sarah's often got a strange miscellany of food, gear and various odds and ends for sale.

Characters in the ruins find the Trading Post a good place to meet others, get information and find some food and drink. It's also somewhere to get ammunition and necessary gear without leaving the city.

Zombies in the Mall of America

The Mall of America was the largest indoor shopping area in the United States, and is located in Bloomington, which lies a few miles south of Minneapolis. The mall once boasted over 400 stores, as well as numerous nightclubs and movie theaters — even an indoor amusement park with a rollercoaster.

Now, though the mall is in ruins, its structure proved remarkably stable. The ceiling is collapsed in only a few places. Most of the windows are shattered and shelves toppled, but the halls are relatively clear and people can move through them



with little difficulty. The mall proves a bonanza of resources of all stripes, from food and camping gear to weapons and alcohol.

Unfortunately for those who seek to plunder it, the Mall of America is a Nightmare Site of a particularly dangerous and almost ludicrously pulpy nature. Most people in the mall survived the initial earthquake that rocked the area, but the Nightmare Wave killed them instantly when it ripped through. The people did not stay dead for long, however. After 24 hours — enough time for them to rot slightly and for stray dogs to gnaw on some of them — the bodies rose from the floors and stairways and turned dead eyes on the corridors.

The mall now crawls with these zombies. The creatures instinctively know that they cannot survive outside the Mall of America; zombies brought out the doors (or flung through the windows) revert to ordinary (dead) corpses immediately. The zombies don't do much in the mall except wander around and moan at each other, but they can sense living creatures and seek to slay them when they enter the mall. The zombies are not particularly dangerous alone — especially when they face modern firearms — but their sheer number makes the mall one of the most deadly places in Minneapolis.

The Mall of America carries a further curse. When a zombie falls, it remains "dead" for only a minute or two before picking itself back up. Zombies missing body parts reattach them, though those blown to pieces seem to be gone for good. However, living people who die in the mall join the zombies' ranks in 24 hours. Thus, in the year since the zombies came to be, their numbers have increased rather than declined.

Desperate people still enter the mall, hoping to smash their way through the zombies with enough speed and vigor to abscond with some of the remaining supplies. Most such forays fail, but some — especially those well-equipped and experienced at fighting the zombies — grab a few resources before fleeing the coagulating masses.

A man named Xavier Hollander makes solitary camp across the street from the mall. Xavier was a Mall of America security guard for several years before the Intrusion. Since the zombies arrived, he has been in and out of the mall more than two dozen times, and his zombie-fighting acumen and knowledge of the mall is unparalleled. He offers his services to groups who attempt missions into the mall, asking for food, medical supplies and other resources in return. Everyone in Minneapolis, from the most violent street gangs to Colonel Killian, knows not to give Xavier any trouble: he is too valuable a resource.

Rumors about the zombies abound. Some say they get more powerful the more times you kill them. Many people offer tips — some valid, some not — about fighting them: Target the head or the heart, or use silver bullets or blessed baseball bats. Some say that different types of zombies exist, some stronger and faster than the others. One wild rumor says that something deep in the mall *controls* the zombies, though few care to dwell on this possibility.

Zombie*: Init +2, Spd 30 ft.; hp 26, Def 15, touch 12 flat-footed 13; DR 5/slashing, zombie template; Atk/Full Atk +5 melee (1d6+3, slam); zombie template.

Minor Minion, Conjured Creature: CR 2; Medium animal; HD 3d8+3+10, hp 26; Init +2; Spd 30 ft.; Def 15, touch 12, flat-footed 13; Base Atk +2; Grp +4; Atk/Full Atk +5 melee (1d6+3, slam); SQ darkvision, damage reduction 5/slashing, zombie template; SV Fort +4, Ref +5, Will +2; Str 15, Dex 15, Con 13, Int 3, Wis 8, Cha 3.

Skills and Feats: Listen +3, Spot +4; Weapon Focus (slam).

SQ—Zombie Template: Zombies are immune to mental attacks, poison and critical hits. They can take only a single move or attack action each round. (A zombie can move and attack in the same round if it charges.)

* This is a typical, weak zombie. It is simply a lesser minion with the zombie template. To create more powerful zombies, use more powerful minions and/or add strange powers appropriate to zombies.

"Dude, whatever you do, stay out of the Mall of America. More like Brawl of America, dude. Brawl with brain-suckin' zombies, that is."
—Josh Hammersh, Minneapolis "dissident"

In the Ruins

The shelves of the Mini Mart were mostly empty. Old plastic and paper containers littered the pair of aisles along with broken glass from shattered doors of the refrigerated compartments built into the walls. Inside those long-open cases, racks of white shelves designed to hold cans of soda, bottled water and beer were covered with a slightly oily, black residue. Leaves and dirt had blown in through the broken windows. It had easily been many months since anyone had been here.

Robin Grant scanned the wreckage carefully. Looters in the early days after the Event were often careless. It was not all that uncommon to find a discarded can of tuna or a small package of chips in a corner or under a toppled product display, although nowadays scavenging animals had usually got into anything like the latter — anything that tiny claws or teeth could open.

Robin's skin was dark, and her hair black and trimmed very short. In fact, she had shaved her head two weeks ago, which may have also been the last time she'd had warm water for a shower. Her eyes were large and bright, and her face narrow.

After a few minutes, she determined that there was no food here, although a bottle of aspirin lay next to a pile of year-old magazines and a large plastic jug of windshield wiper fluid. She pocketed the aspirin, putting it in the outside pocket of her tattered raincoat. Robin glanced behind the counter. She knew she wouldn't find any money or cigarettes, but there might be something of interest.

The remains of a person — probably a man — lay in a jumble amid more leaves and garbage. Dead for months, there was no stench, and animals had made away with most of him anyway.

Probably animals, Robin told herself.

She climbed over the counter, careful not to disturb the bones on the floor when she hopped down on the other side. Spent shell casings lay all around the floor, although there was no sign of a gun. Bullet holes in the back wall confirmed how the man had died, probably right after the Event, in those terrible days that immediately followed. You died defending a Mini Mart? You poor corporate slave.

A rumbling sound from outside made Robin duck down. She knew that sound. Military trucks. She wanted nothing to do with them. As they passed by, her mind shot to Davis, and hoped that he stayed in hiding out there. It was a risk being out during the day, with the army out in force, but it was a bigger risk to be out at night, when the soldiers were smart enough to stay inside.

On the floor, Robin spotted a sheet of notebook paper, dirty and stained.

* * *

Outside, she found Davis among the rusting, dirty washing machines that lay scattered around the back entrance of the appliance store. He popped his head up from behind one of the washers, covered in scraggly blond hair and a

blond beard. It didn't look right on him, but there was not much sense in trying to keep it trimmed, considering how fast it grew. He wore a tattered green wool sweater pulled over a collared shirt, along with jeans and sneakers.

"Did you find anything to eat?" he asked her, eyes raised in hope.

She shook her head. "No." She paused. "But I did find this." She held out the piece of paper, which fluttered in the cold wind.

"Damnit!" he snarled, not looking at what she held. "I'm fucking hungry. I gotta eat."

Davis's abrupt temper changes caught Robin off guard every time. Even after they'd wandered the ruins of Minneapolis together for three months, she still fell into the trap of thinking of him as a human.

"Davis, man, look at this," Robin said, waving the paper in front of his face.

He snatched it from her, and looked at it. He looked back at her. "So?"

"It's directions to a storehouse. Somebody wrote down the address here to a cache of looted goods so somebody else could join them."

"But . . ." Davis scrunched up his face. "This is old. That stuff's probably not even there anymore."

"We don't know that. It's worth a try."

"This is stupid. I'm hungry, and I know I can find food my own way." His eyes narrowed, and he bared his teeth ever so slightly.

"Look, let's just try this. If I'm wrong, you can go hunting." She added softly, "If you have to."

"Don't pull that 'you can't control your own urges' thing on me again. I don't give a flying fuck anymore."

"I'm just saying, if you're not in control, who is?"

"Shut. The. Hell. Up."

"Fine." Davis was in a particularly bad mood today, clearly. Not that he was usually the best company, but he was all right some of the time. And he watched her back.

And he could hold his own in a fight with a vampire.

As she stood there in silence, Davis' nostrils stopped flaring, and his shoulders relaxed. After a minute, he said with a sigh, "Okay. Let's go to this place. But let's hurry. It's getting dark."

* * *

It started to rain, and as she had the last few days, Robin noted that the rain smelled funny, and felt oily. In her real life, before the Event, she had been a dental assistant. The late afternoon rain reminded her of the smell of a dental mold.

They made poor time. Twice they had to stop, once to hide from the same military patrol that had driven by before, and once while crossing Hennepin Avenue they had to hide in the back of a burned-out pickup truck while a pair of demons sauntered by on insect legs and what appeared to be pseudopods. They didn't even try to appear human.

It was dusk before they reached the address on the paper. The neighborhood was a quiet selection of apartment buildings and old rambling houses converted into apartments. A number of them had seen a pretty serious fire in what Robin estimated to be recent weeks.

Now Robin drew her pistol. She had taken it from a dead IDA agent she had found a few weeks ago, and just last

week had scored a full box of ammunition for it in a not-entirely-looted gun store in St. Paul. It was a .44 Magnum, not that that meant much to her. She knew how to use it, though. It was difficult to imagine surviving in the city all these months without being able to use a gun. Unless of course you were a werewolf like Davis.

The notepaper directions indicated an old brick building, and said that the stash was in the basement, the door to which was supposedly hidden under a pile of furniture on the first floor. They went inside cautiously, but it was too dark to see. Robin started to take the flashlight out of her coat pocket, but Davis put his hand on her arm and shook his head.

He closed his eyes, and his whole body shuddered as if he were going to explode. And in a way, he did. Muscles bulged, and his jaw elongated with a snapping sound that made shivers run down Robin's back. Hair grew on the few places on him that weren't already covered in shaggy hair, and his back hunched.

When he was done, he smiled with a huge, bestial mouth filled with far too many teeth. Robin pressed her lips together tightly to conceal her revulsion, but Davis wasn't paying attention to her anyway. In this form, she knew that he could see much better in this dim light, and what he couldn't see he could now smell. It was safer for him to be in this form.

Really it was, she reassured herself.

Davis moved forward with Robin following behind, gun in one hand, notebook page in the other, held like a talisman — as though it somehow signified that she had a right to be here. The building smelled musty and old, and Davis smelled like a kennel. The floor was littered with old newspapers, broken bits of furniture and dirty clothing: the detritus of what seemed now to be a different world.

Davis let out a low growl. He didn't like the scent of something he had detected.

Two young men oozed out of the shadows like liquid. The first was pale but almost shockingly handsome. The other looked almost as inhuman as Davis, with an extended jaw, bulging eyes and pocked flesh. Robin was drawn to the first one — she had to stop herself from going to his side immediately, just to touch him.

"Vampires," Davis snarled softly.

The hideous one was extraordinarily fast. In a heartbeat, he stood over Robin, and snatched the notebook paper from her hand. "Carlos," the creature hissed, "someone found another of your 'invitations.' It's been a while."

Carlos smiled. His dark hair was tousled, but in a very precise, careful way. His teeth were so white they shined. "No one has fallen for that lure in a very long time."

Davis laughed. "So there's no stash of goods here?"

"No." Carlos shrugged. "There is. But not for you."

"I can see why you might think that, gorgeous," Robin replied. "But see, we're not your average victims." She grabbed her .44 Magnum with both hands and fired into the vampire's chest repeatedly.

"And we're really hungry." Davis launched himself at the other, mouth open impossibly wide.

Robin put all six rounds into the vampire, her wrists aching from the recoil. The force of the multiple impacts knocked the creature back against the wall, cracking the stained drywall. She did not pause to look at him. She reloaded as fast as she could.

By the time she was finished, the vampire was on its feet again, the bullet wounds now only holes in the front of his shirt. He smiled. So did she. "I know how it works. I know that it costs you to pull off that trick. I can keep this up all day. Can you?"

She shot him six more times.

This time, it took the vampire ever so slightly longer to recover. By the time Robin had reloaded the Magnum, he was still just pulling himself off the floor. "Come now," Carlos said. "We should be friends, not enemies."

Robin felt a soft touch in her chest. She looked into Carlos's eyes and saw within them a kindred spirit, not an enemy. There was no reason to fight. The gun she held in her hand felt heavy. In fact, it felt foolish to even be holding it. Embarrassed, she dropped it to the ground, although she never drew her gaze from Carlos' lovely eyes. Nothing made any sense to her any more — nothing other than the desire to go to Carlos, and be by his side. Only then would she understand fulfillment —

Davis crashed into Carlos, covered in the grisly remains of the other vampire, which he had apparently entirely shredded with his teeth and claws. His action broke the supernatural bond forming between the vampire and Robin. Her knees buckled, and she fought to keep to her feet. And lost.

The vampire had violated her in the worst imaginable way. These creatures took away even one's ability to think for herself. To feel her own emotions. Well, she felt her own feelings now, and they were revulsion and hate. God, how she hated them. As she stood back up, her head clearing, she saw Davis rending the vampire's flesh a handful at a time and tossing it about the room. It was a horrific sight, and the smell was awful — like a musty, moth-eaten shirt left too long in a slaughterhouse. The werewolf's might was far too much for the vampire, who likely was unaccustomed to having to fight for his meals.

When Davis was done, he knelt in the remains of his kill, covered in the vampire's blood — the Vitae. His eyes were closed, and he breathed quickly and heavily. Robin knew that he was trying to calm the beast. He was quieting the rage inside him lest he become consumed by it and never stop destroying.

Finally, Davis opened his eyes. As he did, his bestial form receded into that of a man. He licked a bloody finger and looked up at Robin, smiling. "Now let's find what we came here to get."

Robin knew she was deeply immersed in forces far beyond her. She knew that if she remained in Davis's company, it was only a matter of time before he lost control. But without him, she would be just as quickly devoured by this ruined city and the things that dwelt in its shadows. She made up her mind, as she always did. She found her pistol on the floor, forced a smile and nodded to her friend.

RECOMMENDED READING, VIEWING, GAMING AND LISTENING

The media listed here have some connection to **Monte Cook's World of Darkness.** Some inspired the creators during the design process. Others share certain aspects with the setting. All are helpful in various ways if you play this game, whether as a GM or player.

Books and Authors

The following books and authors are recommended reading.

Alas, Babylon

Pat Frank's *Alas, Babylon* contains a realistic view of what might actually happen in the wake of a devastating atomic war. The survivors exist in a post-apocalyptic setting, similar to some areas in the Annihilation Zone, and must contend with problems from food shortages to highwaymen. Unlike many other post-apocalyptic settings, his is hopeful.

Blade

The *Blade* comic book series concerns a vampire who fights other vampires: perfect. The movie adaptations with Wesley Snipes are also worth watching.

Neil Gaiman

Gaiman has a fine grasp on modern, urban fantasy. Both his novels and his acclaimed *Sandman* comic books depict modern settings in which the supernatural and fantastic lurk just beneath the surface. In *American Gods,* for example, the magical creatures take human form and weave intricate plots, calling to mind the complex machinations of demons.

H.P. Lovecraft

Lovecraft is a seminal pulp horror author. He made famous a particular subgenre of horror: horror that deals with secrets humans were not meant to know, with alien beings beyond our comprehension, terror from other realities and "the dark between the stars." His stories portray humankind as a small and insignificant blotch in the universe, surviving due only to the whims or relative ignorance of much greater entities.

"The Call of Cthulhu" is the most-often cited of Lovecraft's work, though this story is important mainly because it is a cornerstone in the Lovecraft mythos, which other writers, such as August Derleth, expanded. Other fine and representative Lovecraft stories include "The Shadow Over Innsmouth," "The Colour Out of Space" and "The Whisperer in the Darkness."

The Iconnu, in particular, owe much of their genesis to Lovecraft and those such as Derleth who expanded his Cthulhu mythos.

House of Leaves

Chapter 1: A World in Darkness describes one possible Nightmare Site as "A house grows extra-dimensionally large, but its extra rooms form a maze from which escape is nearly impossible." Mark Danielewski's *House of Leaves* describes just such a house. It is an excellent example of a single haunted location in an otherwise normal (well, pretty normal) world, how normal people react to the strangeness and how it progresses gradually from one too-large room to a gigantic, midnight labyrinth. The book shows curiosity evolving to creepiness and then to terror. It is also a complex work cloaked under many layers, creating a setting brimming with conspiracy ideas and insights into insane minds.

The Magician□s Companion

The complete title is *The Magician's Companion: A Practical and Encyclopedic Guide to Magical & Religious Symbolism,* and it's by Bill Whitcomb. It's a nonfiction book and is an excellent resource for occult symbolism. Since all those old rituals and symbols have real power following the Intrusion, this book is a great reference if you want to learn more about such things.

China Mieville

Miéville has two books worthy of inclusion here.

Perdido Street Station is an amazing blend of fantasy, horror and science fiction set in a dark, steampunk-themed metropolis. While the science fiction and steampunk themes do not feature in this game (at least, not as presented here), the book's fantasy and especially horror elements feel at home. One can imagine beings such as the slake moths and handlingers appearing from the Conflagration. At the time of this writing, Miéville has two other books set in the same world — *The Scar* and *Iron Council* — but they are far inferior to *Perdido Street Station*.

Another novel, *King Rat*, concerns a man who discovers his birth was less — or more — than natural. While developing his supernatural powers, he meets other paranormal characters and confronts a nefarious villain. The story is set in a dark, urban city (London) in the modern world.

Promethea

Promethea, by Alan Moore, is a series of graphic novels that tells the story of a girl drawn into an occult world that remains unseen by others. The series serves as a great introduction to the Kabbalah from an occult perspective.

The Stand

Many consider Stephen King's *The Stand* to be his best work. This massive novel depicts a grim post-apocalyptic America in which survivors struggle to come to terms with the destruction and continue life in this devastated world. Eventually, they congregate around two characters — one good, one evil.

The World of Darkness Books

Monte Cook's World of Darkness is a re-imagining of the original World of Darkness, which has been a popular roleplaying game setting for more than a decade. The books detail a World of Darkness different from that presented in these pages. Rather than the Iconnu causing all the world's problems, a variety of dark and sinister *things* — which humans will never fully know — lurk and prey on humanity.

The four key **World of Darkness** books are as follows:

- **The World of Darkness,** which explains the basics of the world, includes the game mechanics (the Storyteller system) and contains rules to play mortal characters in this dark world.
- **Vampire: The Requiem,** which discusses vampires: their culture, society, psychology, history and rules for playing vampire characters.
- **Werewolf: The Forsaken,** which discusses werewolves: their culture, society, psychology, history and rules for playing werewolf characters.
- **Mage: The Awakening,** which discusses mages: their culture, society, psychology, history and rules for playing mage characters.

See these books for a different World of Darkness from that presented here, but still a world rife with opportunities, hooks and hauntings to plunder for your campaigns. The books offer insight into the minds of monsters, and provide many ideas if you'd like to incorporate more history for vampires, werewolves and mages into your campaign.

Other Books

I Am Legend, by Richard Matheson; *Lucifer's Hammer*, by Larry Niven and Jerry Pournelle; *The Postman*, by David Brin; *Strange Aeons*, by Lucya Szachnowski, Gary O'Connell, and Michael LaBossiere.

Movies

The following movies are recommended viewing.

Hellboy

Hellboy is a supernatural creature from another dimension who battles the machinations of other extra-dimensional creatures: the Ogdru Jahad, beings of vast power who desire the destruction of Earth and humankind. The parallels with the World of Darkness are obvious, though *Hellboy* is (understandably) more superheroic than horrific. Though the movie is merely *pretty good* (instead of *great*), the character of Hellboy, and Ron Perlman's excellent portrayal, make it memorable. The movie is based on a series of comic books, which are also worth reading.

Independence Day

Although *Independence Day* lacks paranormal elements, it depicts a heroic struggle against alien entities in the aftermath of a devastating invasion, which bears some similarities to humanity's fight against the Iconnu. The shattered cityscapes also provide excellent visual aids for post-apocalyptic cities such as Minneapolis.

Mad Max 2: The Road Warrior

The Road Warrior depicts a post-apocalyptic wasteland where vehicles and gasoline are paramount. One can imagine that certain barren places in the central United States (or elsewhere, if you set the Intrusion Point somewhere else in your campaign) might end up like this.

Near Dark

This 1987 movie stars Lance Henriksen and Bill Paxton. Want to be freaked out by vampires who don't have any moral accountability for their actions? See this movie.

Nosferatu

Both the original F.N. Murnau version (1922) featuring Max Schreck and the Werner Herzog version (1979) featuring Klaus Kinski are solid choices. For weird, unsettling vampires with their own strangeness and derangements, you can't beat the tale of Count Orlock.

Shadow of the Vampire

Speaking of weirdness, *Shadow of the Vampire* depicts the filming of the original *Nosferatu*, casting many elements of the production into question. Was the movie cursed? Did the supernatural really plague the crew? Was Schreck *really* a vampire himself?

The Sixth Sense

If you haven't seen this movie, and no one has spoiled the ending for you, borrow it from someone and *watch it*. The plot concerns a boy who can see things no one else can. In the World of Darkness, maybe he'd be an Awakened.

Other Movies

28 Days Later; Akira, The Last Man on Earth; Lifeforce; Mad Max; Mad Near Dark; The Omega Man; Reign of Fire; Vampire Hunter D.

CONVERSION NOTES

This appendix contains ideas, tips and rules for converting characters from the "normal" **World of Darkness** (**WoD**) — including characters from **Vampire: The Requiem, Mage: The Awakening** and **Werewolf: The Forsaken** — to the rules presented in **Monte Cook's World of Darkness** (**McWoD**).

In short, you should simply recreate your character using the rules in this book, trying your best to give your character similar abilities to those he has in **WoD**. The following sections contain some ideas about how to do so.

Experience and Character Level

To determine what level your **WoD** character should be in **McWoD,** determine how many experience points you've spent increasing his traits (hopefully you remember, or can figure it out). For every seven experience points you've spent, that's about a level. Consult the table below to determine *about* which level you should be.

Spent Experience Points	Level Equivalent	Spent Experience Points	Level Equivalent
0–7	1st	55–61	9th
8–14	2nd	62–67	10th
15–21	3rd	68–74	11th
22–27	4th	75–81	12th
28–34	5th	82–87	13th
35–41	6th	88–94	14th
42–47	7th	95–101	15th
48–54	8th	102–107	16th

Ability Scores and Attributes

The abilities (Strength, Dexterity and so forth) serve a similar function as Attributes (Wits, Manipulation and so forth) in **WoD**. If you have lots of dots in an Attribute, you should have a high ability score in the **McWoD** equivalent.

The following tables give you an idea of which abilities correspond to which Attributes, and approximately what score you should have in an ability based on the number of dots you have in its corresponding Attribute. The values in the tables are approximations, and you and the GM should work together to determine the exact numbers. Charisma in particular invites some discussion — see the sidebar.

WoD Attribute	McWoD Ability Equivalent
Intelligence	Intelligence
Wits, Resolve	Wisdom
Strength	Strength
Dexterity	Dexterity
Stamina	Constitution
Presence, Manipulation, Composure	Charisma
Number of Dots	**Ability Score (Approximation)**
1	7
2	10
3	15
4	18
5	22

Skills

Both game systems have skills that do approximately the same things. See the table below for approximate skill equivalencies. If you have lots of dots in a **WoD** Skill, you should have lots of ranks in its **McWoD** equivalent.

The Brawl, Firearms and Weaponry Skills, however, are best represented with feats instead of skill ranks. Exotic Weapon Proficiency, Weapon Focus and Weapon Specialization are good choices; Improved Unarmed Strike works well for Brawl.

Specialties: Skill Focus, Skilled and Weapon Focus are good equivalencies for Specialties.

Wits and Wisdom, Composure and Charisma

So, how do you determine your Charisma score? Take the average number of dots of your social Attributes? The highest? How about Wisdom, in regard to Wits and Resolve?

In general, you should probably use your highest number of dots to determine your equivalent ability score, though very low dots in the other related Attributes may drag it down a little. Also, lots of dots in these Attributes may represent other facets of your character. Many dots in Resolve could represent the Iron Will feat. Dots in Wits could represent the Improved Initiative and/or Skilled (Listen and Spot) feats. Lots of dots in Social Attributes could represent ranks in social skills (Intimidate, Gather Information and the like), as well as the Skill Focus and Skilled feats with these skills.

WoD Skill	McWoD Equivalent	WoD Skill	McWoD Equivalent
Academics	Knowledge, Research	Larceny	Disable Device, Open Lock, Sleight of Hand
Animal Ken	Handle Animal	Medicine	Heal
Athletics	Climb, Jump, Swim	Occult	Knowledge (occult, popular culture)
Brawl*	—	Politics ,Persuasion	Bluff, Diplomacy, Perform (oratory)
Computer	Computer Use	Knowledge	(civics)
Crafts	Craft, Repair	Socialize /Science	Knowledge (behavioral sciences, earth and life sciences, physical sciences, technology)
Drive	Drive, Navigate, Pilot	Diplomacy,	Gather Information
Empathy	Sense Motive	Stealth	Hide, Move Silently
Expression	Perform	Streetwise	Knowledge (streetwise)
Firearms*	—	Subterfuge	Bluff, Disguise, Sense Motive
Intimidation	Intimidate	Survival	Survival
Investigation	Search	Weaponry*	—

* No skill equivalent.

Merits and Feats

Feats are the equivalent of Merits — sort of. Many Merits have no corresponding statistic in **McWoD** and instead require an in-game explanation, for you and the GM to work together to design an appropriate feat (or other game statistic) — or for you to simply eliminate the trait. Consult the following table for some ideas of which feats might represent which Merits; Merits not on this list do not have good equivalents.

WoD Merit	McWoD Feat Equivalent
Ambidextrous	Two-Weapon Fighting
Brawling Dodge	Defensive Stance
Danger Sense	Improved Initiative
Direction Sense	Skill Focus (Navigate)
Disarm	Improved Disarm
Encyclopedic Knowledge	Skill Focus (any Knowledge skill), Skilled (two Knowledge skills)
Fast Reflexes	Improved Initiative
Fighting Finesse	Weapon Finesse
Fighting Style: Boxing	Improved Unarmed Strike
Fighting Style: Kung Fu	Improved Unarmed Strike
Fighting Style: Two Weapons	Two-Weapon Fighting, Improved Two-Weapon Fighting
Giant	Toughness
Gunslinger	Two-Weapon Fighting
Familiar*	Familiar gnosis
Holistic Awareness	Skill Focus (Heal)
Iron Stamina	Diehard, Endurance
Iron Stomach	Great Fortitude

Language	Speak Language skill
Natural Immunity	Great Fortitude
Occultation*	Occultation gnosis
Quick Draw	Quick Draw
Strong Lungs	Endurance
Stunt Driver	Skill Focus (Drive)
Toxin Resistance	Great Fortitude
Weaponry Dodge	Combat Expertise

*This Merit appears in **Mage: The Awakening.**

Supernatural Abilities

Your supernatural abilities should be fairly easy to determine. Vampire Disciplines and werewolf Gifts have clear parallels in **McWoD.** If you spent experience points in Blood Potency or Primal Urge, those also have equivalents. Since mage spellcasting works differently in **McWoD,** there's no need to determine equivalencies to your dots in Arcana — though if you spent a bunch of experience points to develop your Arcana or Gnosis, you might take gnosis such as Dutiful Attention and Extra Components.

The World of Darkness and OGL Games

A number of games out there — some extremely popular — use the same basic rules system as that presented in this book, with d20s, skills, feats and the like. You can use elements of this book in those other games, and you can use elements of those other books in a World of Darkness campaign.

Adventures: You can use adventures made for other related game systems in your World of Darkness campaign. Since such an adventure wasn't written with the World of Darkness in mind, you might want to make alterations to it to better suit your campaign. You could turn the primary villain into a demon, for example, or move the adventure's location to the Annihilation Zone. See Chapter 8: Running the Game for ideas about the elements that make a World of Darkness game feel right.

Magic: With a bit of work, you can use the magic system in this book in other games. The easiest way to do so might be to replace characters that focus on spellcasting (clerics and wizards and so forth) with mages from this book, though doing so doesn't solve all the problems. Whatever the case, refer to the mage character type for an idea of how many components characters should have per day. Note that a 1st-level mage is about the equivalent of a 4th-level character in another game. Also, keep in mind that the primary power of this book's spell system is that its practitioners enjoy great versatility — an aspect which you may or may not wish to adjust with additional rules.

Monsters: Many monster books are out there, all full of bizarre creatures compatible with this system. You can use these books as a source for strange beasts that crawl out of the Conflagration or that are mutated by the Nightmare Wave.

Supernatural Characters: GMs might allow players in other game worlds to create Awakened, demon, mage, vampire and werewolf characters from this book. Note that the supernatural characters in this book begin at a much higher power level than characters in other game systems. A level 1 Awakened, for example, is approximately the same power as a 4th-level character in most other games.

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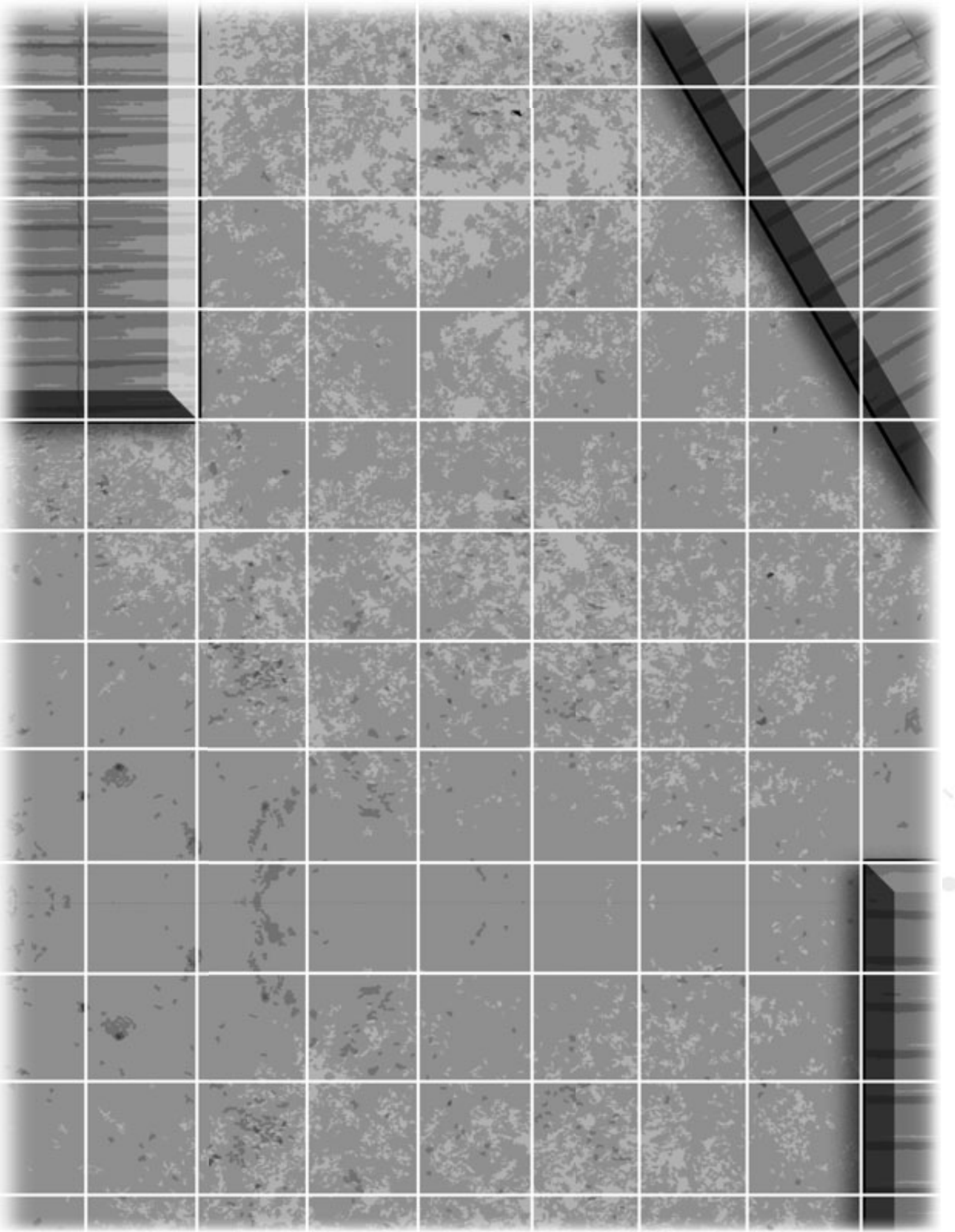

CHARACTER NAME | PLAYER

CHARACTER TYPE AND LEVEL | CLAN/AUSPICE/ETC

SIZE | AGE | GENDER | HEIGHT | WEIGHT | EYES | HAIR | SKIN

ABILITY NAME	ABILITY SCORE	ABILITY MODIFIER	TEMPORARY SCORE	TEMPORARY MODIFIER
STR STRENGTH				
DEX DEXTERITY				
CON CONSTITUTION				
INT INTELLECT				
WIS WISDOM				
CHA CHARISMA				

HP HIT POINTS — TOTAL | WOUNDS/CURRENT HP | NONLETHAL DAMAGE

SPEED

DEF DEFENSE = TOTAL | 10 | CLASS BONUS | DEX MOD. | SIZE MOD. | NATURAL BONUS | DEFLECT. MOD. | MISC. MOD.

DAMAGE RED.

TOUCH DEFENSE

FLAT-FOOTED DEFENSE

INITIATIVE MODIFIER = TOTAL | DEX MOD. | MISC. MOD.

HUMANITY

BASE ATTACK BONUS

SUPERNATURAL ENERGY VITAE, ESSENCE, ETC. — CURRENT | MAX | CURRENT ROUND

GRAPPLE MODIFIER = TOTAL | BASE ATTACK BONUS | STR. MOD. | SIZE MOD. | MISC. MOD.

	TOTAL	BASE SAVE	ABILITY MOD.	MISC. MOD.	TEMP. MOD.	CONDITIONAL MODIFIERS
FORTITUDE CONSTITUTION						
REFLEX DEXTERITY						
WILL WISDOM						

ATTACK

ATTACK BONUS	DAMAGE	CRITICAL	RANGE	TYPE

NOTES

AMMUNITION _____ ☐☐☐☐☐ ☐☐☐☐☐ ☐☐☐☐☐ ☐☐☐☐☐ ☐☐☐☐☐ ☐☐☐☐☐

ATTACK

ATTACK BONUS	DAMAGE	CRITICAL	RANGE	TYPE

NOTES

AMMUNITION _____ ☐☐☐☐☐ ☐☐☐☐☐ ☐☐☐☐☐ ☐☐☐☐☐ ☐☐☐☐☐ ☐☐☐☐☐

ATTACK

ATTACK BONUS	DAMAGE	CRITICAL	RANGE	TYPE

NOTES

AMMUNITION _____ ☐☐☐☐☐ ☐☐☐☐☐ ☐☐☐☐☐ ☐☐☐☐☐ ☐☐☐☐☐ ☐☐☐☐☐

ATTACK

ATTACK BONUS	DAMAGE	CRITICAL	RANGE	TYPE

NOTES

AMMUNITION _____ ☐☐☐☐☐ ☐☐☐☐☐ ☐☐☐☐☐ ☐☐☐☐☐ ☐☐☐☐☐ ☐☐☐☐☐

SKILLS MAX RANKS (CLASS/CROSS-CLASS)

FOCUS SKILLS — **FOCUS**

SKILL NAME	KEY ABILITY	SKILL MOD.	ABILITY MOD.	RANKS	MISC. MOD.
○ Appraise•	Int				
○ Balance[a]•	Dex				
○ Bluff•	Cha				
○ Climb[a]•	Str				
○ Computer Use•	Int				
○ Concentration•	Con				
○ Craft*•	Int				
○ Craft•					
○ Craft•					
○ Demolitions[t]	Int				
○ Diplomacy•	Cha				
○ Disable Device[t]	Int				
○ Disguise•	Cha				
○ Drive	Dex				
○ Escape Artist[a]	Dex				
○ Forgery	Int				
○ Gather Information	Cha				
○ Handle Animal[t]	Cha				
○ Heal	Wis				
○ Hide[a]	Dex				
○ Intimidate	Cha				
○ Jump[a]	Str				
○ Knowledge	Int				
○ Knowledge	Int				
○ Knowledge	Int				
○ Listen	Wis				
○ Move Silently[a]	Dex				
○ Navigate	Int				
○ Open Lock[t]	Dex				
○ Perform	Cha				
○ Pilot[t]	Dex				
○ Profession[t]	Wis				
○ Profession					
○ Repair[t]	Int				
○ Research	Int				
○ Ride	Dex				
○ Search	Int				
○ Sense Motive	Wis				
○ Sleight of Hand[a, t]	Dex				
○ Spellcraft[t]	Int				
○ Spot	Wis				
○ Survival	Wis				
○ Swim[a]	Str				
○ Tumble[a, t]	Dex				
○ Use Rope	Dex				

[a] Your defense check penalty applies to checks with this skill

[t] You must be trained in this skill — must possess at least 1 rank in it — to use it effectively.

* The Craft skill varies on whether or not you can use it untrained.

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CAMPAIGN

EXPERIENCE

GEAR

ARMOR

TYPE	DAMAGE REDUCTION	DEFENSE PENALTY

SPEED PENALTY	WEIGHT	ARMOR CHECK PENALTY

POSSESSIONS

ITEM	PG.	WT.	ITEM	PG.	WT.

TOTAL WEIGHT CARRIED

LIGHT LOAD	MEDIUM LOAD	HEAVY LOAD	LIFT OVER HEAD (MAX LOAD)	LIFT OFF GROUND (2x MAX LOAD)	PUSH OR DRAG (5x MAX LOAD)

FEATS

PG.

WEAKNESSES

PG.

TYPE FEATURES

PG.

CORE ABILITIES

PG.

LANGUAGES

SUPER NATURAL ABILITIES

ABILITY	DC	COST	DUR	PG

NOTES

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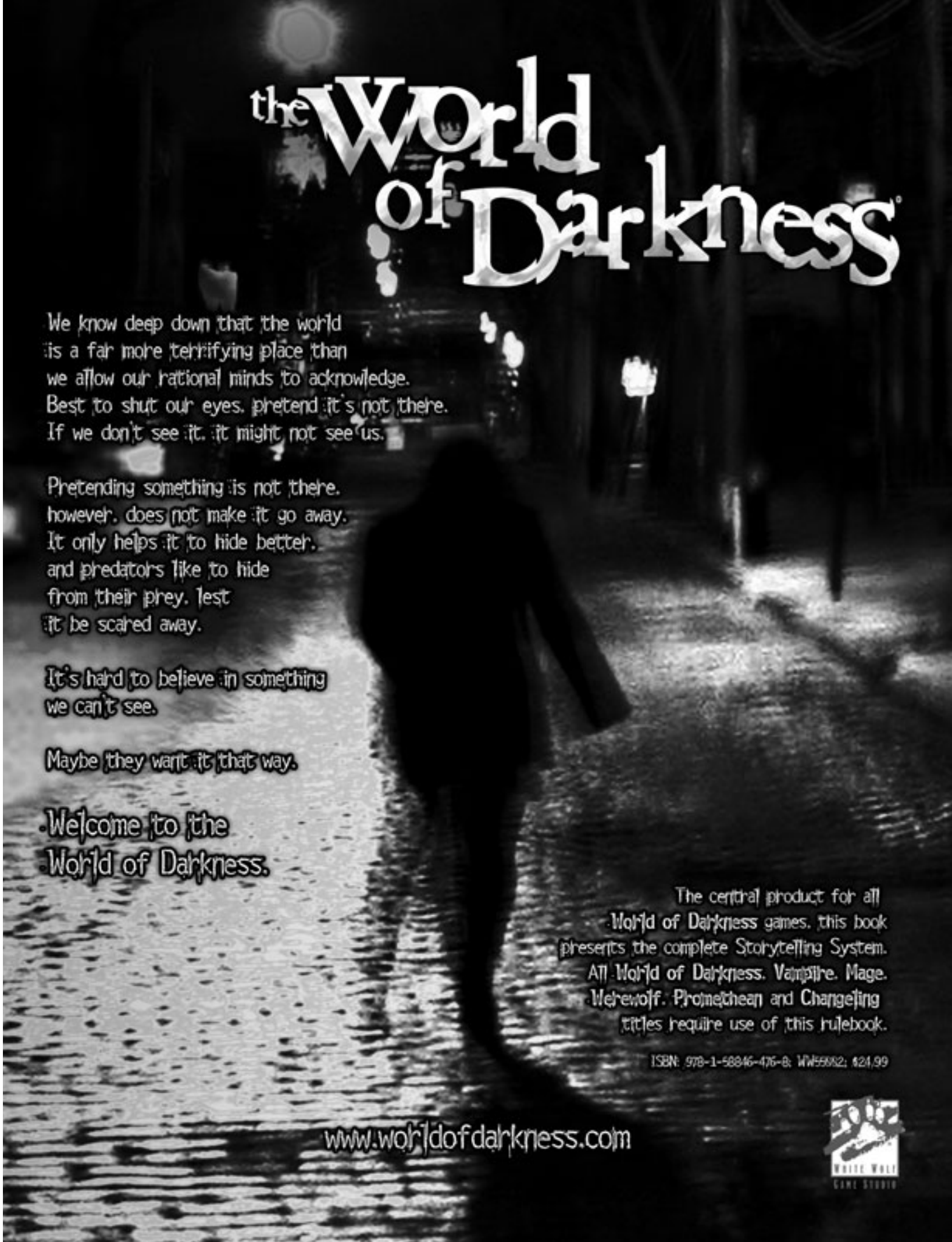
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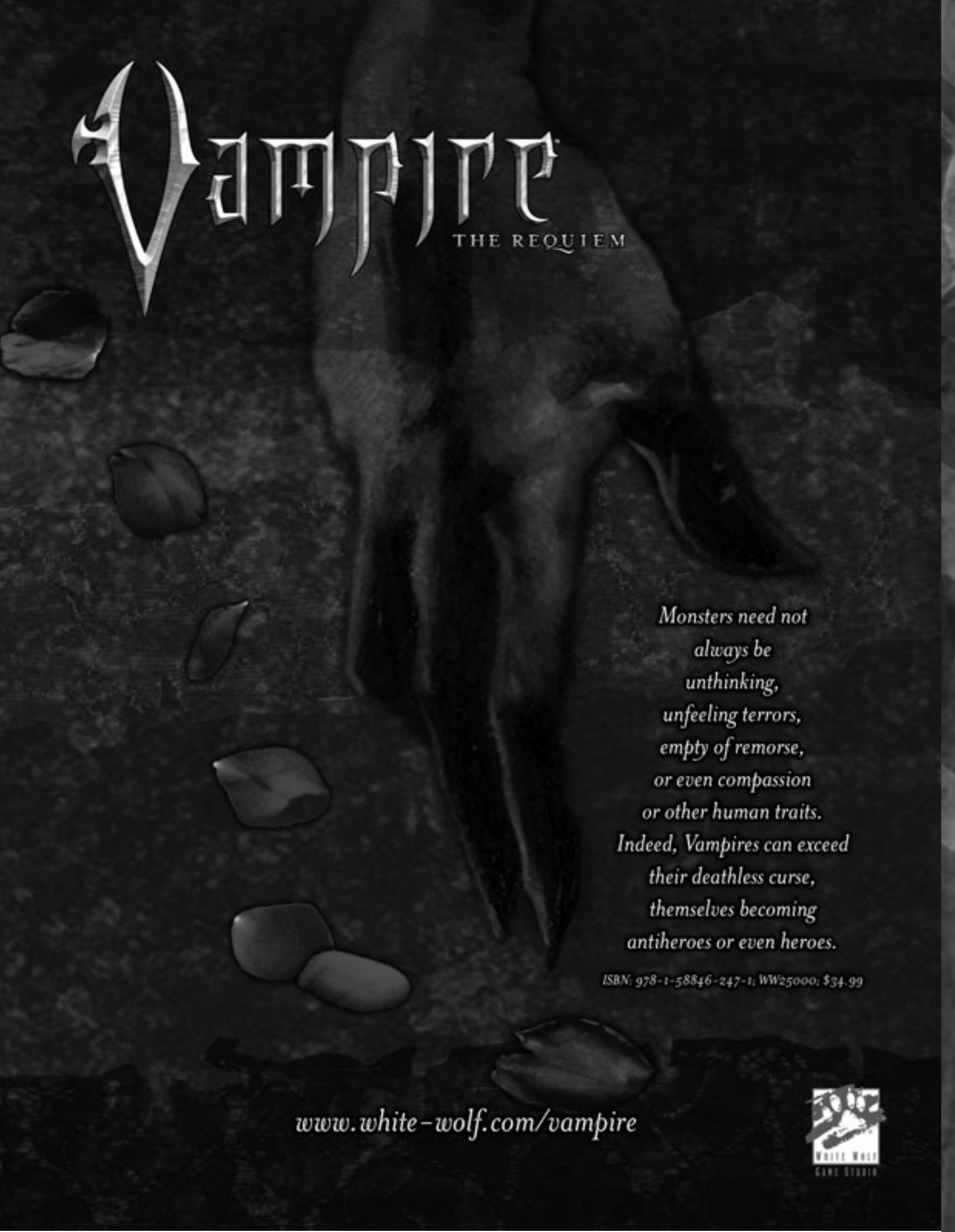

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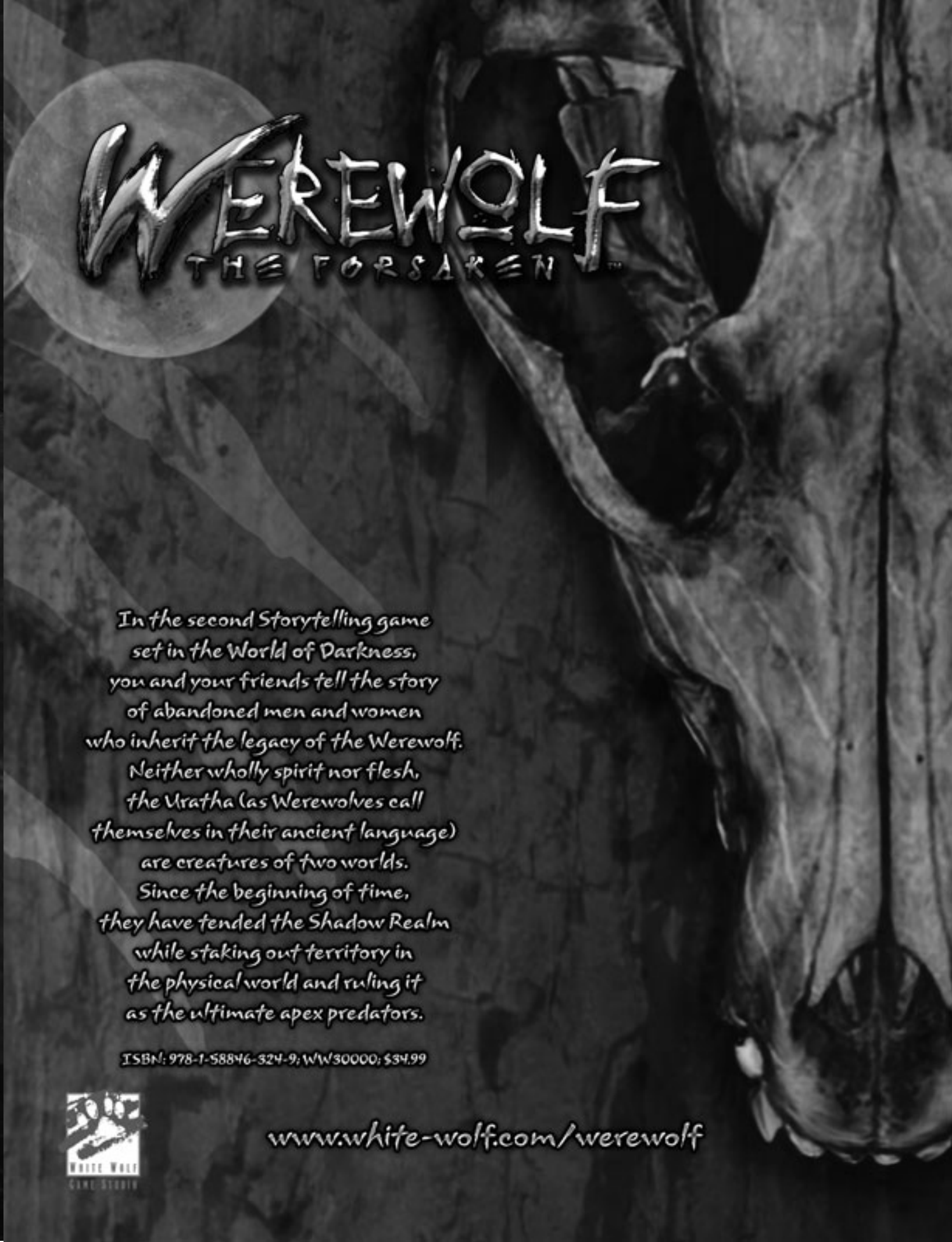

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