

MONGOOSE PUBLISHING PRESENTS

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# Signs & Portents

## Conan

The Concluding part of The Book Of The Elephant

## Battlefield Evolution: World at War

A Report from a World At War Tournament and a dambusters scenario

## Runequest

Lock and Ward, a new supplement

Plus... VAS, GenCon USA, Continuum UK, Chimaera and much more!

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I know you are all sick of hearing it but once again here at Mongoose we have had a very busy month! Lots of exciting things are going on here that we are not allowed to talk about but you can rest assured that all will be revealed in due course... and it is not just good news for us believe me!

I must say a big sorry to all of you for the fact that S&P is a few hours late this month. Unfortunately it took me a lot longer to do the finishing touches due to the fact that I learned exactly why you should not own a big horse... the bigger they are, the more time gravity has to flip you upside down as you fall... and at the end of last week I learned that the hard way as I landed rather heavily on my head and neck. In fact once I have finished this editorial and posted S&P I shall be heading back to the Doctor again. Still... I've owned her for 2 years so it is about time she decked me!

As you all know this is the last issue of S&P as you know it. From next month to mark the beginning of the next five years of S&P you will find that your favourite magazine has been totally overhauled and given a complete new look. Apart from hopefully being more pleasing to the eye, the new borders etc that have been especially commissioned will allow for us to insert more content and more pictures without increasing the file size, and so you will all be getting a lot more for the same amount of downloading time.

I had planned, as I mentioned last issue, to give you a sneak preview this month... However... As I have been planning this for the last 6 months since I took over the role of Editor, I realised that I would not be able to happily do the new look justice in a one page article. Likewise it would not exactly be a proper re-launch if you all knew in advance what was coming.

So in summation, at the risk of becoming excessively unpopular with you all I have left the new look as a complete surprise until next month.

One last thing, I am finding it increasingly difficult to get my hands on decent Wargaming articles, as it seems that no one wants to write them. So anyone who has an idea that they think we would be interested in then I would love to hear from you.

So farewell from the old S&P, see you all next month in the new.

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## Convention and Events Diary

**Game '08. New Century House, Manchester,  
UK.**

**Saturday 1st - Sunday 2nd November 2008.**

**<http://www.game08.eu/>**

**Dragonmeet 08. Kensington Town Hall**

**Saturday 29th November 2008**

**<http://dragonmeet.co.uk/>**

**Conception 2009.**

**January 28th - February 1st 2009**

# THE BOOK OF THE ELEPHANT - PART III

## BY CHRIS LITES

### ENCOUNTER ELEVEN: THE KASAMIR FAMILY ESTATE - THE WEALTHY DISTRICT

This encounter may likely serve as the penultimate climax to the adventure should a typical order of play be followed.

The PCs will first have to scale the wall in order to get into the garden. The wall is 20 feet tall and surrounds the palace. A Hide and Move silently check is required. The PCs must also get over the razor sharp glass embedded in the wall which gleams like freshly cut diamonds.

They can break the glass but it will make noise. Traversing it without proper covering will cause each to take 1d6 points of damage. Moreover, the process is slow and rather apparent. The guards each make a Spot check to see them.

If they have left blood and clothes remnants on the wall, the guards get a Spot check for that as well. The GM can determine the level based on circumstance, likely about DC 12 to see the blood.

Zamoran guard stats can be used from the Shadizar Game Master's Guide. On page 35, use the stats for Sample Zamorian Watchman.

**Zamorian Watchman (4): 2<sup>nd</sup> Level Soldier, HP: 13, Init: +3; Parry: 12; Dodge: 14; DR 7; Melee +2/+3; Atk: Bill +4 2d8+1/x3/AP 7 or short sword +5 finesse 1d8+1/19-20x2/AP 2; Add Spot +2 to stats.**

The better plan is for Boudicea to help the PCs get in by distracting the guards.

Alternatively, the PCs could look for a sewer entrance which exists at the discretion of the GM. This entrance will likely be barred and a strength check at DC 20 will need to be made.

Once inside the compound, the PCs are in the garden.

*There are dark palms waving against the moonlight. The gardens themselves are still and home to plants from all over Hyboria and beyond. Indeed, many you have never seen the likes of before. Sharply trimmed hedges wall off one section from another and small reflecting ponds throw back the cloak of night, stars shimmering in their still waters.*

*The mansion itself rises up some three stories, hewn of limestone and domed with a huge bronze cap. Braziers are lit on the main stair and guards are posted on patrol, their sandals making little noise over the healthy green swards that stir slightly in the night.*

If the PCs have scaled the wall and are sneaking in, then they may be noticed by the guards. Appropriate Hide and Move Silently checks must be made.

Now, the PCs have to gain access to the mansion proper. Again, they may attempt to use the sewers as entrance but will find that the way is barred here too. Another strength check at DC 20 is needed to bend the bars.

The players might alternately decide to scale the outside of the mansion. There are three levels. They may find windows open only on the upper floors. The bottom

floor windows are all locked unless Boudicea makes another arrangement.

The front entrance is a set of double doors with a DC 20 lock. There is a back door, which then leads inside through the kitchen. This lock is DC 15, but depending on when the PCs attempt to penetrate, there may be slaves cooking and they toss out food to the dogs that patrol the house perimeter.

Each dog also has a good chance of finding the PCs by scent. There are three dogs total.

#### DOG

Small Animal

**Hit Dice:** 1d8+2 (6 hp)

**Initiative:** +5 (+3 Dex, +2 Refl ex)

**Speed:** 40 ft. (8 squares)

**Dodge Defence:** 14 (+1 size, +3 Dex)

**Damage Reduction:** 2

**Base Attack/Grapple:** +0/-3

**Attack:** Bite +2 melee (1d4+1)

**Full Attack:** Bite +2 melee (1d4+1)

**Space/Reach:** 5 ft./5 ft.

**Special Attacks:** —

**Special Qualities:** Low-light vision, scent

**Saves:** Fort +4, Ref +5, Will +1

**Abilities:** Str 13, Dex 17, Con 15, Int 2, Wis 12, Cha 6

**Skills:** Jump +7, Listen +5, Spot +5, Survival +1\*

**Feats:** Alertness, Track

**Environment:** Temperate plains

**Organisation:** Solitary, pair (jackals only), or pack (5-12)

Once inside the actual mansion, the PCs have to worry about nine more guards, three per floor. Use the same stat blocks as before for the house guards.

**Zamorian Watchman (9): 2<sup>nd</sup> Level Soldier, HP: 13, Init: +3; Parry: 12; Dodge: 14; DR 7; Melee +2/+3; Atk: Bill +4 2d8+1/x3/AP 7 or short sword +5 finesse 1d8+1/19-20x2/AP 2; Add Spot +2 to stats.**

The bottom floor has the kitchens, which the players might have entered through. There are wide stairs leading up through the main foyer.

*A vaulted ceiling rises to the height of all three stories. Huge buttresses are wrought with naked human carvings that writhe in ecstasy toward Anu the Bull God whose grim visage appends the peak of each arch.*

*The centre of the room has a huge copper bull whose flanks throw back the torchlight and whose face comes alive under the flickering light.*

*The naked marble stairs lead upwards along one wall, snaking up one level and then the next. From above, shouts and invectives can dimly be heard. A woman and a man are shouting at each other.*

The voices are coming from the third floor where Lady Agnessa and her son Oleksander are arguing.

Padding their way cautiously up the stairs, the players will find that the guards are distracted by listening in on the salacious lives of their masters. This will provide a +3 circumstance bonus to any Hide or Move Silently check.

Once the PC's ascend to the third floor, they may follow the sound of the voices to the master bed chamber. The chamber is where the box from Elohan's caravan is being stored.

*A four poster bed draped in silk as thin as a forest mist dominates the chamber. Twin braziers light the spectacular marble floor and the great domed ceiling on which is depicted a scene from Zhemri legend.*

*Former slaves rise up against their cruel masters on the mural and found Zamora far to the West from whence they came The bright colours are picked out by the light where the forward progress of humanity is shown rising and falling in cycles.*

*But the Zhemri survive and as the human figures turn ape-like then back to human, the proud Zamoran people persevere, prostrate before the idols of their dark gods.*

*A huge bath lies along one whole wall of the vast, cavernous room. Inside it, Lady Agnessa reclines, her naked flesh wet and soapy, a pewter decanter at her side.*

*She is arguing with her son, Oleksander, who stalks angrily back and forth over the fine Vendeyan carpet, shouting at his mother until she finally flings herself naked from the bath and grabs his face in one hand, causing him to whine.*

Lady Agnessa and her son are arguing over Boudicea. Oleksander wants to pursue his heart and his mother is firmly set on her ambitions to make him king. He will protest and whine but is like a whipped puppy under his mother's wishes.

She will put on a robe and tell him she will abide no more of this nonsense, that she has, in fact, already paved the way for him to ascend the throne.

Oleksander will continue to protest and reveal that his sister has become so dissatisfied with her mother that she has joined a new cult. This is news to Lady Agnessa who will slap him for his insolence.

Lady Agnessa will then explain that Oleysa infiltrated the cult precisely because she wanted to help Oleksander ascend the throne. She was the one who found out about the book and what it contains. Here the PCs will learn that the book itself is a crystal and it is inhabited by the living memory of the Lotus Dreaming Priest Yara, memories that will allow Lady Agnessa and her son to unlock terrible power with which to take the throne by force.

However, something has clearly gone wrong. She will not become incisive and accuse Oleksander's incestuous relations with her as the cause of her betrayal.

Lady Agnessa knows that the priest, Lung Wu, plans this night of all nights to enact his plan and open the secrets of the book. Thus, any attempt to join the cult or otherwise scout it out is, at this point in the adventure, too late.

When Agnessa goes to show Oleksander the Book of the Elephant, in an alcove behind an arras, the PCs will see there are several dangling, tasseled cords there. They are not hidden but appear as part of the ties which hold the drapes.

In fact, these ropes are similar to those in the Robert E. Howard story, *Rogue in the House*. When pulled they can seal off the alcove from intruders as well as dropping twin panes of thick glass down to from a room leading to the alcove which then fills with poison lotus gas. See the effects of said gas in the core rules on page 335 of *Conan the RPG*. Treat as black lotus juice but in gaseous form. The glass walls require a Strength check of DC 25 to break and it will take 1d3 rounds to batter through.

When the Lady Agnessa opens the iron box she will find, to her outrage, that the book is gone. It was stolen by her own daughter and brought to her new master Lung Wu.

Should the PCs intervene prior to the unveiling of the missing book, Lady Agnessa will blame them and shout for her guards.

If they have put her in a position where summoning help is not possible or wise, she will bargain with them.

However, Lady Agnessa is a sorceress of some power. Treat her as a 6<sup>th</sup> Level Zamorian Sorcerer on page 29 of *The Game Master's Guide* for this encounter.

**Lady Agnessa 6<sup>th</sup> Level Sorcerer, HP: 21.**

She will offer to hire the PCs to retrieve the book and her daughter. Her price is 1,500 SP in gold, the highest offer yet if the PCs have heard all three.

If the PCs have not learned the back story yet, then Lady Agnessa will explain what the Book of the Elephant is: a crystal which harbours the memories of the dead wizard Yara as well as those of the Yaggite he had enslaved. Immense power lies within it.

Boudicea, if she is with the PCs, will scoff at Lady Agnessa and the two of them will argue in front of all concerned unless silenced. This arguing is likely to bring the guards as well, and the PCs may make a hostage of Lady Agnessa, her son, or both. Alternatively, Lady Agnessa may summon the guards before the PCs can stop her and then they will have to contend with all 9 of them. Only the three on the third floor will arrive immediately. The next 3 arrive two rounds later and the next three two rounds after that.

How this encounter resolves itself depends on the ultimate goals of the party and the discretion of the GM. If they can cut a deal with Agnessa and infiltrate the Temple of Yag, so much the better.



If not, then they will have to deal with Lady Agnessa here and now or have a powerful new enemy.

If Shrialun is with the party, she will protest any efforts to make a side deal with Agnessa. She will explain to the party that what Agnessa speaks is high treason and punishable by the most painful death imaginable. If

the PCs side with Agnessa, Shrialun will attempt egress and report back to Aharesus. The PCs will then be an enemy of the state as far as they know.

The GM may decide that Lady Agnessa already knows who Shrialun is and will keep silent until Shrialun points out that they have already heard her treacherous plan.

Shrialun will advocate that the PCs kill Oleksander and the Lady Agnessa and make it look like the botched robbery it has already become.

In the end, the players will have to keep control of a situation that is rapidly spiraling out of their control. What they do is up to them and will set the course for the final events in the adventure.

**ENCOUNTER TWELVE:  
THE TEMPLE OF  
YAG - THE TEMPLE  
DISTRICT**

The following encounter is the climax to the adventure and should be played for maximum drama.

*A magnificent stupa rises 50 feet above you. The building is squat and shaped like a lotus blossom nearly 100 feet in diameter. It is flanked by the thick, lush vegetation of a jungle, water carefully funnelled to keep the plant's thirst slaked in the dry Zamoran clime.*

*There is an unearthly quality to the structure which seems fashioned from some eldritch*

green stone that glows wanly from within as if beings from the Outer Dark lay trapped inside. Surely, there is wizardry in this construction.

No braziers glow here. The paths are dim and the vegetation is allowed to spill over the flagstones and sprout up through the masonry, giving the appearance of an older building, left by its caretakers and forsaken by men.

Would that a building be cursed then surely this is such. Muscles tense, nerves go raw and atavistic fears swell from instinct at the sight of it.

The thick jungle that surrounds the tower comes from Khitai and has been transported here at great expense. It is not merely decorative; it serves as a component in the great spell Lung Wu seeks to cast this night that will open a portal to the past from whence he hopes to draw forth the Kings of Yag. The temple is modelled on the stories of those ancient ones once dedicated to the Kings of Yag.

Inside the thick brush there also resides a Yothga Plant with which the players will have to contend.

## YOTHGA

Large Plant

**Hit Dice:** 9d8+45 (85 hp)

**Initiative:** +10 (+3 Dex, +3 Reflex save, +4 Improved Initiative)

**Speed:** 0 ft.

**DV:** 14 (+3 Dex, +1 natural)

**DR:** 2 (natural)

**Base Attack/Grapple:** +6/+18

**Attack:** Tendril +11 melee (1d6+4 + poison, AP 5)

**Full Attack:** 4 tendrils +11 melee (1d6+4 + poison, AP 5)

**Space/Reach:** 10 ft. (2)/10 ft. (2)

**Special Attacks:** Poison, improved grab, loathsome caress, powerful grapple

**Special Qualities:** Low-light vision, plant traits

**Saves:** Fort +11, Ref +6, Will +3

**Abilities:** Str 19, Dex 17, Con 20, Int 2, Wis 10, Cha 24

**Skills:** Listen +11, Spot +4

**Feats:** Improved Initiative, Skill Focus (Listen), Weapon Focus (tendril)

**Environment:** Underground

**Organisation:** Solitary

There is a victim already inside the plant, eyes milky and rolled back in his head. His body is pale and gaunt but he is not dead.

This is the spy Aharesus sent first to find out about the book. His name is Tarses and he will be very weak if the PCs free him. However, if he is freed, the PCs will have earned an ally for later in the campaign should the GM choose to follow that thread.

Once past the Yothga plant, the PCs can access the temple.

They will find two cultists on patrol around the outside.

**Sample Commoner Cultist (2): 6<sup>th</sup> Level Commoner, HP: 21**, see Den of Iniquity page 23.

The main doors of the temple are closed and locked. There is a DC 20 lock on them and neither guard has a key. Instead, they wear horns with which they may summon help from inside.

The Temple of Yag is outlined below.

## FIRST FLOOR

The first floor is a single, giant room sectioned off by huge screens made of fine paper and wood.

*The whole of the first floor of the temple is sectioned off by fine paper screens framed in bamboo. Behind the screen are the languorous shadows of those moving to a strange and enthralling music that comes from somewhere above.*

*The scent of lotus smoke is strong in the air, a heady strain that fills the nostrils with an unctuous odour and the mind with weird, inhuman dreamings.*

The screens are merely for privacy and can be easily cut through. In the centre of the hallways, made by the confluence of said screens, lies a statue some 15 feet in height of a giant, slumbering man-thing.

*Surely, no man has set eyes on the thing before you in eons whilst it yet lived. It is a huge beast, 15 feet and more, with the head of an elephant, tusks ending in hammered brass spheres. It seems to slumber, cloaked in the leather shroud of its wings. All of the detail is exquisite, carved to a master's eye.*

*The statue is hewn from solid jade, a prince's fortune of the stone. The abomination's eyes are twin emeralds which twinkle in the light.*

Removing the emeralds will take 2 minutes each. Each emerald is worth 500 SP.

The chambers inside the lower portion of the tower hold fine couches and slumbering lotus-dreamers. None of these cultists are in any shape to take note of the characters or to care if they did so. They are high and experiencing the Godhead through the drugged vistas of the blossom.



A trap door in the floor may be found by making a Search check at DC 13. It leads to a chamber below where the apes that the party did not slay remain caged and drugged like the people above.

## SECOND FLOOR

Ascending the stairs to the second floor, the PCs find an open room with a couch that rims the perimeter.

*This great room lies open, 90 feet across with an enormous brazier in the middle. From it rises a great column of smoke into the hole in the ceiling above. Cushions and settees line the walls. Fine silken brocades and arras are draped from the ceiling. There are men and women in states of coupling, a writhing mass of flesh where a floor might be. The music from above is louder here and the bodies rut to its tempo.*

*Whatever dark magic takes place above, it may draw upon the sexual energy here as a power base. Again the lotus burns in a thick cloud making the head spin and the eyelids heavy.*

The players, previously exposed to the lotus below must make another check against being overcome. Each character must now make a Fortitude save at DC 16 or loose 1d6 WIS and take a -2 penalty for all checks for the next ten minutes. In addition, the highly addictive smoke may cause the characters to form a habit and they must make a WILL save versus that eventuality according to the rules. Treat this smoke as a mix of black lotus wine and black lotus powder.

There are 30 or more cultists here and the GM should make three collective spot checks at -5 to see if anyone notices the party.

## THIRD FLOOR

This is the top floor of the temple. It is wide open and there is a large thaumaturgic circle inscribed permanently on the

floor. Several holes are inside the circle itself from which plumes the dark smoke from below. However, the smoke here is distributed as well as being distilled as it rises and thus it does not have the same deleterious effects as it does on the floor below. An Arcane Knowledge check at DC 15 will reveal that the circle is intended to create some kind of portal.

*Dwarfing mere men, two elephant headed Yaggite statures rise to the top of the inverted lotus blossom ceiling. They are likewise hewn from a King's Ransom of solid jade. The arms of the alien creatures support the vast roof as a god might hold up the weight of the sky.*

*Below the elephant-headed gods are terracotta statues of ancient Khitai warriors, wearing finely crafted armour and carrying curved blades. Each face is a work of art in itself.*

*In the centre of the massive ceiling is a glass dome that serves as the centre of the lotus. Outside the stars shine through like the gems in a cosmic trove of treasure.*

*Directly below them lies a large reflecting pool. Knelt all around it are white robed cultists. They intone incantations in Khitan, as foreign to you as the words Lung Wu himself invokes with one arm thrust toward the sky holding a cylindrical green crystal, The Book of the Elephant. He is deep in incantation; his yellow features twisted into a face of concentration as three cultists play entrhralling pipes.*

*At Lung Wu's knees, chained to the centre of the circle, is Oleya. A cultist holds a dagger over her chest, ready to penetrate the pale beauty's heart.*

*The pool begins to stir as the intoxicating chant continues. Soon it bubbles and a strange green mist forms over it. The mist appears to emanate from the Book of the Elephant. It hangs there as an alien gas, then begins to take form. Ethereal translucent images flicker across it, images of beasts, great*

*winged things with the heads of elephants moving across the endless curtain of Elder Night. Fleeing, from a green world they come, to descend on a small blue world whose air burns the wings from their backs as they rocket to Earth in some primordial past forgotten by men.*

*And there they erect temples, great green stones thrust from the earth in a single night. They are worshipped by the degenerate ape men who will one day become human.*

In these thick primeval jungles, they dwell and age, watching the cycles of the rise and fall of men until only one remains.

*The images begin to gain clarity. They take on the solidity of something real, not out of untold time but in front of one's very eyes. The beasts, with their strange alien heads, their trunks raised to the vast cosmic night, seem to look through the portal, through time itself and into the very chamber in which their images have been conjured.*

*The swirling mist and the incantations are bringing them forth across the gaping chasms of time and space!*

The PCs, witnessing this horror out of space-time must make a Terror of the Unknown WILL save at DC 15 or be frightened for 3d6 rounds as outlined in the core rules.

The PCs are witnessing a Power Ritual as defined in the rules. The ritual has imbued The High Priest Lung Wu with 8 extra power points above his base.

Here, the PCs have the opportunity to stop Lung Wu from summoning forth the creatures through time or so they think. In reality, Lung Wu has not the power to take on a spell of this magnitude. To pull beings free from space and time itself requires power beyond his imagining. His actual goal is to find the location of the planet Yag and

summon his gods forth to Earth but his spell is spiralling out of his control!

Whether he is stopped by the PCs or allowed to proceed, the images of the past will quickly shift as time goes not back but forward.

*Of a sudden, the visions speed up. Eons pass, no longer in reverse but forward in time. The cataclysm shakes the world. Atlantis, Lemuria and other civilizations are drowned beneath the waves and still the visions continue to gain speed. From the ruins of Valusia, Acheron and Commoria rise the Hyborian Nations. Then, time seems to slow as a barbarian thief visits an old, blind Yaggite and uses his blood to slay the wizard that has enslaved him. The great priest Yara is trapped within a gem and that barbarian thief rises to become King Conan of Aquilonia as the years again pick up speed and rush past...*

*The room itself seems to take a gargantuan and endless breath as the portal becomes a maelstrom which sucks all near it into its gaping maw out of time!*

Once the gate has been opened, it will continue to swirl and suck at the room as if the chamber itself was taking a gargantuan, endless breath.

If Lung Wu is stopped or the PCs are noticed, difficulty check -7 for the concentration of the cultists, then they will attack.

If Lung Wu is fired on, the cultist standing above Oleysa, will throw himself bodily in front of his master.

Lung Wu will howl a bestial scream as his spell is interrupted and immediately bring the Terracotta Warriors to life.

Their number can be adjusted for the current challenge level the party is up to. The initial number, as outlined here is 4.

The cultists here are not commoners but priests. There are 5 of them total.

**Priests of Yag (5): 6<sup>th</sup> Level Priest, HP: 15;** see page 48 of The Game Master's Guide for details.

In addition, there are another 10 acolytes.

**Acolyte of Yag (10): 1<sup>st</sup> Level Acolyte; HP: 5;** see same page as above.

The acolytes are there to harass the PCs and provide them with the opportunity to hew and slaughter as in any good Conan tale.

The real fight comes from Lung Wu and the Terracotta Warriors. The warriors either have great swords or two broadswords at the GM's discretion. There are 4 Terracotta Warriors.

The Terracotta Warriors are actually ancient victims of the Invocation of Xuthalla spell. They were once fierce Khitan warriors who pledged their service long ago to guard their dead emperor but Lung Wu found the tomb and absconded with the statues. He was able, with the help of his Yaggite master, to repurpose the statues to guard his temple.

### TERRACOTTA WARRIOR

Animated Object, Medium  
Medium Construct  
**Hit Dice:** 2d10+20 (31 hp)  
**Initiative:** +0

#### Speed:

30 ft. (6 squares)

**Defence Value:** 10

#### Damage

**Reduction:**

6 (stone),

**Base Attack/**

**Grapple:**

+1/+2

**Attack:** Slam +2 melee (1d8+1)

**Full Attack:** Slam +2 melee (1d8+1)

**Space/Reach:** (1)/5 ft.

**Special Attacks:** See text

**Special Qualities:** Construct traits, darkvision 60 ft., low-light vision; also see text

**Saves:** Fort +0, Ref +0, Will -5

**Abilities:**

Str 12, Dex 10, Con —, Int —,

Wis 1, Cha 1

**Skills:** — — —

**Feats:** — — —

**Environment:** Any

**Organisation:** Solitary

**Advancement:** — — —

**Example (attacks):**

Greatsword (+2 melee, 2d10+1 damage), or 6' tall humanoid statue (standard, or by two broadswords +2/-3 melee, 1d10+1/1d10 damage)

As the fight progresses, the vortex will continue to become more powerful until Lung Wu is physically separated from the Book of the Elephant.

Each round, the PC's and the cultists must make Strength checks or be sucked toward the vortex and through space-time. Any who do so will be

seen to explode from within, literally turned inside out as their organs are flung outward across the mists of time. It is a hideous death.

The check is made at DC 10 initially and then at plus one per round thereafter as the strength and breadth of the vortex grows.

A critical hit will also cause any person so hit to make a Balance check at difficulty 15 in order to hold their ground against the vortex.

Each failed check above causes a person to be sucked 15 feet (Squares) toward the vortex itself. Entering the vortex will cause fortitude save to be made at DC 18 to avoid being sucked in and killed as outlined above. The GM may wish to lower the DC of the above save and increase it slowly as the vortex grows or not at all. It isn't meant to be a player killer but a dramatic element.

People can be thrown into it as well. This requires a successful grapple to pick some one up and then a strength feat to hurl them toward the vortex. The person attempting to hurl the individual should be within 15 feet of the vortex in order for its gravity to catch and suck the hapless victim inside. Once the vortex has been unleashed, missile combat becomes meaningless and all light objects in the room are sucked through time.

If he feels outmatched or has depleted his magic, Lung Wu will flee. There is a trap door behind one of the arrases that leads to the room below.

Once the PC's have slain him or he has escaped, read the following.

*Then, into the centre of the mist comes a green planet, a world spinning on the outer rim of this universe. It begins to turn brown as might a rare fruit under too many summer's suns.*

*It begins to rot as the vision falls through the clouds and atmosphere of the Planet Yag and toward the surface. There, in a temple not unlike this one, a group of the Yaggites gather and stare into a similar pool. The elephant headed kings stare back into your world. Their eyes penetrate through the ages and slacken the strongest of hearts with gazes meant for no mortal mind. There is no mistaking the malign nature in those dread eyes and one's soul goes pale with it.*

*The creature's wings snap open and they take to the skies, leaving their dying world, vast wings made of light taking them across the eons of endless night and toward Earth!*

*Then, as suddenly as the new vision began, it ceases and the hurricane of mist draws itself back into the crystal, emitting a wailing noise that makes one's ears scream and bleed. Then the images are gone, the vortex blown out and only the dead and victorious remain in the devastated chamber.*

*All is still. Only the sound of your hearts thundering beneath your ribs can be heard in the devastated chamber You reside, momentarily, in the mournful calm after a rare and terrible maelstrom.*

The GM may decide to up the consequences of this spell, as per the rules for Runaway Sorcery. The entire city of Shadizar may suffer a calamitous earthquake with consequences far reaching beyond the bounds of this adventure.

The PC's have either won or fled. If they are going to flee, read the above passage to them before they do, but omit the spell's end.

If the PC's have possession of the Book of the Elephant they will find it is now cracked but not destroyed. Yag Kosha's memories still linger there.

When the PC's observe the temple now, they see it is aged. Carpets have begun to moulder. The roof is

cracked and partly caved in. Below, the cultists they saw on the way up have turned to bones, time having stripped them bare.

Outside is much the same. The garden has grown to become a small jungle, thick fingers of it now wrap the tower which has become a ruin.

The entire area on which the temple sat was ravaged by the spell Lung Wu cast. The tower and its environs were thrust through time at such a pace that they aged centuries, perhaps millennia in moments, gone to ruin under the weight of condensed eons.

The PC's have their lives, perhaps the Book of the Elephant and knowledge not meant for sane nor mortal men. What more can one ask for in The Hyborian Age?

## CONCLUSION

The party has either stopped Lung Wu or he has escaped to torment them another day. They may or may not have made one or more deals with the various NPCs they encountered through the adventure and those will now pay out according to the terms.

Alternatively, any one of the NPCs may betray the PC's and refuse them their money or even try to assassinate them in order to protect their own interests. Aharesu and Lady Agnessa are far more inclined to do this than Elbis.

More frightening than all of this, the fell Priest Lung Wu was able to contact the Planet Yag and alert the Yaggites to location of Earth itself. With their own planet dying, they may decide to make Hyboria their new home and kingdom.

## The Book of the Elephant

What secrets and spells the book contains are left up to the GM but this adventure can set the stage for a very interesting campaign. The final scene has revealed that the planet Yag is dying and the Yaggite Kings are seemingly on their way to Earth. How long this journey may take is likewise up to the GM. It may be that eons will pass before they will arrive or it may be that they fold space and time like a Shemite tailor does his wares and thus their mighty wings speed them to Earth even now. The PCs may blame themselves for the ruined spell, not knowing that Lung Wu was bound to fail anyway. If they do so, the GM may wish to go with the plot thread.

Yag Kosha's memories will tell the story of The Tower of the Elephant in full. Any player unfamiliar with it may be encouraged to read it if the party seeks to uncover the memories trapped inside the crystal.

Further, as many memories of Yag Kosha lay within, the PCs may be able to use it as a kind of map back to the temples of Khitai in which he resided. Great treasures may await them there.

Depending on who has survived, the PCs are now privy to one or more plots against the throne of Shadizar and may have made powerful friends or enemies. The unfolding days and weeks after the adventure, if the PCs remain in Shadizar, should bear out the full measure of the repercussions to come.

The players might find themselves in the midst of a power play for the throne involving House Kasamir, Aharesus and possibly agents of Turan whose spies surely will report the strange rumours flying about the city.

It is left only to the imagination of the GM and the desire of he and his players where the story of the Book of the Elephant may take them next.

## **SERVIUS**

**Medium-Size Humanoid (6<sup>th</sup> Level Aquilonian Thief)**

**Hit Dice:** 6d8+0

**Initiative:** +20 (+6 Dex, +14 Reflex save)

**Speed:** 30 ft.

**DV (Dodge):** 17 (**Parry**): 13

**DR:** 0 or 4 (leather jerkin)

**Attack:** Short Sword, or +8 Poniard +8

**Damage:** Short Sword 1d8+3, or Poniard 1d6+3

**Special Attacks:** Sneak attack : +3d6/+3d8 (poniard)

**Special Qualities:** Trap Sense +2, Sneak Attack

**Space/Reach:** 5 ft.

**Saves:** Fort 2, Ref 9, Will 2

**Abilities:** Str 16, Dex 18, Con 10, Int 13, Wis 10, Cha 14

**Skills:** Appraise +6, Balance +8, Bluff +8, Climb +7, Decipher Script +5, Diplomacy +7, Disable Device 5, Escape Artist +6, Hide +10, Intimidate +6, Gather Information +4, Jump +6, Knowledge (arcane) +3, Listen +4, Move Silently +11, Open Lock 7, Perform (song) +6, Ride +4, Search +4, Sense Motive +5, Sleight of Hand +8, Spot +5, Survival +4, Swim +4, Tumble +8, Use Rope+6

**Feats:** Dodge, Eyes of the Cat, Improved Initiative, Light Footed, Two Weapon Fighting  
Fate Points: 2

Reputation: 5

Corruption: 0

Allegiances: None

**Possessions:** Poniard, Short Sword, 30 sp, Leather Jerkin, Camel, All the PCs items will have been sold except things he may still be hoping to fence privately

### **Personality and Background:**

Servius is a thief from the Aquilonian capital of Tarantia. He grew up there as one of the guttersnipes and novice

thieves who infest the great capital. He is currently on the lam from that city following a misunderstanding between he and several colleagues as to a "fair" split of a robbery's take. He now finds himself based out of Shadizar where he has been hired by Lady Agnessa of House Kasamir to steal an iron box (containing the Book of the Elephant.) He was contacted through Vakos the Fence and has taken it on himself to recruit a clan of Zuagir nomads whom he previously met while freebooting in Shem. He and the nomads go back some time, with Servius having at one point been marked as the sacrifice to one of their dark desert gods. This too was a simple misunderstanding.

When Servius is not arranging trouble, he is talking himself out of it and has no small amount of proficiency with being able to do so. He is a rogue by nature but not a malicious one. He is open to killing but does not have bloodlust in him that makes him inclined toward needless slaughter. For this reason, he allows the players to live, leaving them to what he sees as fortune.

Servius is primarily motivated by greed and a passion for danger and adventure. He will attempt to talk his way out of any situation the PCs might put him in and will even offer to help them steal back the Book of the Elephant and he sees that he has fulfilled his contract by delivering it to begin with.

He should be played with a certain charm and flare, coming off as a scoundrel rather than a murderer, a man who follows his impulses and avarice to places his body is perhaps not quite ready to rescue him from.

Servius is a handsome man with curly blond locks and striking blue eyes. He wears a crooked grin and his eyes gleam at the thought of treasure, danger or sex. Ideally, he should like to mix all three whenever possible.

## LUNG WU

High Priest of Yag, 10<sup>th</sup> Level Scholar, Medium Humanoid

Hit Dice: 10d6+10 (50 HP)

Initiative: +4

Speed: 30 ft.

Dodge Defence: 14

Parry Defence: 14

DR: 0

Base Attack Bonus/Grapple: +7/+2

Attack: Dagger +7

Full Attack: Dagger +7/+2

Damage: Dagger 1d4+2

Special Attacks: Sorcery

Special Qualities: Khitan traits, scholar, background (lay priest), base power points, knowledge is power, iron will  
Space/Reach: 5 ft. (1)/5 ft. (1)

Saves: Fort +8, Ref +6, Will +14

Abilities: Str 12, Dex 12, Con 12, Int 20, Wis 14, Cha 20

Skills: Bluff +15, Concentration +12, Diplomacy +12, Intimidate +10, Knowledge (arcana) +15, Knowledge (history) +10, Knowledge (religion) +10, Perform (ritual) +12, Sense Motive +15

Feats: Adept (hypnotism), Bleed Dry, Power Attack, Priest, Ritual Sacrifice, Tortured Sacrifice

Reputation: 10 (Cruel) Khitai Only

Code of Honour: None

Allegiances: Cult of Yag; Kings of Yag

Base Power Points: 9; 27 maximum (Now at 19 total; 2 for lotus, 8 for power ritual)

Magical Attack: +10

Sorcery Styles: Cosmic Sorcery, Curses, Hypnotism, Oriental Magic

Spells Known: Curse of Yizil, entrance, illusion, burst barrier, calm of the adept, conjuring, hypnotic suggestion, mass hypnotic suggestion, ranged hypnotic suggestion, shrinking doom, the time is right, the stars are right, warding

**Corruption: 6**

**Possessions:** Book of the Elephant, dagger, spell components

Lung Wu is a High Priest of Yag. His cult was founded in antiquity, lost down eons. His was a splinter faction of those men who once worshipped Yag Kosha and his fellow Yaggites as gods. The Cult of the Kings of Yag was created as an antithesis to the power of the exile Yaggites. Their goal was to venerate the true masters of the planet Yag, its kings.

Lung Wu is obsessed with the power he believes the Kings of Yag can offer and is likewise obsessed with bringing them to Earth. He is charismatic beyond measure, enchanting and sinister. His ability to manipulate, cajole, enthrall and dominate is nearly without equal. He finds whatever a person wants and loves and then uses that thing to bend them to his will.

He not only indoctrinates people into the temple but also into the worship of himself as emissary of the Kings of Yag. He is a megalomaniac, as are all cult leaders and uses his followers for his own dark sexual appetites and needs for veneration.

He is charming, sophisticated and horribly dangerous and evil.

Lung Wu is a fair skinned Khitan whose flesh has turned the colour of dry parchment. He is very conscious of this and uses oils to help keep his skin looking youthful and beautiful. His hair is long and jet black and he wears a long goatee, precisely timed. He will never be seen in anything but the finest silks.



# The V/W Class Destroyer

By David Manley

Many of the destroyers featured in Victory at Sea and Order of Battle were the most modern of their type in service with their respective navies. A notable exception is the US Clemson class destroyer which originated in WW1. Similarly, the Royal Navy and the Royal Australian navy fielded a large number of WW1 vintage V/W class destroyers which saw action across the globe in the early years of WW2. They formed the basis for the RN's later classes of WW2-era destroyers and also served as the model for a number of export designs during the interwar period.

The V/W class actually comprised six distinct groups of ships. At the time of their construction they were the most advanced vessels of their kind in the world. However, by the 1930s they were distinctly showing their age and found themselves relegated mainly to second line duties or to the Reserve Fleet. The onset of war saw the reactivation of many of the old ships for service in escorting convoys and for coastal defence. Many were given extensive refits to equip them for specific roles. Four ships also served with distinction in the Royal Australian Navy, although these differed only slightly from their original configuration.

The stats below provide information for the basic V/W class destroyer and several of the modified versions that saw service in WW2

## V/W Class Destroyer

**Vessels in Class:** *Venetia, Wakeful, Wessex, Whirlwind, Worcester, Wren*

This represents the basic V/W design, little changed from its original WW1 appearance. At the outbreak of WW2 many ships were reactivated and sent back into service. All of these unmodified ships were sunk during 1940 with the exception of *Worcester*.

**Speed:** 7"  
**Turning:** 2  
**Target:** 6+  
**Armour:** 2+  
**Damage:** 3/1  
**Crew:** 5/2  
**Special Traits:** Agile  
**In Service:** 1917

Weapon	Range	AD	DD	Special
Secondary Armament	12"	1	1	Weak
AAA	5"	1	-	
Port/Starboard Torpedoes	10"	3	4	AP, One-Shot
Depth Charges	3"	2	2	Slow Loading

**Length:** 312 ft.  
**Displacement:** 1,339 tons  
**Speed:** 34 kts.  
**Crew:** 115

## V/W Class Destroyer (Royal Australian Navy)

**Vessels in Class:** *Vampire, Vendetta, Voyager, Waterhen*

These four ships started life in the Royal Navy and were transferred to Australia during the 1930s. The vessels of the RAN landed their aft torpedo tubes and shipped additional AA weaponry. This was to stand them in good stead in the war against the Axis, since the air threat was otherwise woefully addressed in British destroyer design until well into WW2. All but *Vendetta* were war losses.

**Speed:** 7"  
**Turning:** 2  
**Target:** 6+  
**Armour:** 2+  
**Damage:** 3/1  
**Crew:** 5/2  
**Special Traits:** Agile, Radar  
**In Service:** 1917 (transferred 1933)



Weapon	Range	AD	DD	Special
Secondary Armament	12"	1	1	Weak
AAA	5"	2	-	
Port/Starboard Torpedoes	10"	2	2	AP, One Shot
Depth Charges	3"	2	2	Slow-Loading

**Length:** 312 ft.  
**Displacement:** 1,339 tons  
**Speed:** 34 kts.  
**Crew:** 115

## O/W Long-Range Escort

The V and W class were designed to support the Grand Fleet in its actions in the North Sea, for which they were required to make fairly short, high speed dashes. Thus, they were unsuitable for the ocean escort role to which they found themselves allocated in the Second World War, where speeds over 20 knots were of limited value (as ASDIC rapidly lost efficiency) and endurance was desirable over firepower.

A number of V and W class were modified into long-range escorts to suit them for convoy escort duties. High speed was not a requirement (ASDIC lost performance over 20 knots) so one set of boilers and the associated funnel were removed and the resulting space divided into fuel tanks giving longer range and accommodation for the increased crews. 'A' and 'Y' guns were landed and replaced with a *Hedgehog* ASW weapon and additional depth charge stowage and launchers respectively. The torpedo tubes were removed and replaced with a 12pdr anti-aircraft gun and platforms for a pair of 20mm guns amidships, with a further pair in the bridge wings. Type 271 radar for target indication was added on a platform aft of the on the bridge and Type 291 Radar for air warning was added at the masthead, with High Frequency Direction Finding (HF/DF) fitted in some ships. The maximum speed of the conversions was around 24 knots.

**Vessels in Class:** *Vanessa, Vanoc, Vanquisher, Velox, Vesper, Versatile, Vidette, Vimy, Vivacious, Viscount, Walker, Warwick, Watchman, Westcott, Winchelsea, Wrestler, Vansittart, Venomous, Verity, Volunteer, Wanderer, Whitehall*

**Speed:** 5"  
**Turning:** 2  
**Target:** 6+  
**Armour:** 2+  
**Damage:** 3/1  
**Crew:** 5/2  
**Special Traits:** Agile, Radar  
**In Service:** 1917 (converted 1940)

Weapon	Range	AD	DD	Special
Secondary Armament	12"	1	1	Weak
Hedgehog	4"	4	-	Slow Loading, automatic kill
AAA Depth Charges	5"	2	-	
	3"	4	2	Slow-Loading

**Length:** 312 ft.  
**Displacement:** 1,760 tons  
**Speed:** 24 kts.  
**Crew:** 140

## O/W "WAIR" AA Destroyer

The WAIR type conversions were intended for service on the East Coast convoy routes. Everything above the weather deck with the exception of the funnels and aft deckhouse were removed. The original armament was replaced with four 4" high angle guns. A new bridge structure was built which supported a Type 285 and Type 286 or Type 291 radars. 0.5" machine guns and quick firing 2pdr guns were also carried, with 20mm cannons replacing the smaller guns later. Additional depth charges were also carried.

**Vessels in Class:** *Valentine, Valorous, Vanity, Vega, Verdun, Vimiera, Vivien, Viceroy, Westminster, Whitley, Winchester, Wolfhound, Wolsey, Woolston, Wryneck*

**Speed:** 7"  
**Turning:** 2  
**Target:** 6+  
**Armour:** 2+  
**Damage:** 3/1

**Crew:** 5/2  
**Special Traits:** Agile, Radar  
**In Service:** 1917 (converted 1940)

Weapon	Range	AD	DD	Special
Secondary Armament	12"	1	1	Weak
AAA	5"	2	-	
Port/Starboard Torpedoes	10"	2	2	AP, One-Shot
Depth Charges	3"	3	2	Slow-Loading

**Length:** 312 ft.  
**Displacement:** 1,710 tons  
**Speed:** 24 kts.  
**Crew:** 115

## O/W Short Range Escort

The Short Range escorts, in common with many RN conversions, lost their aft torpedo tubes and shipped additional AA weaponry. Air and surface radar was fitted To counter the increasing threat from enemy *Schnellboote* they also carried additional close range armament, typically old pattern 2pdr/40mm guns in rapid fire mountings. *Walpole, Windsor, Wished* and *Wivern* received the even more effective army-pattern twin 6 pounder semi-automatic gun in 'A' position for east coast anti-E boat work.

**Vessels in Class:** *Vortigern, Walpole, Windsor, Veteran, Wished, Wild Swan, Wishart, Witch, Witherington, Wivern, Wolverine*

**Speed:** 7"  
**Turning:** 2  
**Target:** 6+  
**Armour:** 2+  
**Damage:** 3/1  
**Crew:** 5/2  
**Special Traits:** Agile, Radar  
**In Service:** 1917 (converted 1940)

Weapon	Range	AD	DD	Special
Secondary Armament	12"	1	1	Weak
Hedgehog	4"	4	-	Slow Loading, automatic kill
AAA**	5"	1**	-	
Port/Starboard Torpedoes	10"	2	2	AP, One-Shot
Depth Charges	3"	4	2	Slow-Loading
			3"	4 2
				Slow-Loading

\*\* AA rating is 1 when used against air targets, 2 against coastal forces surface craft (3 for *Walpole, Windsor, Wished* and *Wivern*)

**Length:** 312 ft.  
**Displacement:** 1,339 tons  
**Speed:** 24 kts.  
**Crew:** 115





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# Continuum 2008

By Sandrine 'Sand' Thirache & Katrina 'Kat' Hepburn

This year's Continuum 2008 took place at the John Foster Hall, one of the new Halls of Residence at the Leicester University, from Friday the 1<sup>st</sup> of August to the following Sunday. Two and a half days of gaming excellence!

## Mongoose

Continuum is a convention themed around Runequest and Cthulhu, hence the prominent presence of Mongoose Publishing. The Traders Hall was small but each company was provided with enough space to show off their wares, which ranged from books and dice to jewellery and exclusive convention goodies.



Evil Genius at Work!

Mongoose set up its wide range of Runequest books and campaign settings such as Elric and Hawkmoon, as well as Conan and Babylon 5. Products like The Traveller's Core Rulebook and Cthulhutech were the little surprises of the event. Matt and Nick alternated between answering fan questions and seminars. All in all it was a very friendly atmosphere.



Nick the Greek... Always Ready to Help!

## Traders Hall

Other stalls included Reaper's Revenge with their horde of dice. Their metallic sets were popular and they also sold spectacular Fantasy and Cthulhu themed



# MONGOOSE





Traveller Seminar in full swing



You Know You Want it!!!

sets. Pagan Angel was present with their gothic jewellery, as well as Chaosium with a range of Cthullu products. Moon Designs displayed their Heroquest and Sceptune Games expanded with their Runequest Open Gaming titles.

Sceptune actually produced a series of 'collectable' business cards, each had a character designed at the back of it (I personally chose the pirate duck). The Continuum Stall presented a new fanzine 'Hearts of Glorantha', exclusive to the convention and expanding on Glorantha's 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> age.

### Continuum's Official Welcome

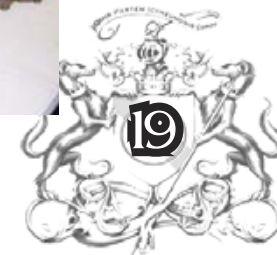
Although the trader's hall was opened by two o'clock on Friday, the convention itself did not officially open until later that day. The guests of honour panel included designer of Call of Cthulhu: Sandy Petersen, game designer and former publisher: Greg Stafford, producer of Mythic Russia: Mark Galeotti, Angus Abranson of Leisure Games and co-founder of Cubicle 7 Entertainment, president of Chaosium: Charlie Krank, co-author and publisher of Heroquest: Jeff Richard and Rick Meints and of course, our very own Mongoose Matt.

### Games and More Games!

Finally proper gaming started. The gaming boards filled extremely quickly and so did the available slots. Heroquest, Simplequest, Runequest and Cthulhu to



Heroquest Fantasy Setting



# MONGOOSE



**Kat Winning Heroquest!**

name but a few. Thank god there was a bar (yes a real bar!) which offered a much needed relief. Don't worry, everyone was responsible and behaved themselves. To our dismay we missed opportunities to play the games we were interested in with the slots filling up so quickly. However, the convention premises were big enough to allow gamers to set up their own spontaneous games for everyone who wanted to try their hands at something new. There were some tabletop games like Heroscape, with both fantasy and Marvel settings and a kind of wacky 'Race Around the Block' (Runequest Theme). There were some board games with Arkham Horror, Inca Gold and roleplaying with Paranoia. Nick also treated us with Carcassonne and Puerto Rico (both are awesome board games) as well as roleplaying with an introductory adventure for Traveller, which even Matt joined in on. No Matt, dangling the man by his feet over the side of a building is 'bad'. There were more games but unfortunately we did not have enough time to play them all.

A few seminars took place throughout the weekend and we unfortunately missed them too, with the exception of Matt and Nick's little talk about the Traveller license and what was in store for the near future.

Overall the convention was a success and catered for both the beginners and the hard core gamers. There was enough treasure in the trader's hall to re-supply an entire army (or at least the people who forgot their roleplay essentials. I.E. pencils/ dice).

The games were coming fast and furious, even when people had not reserved a game slot. Continuum is definitely 'the' convention to go to if you want to immerse yourself in one of your favourite gaming hobbies.



**Who Could Ever Resist the Charm of the Greek?!**



**Tum Te Tum... Sat Back Enjoying His Success**



# Chimaera Roleplaying Game Combat Breakdown

Chimaera Studios

This section lays out a typical combat session using the Core Rulebook.

We are joining this combat after action has started. Chris is playing his favorite character Lone Soldier. This segment involves the Chris the player and Terrance is playing the Director.

Terrance <Director> “Alright, you are facing a squad of well armed soldiers. The street is pretty bare. Five of the six have automatic rifles drawn.” The director knows that Lone Soldier has an intimate knowledge of weapons. “They are AK-74 Century models, one of the soldiers has a nine millimeter pistol still in it’s holster.” The director sets the soldiers up in his head and determines based on Lone Soldiers movement rate that it will take one frame for him to reach the soldiers. “At a dead sprint you can reach them in a frame, they may get a few shots at you, what are you going to do?”

Chris <Player> “I’m going to stick to hand to hand in this. I don’t want to hurt them too bad. I’m going to rush them, try to split the group so they won’t fire towards their own men.”

<Director> Lone Soldier has a special attribute for Military Tactics. “Roll the dice for your maneuver.” Chris rolls an 85, his ability is at a 50. Terrance knows that Chris gets a +35 to his basic maneuver roll. This means that for all dodges executed during this frame Chris has a strong advantage entering the fray. The soldiers have

never experienced a combatant as skilled as Lone Soldier so the squad of six has been split in half. The director decides that only two soldiers will get a shot off. He rolls twice with a result of 80 and 65. The soldiers have a base ability of 30 in rifle. To hit a standard target they would need to roll a minimum of 70. Due to the bonus received and Lone Soldiers dodge ability 60, the director decides that there is less than a 1% chance that the dodge fails. In order to get into combat the director states. “As you turn to rush the soldiers you see your opening and split the group into two. As you drove into your sprint two soldiers got a shot off, one of them nearly hit your (Rolls a single die) hip and the second wizzed by your arm. They are stepping back and seem to be attempting to flank you. You are in range of one of the groups of three.” Somewhere in the city a secret puppet master holds the controls to Lone Soldier. The director hasn’t clued Chris into that fact. The director rolls two dice against the puppet masters control ability of a 70. The result is only a 10, there is no chance for control. “Let’s move to the next frame. Two of them have a shot angle on you, three of them are point blank with you, they may or may not get a shot off. Are you planning on attacking or defending?” The director decides that the three in front of Lone Soldier are going to try to dodge his attacks, one of them is amazed that he missed so he may not conduct an action. Two of the remaining three are going to get a shot off this round. One of the soldiers is an officer and will draw his pistol next frame.

<Player> “Oh, I’m going after them. Can I get to one of the guys that shot me?” The director nods. “Then yeah I’m going to attack.”

<Director> He rolls six dice getting a 2, 3, 4, 2, 1, 7. “Please roll for action order.” The director supervises the roll, Chris rolled a 3. “Two of the soldiers are going to shoot, you’ve got the drop on one of them.” The director rolls two attack rolls versus the soldiers rifle ability of a 30. He rolls a 20 and a 40, neither shot is close. “What attack are you doing?”

<Player> “I’m going to go for a kill shot to the nose, these guys are trying to kill me.” Chris rolls an attack roll versus his martial arts ability of 70, he rolls a 98. The director rolls to defend receiving a 01. This roll is a critical failure for the soldier, the director decides that the attack succeeds and judging Lone Soldiers strength against a normal human determines that it is a killing blow.

<Director> The soldier’s couldn’t hit water if they fell out of a boat so the director decides to have one of them focus and take aim. The other soldiers are a little too stunned to move. “You shattered the soldiers face, you’re pretty sure he’s down for good. One of the soldiers is getting a bead on you, his partner is raising his rifle. The other three soldiers are splitting up to get a good firing line. You lost sight of the one you think is an officer. We are moving to the next frame. Attack or Defend?”



<Chris> “I need to take these two out quick, I’m going to attack. They seem pretty easy so I’m going to try a complex move.” Chris starts shaking his dice, trying to get them a little warmed up.

<Director> It’s going to take the other three one frame to get into a good firing angle. The next actions depend on who wins highest start roll. “Roll one die.” The director rolls two times receiving a 3 and a 9. Chris rolls a 10 winning the roll. “You have the first move this frame what are you doing.”

<Player> “I’m going for a complex action, I want to punch one and kick the other”

<Director> Chris has to roll a complex action, he’ll roll on his martial arts ability, if he fails the roll he fails his attack. If he succeeds at the roll he rolls two separate attacks on the soldiers. Chris rolls a 90 for the action, a 76 and a 89 for the individual attacks. The director rolls two dodge rolls versus the soldiers’ dodge ability. He rolls a 10 and a 09. Both attacks succeed at a remarkable degree. “As your left hand drives into the jaw of the first

soldier you hear a satisfying crack, your foot swept into the jaw of the second soldier. You didn’t see him fall but you felt it. You don’t think they are going to get up.” The director rolls another roll for the puppet master, he rolls a 30, not enough to set up a link. “You feel a faint buzz in your head, the buzz makes you feel a little out of control.”

<Player> “What can I do, I’m trying to remain focused.” Chris is getting a little nervous with the directors secret rolls.

<Director> The director rolls for the Officers leadership skill of a 30. He rolls a 90, the soldiers are going to setup a cross-fire situation as the officer tries to get the drop on Lone Soldier. “Roll the dice for me.” The director is

rolling a straight opposed roll to determine first to act as the officer sneaks up on Lone Soldier due to the fact that the officer has no skill in stealth and Lone Soldier is a little distracted. Chris rolls a 20 and seems concerned. The director rolls an 18. “There is a soldier creeping behind you, will you attack or defend?”

<Player> “Forgot about the, I’m going to throw an elbow and try to look around.” Chris rolls the dice and rolls a 98. “Got him.”

<Director> The officer has a dodge of 40 versus Lone Soldiers martial arts of 70, he'll receive a -48 to his die roll. Chances are the officer is toast. "You landed a blow to his neck, you feel a spray of fluid and hear his body hit the ground. It's a good thing you look around, there are four soldiers lining you up."

<Player> "I'm going to kick the closest one if I can and try to get out of the line of fire."

<Director> These guys can't shoot so the director rolls four times for shots, he receives a 30, 60, 90, 20. One of those shots stands a chance to hit. "Roll a die for action order." The director wouldn't need to do this unless there is a chance for the soldiers to hit. Chris rolls a 9 and the soldiers roll a 7, 3, 2, and an 8. "You're attack goes first. You wanted to kick one of them?"

<Player> "I'm going to kick him and try to propel myself out of the line of fire." The director asks him to roll the dice and decides that the action is not so complex. Chris rolls a 98.

<Director> The soldier has a 1% chance of success so the director forgoes a roll. "You land a blow solidly to the soldier's lower rib cage, you hear the air rush out of him. There are several shots going your way." The soldier will receive a -40 to his die roll opposed versus Chris. The director rolls the dice receiving a 30, the result is a -10 so Lone Soldier manages to get out of the line of direct fire. "You've timed the blow perfectly as two bullets fly by the spot you where standing in." The director fails another puppet master roll. "Your eyes focus in on the nearest soldier, your ears pick up on the distinctive click of the rifle moving to burst."

<Player> "I'm going to kick it into adrenaline mode, I'm rushing him."

<Director> Chris is activating a means, the director asks for two die rolls. One for power and one for duration. Chris rolls an 87 and a 70. Lone Soldiers mental threshold drops with the use of this means, he may fall under the power of the puppet master. "You taste the coppery sensation fill your mouth as your eyes focus on the soldier. Your heartbeats at a blur as you launch into a dead sprint." The director rolls for the soldier anticipating three bursts before Lone Soldier makes it to him. The director curses his dice as he rolls a 20, 24, and 32. "Roll to dodge, he's got a good bead." The director know there is no chance to have the soldier hit him, he just wants to increase the drama. Chris rolls a 69 and seems nervous. "You're feet fly as the first series of bullets blend trails in the air around you." The director rolls a puppet master roll and receives a 98. Chris

can fight the link but it will be set for at least the next ten frames. "Please roll the dice." Chris rolls a 01, that's a critical failure and he looks scared. "You feel the air pressure pops over your left arm and near you left ear. The soldier is almost in your grasp. The next series of bullets your body seems to naturally dodge. You may be getting back in the groove." You are in attack range.

<Player> "I'm executing him, he goes down now."

<Director> The puppet master has established a link, the Director asks Chris to roll. It doesn't matter what he rolls the outcome will lead to him crushing the soldier. The director controls Lone Soldier for at least three more frames. The Director can play it up as they will.



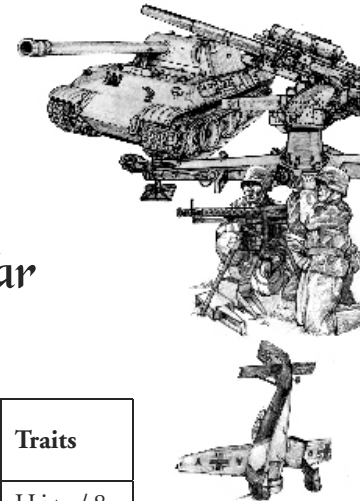




# Operation Chastise

## An Unusual Scenario for Battlefield Evolution: World at War

Matthew Sprange



When Charlotte asked me for another World at War article for this month's Signs & Portents, I duly flipped through my hard drive to see what tasty morsels I could give her. This article is built from some bits and pieces we are currently working on for the Air Power supplement, a tome that brings all manner of aerial fun to the battlefield.

As well as the expected expanded Air Assets for every force in the war (and plenty of options for each aircraft, so you can tune their payloads to your specific missions), we could not resist writing a 'silly' chapter – covering 'Strategic Air Assets'. Now, whether this chapter actually makes it in to the final book is anyone's guess at the moment but the intention is to give the statistics of various aircraft that really have no business on the average tabletop, such as heavy bombers. The intention is partly as a thought exercise as to how the system can handle aircraft like these, partly for use in special scenarios (such as the one presented here) and partly because we know there are some gamers out there who are truly, umm, dedicated and might just have armies large enough to fill the average sports hall!

Anyway, on to the scenario. It is from one of the most famous actions of World War II and lets you use one of the most iconic aircraft. We are proud to present Operation Chastise and the Lancasters that were to become known as the Dambusters!

Type	Size	Move	C l o s e C o m b a t	Target	Save	Kill	Traits
Lancaster	9	Cruise Burn	8xD10	5+	6+	9+	Hits/8, Multifire/ all

**Unit:** Lancaster with two Browning. 303 MG, two Browning. 303 MG (FaF) and four Browning. 303 MG (FaA).

**Options:** The Lancaster may be two extra Browning .303 MG for +25 points. The Lancaster must also be given one of the bomb loads below for the listed points cost. It may drop all bombs carried in a single Shoot (Bomb) action.

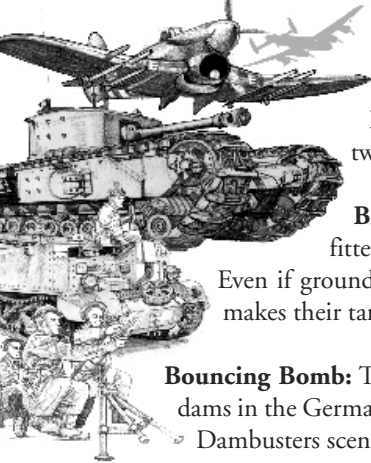


**Avro Lancaster Mk I – 375 points**

**British**

The most successful bomber of the war, the Lancaster was the mainstay of Bomber Harris' thousand bomber raids.





**Bouncing Bomb (Special):** One Bouncing Bomb. Lose two Browning. 303 MG.

**Browning. 303 MG:** None of the Browning. 303 MGs fitted to the Lancaster are capable of firing on ground units.

Even if ground targets are in their arc of fire, the motion of the aircraft makes their targeting almost impossible!

**Bouncing Bomb:** The ingenious weapon designed by Barnes Wallis to defeat dams in the German industrial heartland. Rules for its use can be found in the Dambusters scenario.

So, your chariot awaits! Naturally, we have already worked out the other possible bomb loads of the Lancaster (8,000 lb. bombs were fun to write up!), plus rules that allow for carpet bombing rather than dumping them all on a single Impact Point. Will they ever be used in a serious game? Probably not! However, we are just concerned about the Bouncing Bombs for the moment and their use in one particular mission.

What follows is a special scenario, involving only a single type of aircraft and a couple of ground units. Players must re-enact the famous Dambusters raid (with a few historical liberties taken), lining up on their target to ensure safe delivery of the bouncing bomb!

## The Dambusters

Once the industrial heartland of Germany had been identified as a primary target for Bomber Command, strategists set to work to build an effective plan to destroy the great dams providing power to the region – the Mohne, Sorpe and Eder dams, with others being cited as potential targets should the aircraft still have bombs remaining.

It had been acknowledged that heavy bombing would destroy the dams but concerns were raised as to the accuracy required. Barnes Wallis, designer of the Wellington bomber, came to the fore with an innovative idea to produce a bomb that, by a spinning motion, would skip over the water (and the submerged torpedo nets) when released, then drift down to the base of the dam before exploding.

It fell to 617 Squadron and their Lancasters to undertake the mission, which required a great deal of ingenuity and practice. The bouncing bombs had to be released at a specific altitude (60 ft.) and specific speed

(240 mph), at a specific distance from their targets – at night.

Two aiming systems were developed to aid this precision. The first, to precisely measure altitude, consisted of two downward pointing searchlights whose lights would converge when the aircraft was at 60 feet. The other used the towers at each end of the Mohne and Eder dams as a visual reference for distance. The Lancasters were also lightened as much as possible, with the removal of the mid-upper turret and armour.

On May 17<sup>th</sup> 1943, 617 Squadron took off to begin their attack in 19 Lancasters, arranged into three formations. Once the English Channel had been crossed, the aircraft descended to treetop level for safety while skirting known concentrations of AAA but two aircraft were forced to return to base due to technical faults and a further five were shot down or crashed during their hazardous flight.

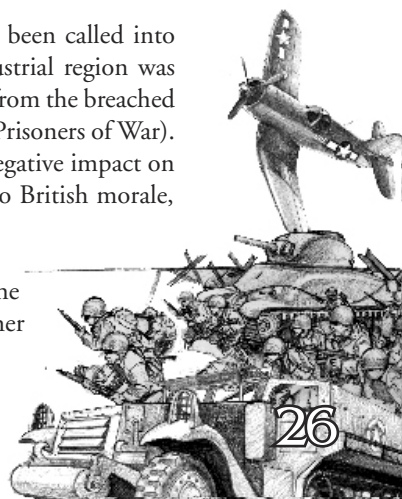
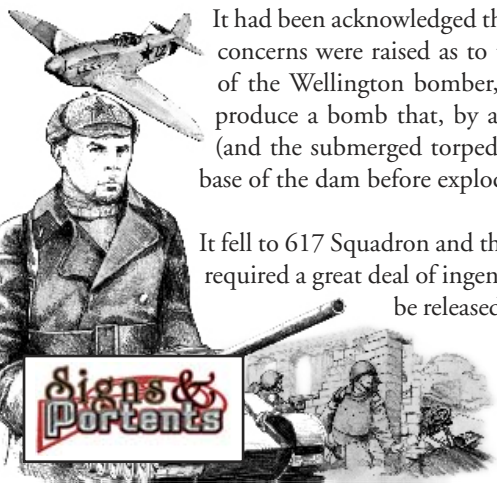
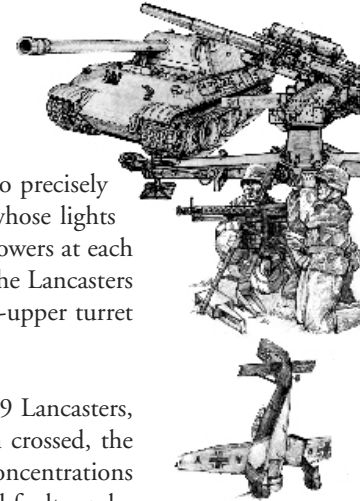
When the first formation reached the Mohne Dam, the attack was launched under flak. Several aircraft were hit by the defensive fire but the only Lancaster lost was due to it being caught in its own bomb blast. It took five separate runs at the dam by different aircraft but finally, it was breached. Five aircraft from this formation then proceeded to the Eder Dam which was undefended but wreathed in fog. The surrounding hills made the approach to the dam difficult and seven attempts were made before the first bomb was dropped. Another Lancaster was damaged by its own bomb, which had struck the top of the dam but two further successful runs resulted in the dam being breached.

The attacks on the Sorpe and Ennepe dams were foiled due to either thick mist or the dam being too strong (the Sorpe was a heavy earth dam, not a concrete structure).

The surviving Lancasters regressed from mainland Europe, again at treetop level but another was shot down by German flak despite this precaution.

While a success, the overall effect of the attack on the dams has been called into question. After all, the water and electricity supplies to the industrial region was restored in little more than a month and the flood waters resulting from the breached dams claimed many lives (well over 1,500, with many being allied Prisoners of War). However, the raid did cause serious food shortages, which had a negative impact on German morale. Perhaps more importantly, it was a great boost to British morale, its people still facing bombing from Germany at the time.

From 617 Squadron, 53 crew, out of the 133 who took part in the raid, were killed as their planes were shot down or crashed. Another





three were taken prisoner when they bailed out of their aircraft. Of the survivors, 33 were decorated on their return, with Squadron Leader Guy Gibson being presented with the Victoria Cross.

### Briefing for 617 Squadron

Through a combination of luck, skill and daring, you have managed to fly across Europe at treetop height and are now in position to destroy the great Mohne Dam. Fly through the flak and release the bouncing bomb at the right moment to break the dam and release its waters!

- You have five Lancasters, each carrying one Bouncing Bomb.
- One Lancaster will enter the table from your table edge on turn one to make its attack on the dam.
- When a Lancaster leaves the table, a new Lancaster may be brought on from your table edge in the following turn. You may only ever have one Lancaster on the table at any one time.
- If a Lancaster leaves the table from any edge without dropping its Bouncing Bomb, you may use it again later. Lancasters that are destroyed or have released their Bouncing Bombs may not be re-used.

### Multiple Players

While this scenario is fully capable of being played solo, it is always more fun to play with a friend – after all, it never seems right rolling dice to destroy your own aircraft! In order to decide who will have the first crack at the dam, both players should secretly decide how many aircraft they will use in an attempt to destroy the dam (both may choose a maximum of nine Lancasters, though they will need at least two very lucky Lancasters if they are to breach the dam). The lowest will play the part of 617 Squadron first! If both players choose the same number of aircraft, simply roll a dice each to decide who will go first.

While the first player attempts his runs against the dam, his opponent will take the part of the AAA. If the first player fails with all his Lancasters, his opponent will then take command of 617 Squadron,



### Scenario Rules

Normal turns are not used in this scenario. Instead, only Air Phases are taken into account. This effectively means that the Lancasters will take consecutive actions, with the German units only reacting against them.

There are two 2cm Quad AA guns on the top of the dam. For the purposes of this scenario, they do not have the Slow trait and so may React against incoming Lancasters.

To successfully drop a Bouncing Bomb, the following conditions must be met.

- The Bouncing Bomb must be released exactly 12” from the dam.
- The Lancaster must be travelling at Cruise speed and move no more than 24” on the turn the Bouncing Bomb is released.

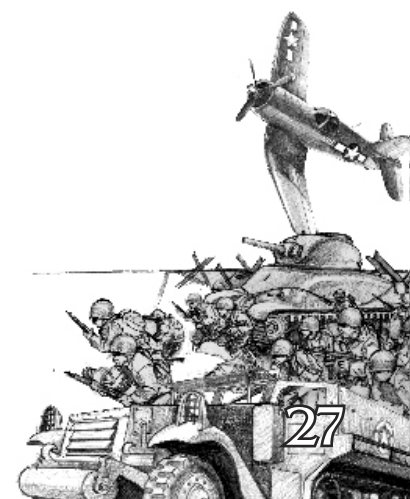
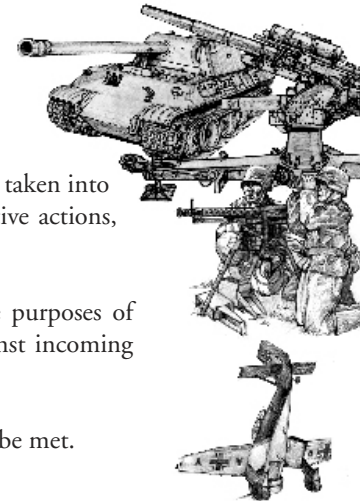
When the Bouncing Bomb is dropped, roll a D6, deducting -1 for every Hit the Lancaster has suffered in this turn. On a 3 or more, the bomb is released successfully and begins bouncing.

At the end of the next turn, the Bouncing Bomb will strike the dam. It rolls 2xD10+2 Damage Dice, with the Killshot and Multihit traits.

The Mohne Dam has a Target score of 8+ and a Kill score of 10+. It also has Hits/16. When its Hits have been reduced to 0, the dam has been breached!

### Victory Conditions

If 617 Squadron manage to breach the dam, they may claim victory!





## Announcement

In conjunction with Comstar Games and Avenger Enterprises, part of the Flaming Cobra imprint, Mongoose Publishing is proud to announce the release of the first PDF Traveller adventure: Type-S.

The Type S is one of the most ubiquitous starships in all of Charted Space. Users describe it as tough, reliable and robust. It is just plain hard to break. And yet the crew of the Detached Duty Scout/Courier *Highndry* have somehow managed just that. Now the ship is stranded on Walston in the Spinward Marches, the crew have absconded and the Scout Service wants their vessel back.

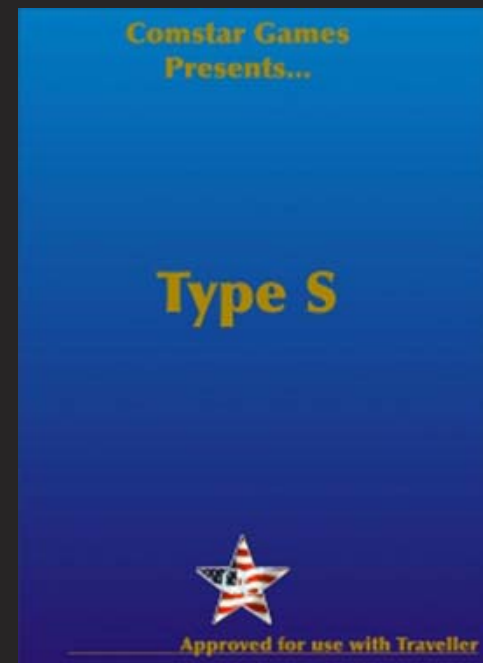
Enter the travellers, a resourceful team of adventurers or maybe even heroes. Commissioned to track down the missing ship, affect a repair and return it to Flammarion Scout Base, they might consider the recovery of *Highndry* to be easy money. They might be wrong about that...

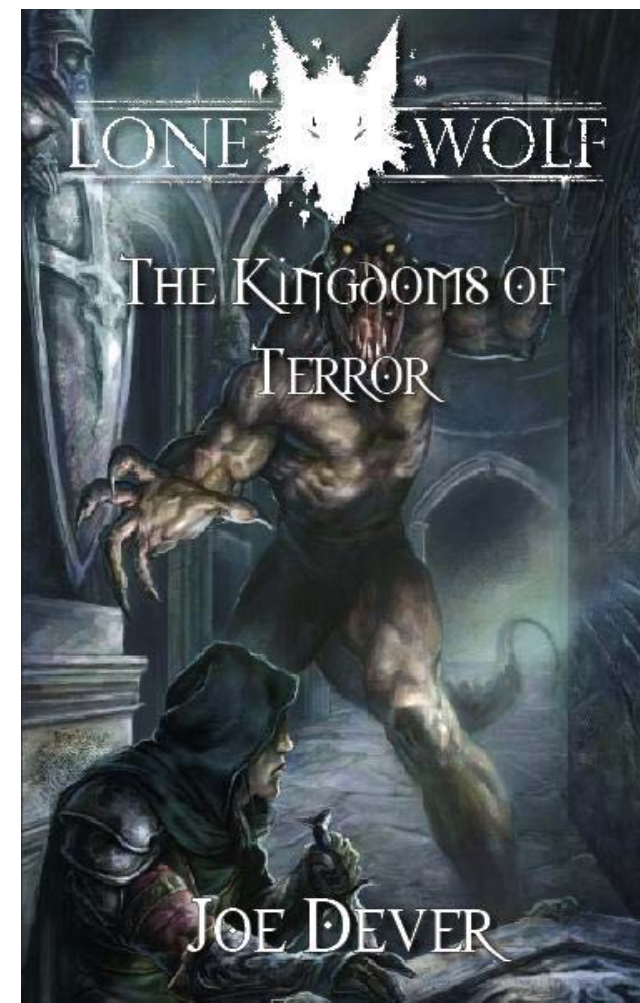
Type S is a complete adventure for Traveller. Written by Martin J Dougherty, author of the Spinward Marches sourcebook, it takes the travellers from the high-tech starport at Flammarion to a frontier world where adventure, disaster and crisis await.

This volume also details the world of Walston and the surrounding systems, providing additional adventure possibilities and background material that will help bring the Spinward Marches to life.

You can find Type-S on DrivethruRPG.com, at:

[http://rpg.drivethrustuff.com/product\\_info.php?products\\_id=57163](http://rpg.drivethrustuff.com/product_info.php?products_id=57163)





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# GenCon USA 2008

## By Rob Glass

As all of you readers likely know, GenCon Indy '08 wrapped up just a couple of weeks ago. As always, it was the highlight of the convention season for us and just about every other company that attended. It is a show that we look forward to and dread at the same time. We look forward to it because it is a great opportunity to see friends who we may only get to see once or twice a year and for the opportunity to speak directly with our fans and customers. We dread it because it is a large show with a great deal of preparations needed to be done behind the scenes. Hotels must be arranged, rental vans reserved, booths planned, demos run and so on. The last couple of weeks before the show can be truly crazy as the final preparations are made.

The show began, for us, Wednesday morning as we load up the van with all of the books, racks and other gear we need for the show and headed to the convention hall. Since the US warehouse is located in Dayton Ohio the drive is only a couple hours, which makes a number of things much easier for us. Once we arrived in Indianapolis, however, we could not just head directly to the exhibit hall. First I had to go to the marshalling yard. Due to the size of the show and the number of exhibitors that need to set up their booths, docks are at a premium and we each had to wait our turn for a dock to open up then get the truck unloaded as quickly as possible so the next company in line could get their truck unloaded. Fortunately, the GenCon people were on top of their game and this was a virtually pain-free process. I had barely pulled into the marshalling yard when I was dispatched to a dock. I was lucky that the rest of my crew had arrived on schedule or I would have been unloading the truck alone – not a terribly pleasant thought.

One of the advantages of being an exhibitor at a show like GenCon is the ability to get into places before anyone else. There is something unique about the energy inside the

exhibits hall as all the booths are being built and the stock being shelved. People are excited at being there. It is also an opportunity to figure out, before the crowds appear, what booths you want to visit yourself once the show is up and running. There are always a few good deals to be had and new products to take a look at. Most companies like to roll out their latest and greatest at the show and sometimes it is possible to find stuff that will not hit retail shelves for a few weeks yet. We, of course, had our share of new products at the show. Baron Munchausen was one such book we released at the show. Trial of Blood for Conan also made its first appearance as well as the new superhero game Chimeara.

The first day of the show is always a treat. In the morning as we were making our way to the booth, two hours before the exhibit hall was to open, people were already starting to stake out seats near the entry doors so that they could be among the first to get into the hall. When the doors opened the masses poured in – an unstoppable horde of gamers going after whatever gem they couldn't wait to get their grubby little hands on. It is actually an important period as this first rush can often be a good indicator of how your week is going to go. Soon we had people filling the booth looking for what was new or for old products that they had missed.

Predictably Traveller was the biggest mover at the show, both during that first hour and for the rest of the show, it was common to see someone set a full set of the books down to buy. Runequest and Conan also had a good showing for us. The Lonewolf books were also on sale and by the end of the show we only had a handful of books five and six remaining – the rest sold completely out. Throughout the show we enjoyed a nice steady stream of traffic in and out of the booth, which is what you want to see.

Of course, there is much more to the GenCon than just the exhibit hall. When I had an opportunity I visited the

miniatures game room where a variety of games were being run including Starship Troopers and A Call to Arms. I also dropped by the RPG and card halls to say hi to people I knew. Everywhere I went attendees were hard at work concentrating on their game, trying to beat their opponent or in the case of role-playing games, overcome the Big Bad that the Game Master was throwing their way.

Once the work day was done and the exhibit hall closed down each evening the real fun began. There are a lot of great places for food in downtown Indianapolis. Bucca di Beppo's, The Ram, Ruth Cris (greatest steaks on the planet as far as I'm concerned), a variety of breweries and more are all to be found. If you need a break from the mad rush of the show you can take in a movie at the local theatre. Then there are the bars (or if you prefer, pubs). Downtown Indy has no lacking of bars. Want fun and games? Go to Jullians. Want something a little more trendy? Try the Ice House. This latter is where White Wolf held their annual industry party and I can promise you that it was a blast – loud music and great drinks were abundant. Fortunately I do not get hangovers so the next morning I was revving to go again.

As they say, all good things must come to an end. As the doors closed at 4PM on Sunday and the exhibit hall emptied out it was a great relief since working the show can get pretty exhausting but also a little sad. It would be another year now before I'd get to absorb the great energy and enthusiasm that gamers have for their games and their hobby. If you readers have never gone to GenCon I would highly recommend that you mark your calendar now for next year. It is an experience well worth the time and money. For those of you that were there I'd like to say thanks for making it such a great show and I look forward to seeing you again. Finally, I'd like to tip my hat to the GenCon staff for putting on a virtually flawless show.



# MONGOOSE

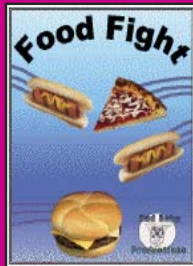
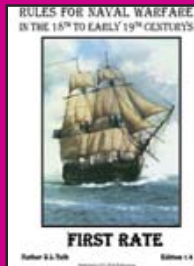


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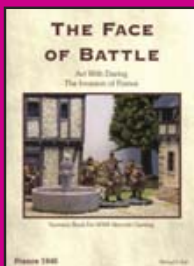
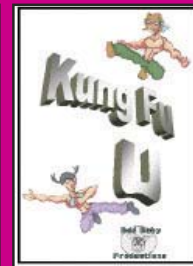
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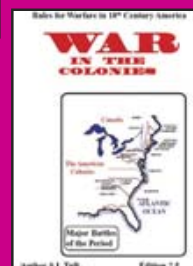
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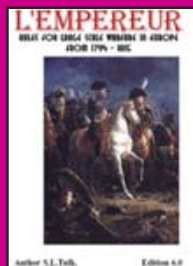


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# Lock and Ward

## A Runequest Supplement by Carl Walmsley

### Introduction

Thievery is an integral part of any fantasy world – and is central to just about every quest. Whether picking locks, disarming traps or sneaking past wary guardians, the rogue's talents are vital to the success of many adventuring escapades. Was there ever an adventuring party that did not seek to acquire something that was not freely given?

In a world where thieves can call upon not just expert training but also spells and magical items in their hunt for ill-gotten gains, only the most cunning and devious devices will stand a chance of thwarting their efforts.

### Show me the money

It is a staple of fantasy adventures that items of treasure and enchanted objects are hidden away in tombs, dungeons and long forgotten ruins. The pursuit and protection of such riches has been handled many times, in many different tomes. However, it is foolish to believe that the majority of the world's wealth would be secreted away: it is the living rather than the dead who will have most use for it. This wealth – stored in homes, warehouses, temples and shops – would need to be very well protected. Only a fool would assume that a locked door will deter a thief armed with all manner of magical enhancements.

What is more, traps and security measures that work in an isolated crypt are entirely unsuitable for a house

or shop: you cannot flatten, eviscerate or fry the people who live or work on the premises just because they accidentally enter a room or step on the wrong flagstone! There is a big market for security measures that are designed to work in and around everyday life – and if you think that means they are any less challenging then you are in for a shock!

### Counter Measures

A key feature of the security measures in this article will be the steps that can be taken to circumvent them. No trap is perfect; no lock or safe uncrackable. The inclusion of Counter Measures provides all sorts of opportunities for thieves to master their trade and for players to have fun acquiring the knowledge and tools they need to get the job done. Where better to acquire this information than a Thieves' Guild?

### Ingenious Inventions

There are master craftsmen with such a knowledge of gears and cogs, metal and crystal, that they are able to fashion the most remarkable devices. Often resembling mundane items that most intruders fail to notice, they can possess clockwork innards and tiny moving parts so perfectly wrought that they seem almost to come alive.

Thieves and adventurers searching homes, shops and buildings must quickly realise that an innocent seeming room may actually contain a host of hidden obstacles.

### Clockwork Spider

Hidden away during the day, out of sight and out of mind, a clockwork spider emerges only at night, ready to protect its owner's premises. Crafted from metal and gemstone gears, encased within a carapace of steel, these arachnid-like machines may only be crafted by the most skilful of artisans.

Just like its namesake, a clockwork spider may spin a web of fine silk. This it does each night when it first emerges, stringing tiny almost invisible trip-wires across the doorways of whatever room it has been assigned to protect. It can then hide itself away, its tiny limbs fastened to lines of silk that can detect even the tiniest vibration in the trip-wires.

Should a trip-wire be disturbed, a spider automaton may react in one of two ways depending upon the instructions it has received from its owner. The machine may retreat from the room and summon help, awakening guards or the owner of the premises. Alternatively, it may attack. Though small, a spider automaton can deliver a venomous bite via the hollow metal stinger built into its abdomen. This may be loaded with whatever poison the owner desires, but the most common choice is a long-lived concoction known as *delirium serum*.



### Characteristics:

STR	1D6+3	(6)
CON	10	(10)
DEX	1D6+12	(15)
SIZ	3	(3)
INT	7	(7)
POW	0	(0)
CHA	3	(3)

### Clockwork Spider Hit Locations

D20	Hit Location	AP/HP
1	Right Fourth Leg	3/3
2	Left Fourth Leg	3/3
3	Right Third Leg	3/3
4	Left Third Leg	3/3
5-11	Abdomen	3/5
12	Right Second Leg	3/3
13	Left Second Leg	3/3
14	Right First Leg	3/3
15	Left First Leg	3/3
16-19	Thorax	3/3
20	Head	3/3

### Weapons

Type	Weapon Skill	Damage/AP
Sting	40%	1D4 + poison

### Special Rules

*Combat Actions:* 3

*Strike Rank:* +11

*Movement:* 4m

*Traits:* Dark Sight, Disease immunity, Poison Immunity, Wall Walking

*Skills:* Athletics 60%, Perception 70%

*Typical Armour:* Steel Shell (AP 3, no Skill Penalty)

## Oclerium Serum

**Type:** Ingested or smeared

**Delay:** 1 Combat Round

**Potency:** 55

**Full Effect:** 1 point of damage to location struck, applies a -8 penalty to victim's DEX and INT (upon reaching 0 DEX or INT victim falls unconscious)

**Duration:** 2D10 minutes

Constructing a spider automaton is difficult, requiring the use of several different Craft Skills. Of course, several characters may collaborate, each lending their expertise to a particular step in the process.

The first stage of construction requires a successful Craft (Blacksmith) test with a -20% Skill Modifier. This forges the sturdy outer shell and limbs. Failure at this stage costs 50 SP in wasted materials. Each test at this stage takes 25 hours of work.

The second stage requires a successful Craft (Jeweller) test to shape the quartz and soft metal gears and cogs. Failure of this test does not damage the shell created in stage one but does cost 100 SP in wasted materials. Each test at this stage requires 30 hours of work.

The final stage represents assembly of the finished spider. A Mechanisms test with a -30% Skill Modifier achieves this. A fumble damages the unassembled parts beyond repair and the construction must begin anew. A normal failure merely means that the artisan must continue his work. Each test at this stage takes 20 hours of work.

The base cost of constructing a clockwork spider is 1000 SP.

## COUNTER MEASURES

Effective night watchmen though they are, clockwork spiders do have a few weaknesses.

Firstly, the trip-wires that they use to sense intruders are reflective. A thief who shines a light directly towards one will see it glinting if he succeeds at a Perception test with a +20% bonus.

In addition, clockwork spiders only react if one of their lines is disturbed – they do not spring into action simply upon seeing an intruder. This precaution allows a resident of guarded premises to step safely over the trip-wires if he needs to enter a room for any reason after dark. Because of this, a wary thief may evade the trip-wires and he will be able to walk past the spider unopposed.

In dark conditions, noticing a trip-wire requires a Perception test with a -40% penalty.

## Creakboards

Designed to fit unnoticed amongst normal floorboards, creakboards are touch-sensitive slabs that will groan loudly if even the tiniest amount of pressure is placed upon them. Creakboards come in various shapes and sizes and can therefore be fitted within any building that has wooden floorboards.

The amount of pressure required to trigger a creakboard is equal to around 3 pounds – or the footfall of an adult domestic cat. It does not matter how gently pressure is applied to a creakboard – if it rises to 3 pounds or more, the board emits a loud groan.

Any creature that is inside the room when a creakboard is triggered will automatically hear it. Even if the creature is asleep at the time, the noise is so loud that it will automatically be woken up.

Any other creatures inside the building when it is triggered must pass a Very Easy (+60%) Perception Test to detect the sound. Every closed door between the creature's location and the room where the creakboard is located imposes a -10% penalty. In addition, if the creature is asleep at the time the creakboard is triggered, a further -20% penalty is applied.

#### For example:

*A careless thief treads on a creakboard in the entrance hall to Lord Maric's manor, activating it. A sleeping watchman seated at the end of the hall is automatically roused by the noise.*

*Lord Maric, asleep in his bedroom upstairs, has three closed doors between him and the creakboard. He must therefore pass a Perception test with a +10% modifier (+60% - 30% for the doors and 20% for being asleep).*

When not required, a creakboard may be deactivated via the use of a hidden lever. This raises a muffling pad stored beneath the board so that it will not emit any unusual sounds when trodden on.

The cost of purchasing and installing a creakboard is 300 SP.

## COUNTER MEASURES

Some thieves use a trained rat to detect the presence of creakboards. The rodents are trained to scurry out across the floor, using a surprisingly methodical system

to cover all areas of the room in search of creakboards. Whilst the rodent's tiny footsteps are not heavy enough to fully activate a creakboard, they will elicit a tiny groan which is just about audible.

Any creature in the same room as a creakboard when a rat runs over it must pass a Perception test in order to hear the quiet creak.

A trained rat – referred to affectionately by the thieves who use them as *creakers* – can search one square metre of floor each Combat Round. A 'creaker' costs 50 SP to buy.

An alternative method of locating creakboards is to use a device resembling a yo-yo, called a *rolling snitch*. These detection devices can be reeled out across the floor to reveal any creakboards. A rolling snitch touches a board even more lightly than does a 'creaker'. Hearing a creakboard triggered by a rolling snitch requires a Perception Test with a -10% modifier.

A rolling snitch can be used to check one square metre of floor every Combat Round. Purchasing a *rolling snitch* costs 20 SP.

Perhaps the most reliable way to circumvent a creakboard is to locate and use the deactivation lever. The artisans who install these devices are careful to keep secret the locations where they have been installed. Nevertheless, such information can sometimes be acquired through appropriate contacts or some form of coercion.

Searching a room in order to locate a deactivation lever is extremely difficult. A successful Perception Test with a -60% penalty is required. Each attempt to find a lever takes 10 Rounds.

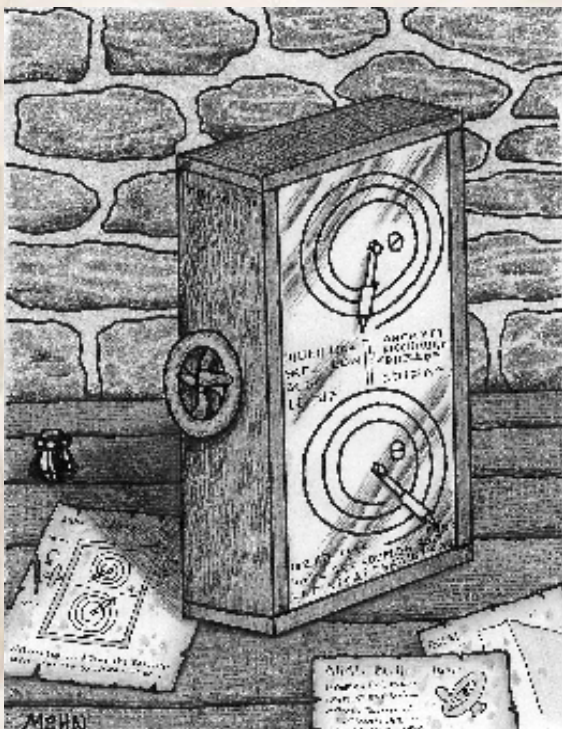
## Deconstructibles

A key feature of any security measure to be employed in a home, shop or such like is the ability to go unnoticed. With this in mind, the sorcerer-craftsman *Jerops* designed the first of his *deconstructibles*. Each of these guardian constructs is able to assume the appearance of an everyday object and thereby avoid drawing attention to itself. The most common choices are chairs and tables but deconstructibles can be crafted to resemble large metal mirrors, fireplaces or any other item that the craftsman has the skill to imitate.

To all intents and purposes, a deconstructible spends most of its life fulfilling the role of whatever piece of furniture it resembles. However, given a specific circumstance, it alters its shape as hidden gears and levers come alive, transforming it into its guardian form. *Jerops* himself designed most of his creations to metamorphose into predatory creatures such as wolves or cats. Since other craftsmen have taken up and modified his designs, it is conceivable that a deconstructible might take on the form of any animal – even a humanoid.

In appearance, these constructs resemble blocky, angular versions of the creatures they are based upon, often with tell-tale signs of the everyday items they spend most of their time disguised as.

Each deconstructible may be given a single, simple instruction which dictates the situation in which it will come alive. A command such as *attack anyone who removes this painting from the wall* or *immobilize anyone who enters this room* are examples of the sort of instruction that will work.



As a safety precaution, all deconstructibles are built with a deactivation word. If this is spoken directly to the construct, it will ignore the activation instructions that it has been given for 10 minutes. After this time, the instructions become active once more.

The most common type of deconstructible is fashioned from wood, though there are also examples that have been made from metal, marble and even glass.

Presented below are the typical characteristics of a small (chair-sized) and a large (table-sized) deconstructible. These base characteristics should be modified according to the material used to craft the construct.

Material	Modifiers
Wood	None
Iron	+2 HP on each hit location, 3 AP, Damage from strike increased by one step*
Steel	+3 HP on each hit location, 4 AP, Damage from strike increased by one step*
Marble	-1HP on each location, 4 AP
Glass	-2 HP on each location, 1 AP, Damage increased by two steps*

\*For each damage step increase, a D6 becomes a D8, a D8 a D10, and so on.

### Small Deconstructible

Characteristics:

STR	2D6+3	(10)
CON	10	(10)
DEX	3D6	(10)
SIZ	1D6+3	(6)
INT	1	(1)
POW	1	(1)
CHA	3	(3)

### Small Deconstructible Hit Locations (Quadruped)

D20	Hit Location	AP/HP
1-2	Right Hind Leg	2/3
3-4	Left Hind Leg	2/3
5-7	Hindquarters	2/4
8-10	Forequarters	2/4
11-13	Right Front Leg	2/3
14-16	Left Front Leg	2/3
17-20	Head	2/3

### Weapons

Type	Weapon Skill	Damage/AP
Strike	50%	1D6

### Special Rules

*Combat Actions:* 2

*Strike Rank:* +9

*Movement:* 4m

*Traits:* Disease immunity, Poison Immunity

*Skills:* Perception 44%, Resilience 35%

*Typical Armour:* Natural 'Hide' (AP 2, no Skill Penalty)

### Large Deconstructible

Characteristics:

STR	3D6+6	(16)
CON	10	(10)
DEX	3D6	(10)
SIZ	3D6+6	(16)
INT	1	(1)
POW	1	(1)
CHA	3	(3)

### Deconstructible Hit Locations (Quadruped)

D20	Hit Location	AP/HP
1-2	Right Hind Leg	2/6
3-4	Left Hind Leg	2/6
5-7	Hindquarters	2/7
8-10	Forequarters	2/7
11-13	Right Front Leg	2/6
14-16	Left Front Leg	2/6
17-20	Head	2/6

## Weapons

Type	Weapon Skill	Damage/AP
Strike	60%	2D6 + 1D4

## Special Rules

*Combat Actions:* 2

*Strike Rank:* +9

*Movement:* 4m

*Traits:* Disease immunity, Poison Immunity

*Skills:* Perception 44%, Resilience 35%

A small Deconstructible costs 1,500 SP. A large Deconstructible costs 2,500 SP. Using Iron as the building material increases the cost by 10%. Using steel adds 20%. Using either marble or glass adds 50%.

## Echochamber

Installing an echochamber inside a building is neither cheap nor easy – however, it does present unwanted intruders with a significant obstacle.

An echochamber is carefully designed and constructed so as to capture and amplify any sounds made within the confines of its walls. What is more, thanks to retractable and re-alignable panels built into the walls, this effect can be entirely nullified, allowing the room to be used normally.

When the panels are aligned to amplify – it takes a single round to pull a lever that can switch the room between its two states – an echochamber magnifies every sound twenty-fold: a sneeze becomes a roar, a footstep an earthquake and the click of an opening lock a resonating rumble. However, thanks to the unique design of such a room and the ways that sounds are funnelled in or out, noises made even a few centimetres

outside the chamber are in no way magnified.

The most common application of an echochamber is as an ante-room to a space where something valuable is stored. A nobleman wishing to safeguard his riches might place an echochamber outside his underground vault for instance or a man fearful for his life might build one outside his bedroom.

Attempting to do anything quietly whilst inside an echochamber is extremely difficult. Even the sound of breathing becomes like the screaming of a gale. For every potentially noisy action the character takes, he must pass an Opposed Stealth vs. Perception Test against any creatures within earshot. Because of the properties of the chamber, the character's result on the skill test dice is doubled!

### For example:

*Killick the thief whispers an instruction to his companion as the two of them are sneaking through an echochamber. There is a guard next door who might overhear their conversation, so an Opposed Test is required.*

*The guard has Perception 40% and rolls a 37 – a normal success.*

*Killick has Stealth 55%. His player rolls a 34. Normally, this would be a success but the result is doubled inside the chamber, giving 68. Killick's fails the test and his amplified whisper is heard.*

Noisy actions such as knocking over an object, running or engaging in combat are amplified to such a degree that everyone within a building will automatically hear them.

Building an echochamber costs 100 SP per cubic metre of room.

## COUNTERMEASURES

Perhaps an echochamber's main weakness is the fact that it can be deactivated by the use of a lever. Consequently, such a device is usually concealed, requiring a successful Perception test to locate it. Additionally, the lever is usually located 'beyond' the chamber. For example, a museum safeguarding its exhibits would place the lever on the far side of an echochamber lobby, making it that much more difficult to reach without making a noise – personnel opening up in the morning will not be too worried about booming footsteps when they first enter the building, whereas a thief obviously would.

A few thieves have taken to wearing specially designed footwear which allows them to dampen the sound of their footsteps. Known as *mufflers*, these padded shoes provide a +20% bonus on Stealth Tests. Unfortunately, mufflers are not suitable for general wear as the padded material provides very little grip on flat or polished surfaces (-20% on Acrobatics or Climbing and Jumping Athletics tests). They are also difficult to run in, limiting movement to walking pace.

A pair of mufflers costs 25 SP.

A second device that may prove useful when encountering an echochamber is a *thieves' muzzle*. Worn over the mouth and nose like a mask, it serves the dual purpose of disguising the wearer and silencing his breathing. Equipped in this way, a skilful thief has at least a chance to pass through an echochamber undetected.

A Thieves' muzzle cost 35 SP.

## Sealing Room

Another security measure requiring major renovation – but offering excellent protection – is a sealing room. When activated all exits from this chamber can be entirely closed off and, depending on the design, bellows may then be used to suck oxygen out of the room or to pump it full of gas.

Sealed rooms are almost always located within the centre of buildings as the inclusion of windows in such a room would present anyone who becomes trapped with an obvious means of escape.

The activation method for a sealing room can be either a trip-wire or a pressure pad. Typically, these are located some way inside the room. A trip-wire is slightly easier to spot but is a cheaper option than a pressure pad. Noticing a trip-wire requires a successful Perception Test. Detecting the presence of a pressure pad requires a Perception Test with a -20% penalty.

Once triggered, the doors to a sealing room slam shut almost instantly. A character who is located just inside the doorway who succeeds with a Dodge Test may leap back outside the room before it is sealed.

If fitted with extraction bellows, a sealing room will immediately begin to empty of air once it has been sealed. This takes a number of Combat Rounds equal to the volume of the room, measured in cubic metres.

For example:

*Lysan triggers a sealing room and has no time to escape before the doors slam closed. He hears the hissing of air being drawn out of the chamber. Glancing round, he estimates the size of the room – 4 metres along each wall and 3 metres high. He therefore has 48 rounds (4x4x3) or just under 5 minutes, before the room empties of air.*

An alternative to emptying a room of air is to pump it full of gas. A substance known as Drowse Wind is most often used: this renders unconscious any thieves trapped inside the room.

### Drowse Wind

Type: Inhaled

Delay: 1D6 rounds

Potency: 58

Full Effect: Victim falls asleep

Duration: 4d10 minutes

As mentioned earlier, sealing rooms are typically built inside interior rooms and tend to be surrounded by solid stone. This usually means that the doors are the most vulnerable areas when it comes to those inside trying to find a way out. Accordingly, the doors are constructed of sturdy metal (10 AP, 60 HP), making them difficult to break down. Note that the door must suffer a full 30 points of damage before even the smallest of holes is made.

Once activated, a sealing room can only be opened from the outside using a hidden pulley, which reverses

any changes in the air content within the chamber and then releases the doors. Pumping air back into a room takes 3 rounds. Sucking out Slumber Wind Gas takes one round for each cubic meter of room.

The cost of building a sealing room is equal to 50 SP per cubic metre of space within it, plus 400 SP. If the room is triggered by a pressure pad, rather than a trip-wire, it costs a further 250 SP to construct.

Installing extraction bellows adds a further 500 SP to the cost. A gas pump that can flood a sealed room with Slumber Wind Gas costs 750 SP.

## COUNTERMEASURES

A few cunning rogues have taken to using a special type of *thieves' muzzle*, which is enchanted so as to purify the air that the wearer breathes.

An enchanted air-purification muzzle is both difficult to acquire and usually costs at least 250 SP.

Others still have fitted their masks with a small, independent air-supply which can buy a thief enough time to escape from a sealing room.

Masks fitted with an emergency air supply cost 120 SP. There is enough oxygen stored inside the muzzle to supply the wearer for 20 rounds. These devices have the added benefit of allowing the wearer to breathe under water, though only in depths of up to 3 metres.

An inevitable weakness in the hermetic nature of a sealing room exists at the point where an extraction bellows or gas pump is connected. Locating one of the holes where gas is pumped in or out requires a successful Perception Test. There is usually 1 hole in a sealing room for each full 10 cubic metres of volume. If all of these holes are bunged up somehow, gas can be kept in or out of the chamber – or oxygen kept in.

## Shadowcaster

Even the most experienced of thieves is not immune to the tension involved in breaking into an unknown building and trying to anticipate the sorts of traps and defences he might have to overcome. Accordingly, fear can be a powerful deterrent when trying to discourage would-be rogues.

A shadowcaster is an ingenious device that plays not just with light and shadow but with the imagination of unwelcome intruders. These skilfully wrought contraptions throw monstrously enlarged shadows designed to terrify intruders and make them believe that something hideous is waiting around the next corner.

In truth, the shadows are nothing more than that – images cast by a light source through a rotating cylinder of metal plates, beamed onto a wall to appear as the fearsome silhouettes of guardian creatures. Most shadowcasters hurl images of huge dogs but it is possible to have the metal plates create the shadow of any beast imaginable.

In order for a shadowcaster to function, there must be an area of wall for the shadow to be cast upon. Given a large enough wall, a shadowcaster could create an image several metres high and wide.

A shadowcaster costs 200 SP to purchase and a further 1 SP each day to oil its moving parts. New plates for a creature's shadow may be purchased for 50 SP.

## COUNTERMEASURES

The rotation of a shadowcaster, whilst extremely quiet, is not entirely silent. A character who succeeds with a Difficult (-20%) Perception Test can discern the faint sound of the rotating plates. For a knowledgeable thief, this quiet whirring may be enough to tell him that the hideous shadow he sees is no more than a skilful trick.

In addition, for a shadowcaster to continue rotating quietly, it must be oiled every night. The penalty imposed on the Perception Test to hear a functioning shadowcaster is reduced by 10% for each night that the device has not been oiled. A Shadowcaster that is not oiled at all for a week ceases to function altogether.

The rotation of the plates creating the shadow of a creature works in cycles that last around 12 seconds (2 Combat Rounds). During this cycle, the shadow of the creature may move – most often as though a creature is sleeping, its chest rising and falling slightly. A character who is patient and watches the movement of the shadow, will notice that the same pattern is repeated indefinitely. A clever thief (or perhaps one who knows what to look for) might discern from this that what he is seeing is simply the light-show of a shadowcaster.

## Shuffling Furniture

Fashioned with all the skill and care of the finest antiques a *shuffler*, as they are known in the thieving trade, is designed to do far more than simply look nice. Hidden within a *shuffler* are a series of cranks and levers that allow them to move. Though not fast and

possessed of the stiff-kneed gait of a young fawn, this allows a *shuffler* to change position several times during the night. More than one thief re-tracing his steps as he leaves a building has been caught unawares by an awkwardly placed foot-stool that he could have sworn was not there a few minutes before.

An intruder passing through a room with which he is familiar must succeed with an Easy (+20%) Perception Test to notice that a *shuffler* has moved. If a room is well lit, it is likely that the *shuffler's* change of position will be spotted. However, the modifiers applied for partial or total darkness (-20% and -40% respectively) will make it far more likely that the rearranged furniture will not be noticed. A character who inadvertently collides with a *shuffler* must pass an Athletics test or trip over, quite possibly alerting anyone within ear-shot.

A *shuffler* costs 300 SP for the inner workings plus the usual cost of the item of furniture.

## COUNTER MEASURES

All *shufflers* have a small timer located on the underside of a surface. This allows their owners to control how often they change position and the hours during, which they will do so; in this way, it is possible to ensure that they return to their proper positions by the time the building is required for regular use. A character who checks the underside of a *shuffler* cannot fail to notice this timer.

As is often the case for a thief, vigilance is the key to success: assuming that a room will have the same layout of furniture when one returns can lead to difficulties. There is no substitute for maintaining one's alertness until the job is finished.

## Snakecharm Lock

Devising locks good enough to thwart master thieves was the life's work of an artificer wizard named Verelyon. Taking his inspiration from the snakes that were so common to his tropical home, Verelyon devised a lock every bit as cunning as a serpent.

The keys to Verelyon's locks take the form of tiny metallic serpents, coiled up to form a circle about the width of a man's finger. Indeed, each miniature snake is designed to be worn as a ring. This enables the owner to hide the key in plain sight – most thieves will not be aware of the ring's true nature and even if they do learn the truth, stealing it without being noticed is extremely difficult.

When one of these keys is placed near its corresponding lock, it unfurls, as mechanical components spring to life and the tiny snake slithers inside the keyhole to trip the tumblers. The mechanical serpent then slides back out of the lock and wraps itself once more around its owner's finger. This entire process takes two rounds to complete.

It is believed that Verelyon designed each snakecharm lock and key to be unique. However, only 12 designs have survived, meaning that all newly constructed locks and keys are based on one of the dozen original schematics.

A thief who tries to pick a snakecharm lock without the key will find that it is extremely difficult to do so. A successful Mechanisms test with a -50% modifier is required to trip the tumblers and open the lock.

Having a snakecharm lock and key constructed and installed costs 1,000 SP.

## Hydric Deadlocks

Surpassing even the exquisite craftsmanship of his snakecharm locks, Verelyon crafted three unique devices that he called his hydric deadlocks. Whilst a snakecharm lock is opened by a single ring-key, these mechanical masterpieces require the use of seven separate keys in order to release them.

Verelyon designed each of the deadlocks for organisations that wished not only to safeguard their most treasured items but to ensure that no single member of their ruling hierarchy would ever be able to steal them for himself.

To open one of the hydric deadlocks, all seven corresponding ring-keys must be used simultaneously. The lock resembles a large heptagonal metal doorway, usually leading into a vault. The metal used to construct the lock was an invention of Verelyon's that he called hydric steel. This metal is exceptionally tough and heavy. Located at the seven points of the heptagonal doorway are the locks that must be triggered at the same moment in order for the door to open.

Lock-picking a hydric deadlock is virtually impossible as it requires seven simultaneous successful Mechanisms tests, all with a -50% penalty. Even a single failed test means that, not only does the deadlock remain closed but that one of the locks – determined at random – releases a cloud of acidic vapour. This noxious gas inflicts 1D6 damage upon the hand of any thief trying to open that lock and corrodes beyond use any picks he is using.

The current location of Verelyon's three hydric deadlocks is unknown. It is likely that they are still in

use somewhere, safeguarding information or treasure of exceptional value.

If a hydric deadlock were ever to come onto the market, it would be a rare treasure in itself, selling for at least 20,000 SP.

## COUNTER MEASURES

The only reliable way to open a snakecharm lock is to acquire the appropriate ring-key. However, trying to remove a snakecharm key from someone's finger without them noticing is not easy. The would-be pilferer must succeed with an Opposed Sleight vs. Perception test. If the wearer of the ring is distracted in some way, he suffers a -10% penalty to his Perception test.

For example: *Laban, a skilful thief, has learned that the merchant, Caeril, wears a snakecharm ring-key on his left hand. At the precise moment an associate of his deliberately knocks over a tray of glasses – causing a distraction – Laban tries to slide the ring-key from Caeril's finger.*

*An Opposed roll is made, with Caeril suffering a -10% penalty to his Perception skill. Laban achieves a critical success and the ring is slipped deftly from Caeril's finger and pocketed without the merchant noticing.*

Normal lock picks are of limited use when dealing with snakecharm locks as these mechanisms are made to such an unusual design. However, someone willing to pay 50 SP may have a set of picks made specifically for the task of opening snakecharm locks. *Mongoose picks*, as they are known, reduce the penalty when trying to open this type of lock to -25%.

## Trap Handle

Unless a thief is intimately familiar with the interior of a building, it is difficult for him to distinguish between a real doorknob and a trap handle – effectively, a booby trap designed to trick an intruder into setting off an alarm.

Typically, a trap handle is used in one of two ways. In the first instance, a false door is constructed and installed and a trap handle attached to it. Those familiar with a building will know to avoid using the doorknob and legitimate visitors can be provided with a suitable warning. Sometimes the real doorway to a room – particularly to an area that will store items of value – is concealed, making the bogus entryway appear to be the only means of access.

The second method of employing a trap handle is to locate it on a door where the real handle has been hidden. Unless a thief is wary enough to check the door for a hidden panel (inside which the 'safe' handle is located), he will activate the trap.

Once turned, a trap handle will trigger an alarm. Depending upon the design, this may take the form of either a loud ringing bell that is audible throughout the building or a discreet series of chimes, discernable only within a single room.

A few trap handles are also designed to deliver a sudden electric jolt when activated. Connected to a crude battery, a single activation exhausts the charge for 24 hours but can provide a nasty surprise for an intruder. A character electrocuted in this way suffers 1 point of damage to the appropriate hand and a further point to every area in contact with metal armour or equipment. In addition, the character must pass a Resilience test or

be paralysed for 1D3 Combat Rounds.

A trap handle and false door typically cost 250 SP to construct and install.

A trap handle used in conjunction with a hidden 'safe' handle costs 300 SP.

Adding an electric jolt to a trap handle costs a further 200 SP.

## COUNTER MEASURES

Detailed plans or prior knowledge of the layout of a building are crucial when it comes to avoiding trap handles. A thief who knows exactly where the walls and rooms are located can usually avoid being duped by a false door.

A character who passes a Perception Test with a -20% penalty is able to locate a hidden panel in a door where a 'safe' handle has been hidden.

A few thieves have taken to wearing insulated gloves whilst exploring buildings suspected of having trap handles. These will not prevent an alarm from being triggered if a trap handle is turned but they do protect the wearer from the electric jolt. The gloves, made from a thick weave studded with tiny insulating crystals, are a little cumbersome and apply a -10% penalty to all Skill Tests which require fine manipulation. A pair of *insulated gloves* cost 40 SP.

Disarming the alarm on a trap handle can be achieved by cutting the wire, which connects it to the alarm bell. This wire runs within the frame of the door and then through the hinges via a specially designed channel, eventually linking with the alarm elsewhere

in the building. A successful Mechanisms Test with a -20% penalty allows a character to open the hinges and snip the wire, thereby disarming the alarm. This is a risky procedure, however, as failure on this test triggers the alarm.

## Tubelock

There are few more precarious positions for a thief to find himself in than having his arm extended along the length of a trap-filled tubelock, fingers searching blindly for the keyhole. Requiring both skill and courage, these anti-intruder devices are not to be tackled by the faint-hearted.

In construction, a tubelock resembles a 50 to 80 cm long metal cylinder, just wide enough for a human man to slide his arm inside. Typically, they are installed either within stone walls or (if the owner lacks the finances for this) inside a wooden frame. At one end of the tubelock is a keyhole. A key may be fitted into this and the lock opened in the same manner as any other keyhole. Of course, without being able to see the keyhole directly, it does require a little more dexterity on the part of the person using the key.

Where a tubelock becomes dangerous is if the person trying to open it is not using a key but lock picks. Doing so blindly and with only a single hand to manipulate the picks is extremely difficult. Attempting this feat requires a successful Mechanisms test with a -40% penalty and takes at least 5 rounds to complete.

Besides the difficulty of tripping the tumblers, there is a very real threat – if not to life – then certainly to limb. About half of the tubelocks a thief is likely to encounter contain a vicious blade trap, triggered if three unsuccessful attempts are made to open the lock.



The blade takes the form of a rotating sphincter, which circles shut, potentially severing the thief's hand. When triggered, the blade inflicts 2D6 damage to the appropriate limb.

Particularly old and well-used tubelocks may even carry the stains left by thieves unlucky enough to have triggered their blade-traps. Amongst themselves, thieves tell tales of one tubelock that became jammed up with the severed hands of those who had tried to open it and failed.

To further exacerbate the problems presented by tubelocks, about one in device in 10 will not be fitted with a blade trap at all but with a poison dart. When triggered, this is fired directly along the path of the tube, usually into the hand of the thief. The dart inflicts 1 point of damage and is likely to be coated in poison, most often Manticore Venom.

A basic tubelock costs 500 SP to purchase and install in a suitably sturdy stone wall. Fitting a wooden frame around the lock – rather than embedding it in rock – reduces the cost by 150 SP but leaves the device far more prone to tampering.

Adding a blade trap or a poison dart trap to a tubelock costs another 250 SP. It is not possible to fit the mechanisms for both traps inside a single lock.

## COUNTER MEASURES

A particularly cunning thief artisan (who it is said lost the end of a finger to a tubelock) devised a tool that,

whilst not guaranteed to open such a lock, certainly protects the thief from bodily harm. By using extendable lock picks that sit upon a specially designed rest, it is possible to open a tubelock without having to place one's arm inside the device. Of course, manipulating the tumblers within the lock is more difficult this way, imposing an overall -60% penalty on the Mechanisms Test to open the lock. A set of extendable lock picks and rest cost 70 SP.

Alternatively, a thief can use a device called a *disarm pipe*. This is a cylinder designed to slide inside a tubelock, whilst still providing enough room for a thief to insert his arm. In essence, the disarm pipe forms a barrier between the tubelock blade and the thief, protecting him from harm. If a blade trap is triggered, the disarm pipe absorbs the damage and is destroyed in the process. Unfortunately, a disarm pipe provides no protection against those few tubelocks fitted with poison dart traps.

A *disarm pipe* costs 30 SP.

## CREATURES

There are a number of creatures whose acute senses and ability to absorb training make them ideal watchbeasts. Other animals possess such fearsomely powerful physical attacks or magical capabilities that their mere presence can act as a deterrent. Others still are able to conceal themselves in unique ways and lie in wait for unwanted guests.

All have something to offer those looking to protect their goods and property. Thieves should expect to encounter far more than simple guard dogs when they choose to go where they have not been invited!

## CHARCOAL GOLEM

This diminutive construct makes a perfect household guardian. When not required, it can secret itself away amongst the coals of the fireplace, even providing heat for the occupants of a home. A charcoal golem requires no food or water and could conceivably remain in this docile state for years on end. When it is called upon to defend the premises against intruders, it bursts into life, charcoal body smouldering with flame.

The body of this golem is constructed from blackened coal, its stumpy fingers and toes topped with razor-sharp diamond claws. In combat this means that despite its small size – most charcoal golems are no more than two feet tall – it can deliver vicious lacerations to lightly armoured foes.

In addition to its claws, a charcoal golem can spit out smouldering balls of coal. These strike with similar force to a sling-shot and have the added danger of setting their target ablaze.

Unable to think for themselves, charcoal golems follow the simple instructions given to them at the time they are created. Typically, these include orders such as *defend the residents* and *attack anyone that breaks in*. Once an intruder has left the grounds, a charcoal golem will usually not pursue him.

### Characteristics:

STR	1D6+6	(9)
CON	-	(-)
DEX	2D6+6	(13)
SIZ	1D3+3	(5)
INT	5	(5)
POW	10	(10)
CHA	5	(5)

### Charcoal Golem Hit Locations

D20	Hit Location	AP/HP
1-3	Right leg	2/4
4-6	Left Leg	2/4
7-9	Abdomen	2/5
10-12	Chest	2/6
13-15	Right Arm	2/3
16-18	Left Arm	2/3
19-20	Head	2/4

### Weapons

Type	Weapon Skill	Damage/AP
Diamond claw	50%	1D8 – 1D4
Flaming spitball	35%	1D4 + 1 point of fire damage

### Special Rules

*Combat Actions:* 3

*Strike Rank:* +9

*Movement:* 3m

*Traits:* Disease immunity, Poison Immunity

*Skills:* Perception 50%, Resilience 50%

*Typical Armour:* Carbon Hide (AP 2, no Skill Penalty)

A Charcoal Golem costs 600 SP.

## Counter Measures

If one is aware of the specific instructions that have been given to a charcoal golem it may be possible to avoid awakening it. For instance, if told to attack someone that tries to take items out of the house at night, a thief would be free to do so during the day. Similarly, a thief who can get himself invited into a building will not be bothered by a golem charged with attacking intruders.

A second thing to keep in mind is that charcoal golems are brittle creatures – a trait that can be exacerbated by exposure to either water or ice. If subject to a successful cold-based spell (such as *Frostbite*) or immersed in water, a charcoal golem's skin becomes so brittle that it no longer provides any protection against damage. In addition, the amount of damage this golem suffers from cold and water based attacks is doubled.

One weapon that has been specifically devised to exploit a charcoal golem's vulnerability to cold is the *frost cracker*. These small alchemical grenades emit a chilling burst when they explode, freezing all the moisture within a 1 metre radius. A charcoal golem caught within this blast suffers 1D6 damage to all locations and the AP of his hide is reduced to 0. Against other creatures caught in the blast, a frost cracker inflicts 1 point of damage to 3 random locations. It will also extinguish a Flame, Large Flame or Small Fire caught in the area of effect.

A *frost cracker* costs 50 SP to buy.

## Gazing Guardian

Choosing to place a gazing guardian within your home is not something that can be done without great forethought on the part of a tenant. Only by constructing a building with the demands of such a creature in mind or by making significant alterations to an existing structure, can one be effectively employed.

The body of a gazing guardian is a slimy, pulpy mass of tissue. Extending from this fleshy sack is a mass of slender, prehensile stalks, each ending in a bulbous, lidless eye. These eyes never close, and a gazing guardian is said never to sleep. By extending its stalks out along a series of narrow tunnels burrowed through the walls of a building, the guardian is able to watch every room at once. All that is usually visible is a discreet opening in a ceiling or wall, through which peers an unblinking eye.

A gazing guardian may be trained to recognise people who are allowed inside a particular building. When it detects the presence of an intruder, it can use one of its eyestalks to pull on an alarm cord, alerting the owner and any guards who are present. Note that a gazing guardian is unable to go and fetch help – it is barely able to move at all.

Gazing guardians are extremely difficult to breed and must be fed on exotic fruit, which can only be grown in hot climates. Often this food must be specially imported, making it very expensive to keep a guardian. Purchasing one of these odd creatures costs 1,000 SP plus 100 SP for each eye-stalk, up to a maximum of ten.

Feeding one costs 10 SP a week (or half that amount in hot climates where the fruit may be grown).

#### Characteristics:

STR	2D6+6	(13)
CON	3D6	(11)
DEX	2D6+3	(10)
SIZ	2D6+6	(13)
INT	1D6+3	(7)
POW	3	(3)
CHA	2	(2)

#### Typical 8 limbed Gazing Guardian Hit Locations

D20	Hit Location	AP/HP
1-12	Body	1/12
13	Tentacle One	1/6
14	Tentacle Two	1/6
15	Tentacle Three	1/6
16	Tentacle Four	1/6
17	Tentacle Five	1/6
18	Tentacle six	1/5
19	Tentacle seven	1/5
20	Tentacle eight	1/5

#### Weapons

Type	Weapon Skill	Damage/AP
Tentacle	25%	1D2+1D2

#### Special Rules

Combat Actions: 2

Strike Rank: +8

Movement: Special\*

Traits: Night Sight

Skills: Perception 75%

\*A gazing guardian is almost immobile and may only move 1m each minute.

#### Counter Measures

Despite their keen eyesight and unwavering alertness, gazing guardians do have one notable weakness: all suffer from acute hay fever. If a thief manages to introduce pollen into a room being watched by a guardian, the creature's eye will begin to water, severely restricting its vision.

One of the most ingenious methods of blinding a guardian is through the use of a *pollen pipe*. These long, hollow tubes are used to blow pollen into a room, delivering the spores as close as possible to a guardian's eyeball. An opposed Perception vs. Stealth test enables the guardian to notice the device; otherwise the pollen may be delivered undetected from up to 5 metres away and takes immediate effect. Gazing guardians afflicted with hay fever suffer a -60% penalty to all Perception tests. This effect lasts for 3D6 minutes.

A pollen pipe costs 15 SP. A dose of pollen costs 5 SP.

Another feature of a gazing guardian that could be exploited is its near inability to move. If a thief were to locate the room where the guardian is housed, then severing the creature's alarm cord would mean that the beast could do little to alert its owners to the presence of intruders.

#### Omni-beast

Using a bizarre mixture of sorcery and science, certain wizards – who refer to themselves as *animancers* – have learned to create packs of creatures that share a common intelligence. What one experiences, they all experience; what one knows, they all know.

Such packs have been effectively employed to guard the grounds of large estates: if even a single omni-beast is alerted to the presence of an intruder, every other creature in the brood becomes aware of it and will rush to the aid of its mind-sibling.

The most common omni-beasts are ferocious hounds. Originally bred for war, these creatures have little sense of fear and, in a pack, can bring down a creature much larger than themselves. They are also intelligent enough to be properly trained so as to avoid attacks on those who live and work on the grounds.

Another popular choice is baboons. Stronger than most men and with teeth that can rip out an enemy's throat, they are intelligent enough to use group tactics and even to set ambushes. A further benefit to the creation of an omni-beast is the heightening of the creature's senses. This makes sneaking past one an even more formidable challenge.

In order to create a brood of omni-beasts, the sorcerous science required must be performed simultaneously on all of the creatures that will be part of the pack. No further beasts can be added once it is created: it is a unique bond.

There is an effective limit to the size of an omni-beast pack that can be created. As every member must remain within a 5 mile range of every other member, it makes more sense to create several small packs – which can each cover a particular area – than a single enormous brood.

The cost of purchasing a pack of omni-beasts is tripled as the size of the brood increases. For example, a pair of war hounds costs 400 SP; three hounds costs 1,200 SP; four hounds cost 3,600 SP and so on.

Baboon omni-beasts cost 500 SP for a pair, 1,500 SP for three, 4,500 SP for four and so on.

## War Hound Omni-Beast

### Characteristics:

STR	2D6+6	(13)
CON	2D6+6	(13)
DEX	2D6+6	(13)
SIZ	2D6+3	(10)
INT	1D3+3	(5)
POW	2D6	(7)
CHA	2D6	(7)

### War Hound Omni-beast Hit Locations

D20	Hit Location	AP/HP
1-2	Right Hind Leg	-/5
3-4	Left Hind Leg	-/5
5-7	Hindquarters	-/6
8-10	Forequarters	-/7
11-13	Right Front Leg	-/4
14-16	Left Front Leg	-/4
17-20	Head	-/5

### Weapons

Type	Weapon Skill	Damage/AP
Bite	45%	1D6+1D2

### Special Rules

*Combat Actions:* 3

*Strike Rank:* +9

*Movement:* 5m

*Traits:* Night Sight

*Skills:* Athletics 65%, Dodge 50%, Perception 50%, Resilience 40%, Stealth 45%, Survival 40%, Tracking 55%

## Baboon Omni-Beast

### Characteristics:

STR	3D6+3	(13)
CON	3D6+3	(13)
DEX	3D6+6	(16)
SIZ	1D6+6	(9)
INT	1D6+3	(7)
POW	3D6	(10)
CHA	2D6	(7)

### Baboon Omni-beast Hit Locations

D20	Hit Location	AP/HP
1-3	Right Hind Leg	1/5
4-6	Left Hind Leg	1/5
7-9	Abdomen	1/6
10-12	Chest	1/7
13-15	Right Front Leg	1/4
16-18	Left Front Leg	1/4
19-20	Head	1/5

### Weapons

Type	Weapon Skill	Damage/AP
Bite	50%	1D8

### Special Rules

*Combat Actions:* 3

*Strike Rank:* +10

*Movement:* 4m

*Skills:* Athletics 85%, Dodge 45%, Perception 55%, Resilience 50%, Stealth 55%, Tracking 45%

*Typical Armour:* Hide (AP 1, no Skill Penalty)

## COUNTERMEASURES

If an omni-beast is killed, its mind-siblings will feel its passing and demonstrate their anger with howling and mournful cries. They will then race to the last known location of their kin and seek to avenge its death. If the body cannot be found for any reason – it may have been removed, for instance – the pack will search for several hours before giving up and returning to their posts.

By targeting and eliminating a single omni-beast, other members of the pack can be drawn away from their post. This can be a risky tactic, as the enraged mind-siblings will do everything they can to kill their kin's slayer but it is certainly one way to get past an area guarded by a pack.

The bond between omni-beasts has a limited range. The creatures within a pack must remain within five miles of each other for their link to be maintained. An omni-beast that is forcibly moved beyond the range of even one of its mind-siblings suffers great distress. It will attack anything nearby until such time as it is allowed to move close enough to all of its siblings for the link to be re-established.

## Slumbervine

This sinuous yellow vine produces violet flowers of rare beauty. In the tropical jungles where it grows naturally it is revered as a holy plant, believed to blossom wherever the gods have walked the mortal realm.

When darkness falls, the blooms of a slumbervine open and begin to exude a soothing fragrance. Hidden

in this aroma are tiny spores that can induce sleep in any creatures that inhale them. In the wild, animals are drawn to the scent of the vine and simply curl up and sleep beneath its leaves. No harm will come from exposure to these sleep-inducing spores – at least, not directly – and the animal will waken in the morning feeling rested but covered in the spores. In this way, slumbervines manage to distribute their spores and ensure the spread of their species.

Beyond the tropical climes to which they are indigenous, slumbervines have found use as a security measure inside a variety of buildings. The vines are encouraged to curl and grow around beams and rafters, providing taverns, hotels, museums are the like with decorative adornment. Slumbervines require almost no tending as they are able to extract nutrients directly from moisture in the air. Only when exposed to darkness, do the flowers start to shed their sleeping spores, providing an invisible obstacle for unwanted guests. Many inn-keepers and shop-owners have risen in the morning to find a would-be thief sleeping soundly beneath a slumbervine.

Slumbervines would be of little use were it not possible to control the times at which they emit their spores. For their flowers to open, they must be exposed to near total darkness. It is therefore a simple matter for a landlord to keep a lantern lit near to any vines he has growing, dousing the flame only when he wishes to secure the premises for the night. Five minutes after it is subjected to darkened conditions, a slumbervine starts to produce spores. It continues to do so until exposed to a light source for two minutes continually. Typically, this will be the rising sun, meaning that it will be safe to move around a building with a slumbervine a short time after the dawn. However, lighting an artificial

light source and keeping it close to the vine will also stop the flow of spores after two minutes.

### Slumbervine Spores

Type: Inhaled

Delay: 1 round

Potency: 80

Full Effect: Victim falls asleep

Duration: 2D4 hours

Each round that a creature is exposed to slumbervine spores, it must test to see whether it falls asleep.

The spores from a slumbervine cover an area within 3 metres of the plant.

A fully-grown Slumbervine costs 75 SP

### COUNTERMEASURES

A thief who is willing to risk using a light source can stop the production of spores. A focused beam of light, such as can be created with a hooded lantern, may be shone directly at a slumbervine for two minutes, after which time it becomes inert.

An alternative tactic, though again one that runs the risk of alerting any guards or residents of a building, is the use of a *sparkleflask*. These specially concocted alchemical bottles contain a mixture of chemicals which explode with a blaze of light when exposed to oxygen. Such a sudden, dazzling flare is enough to instantly neutralize any slumbervines within 5 metres of the detonation. The flowers will close and stop producing spores for 10 minutes after exposure to a detonating sparkleflask.

Any creatures within 5 metres of a detonating sparkleflask must pass a Dodge or Resilience Test (whichever is higher) or be blinded for 1 Combat Round.

A single sparkleflask costs 50 SP.

### Squeak Slugs

These small, nocturnal slitherers emit a loud, high-pitched squeak if they are trodden on by intruders who fail to watch where they are stepping.

In their natural habitat, squeak slugs share a symbiotic relationship with bears. By day, they seek refuge in dark, rocky holes and then emerge at night to pick over the remains of whatever the bear has eaten that day. Should any large predators or rival bears enter the cave, they are likely to tread on a squeak slug: its dying act is to emit a piercing scream, warning the resident bear that he is in danger.

Within buildings, some landlords have taken to using squeak slugs as a deterrent to thieves. By chiselling out a few narrow rocky openings these creatures can be provided with a place to sleep during the day. A few tufts of bear pelt make it seem just like home and ensure that they will not try to nest anywhere else.

As night falls – something that the slugs sense instinctively – the owner of the building can scatter a handful of grain or breadcrumbs around the area he wishes the slugs to patrol. The creatures will then spend the evening crawling around gathering up and eating the morsels.

Unlike others of their kind, squeak slugs leave virtually no trail. What little residue there is disappears entirely within a matter of minutes. This means that they can be safely used inside storerooms or homes without fear that they will damage expensive materials or soil surfaces.

The death-squeak of a slug is audible to any creature within 20 metres that passes a Perception test. Each closed door between the slug and the listener applies a -10% Skill Modifier.

Creatures within 5 metres of a squashed slug will hear its squeak automatically.

Squeak slugs are too small to have characteristics. They cost 10 SP each and live for several months.

## Counter Measures

The best protection against squeak slugs is simply to watch where you are walking. A character who specifically checks the ground ahead of him will automatically notice the presence of these slugs as long as there is some illumination. In conditions where there is Partial Darkness, Darkness or it is Pitch Black a Perception Test is required to spot a squeak slug.

Like others of their kind, a squeak slug that is exposed to salt will quickly wither and die (in 1D3 rounds) – without making a sound – leaving nothing more than a squelchy mess. Some cautious thieves have taken to scattering salt ahead of them when advancing across a darkened room.

## Wacktus

This large semi-intelligent plant resembles a sturdy, red-hued Sequoia cactus. Its thick hide is lined with barbed spines that can be projected a short distance on lines of sinewy thread, creating a sort of harpoon. The wacktus then reels in its prey and consumes it – for, whilst able to survive for a time on water-based nutrients – wackti are carnivorous.

By nature, a wacktus is a deeply territorial creature, meaning that two wackti cannot share the same room. If two or more plants are ever placed within range of each other's harpoon barbs, they will engage in a fight to the death.

In order to tame a wacktus and employ it as an effective security measure, it must be raised from a sapling. Development from seed to fully grown plant takes one year. During this time, a wacktus is far less aggressive and can be trained to recognise the scent of its master. A combination of grooming and feeding is required to tame a wacktus and instil in it a degree of subservience. The cost of purchasing a wacktus seed is 25 SP: a further investment of 100 SP is required to feed and train it for the first year of its life.

Once tamed, a wacktus can be instructed to recognise the scent of people that it should allow to pass unmolested. This training takes almost an hour per person, meaning that a wacktus is not a suitable security measure in a shop or other building where there will be frequent visitors. More often, they are placed inside restricted rooms such as the inner sanctum of a temple.

When a wacktus senses the presence of an intruder, it will immediately attack. Typically, it will fire its harpoon barbs and try to draw a creature within range of its prickly limbs. These are capable of delivering ferocious blows that can shred flesh and even light armour. A creature killed by a wacktus will be slowly consumed by the plant through its seven mouths, located in its trunk.

### Characteristics:

STR	3D6+6	(16)
CON	3D6	(11)
DEX	2D6+3	(10)
SIZ	3D6+6	(16)
INT	4	(4)
POW	2D6	(7)
CHA	1D6	(3)

### Wacktus Hit Locations

D20	Hit Location	AP/HP
1-6	Lower Trunk	2/10
7-12	Upper Trunk	2/10
13-16	Left stem	2/7
17-20	Right Stem	2/7

A Wacktus may only be killed by destroying either its upper or lower stem. It may re-grow severed arm stems.

### Weapons

Type	Weapon Skill	Damage/AP
Stem Swipe	55%	1D6+1D4
Harpoon Barbs	50%	1D4 + impale*
Bite	40%	1D8 + 1D4

\*A target struck by a harpoon barb is impaled. At the start of each round where a creature is impaled, it must succeed with an Opposed Athletics (Brute Strength) Test or be pulled 1 metre closer to the wacktus.

A barb may be safely removed with a successfully First Aid Test – simply pulling it out inflicts a further 1D4 Damage.

Harpoon barbs can be fired at a range of up to 5 metres.

A wacktus is only able to bite a creature which has been drawn in by harpoon barbs to a point where it is touching the plant.

### Special Rules

*Combat Actions:* 2

*Strike Rank:* +7

*Movement:* 0m

*Traits:* Earth Sense

*Skills:* Perception 70%

## COUNTERMEASURES

A thief who carries the scent of a female wacktus (a smaller, non-aggressive version of the male wacktus described above), will not be attacked. Instead, a male will fire a much smaller type of fertilizing dart at the source of the smell in an attempt to impregnate the female. These darts are sharp enough to pierce skin or cloth, but cause no significant damage.

Purchasing a female wacktus costs 200 SP. A dose of scent, which will mask a single character for 2D4 hours – or until he bathes – cost 20 SP.

It is worth noting that a character doused with the scent of a male wacktus, will be attacked with unrelenting ferocity by any other males that he encounters.

A wacktus is more docile just after it has eaten. A character who feeds a wacktus – any sort of raw meat will do – will find that it is less likely to attack intruders. There is only a 15% chance that a wacktus fed within the last hour will attack an intruder that comes within 5 metres of it.

## Enchantments

For those with the talents to fashion them (or the money to pay someone who can), there are various enchantments that may be placed upon a room or building to protect it from intruders. These range in potency from simple charms to dangerous spells and as always, the purpose of a building must be taken into account when considering their implementation.

## Well of Night

This arcane item resembles an urn or pot that can be placed inconspicuously within a room. When inactive, a Well of Night functions like any other mundane container of its kind.

When a command word is uttered, a black river of shadow spills from the urn and fills the room with darkness. This inky shadow stops abruptly at the threshold of the room (or at the edge of the enchantment's range – see below), forming a discernible barrier to light. Indeed, this syrupy blackness cannot be penetrated by any normal light or flame. Nor can eyes piece this gloom – even creatures with dark vision

cannot see beyond the edge of the darkness produced by a Well of Night.

Magical light or flames may chase back the darkness a little. For each point of Magnitude, such a spell may produce a globe 1 metre in diameter where it is possible to see normally.

A Well of Night costs 800 SP per point of POW invested in it.

Casting the Well of Night Enchantment requires a successful Hard (-40%) Enchantment Skill Test. The Requisite Spell is *Cover of Night* or *Darkwall*. Each point of POW invested in the enchantment allows the Well of Night to create an area of darkness up to 10 cubic metres in size.

## COUNTER MEASURES

When faced with supernatural darkness such as this, many thieves resort to using a rope to navigate in and out of the darkened area. Of course, this alone will not help them to see what it is that they are walking into.

A more resourceful counter measure involves the use of trained bats. These winged rodents, known as *seekers*, can use their sonar and agility to flit in and out of a room and then report back to their master. Simple information such as the size of a room – small (2m square), medium (4m square) or large (5m+ square) – can be communicated, along with the presence of movement and other creatures. A *seeker* costs 150 SP.

Gazing into an inactivate Well of Night will reveal its nature. A pool of black liquid, through which no light passes, rests at the bottom of the container.

If a character can learn the command word for a particular Well (usually a closely guarded secret), he will be able to activate and deactivate its power at will.

### Fool's Gold

Many thieves are like magpies and simply cannot resist an item that sparkles. A Fool's Gold is an item designed with just such an avaricious rogue in mind.

Most Fool's Golds are not subtle in form and are crafted to resemble thick gold chains, diamond-studded rings and even crowns. A character who takes the time to scrutinize one before he touches it may pass an Evaluate test to detect that the item is a fake.

Once touched, the enchantment on a Fool's Gold activates. The thief will initially feel nothing – until such time as he tries to put the item down. Then he will realise that the worthless fake is now stuck to him. No amount of pulling will release it – though it may start to hurt quite a bit.

The enchantment placed on a Fool's Gold is designed to release its hold only when someone turns themselves in to the authorities and admits that they stole the item. At that moment, the spell is broken and the item will release its hold.

Creating a Fool's Gold requires a Difficult (-20%) Enchantment Test. The caster is required to invest one point of POW. The requisite spell is either *Slow*, *Gossamer Bind* or *Holdfast*. A fake – but typically sparkly looking object – costs 20 SP.

A Fool's Gold may be purchased for 500 SP.

### COUNTER MEASURES

One especially cautious thief, apparently himself the victim of two separate Fool's Golds, designed a pair of mechanical gloves called *slip-gaunts*. These are hefty, over-sized gloves that if trapped in any way will still safely release the wearer's hands. Attempting any form of fine manipulation whilst wearing slip-gaunts is all but impossible, however. Tests for skills such as Mechanisms suffer a -40% penalty.

A pair of slip-gaunts costs 50 SP.

A truly desperate character might use a strong acid to burn off the tips of his fingers if they are all that has touched a Fool's Gold. Doing so inflicts 1 point of damage to the character's hand and results in a permanent -5% penalty on skill tests requiring fine manipulation with that hand.

### Footpad's Foe

Initially colourless, Footpad's Foe is a magical ink that reveals itself only after it has come into contact with skin and then one hour has elapsed. A thief doused in a batch of footpad's foe will also find that every object he touches will turn blue, leaving a trail that is all too easy for others to follow.

Typically, footpad's foe is either squirted or poured onto unwelcome visitors via a trap. The most common device is a simple trough fitted above a doorway. If the door is opened without deactivating the trap, the trough upends, soaking the intruder in liquid.

Initially, a soaking in Footpad's Foe will seem to have little effect – it appears, smells and tastes just like

water. However, after one hour, it will – in a matter of moments – turn bright blue. What is more, everything that the character's doused skin has come into contact with in that hour will also turn blue. Once Footpad's Foe has turned a character's skin blue, it will continue to mark anything he touches. The effect last for three days, at which time the marked skin will have flaked away.

A trough trap costs 50 SP to purchase and have installed. A batch of Footpad's Foe costs 100 SP.

Creating enough Footpad's Foe for ten batches requires 20 SP worth of ink and a large vat to hold it in. An Easy (+20%) Enchantment Test must then be passed and one point of POW invested. The Requisite Spell is *Detect X*.

### COUNTER MEASURES

Exposure to an alchemical acid known as *dissolvent* can remove a covering of Footpad's Foe – along with several layers of skin. Whilst a painful experience, this is the only way a thief who has been doused can avoid leaving a very visible trail.

Enough *dissolvent* to clean a single character costs 100 SP.

A thorough scrub with a wire brush will accelerate the process of shedding skin contaminated with Footpad's Foe but it will still be a day before the character loses his blue tinge or can touch anything without leaving a stain.

Detecting one of the trough traps most commonly used to deliver Footpad's Foe requires a successful



Perception test. Disarming it requires a key (which is placed and turned inside a hidden lock) or a successful Mechanisms Test. Only when the door is opened will a character know for sure whether his efforts to disarm the trap have been successful or not.

## Peeping Portrait

These enchanted paintings can be instructed to watch over a room or to keep an eye on a particular item. Anyone spied by the portrait will be asked a riddle. Should they try to leave the room or take the object before they have answered the riddle, the figure in the portrait will shout and scream to raise the alarm.

Some typical riddles asked by a Peeping Portrait include:

I go around the house and peer into the house but never touch the house. What am I?  
(Answer: The Sun)

The more you take, the more you leave behind. What are they?  
(Answer: Footsteps)

When one does not know what it is, then it is something; when one does know, then it is nothing.  
(Answer: A riddle)

A peeping Portrait has Perception 50% and, of course, has no need to sleep so remains equally alert at all hours of the day.

A Peeping Portrait costs 500 SP for the enchantment, plus whatever the original painting cost.

Creating a Peeping Portrait requires a Difficult (-20%) Enchantment Test. A single point of POW must be invested. The Requisite Spell is *Golden Tongue* or *Mindspeech*.

## COUNTER MEASURES

A character who can answer a Peeping Portrait's riddle is free to go about his business. In addition, each Portrait has only one riddle and once a person has successfully answered it, he will never be asked again.

A Peeping Portrait may also be destroyed in various ways – fire, acid or simply lots of cuts with a blade. However, if any attack is made upon one, it causes the portrait to cry out in alarm.

A Portrait has 0 AP and 10 HP. Fire and acid inflict normal damage but cuts and scrapes each inflict only 1 point of damage.

## Polylock and Polykey

For a certain type of thief, a polylock is perhaps the ultimate test of his skill. It is said that a rogue who can trigger one must have fingers deft enough to open a miser's heart or the gates of Hell itself.

At first glance, a polylock resembles any other small, metal lock. However, closer inspection reveals something quite extraordinary. Polylocks are never still; their tumblers and bolts – and to a lesser extent, the keyhole itself – are constantly changing shape. As a result, any attempt to open a polylock is almost guaranteed to fail.

Further scrutiny of a polylock reveals one other important detail. They do not alter their shape in a random manner but follow a definite pattern, repeating the changes over and over again. It is this pattern that is at the heart of how a polylock functions. Each polylock is linked to a single polykey, set to repeat the exact same set of transformations. Placing the correct polykey inside the correct polylock will open the shifting tumblers one by one until the entire lock is sprung.

Polylocks may be fashioned to incorporate between three and six individual tumbler mechanisms: each must be triggered before the lock will open. Even with the correct polykey, it takes a number of Rounds equal to the number of tumblers present to open. This is not usually a problem, as polylocks are rarely fitted to doors that need to be opened in a hurry.

Opening a polylock is extremely difficult but it is not impossible. A character who can succeed at a series of Mechanism tests equal to the number of tumblers can open one. Of course, these tests must all be made in successive rounds and as soon as one test is failed, the process must begin again. What is more, each test after the first imposes a cumulative -10% penalty. At any time, a failed test means that the character's lock pick has become trapped inside the shifting parts and is destroyed.

A character with the Enchanting Skill may fashion a polylock, though it is not easy to do so. The enchanter must expend an amount of POW equal to the number of tumbler mechanisms within the lock and succeed with an Enchanting test. This test receives a -10% penalty for every tumbler mechanism. The enchanting time follows the table on page 39 of the *RuneQuest Companion*.

There must also be a lock to begin with, which will receive the enchantment. This must be carefully fashioned by an expert lock maker. Typically, this will cost 400 SP plus an extra 200 SP for each tumbler mechanism.

## COUNTER MEASURES

There is only one way guaranteed to open a polylock – find and use the appropriate polykey!

## Phantom Watchman

Sometimes the mere threat of encountering someone at home can be enough to deter a thief. Of course, with magic-wielding cat-burglars on the loose it pays to do a little more than simply leave a lantern on.

A Phantom Watchman is a powerful illusion, designed to convince intruders that the building they are trespassing within is being patrolled. Typically, the illusion projects the likeness of a human watchman going about his rounds. Another popular choice is for a large hound, padding warily from place to place.

More advanced – and expensive – versions of this spell bestow sound upon the illusion, allowing a watchman to mutter suspiciously or a dog to growl.

A Phantom Watchman can, at the time of casting, be instructed to patrol an area up to 20 metres in diameter, traversing stairs or others obstacles in the normal way. As it cannot, in any way, interact with the real world, it may not open doors or other portals. Similarly, if the layout of a house is ever changed, the Phantom Watchman will not adapt its path because of this.

The patrol route given to a Phantom Watchman must bring it back to its starting point within five minutes.

Creating a Phantom Watchman requires an Enchantment test and the investment of one point of POW for a silent version, two points of POW for one with sound. The Requisite Spell for a silent watchman is *Phantom (Sight)* or *Illusion (Sight)*. For a watchman with sound, *Phantom (Sound)* and *Illusion (Sound)* are added to this list.

The cost of having a silent Phantom Watchman enchantment put in place is 600 SP. A version which includes sounds costs 1,000 SP.

## COUNTER MEASURES

The movements and mannerisms of a Phantom watchman are entirely pre-planned and are simply repeated on a cycle. Most often he (or it) will walk round and round the grounds of a large house, through the various areas of a warehouse and so forth. A small rest may be included as part of the five minute routine.

A thief who observes a Phantom Watchman for 10 minutes or more may pass a Perception test to discern the true nature of the figure or beast he is viewing. If the observer has encountered a Phantom Watchman before, he receives a +10% Skill Modifier.

## Tattletale

Upon inspection, there is nothing whatsoever to reveal the fact that an object is subject to a Tattletale enchantment. However, once removed from its rightful place – by someone who has not first uttered the deactivation phrase – it becomes impossible to miss!

A stolen Tattletale item will proclaim loudly the name of its owner and where it belongs every hour, on the hour, until such time as it is returned. Any creature within 20 metres of the object at this time, will hear the declaration.

Creating a Tattletale requires an Easy (+20%) Enchantment test and the investment of 1 POW. The Requisite Spell is Detect X or Oath of Ordeal.

Having an item enchanted in this way costs 500 SP.

## COUNTER MEASURES

Timing is everything when trying to sell an object that is the subject of a Tattletale enchantment. A thief in possession of a pilfered Tattletale must wait for it to declare the name of its rightful owner and then try to dispose of it – hopefully for a tidy profit – within the hour!

## Magimould Bust

Sealed inside a thickened glass cabinet, these miraculous sculptures look quite at home in the mansions and palaces of the rich and famous. The enchantment placed upon the bust means that it transforms, remoulding itself to perfectly capture the image of any new person who comes near it. Carefully positioned within a house, a magimould can record the likeness of any intruder that strays too close.

In order for a Magimould Bust to activate and reshape its appearance, a humanoid must come within 3 metres of it. The transformation takes only a single Combat Round.

Amongst certain extravagant members of the nobility, Magimould Busts are purchased as curios and to serve as entertaining conversation pieces at parties. That they might also one day end up revealing the identity of an unwanted intruder is an added benefit!

Creating a Magimould Bust first requires the purchase of a metal sculpture costing 500 SP. The enchanter must then pass a Difficult (-20%) Enchantment test and invest 2 point of POW. The Requisite Spell is Illusion (Sight) or Animate (Metal)

A Magimould Bust costs 1,500 SP.

## COUNTER MEASURES

Magimould Busts are designed to capture an individual's appearance only once – the first time that the bust encounters him. After this, it will effectively 'ignore' him.

This means that if an intruder were to give himself the exact appearance of someone that a Magimould Bust has imitated before then the bust will not try to copy such a visage a second time. Taking on the exact – and it must be exact – likeness of the bust's owner, for instance, would mean that a thief would be ignored.

Similarly, if a thief could in some way change his appearance – with an illusion for instance – the Magimould would only be able to imitate his fake appearance.

Finally, if a thief could gain legitimate access to a Magimould bust – be invited into a house, let's say – then he could have his appearance copied and then return later without fear of his identity being captured a second time.

## Spells

Though not as permanent a solution as some of the other options, there are a number of spells that can be cast upon buildings and possessions to ward off intruders. Devised by miserly wizards, avaricious sorcerers and wealthy Runelords, these spells are designed to do everything from restricting entry into a building to immobilizing would-be thieves.

Not to be outdone, a number of renegade spellcasters and sorcerer-thieves have invented spells of their own. These enhance a rogue's natural abilities or allow him to detect the various traps that might be placed in his path.

## Rune Magic Spells

### Amplify Touch

Casting Time 2, Duration 5, Magnitude 2, Resist (Resilience), Touch

*Runes:* Mastery

*Gerack ran his fingertips over the tiny indentations on the mysterious device: every faint groove felt like a gully, every raised notch a sheer surface.*

This spell greatly enhances the target's tactile sensations, to the extent where the tiniest movement or vibration can be felt through the tips of his fingers.

Each point of Magnitude of the spell provides a +5% Skill Modifier on all tests requiring a delicate touch. Examples include Mechanisms and Perception Tests when used to find a hidden object.

One dangerous side effect of this spell is that the subject is far more vulnerable to any pain inflicted upon his hands. If either of the character's hands is injured whilst under the effects of this spell, the amount of damage suffered is doubled. Any damage to the character's hands immediately ends the effects of the spell.

## Command Omni-Beast

Casting Time 1, Duration 10, Magnitude 1, Ranged, Resist (Persistence),

*Runes:* Beast

*Your mind is filled with disparate animal voices which gradually merge into one. Suddenly you are a part of the whole, part of the pack – and your voice will be listened to, your orders followed.*

When successfully cast on any member of an omni-beast brood, this spell allows the caster to command the group either to go to a specific location or to immediately fall asleep.

The location the omni-beasts are sent to must not be outside the area they normally protect but they may be instructed to gather and wait there until the spell ends. At this point, they will return to their normal activities.

A omni-beast that is ordered to sleep does so especially soundly and cannot be wakened until the spell ends or it suffers damage.

In addition, the caster of this spell will not be attacked by any of the omni-beasts he has commanded for as long as the spell is in place – even if the beasts' master directly instructs them to do so.

## Enhance Senses

Casting Time 2, Duration 10, Magnitude 1, Progressive, Touch

Runes: Truth

*The patter of a mouse's feet became like the thunder of a stallion's hooves.*

This spell is able to enhance one of the subject's natural senses, making either his sight, hearing or smell/taste (considered as one sense) far more sensitive.

Perception tests made with the relevant sense receive a +10% Skill Modifier for each point of Magnitude of the spell.

## Freeze

Casting Time 2, Magnitude 2, Resist (Resilience), Touch, Trigger

Runes: Cold

*His breath misting in the air before him, the rogue had just enough time to place a hand on his dagger before a sheath of ice solidified about him.*

Once cast, this spell creates a trigger area 1 square metre in size. As soon as a living creature touches this area, the spell activates.

The effect of the spell is to create a sudden surge of icy cold, freezing the target creature in a thin coating of ice and thereby immobilizing him. The spell inflicts no damage on the creature but holds it in place until a successful (Brute Force) Athletics Test is made.

If the frozen creature is attacked, any blow which inflicts more than 1 point of damage will shatter the ice and free it. Note that the creature will take damage as normal from the attack.

## Gossamer Bind

Area (Special), Casting Time 2, Duration 120, Magnitude 1, Progressive, Resist (Resilience), Touch

Runes: Air

*The thief slowed, his movements becoming awkward and jerky. Within moments, he could barely move at all. His clothing and skin took on a sheen in the glow from the window, and thousands of tiny fibres twinkled in the moonlight.*

This spell conjures thousands of tiny, gossamer-thin threads which hang, unseen, in the air. Each of these fibres is finer than silk and as sticky as a spider's web. Any creature which passes through the air where they float will quickly become coated. At first, the affected creature is unlikely to even notice what is happening. Then, within moments, the thread will harden, forming a translucent layer as stiff as boiled leather. If sufficiently coated in threads, a creature can become immobilized.

To cast this spell, the character must touch the air where he wishes to centre the magic. From this location, the gossamer bind thread will extend in a sphere, its radius in metres equal to the Magnitude of the spell.

The conjured thread will hang almost motionless in the air for the duration of the spell. Any solid object passing through the area of the spell will become coated. If nothing has passed through the area by the time the spell's duration ends, the fibres simply disappear.

Spotting a sphere of gossamer bind thread requires a Very Hard (-60% Skill Modifier) Perception test.

A creature which passes through the area of the spell must pass a Difficult (-20% Skill Modifier) Perception test to feel the feather light touch of the threads against his skin. If successful, the creature may elect to spend the next round wiping away the thread before they have a chance to harden.

One round after exposure to a solid object, the threads stiffen. Any creature that has been coated now suffers a -10% penalty on all Skill Tests which involve movement.

A creature exposed to gossamer bind thread for several rounds, will continue to be coated, round after round. This may lead to multiple penalties to movement based Skill Tests. If a creature's (Brute Force) Athletics Skill is ever reduced to 0% or below as a result of penalties from the thread, it is immobilized for the duration of the spell.

It is difficult to scrape stiffened gossamer bind threads off an affected object or creature. It takes an entire Combat Round to remove enough threads to reduce the imposed Skill Modifier by 1%. In addition, whatever is used to scrape away the thread becomes coated itself. Therefore, a character scraping the fibres from a companion will become coated himself unless he uses a tool – which will then pick up the thread instead.

Any moderately strong breeze will disperse a sphere of gossamer bind thread, making this spell unsuitable for use outside a building.

## Massive Hands

Casting Time 2, Duration 30, Magnitude 2, Resist (Resilience), Touch, Trigger

*Runes:* Disorder

*The thief stared in horror at his rapidly distorting limbs. Within moments, his fingers had more than doubled in size and the palms of his hands continued to stretch and pulsate.*

No doubt invented by a wizard with a rather twisted sense of humour, this spell is designed to greatly enlarge the size of a character's hands. Typically, they will grow to three times their usual size.

Any gloves that a character might be wearing when the spell is triggered are destroyed. Even metal gauntlets are torn apart, though this inflicts 1D4 Damage on to the hand.

Attempting feats of manual dexterity with enlarged hands is extremely difficult and a -30% Skill Modifier is applied.

This spell may be cast upon any small item (SIZ 5 or less) and will remain dormant until the item is next touched, at which point the spell will activate.

Massive Hands is a source of humour amongst thieves, leading to the derisory expression *a huge handed half-wit*.

## Meld

Casting Time 1, Duration 10, Magnitude 1, Progressive, Touch

*Runes:* Metal

*With a tang of burning metal, the lock glowed briefly then emitted a wisp of smoke. Esracar grinned – No one would be opening that door in a hurry.*

This spell is used to fuse together the metal parts of a lock, making it impossible to open in the conventional sense: tumblers become a solid block of metal, bolts weld with their housing and so on. The only way for an intruder to open a lock with Meld cast upon it is to dispel the magic or to destroy the lock.

At Magnitude 1, the caster of the spell may dismiss this spell as normal. At Magnitude 3 (1 and 3 being the only Magnitudes at which the spell may be cast), a command word may be included in the casting, allowing anyone who has this to dismiss the spell.

## Sleep with One Eye Open

Casting Time 2, Duration *Special*, Magnitude 1, Touch

*Runes:* Truth

*Though Balthazar had begun to snore softly, one of his eyes was peeled back, the eyeball flickering from side to side as though constantly searching for something.*

Like a wary cat, the subject of this spell will sleep on the edge of wakefulness, never fully letting down his guard.

The next time the character sleeps – which must be no more than an hour after the spell is cast or it will have no effect – he will be treated as though fully awake if required to make any sort of Perception Test.

As soon as the character awakens the spell ends.

## Sneezing Fit

Casting Time 1, Magnitude 2, Resist (Persistence), Touch, Trigger

*Runes:* Man

*Leon clutched his nose frantically but a succession of sneezes continued to fight their way free. From upstairs, came the unmistakable sound of someone rising from their bed.*

It is difficult to remain quiet and undetected when one is constantly sneezing– which is exactly the effect that this spell is designed to induce.

Typically cast onto a door – though any solid surface will do – this spell activates as soon as the affected area is touched. Should the target character fail to resist the spell, he will begin sneezing loudly and continue to do so for 1D6 Combat rounds. During this time, all Skill Tests suffer a -20% Skill Modifier. Any creatures within earshot – typically about 10 metres – are entitled to a Perception test to hear the sneezing.

Note that a character wearing a Thieves' Muzzle makes no noise when he sneezes.

## Thieves' and Trapsters' Guilds

Thieves' Guilds are a well-established feature of many fantasy worlds, providing shady dens where rogues can meet and plot, and fence their ill-gotten gains. Using the devices and enchantments provided in this supplement, players and GMs alike will find a host of new things to trade and haggle over.

The notion of a Trapsters' Guild is something new. Thieves would not be the only ones looking to meet up, swap ideas and purchase equipment – it would be just as important to their adversaries: the trap-makers and counter-thieves whose job it is to thwart them.

It is quite likely that a Trapsters' Guild would be officially sanctioned – licensed and approved by the authorities in the same way as any other respectable Guild. They provide a useful role in maintaining law and order, after all. Indeed, they might even be a centrally controlled organisation – a branch of the government or of a law enforcement agency.

This is not to say that only upstanding members of society will employ the services of this Guild: as often as not, it will be disreputable types who are looking to safeguard their treasures – and the people looking to steal it may be well-intentioned adventurers.

In a city which is ruled by thieves (such as Lankhmar), the Trapsters might themselves be the outsiders – renegades looking to thwart the activities of a powerful Thieves' Guild. Giving people the ability to protect their own premises can make them independent and there are various organisations that might not be happy with that.

In a location where there is both a Thieves and a Trapsters' Guild, there are a number of ways in which the two organisations might interact with each other:

**Hostile:** The two organisations are in open conflict. It may be that rival affiliates have orders to attack each other on sight. There will certainly be no direct contact

through diplomatic channels and turf wars might well be commonplace.

**Ambivalent:** The organisations tolerate and largely ignore one other. Violent confrontations are rare though, as rivals, opportunities will be taken to undermine the activities of the other group. There may be some limited dialogue between the Guilds.

**Respectful:** The rival Guilds have come to an understanding. There is likely to be a well-defined treaty with rules governing the behaviour of members of each faction. Diplomatic channels will be well-established and each group will do what it can to avoid violent confrontations. There may even be a 'friendly' rivalry between the affiliates.

**Allied:** Whilst only those at the very top of the organisations know it, the two guilds are in fact different faces of the same organisation. The pretence is carefully maintained, but in truth the guild plays one side off against the other, all the while making a handsome profit.

## Using the Guilds

PCS are likely to visit a Guild for any number of reasons: to lay low for a while, to look for work or to meet up with associates. More often, however, a Guild will provide a place where they can buy or sell equipment and information.

A list of the equipment that a typical Thieves' or Trapsters' Guild should have available to sell to characters is provided. Guilds will usually buy

equipment for half its listed price, assuming that it is in good, working condition.

These prices assume a world where magic, whilst not freely available, is commonplace enough to be accepted as a reality by most people. In a setting where magic is easier to come by than this, the prices should be reduced by 50%. Similarly, in a world with very little magic, it is appropriate to double these costs.

### Trapsters' Guild Equipment List

Item	Cost
Charcoal Golem	600 SP
Creakboard	300 SP
Creakboard Activation/ Deactivation lever	100 SP
Deconstructible (Small)	1,500 SP
Deconstructible (Large)	2,500 SP

### Trapsters' Guild Equipment List

Item	Cost
Deconstructible Materials:	
Wood	-
Iron	+10%
Steel	+20%
Glass or Marble	+50%
Echochamber	100 SP per cubic metre of room
Fool's Gold	500 SP
Footpad's Foe (one batch)	100 SP
Footpad's Foe Trough trap	50 SP
Gazing Guardian	1000 SP + 100

Hydric Deadlock	per eye stalk	20,000+ SP
Magimould Bust		1,500 SP
Omni-Beast Pair: war hounds		400 SP
Baboons		500 SP
Peeping Portrait	500 SP + cost of painting	
Phantom Watchman		
Enchantment (without sound)		600 SP
Phantom Watchman		
Enchantment (with sound)		1000 SP
Polylock		400 SP + 200 SP for each tumbler mechanism
Sealing Room		400 SP + 50 SP per cubic metre of room
Sealing Room Pressure Pad		+250 SP
Sealing Room Extraction Bellows		500 SP
Sealing Room Gas Pump		750 SP
Shadowcaster		200 SP
Shadowcaster Plates		50 SP
Shuffling Furniture		300 SP + cost of furniture
Slumbervine		75 SP
Snakecharm Lock and Key		1,000 SP
Spider Automaton		1,000 SP
Squeak Slug		10 SP
Tattletale		500 SP
Trap Handle		250 SP
Trap Handle (with hidden safe handle)		300 SP

Trap Handle electric jolt	+200 SP
Tubelock (Stone)	500 SP
Tubelock (Wood)	350 SP
Tubelock blade or dart trap	250 SP
Tattletale Enchantment	100 SP
Wacktus Seed	25 SP
Well of Night	800 SP

### Thieves' Guild Equipment List

Item	Cost
Creaker	50 SP
Disarm Pipe	30 SP
Dissolvent	100 SP
Extendable Lock Picks	70 SP
Female Wacktus Plant	200 SP
Female Wacktus Plant Scent (one dose)	20 SP
Frost Cracker	50 SP
Insulated Gloves	40 SP
Mongoose Picks	50 SP
Mufflers	25 SP
Pollen Pipe	15 SP
Pollen (one dose)	5 SP
Rolling Snitch	20 SP
Seeker	150 SP
Slip-Gaunts	50 SP
Sparkleflask	50 SP
Thieves' Muzzle (Basic)	35 SP
Thieves' Muzzle (Air Purification)	250 SP
Thieves' Muzzle (Emergency)	
Air Supply	120 SP

## Information Is Power

The trafficking of information can be every bit as profitable for the Guilds as the sale of equipment and goods.

### Information for Thieves' Guilds

Here are some examples of the sort of information that a Thieves' Guild might provide:

- The location of a hidden deactivation lever
- The names and addresses of the watchmen guarding a property
- The daily routine of the owner of a building
- Details of the items someone has recently had valued
- The name of a tavern frequented each night by the owner of a shop
- Detailed blueprints of a building, including the location of all security measures

Any information which might be of use to an inventive thief or adventurer will be sought after by a Thieves' Guild. Accordingly, PCs may find that they can turn a profit by providing information to a Guild.

The value of information can vary considerably. Plans of a baronial estate, including details of the secret vault, the positioning of guards and the location of security measures could be worth a small fortune to someone with the means to affect a robbery. Blueprints of a small shop might be worth only a handful of silver pieces.

As a general guideline, a Thieves' Guild will always be looking to skim a profit off the top, without angering or disheartening its members. The price of information will be based on an estimate of how much profit it can be used to acquire. The Guild will expect between 10% (for information that will give characters a little help, such as where a particular item can be found) to 50% (for information without which a job really could not be attempted: a set of keys that open every lock in the house and a pre-arranged bribe for the guards to look the other way for an hour).

#### Information for Trapsters' Guilds

Trapsters' Guilds will value any information that helps them – or their clients – to stay one step ahead of thieves and adventurers.

Examples include:

- Details of rogues and adventurers that have just arrived in the area, asking suspicious questions
- Information about jobs which have been sanctioned by the local Thieves' Guild
- A list of thieving tools recently sold to a particular rogue
- Details of which buildings are being watched by members of the local Thieves' Guild

With such a high value placed on information, it is inevitable that both the Thieves' and Trapsters' Guilds will seek to recruit or place spies in the ranks of their rivals. These moles can provide a steady flow of information and tip the scales in favour of one organisation or another.

#### Doing Business with the Guilds

Most of the time, Thieves' and Trapsters' Guild will be happy to accept cash as payment for their services. There will certainly be instances, however, where they are more interested in having PCs provide information or a service instead.

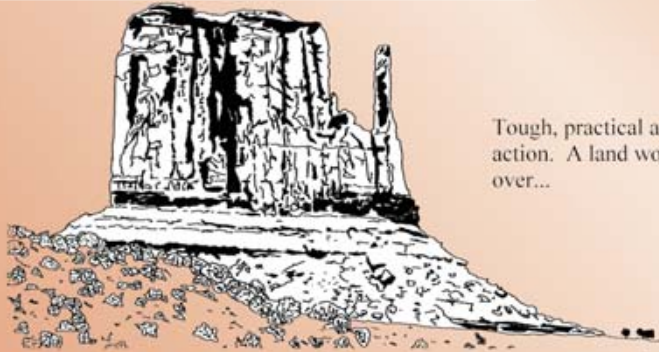
Examples of the sorts of activities by which PCs can earn favour with either Guild include:

- The assassination of a dangerous enemy
- Delivering a threat to someone who is not co-operating
- Breaking into an architect's office and secretly copying building plans
- Becoming a double-agent, infiltrating the ranks of a rival organisation
- Providing false information to rivals
- Investigating a suspected mole

Sometimes, a Guild will be happy to do a character a favour – provide equipment, information, and so forth – with the understanding that at some later date he will have to return the favour. With these Guilds, the old adage is especially true – there is no such thing as a free lunch.



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# Where's Wally?: Wally Squad Judges in GOMC-1

The judges of Mega-City One are The Law made flesh: intimidating, unyielding and conditioned to dispense instant justice, their training makes them more - and less - than human. So, when criminal investigations require a more subtle approach, how can these stern individuals be expected to blend in amongst the wilfully exotic citizens of the Big Meg?

'The Wally Squad' (as the Justice Department's Undercover Division is known to both judges and perps alike) is composed of lawmen and women who, after 15 years of iron discipline and the rigors of being a Street Judge, decide to undergo further intensive training that lets them live unnoticed amongst crazies, perps and low-lives, slowly making contacts and gathering information that may lead to a major bust.

It's a dangerous career path to take. Despite regular liaisons with a Street Judge contact, the Wally is essentially on their own in the field, forever fearful of being discovered. Any Judge willing to take such risks must be firmly committed to upholding The Law but because they must adopt eccentricities, form relationships and even - Grud forbid! - commit crimes to maintain their cover, they are regarded with a combination of derision and suspicion by their uniformed peers. In fact, it's not unknown for a Wally to end up identifying more with the perps he was sent to investigate than his sceptical fellow Judges.

It's not easy for a Judge to adapt to the slang, psychology and ludicrous fashions of a Mega-City gang member and infiltrating non-human gangs is even harder. However, Undercover Division will go to great lengths to uphold The Law. Those gangs who think themselves too unusual to be the targets of covert work are seriously underestimating Justice Department resources.

Ape gangs can be infiltrated with controlled application of Fribb Enzymes (the devolutionary drug that once caused chaotic monkey business in Charles Darwin Block), while face-changing machines, ugly products and advanced prosthetics allow radical alteration of a Judge to emulate troggies and mutants. There are also cases of Judges transferring to the Wally Squad after suffering mutations in the Cursed Earth,

for example Judge Coil, the baby-faced (and bodied) Wally from 2000AD's Low Life strip. Med Division have a cure for Cassidium-induced lycanthropy, so even a spell as a werewolf is not completely impossible for a committed undercover operative. However, since the Justice Department decommissioned their 'Mechanismo' robots after they proved to be murderously unstable, a robot gang is more likely to be infiltrated by a remote-controlled Tek-Division drone, rather than a robot judge.

## Using Wally Squad Judges in Gangs of Mega-City One

Wally Squad judges may only be deployed in addition to at least one other fully-qualified Judge (5 Justice Points or higher). A judge patrol can include no more than one Wally Squad judge.



At any point in the *Scarper, It's the Law* scenario, the Judge player can reveal that one opposing Punk or Juve has, in fact, always been a Wally Squad operative who has infiltrated their gang. The selected ganger may not have the Lieutenant or Resist Arrest traits or exceed 10 points in reputation. The gang player must immediately cross him off his gang sheet and the figure becomes part of the Judge Patrol, using the stats given below.

Although this will sow fear and confusion amongst the gang, the Judge player is taking a risk; a Wally Squad judge possesses none of the equipment of a normal judge and, his cover blown, must survive the battle solely on his wits and superior positioning. He will also have ensured that, by the end of the battle, the gang are considerably tougher subjects for future undercover operations. Gang players, seeing that a judge patrol is 12 points short, will twig that a Wally has been included in the squad and may try to second-guess the judge player's choice of turncoat, positioning his miniatures with increasing paranoia. Of course, the longer the judge player resists making his selection, the longer the rest of his patrol is under-powered.

The Wally Squad make a traitorous addition to GOMC-1 but the inherent risks should ensure that a judge player will not add them to a patrol lightly.

## Wally Squad Judge

Having hidden his true nature and abilities from the gang, the Wally Squad judge uses the following stats, except where the gang member scored higher. He will also retain any traits, mutations, abilities and equipment he had as a gang member.

Spd	Ag	Res	CC	Hits	WtF	Justice Points
6"	3+	7	3D	4	2+	12

**Traits:** Nerves of Steel, Luck of Grud, Duck & Weave + those previously possessed.

**Equipment:** As possessed when a gang member. A Wally Squad judge may never be upgraded with a Lawmaster.

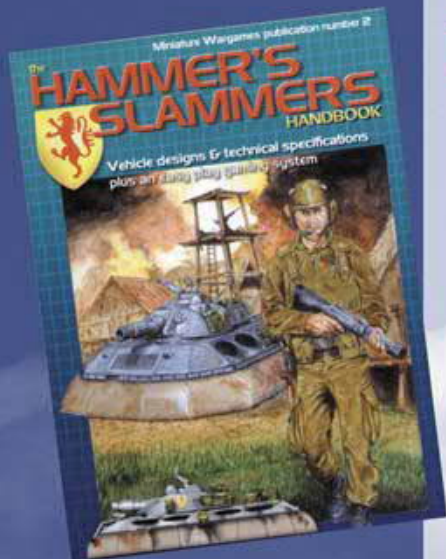
**Infiltrator:** A gang known to have been infiltrated by the J's will lose a lot of friends fast – the gang player loses all Contacts at the end of the scenario.

**Fear & Loathing:** Hatred of traitors is so intense that any ganger who manages to injure a Wally Squad judge (so the judge is removed from the table) gains an immediate +3 to his personal Rep, or +6 for killing him.

**Once bitten:** An infiltrated gang develops such an abject loathing of The Law that up to 3 gang members that survive the scenario (even if removed from the table) can be awarded the Resist Arrest trait, in addition to any traits gained in the normal post-fight process.



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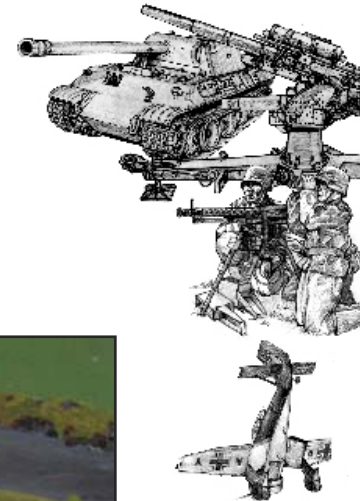
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**NEW**



# War in New England

By Alex Fennell



On Saturday 2<sup>nd</sup> August The Time Machine game store in Manchester, CT played host to their first World at War tournament/campaign day. The store was in the process of renovating the gaming area and the day was spent playing under very bright new lights while sliding on the plastic sheeting protecting the not-yet-waxed new floor.

Six players were in attendance for the whole day and other people dropped in and joined in on a few games. Ken, Josh and Alex were the Allies for the event with 1,500 points of US Infantry, British Infantry and British Paratroopers respectively with the Axis team represented by Kermit and his Fallschirmjager, Jay's Grenadiers and Bob's SS Army.

Each person played three games and to reflect the team nature of the event winners were allowed to reinforce their team mates if their game finished early. The winning team from each round would also get a bonus artillery strike in the subsequent round. Points were available to each player for completing various mission objectives and to keep track of the carnage players scored separate points for each enemy unit they killed in each game.

## Game 1 - Breakthrough!

The first game of the day was a straightforward breakthrough mission with the winner being the player with the most units in the enemy deployment zone. To make things interesting the games were played using the night fighting rules.

The match-ups saw the Grenadiers taking on the British Paratroopers, the Fallschirmjager against the US Infantry and the British Infantry versus the Elite SS.

The first game to finish was Jay's and Alex's with victory going to the Paratroopers. Despite losing their Firefly early on in the game the Para engineers managed to stall a German advance with their improved anti-tank explosives and the Typhoon returned to the battlefield just in time to destroy the tank destroyer and an infantry unit as they raced towards the deployment zone. With those two units dead Alex pulled off a win with just a single Section making it into Jay's deployment zone. Despite finishing early the British decided to stop for tea and buns, confident that their Allied colleagues would not need any reinforcements.



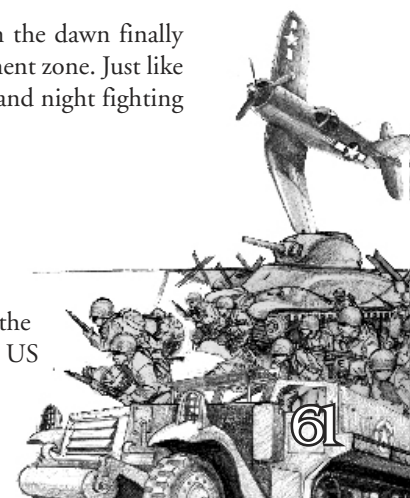
In Kermit and Ken's game the Fallschirmjager dropped in on the US Infantry and ended up right in the middle of them, triggering a huge firefight that saw the skills of the Germans win out. Elite troops in cover at night are very hard to kill and Kermit was able to get a couple of units into Ken's deployment zone at the end of the game while his two Focke Wulf's caused havoc with the US infantry.

Bob and Josh's game went right down to the wire but when the dawn finally broke at the end of the game Bob had a unit in Josh's deployment zone. Just like the Fallschirmjager, the SS had taken advantage of the cover and night fighting rules to make things very hard for the Allied troops.

**Allies: 0 Axis: 1**

## Game 2 - Seize and Secure

This mission was played straight out of the rulebook and the games had the Fallschirmjager versus the Paratroopers, US





Infantry against the SS and the Grenadiers taking on the British Infantry.



Attempting to recreate his earlier success Kermit dropped his German force as close to Alex's as he could but while waiting for the Fallschirmjager to arrive the Paratroopers had advanced, unopposed, to take up positions in a number of woods



close to the objective. With their bonus to cover Alex was hoping they would be very hard to shift and that is exactly what happened. A promising German attack was stalled thanks to bombs from the Typhoon

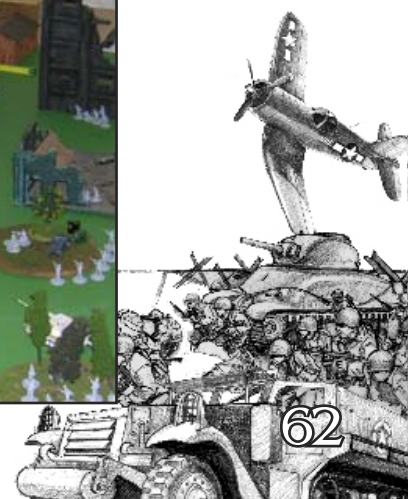


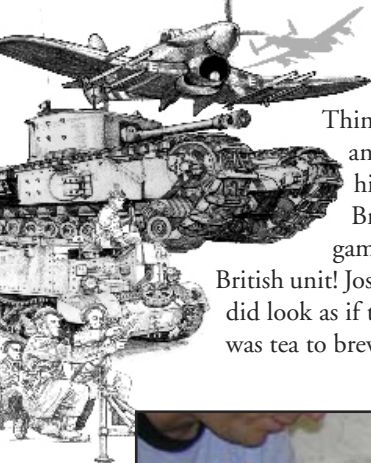
and the British pilot then turned out to be a real ace, avoiding every attack from the two German planes while managing to reposition himself to shoot one of them down later in the game. A victory for the Brits, thanks mostly to the awesome flying displays of their pilot!

Meanwhile, Bob's SS force was holding their own very successfully against the US infantry of Ken and a German victory here looked inevitable until the sudden arrival of a guest commander who took command of the US tanks (Dino had arrived to join



in for a couple of hours). Faced with two generals Bob's force fell apart and the game ended with US forces in command of the objective.





Things went from bad to worse for the German Grenadier force and after almost pulling off a win against the Paratroopers in his previous game Jay's army just disintegrated against the British Infantry, getting wiped out to a man long before the game was scheduled to end. They had not destroyed a single British unit! Josh decided against reinforcing any of his allies as this time it did look as if the allies would end up winning this round. Besides, there was tea to brew and buns to eat!

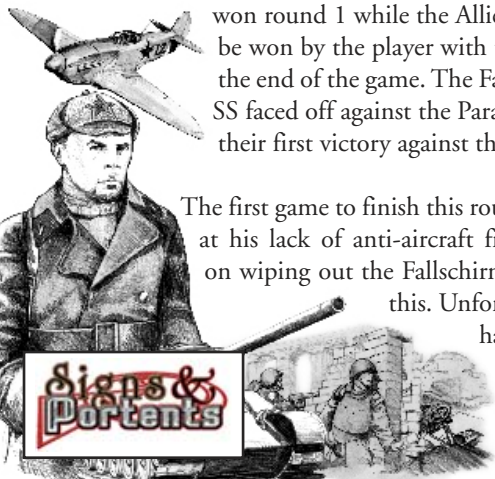


Allies: 1 Axis: 1

### Game 3 - Control the Terrain

The last mission of the day and everything was still to play for. The Axis team had won round 1 while the Allies had won round 2. The final scenario would be won by the player with the most pieces of terrain under his control at the end of the game. The Fallschirmjager took on the British Infantry, the SS faced off against the Paratroopers and the Grenadiers went looking for their first victory against the US Infantry.

The first game to finish this round was between Josh and Kermit. Concerned at his lack of anti-aircraft firepower Josh's British Infantry concentrated on wiping out the Fallschirmjager and his army proved very proficient at this. Unfortunately for Josh the two Focke Wulf's caused havoc when they arrived and although Kermit



ended the game with just five models remaining the British force had been completely wiped out. Kermit decided to send reinforcements to Jay's battle and the Command squad parachuted onto the board to put more pressure on Ken's US Infantry.

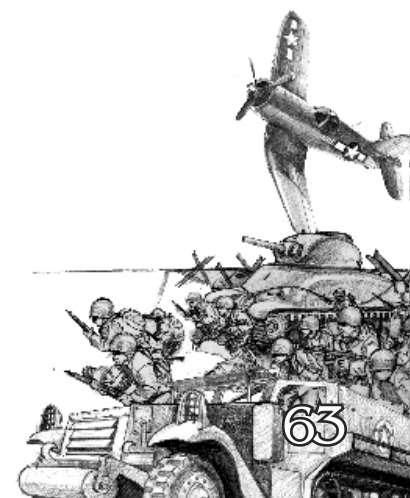
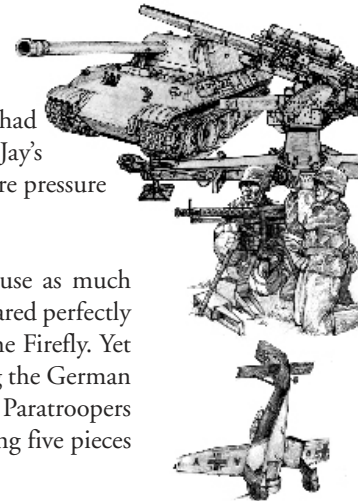
Bob and Alex traded blows with the two elite armies seeking to cause as much damage as possible before all of the troops ended up in cover. Things started perfectly for Bob as his first shot of the game with his tank hunter destroyed the Firefly. Yet again though the Typhoon pilot proved his worth and ended up killing the German tank and a bunch of SS infantry. With the help of the aircraft the Paratroopers slowly pushed the SS back and the game ended with the British holding five pieces of terrain and the Germans three.

All of the players then gathered round the last table to see if Ken could prevail against Jay and Kermit, as the winner of this game would determine the winning team for the day. Kermit's reinforcements were helping turn the tide against Ken but a rush of blood to the head on the part of Jay saw him charge a squad towards an entrenched US position, which put Ken back on level terms. A final shot from the single surviving Sherman saw Ken take the win six to five.

The final results of the day were as follows

- First: Alex
- Second: Kermit
- Third: Ken
- Fourth: Josh
- Fifth: Bob
- Sixth: Jay
- Bloodiest battle: Kermit and Josh
- Largest winning margin: Josh (against Jay)

Overall winning team: Allies





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