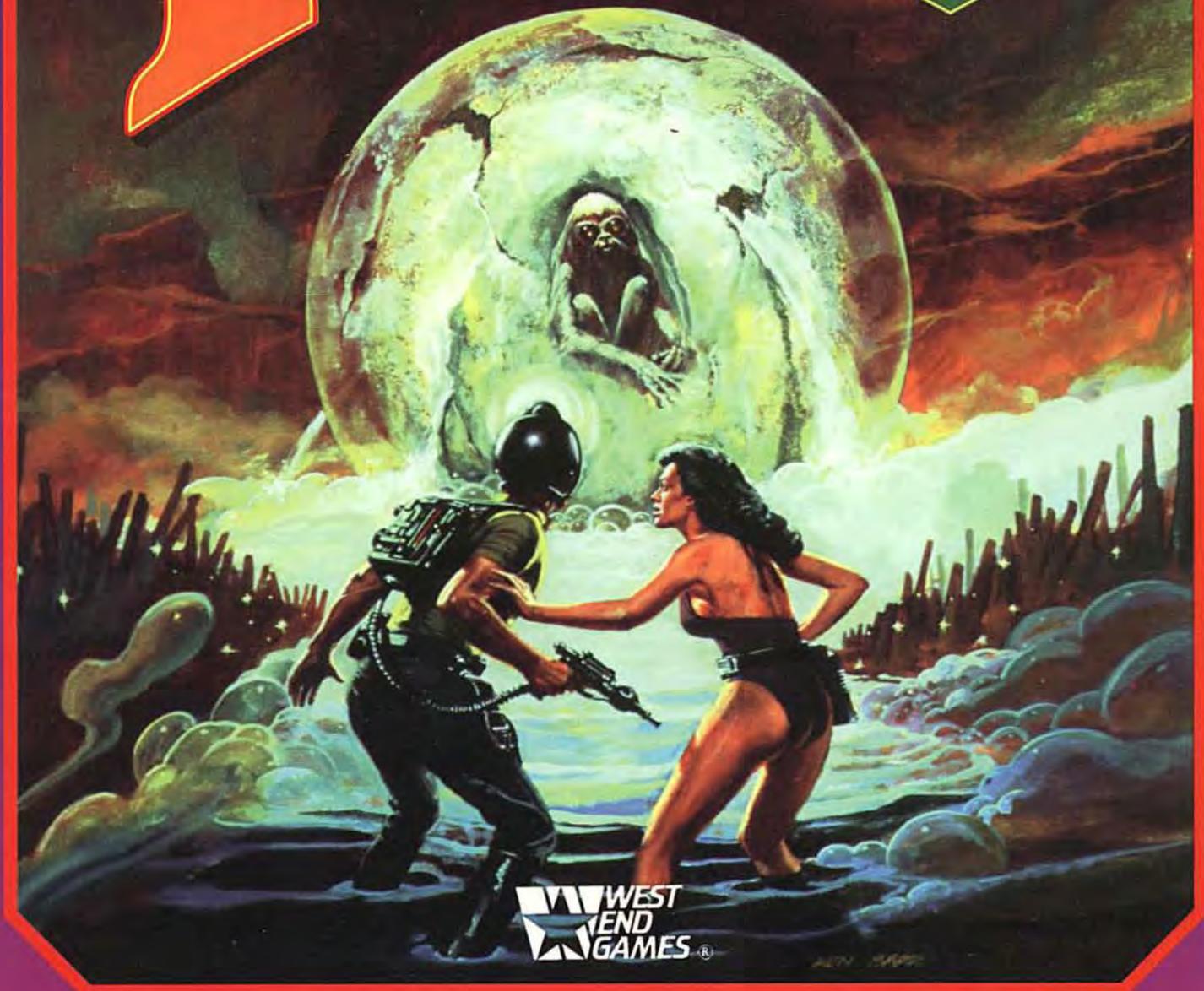


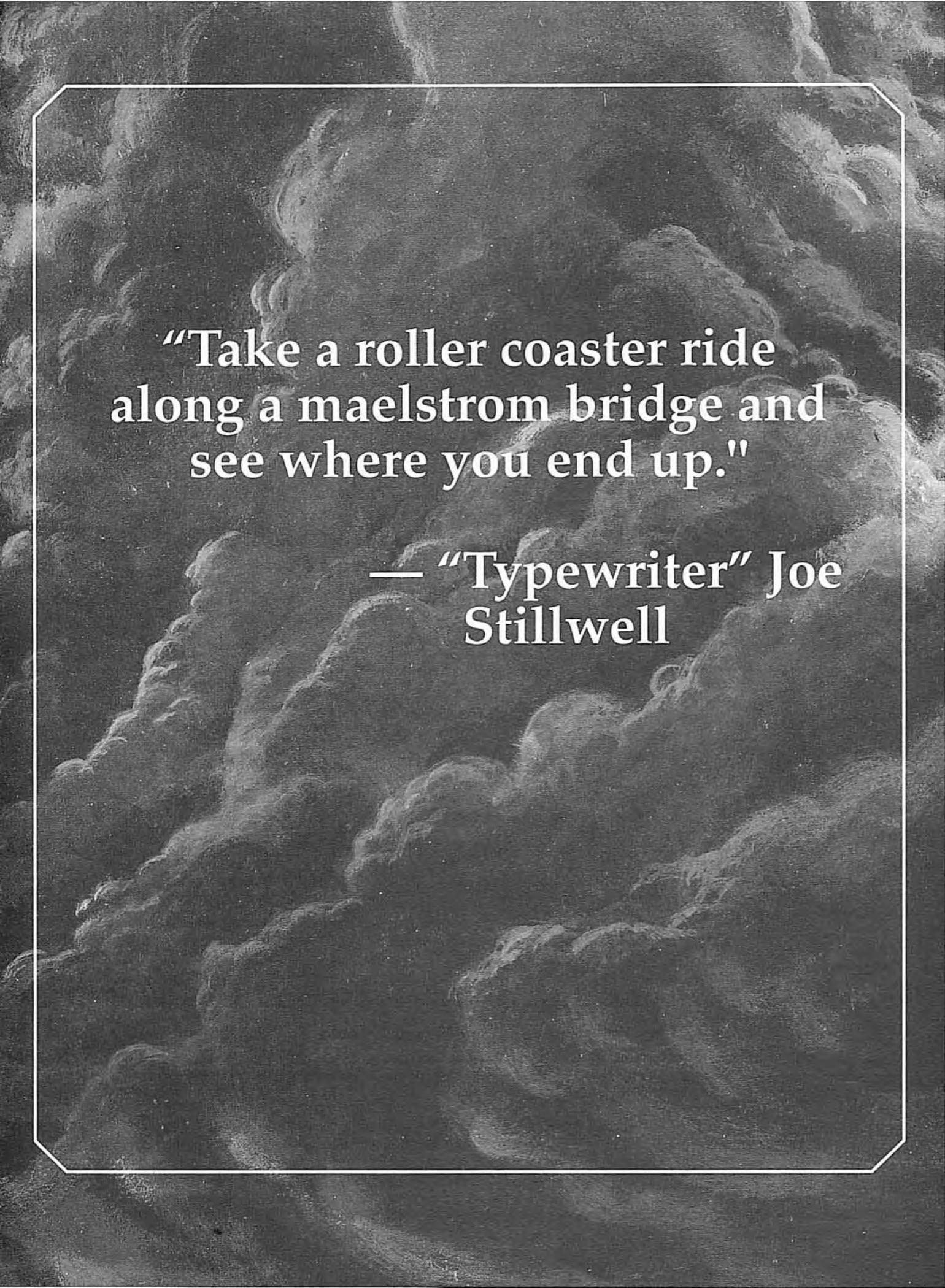
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Where Reality is High Adventure



**“Take a roller coaster ride
along a maelstrom bridge and
see where you end up.”**

**— “Typewriter” Joe
Stillwell**



Roleplaying the Possibility Wars™

Terra

Where Reality is High Adventure

T A B L E O F C O N T E N T S

Introduction	4
Chapter One: History 101: Origins of the World of Weird Science	5
Chapter Two: History 201: Politics of War	12
Chapter Three: History 301: After the War	24
Chapter Four: History 401: The New Age of Heroism	35
Chapter Five: Axioms and World Laws	41
Chapter Six: New Terrian Skills & Pulp Powers.....	54
Chapter Seven: Pulp Magic	70
Chapter Eight: Gadgets and Gizmos	77
Chapter Nine: Equipment	93
Chapter Ten: Cities of Adventure, People of Power	100
Chapter Eleven: Template Section	116





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Introduction



Terra. Many have described it as a world of high adventure. Others, a world of mystery and intrigue holding secrets both supernatural and political. And others still call it the world of the heroic. Me, I call it home. My name is Joseph Stillwell, "Typewriter Joe" to my friends. You can call me Joe and, as I was just saying, welcome to Terra. My boss (who actually *likes* being called "Chief") decided that I should be the one to let you in on our world. I guess he figured my Pulitzer prize for investigating the year's city election scam needed a companion. Either that or he's a lot more pissed off than I thought about that practical joke I pulled last week in the printroom.

In either event, here I am. So where do I begin? Whew, that's tough. First, I need to establish why I'm writing you at all. Apparently, there is a lot more to this great big universe than what my physics teacher taught me back in twelfth grade. Somewhere out there, like in the farthest reaches of some strange ten-cent sci-fi novel/alternate space-time-continuum pocket, there are literally thousands of other dimensions, or *cosms* as some people call them. Many of them are more or less just like my world, but there are others that are just like the fictional fantasy worlds in Howard's last adventure story. Besides them, there are horror-filled places like those I listen to tales about every Wednesday night and futuristic planets that even Mr. Wells would've balked at.

But you probably know that, seeing as that's where most of you came from and that's why I'm writing this book. The *Terra* sourcebook is a kind of guide

or introduction for you folks that have travelled the cosmverse (that's the name the government lab coats are calling this new expanded universe). For those folks hailing from Terra, there are few things in here for you, too. You

wouldn't believe some of the stuff I've discovered in researching this book. So, let's start with the basics ... World History. (Hey, Mrs. McPersis told me history was important and it is, so just read on and stop that groaning.)

The Terra Sourcebook

The *Terra* sourcebook is a fictional sourcebook for West End Game's *Torg: Roleplaying the Possibility Wars* roleplaying game. Players adventuring on Terra are able to play in a world very similar to that which was written about in our pulp fiction novels of the 20s, 30s and 40s. Terra blends the political overtones of a near-depression post-WWI world with heroes and villains with strange "weird" science powers and gadgets. During the course of an adventure in Terra, it is just as likely that a player may find himself chasing a gangster through the streets of New York as he is to find himself face to face with power-hungry sorcerer from the (fictional) Far East.

Beyond the initial history found in the following chapters, there are several pieces of information for both players and gamemasters. However, this supplement is not a complete game. Owning, or at least borrowing (the law frowns on steal-

ing), a copy of the basic game, *Torg: Roleplaying the Possibility Wars*, is necessary, unless you intend to use this supplement with another game system (which you can). The basic game describes the game-specific terms and notations and is all you need to get started. There are some *Torg* products already in print (check the shelf right next to this one!) that are also helpful in creating and playing a Terra campaign. These are *The Nile Empire* sourcebook, *The Land Below* supplement, and *Infiniverse Update Vol. I and II*. Having these is not mandatory, but they do include several additional items of interest to both players and gamemasters for adventuring in Terra. Most notably, *The Nile Empire* sourcebook has descriptions of many of the pulp powers that are available to Terran characters but which are not outlined here. Some other items of interest in these supplements include equipment and pre-developed non-player characters.



Chapter One

HISTORY 101: Origins of the World of Weird Science



o preface, I am writing this history assuming that you know some of the basic history of a cosm called *Core Earth*.

Apparently, there is some sort of war going on there and that's where many of you are coming from. This assumption makes my life a bit easier because *Core Earth's* history is nearly identical to *Terra's*. It also makes your life a bit easier because you won't have to read a whole bunch of stuff you already know. So, on with the book.

Terra's ancient history is pretty unremarkable. As I said, *Terran* history is virtually the same as *Core Earth* history up until the turn of this past century. We both had Roman Empires, we both had legends of King Arthur and Robin Hood, we both had pirates and we both had English and French revolts. We even had an Industrial Revolution back a few years ago ... though I'm told by some of my more philosophical sources that this is about where the divergence began.

But back to what I was saying — aside from all that, there is one item of note in *Terra's* ancient past that has taken a slightly different turn on *Terra* than it has on *Core Earth*. This item of note surrounds the life of an Egyptian pharaoh, *Sutenhotep*.

The way the story goes is that *Sutenhotep*, the illegitimate son of pharaoh *Amat-Ra*, was a powerful leader. Using his natural command abilities, he led massive armies to con-

quer much of Northern Africa and the Middle East for his father. Under the guidance of *Amat-Ra* and the might of *Sutenhotep*, Egypt became the primary power of their time.

But their reign was not without its turbulence. Because of the illegitimacy of his birth, *Sutenhotep* was denied the right to become pharaoh upon his father's death. Instead, *Amat-Ra* announced publicly that *Toth*, *Sutenhotep's* half-brother, would be the heir to power. This caused *Sutenhotep* to seethe with hatred. He was angered, not just because he was not picked, but because *Toth* was chosen in his stead. Although *Toth* was another successful leader in *Amat-Ra's* army, *Sutenhotep* felt that, without his own leadership, the armies of *Amat-Ra* would never have become so great. He considered the extremely popular *Toth* to be an imbecile and refused to accept his father's suggestion that he take the post of *Toth's* grand vizier — a position of great power and influence in its own right.

Sutenhotep's mentor, *Kerkeremtis*, attempted to soothe *Sutenhotep's* anger. *Kerkeremtis* knew his student's anger would lead only to trouble, but *Sutenhotep* shrugged off the advice. Instead, he swore to his mentor that not only would he see himself seated on the throne of Egypt, vanquishing his father and brother, but he would conquer time and eternity itself.

This was a vow that *Sutenhotep* made a very good attempt at keeping.





Brian Schomburg

Sutenhotep managed to gather several loyal armies together and marched them against his half-brother's forces. Vanquishing them with barely a fight, Sutenhotep walked up to and killed Toth personally. However, because of Toth's popularity, public opinion swayed radically at this gesture, and many of the would-be pharaoh's own troops demanded that Amat-Ra make Sutenhotep pay for his transgressions. Unable to order the death of his only remaining son, Amat-Ra instead exiled Sutenhotep and his still-loyal troops into the deserts of Africa, never to return.

After a fifteen-year anger-simmering retreat into the desert, Sutenhotep returned, regardless of his father's orders. During his exile he had used his masterful leadership abilities to gather another army, an army of nomads and warriors, that were able to beat the vastly superior forces of Amat-Ra and seize the capital. From there,

Sutenhotep took command and ordered the deaths of his father's advisors. When he captured his father, Sutenhotep had compassion. Instead of slaying his progenitor outright, he ordered Amat-Ra to be mummified alive in a sadistic tribute to his station. It was to be a glorious ceremony which would befit the passing of a pharaoh.

Although Sutenhotep thought that this was considerate, Amat-Ra had other opinions on his death sentence. Overcoming the pain of the slow, agonizing death of living mummification, he managed to utter a curse that made Sutenhotep's reign bloody and short. Amat-Ra's curse took effect almost immediately upon his death and quickly caused Egypt's fertile crops to be overcome with blight. The lands shifted into arid, barren deserts and once-complacent peasants turned into unruly rioters. A mere six months after Sutenhotep took power, he was

murdered during a public speech. The large audience in attendance bore witness to his assassination, and nearly all cheered uncontrollably for days as Sutenhotep's self-proclaimed desire to rule forever was brutally crushed.

Nearly all.

Prophecy or Psychosis?

After that brief jaunt into ancient history, we move a bit closer to the present. The date is August 12th, 1897, exactly three thousand years to the day of Sutenhotep's assassination. A small cult on an uncharted island in the Pacific rose from their underground vaults to perform a ritual. They, claiming to be direct descendents of the same priests that served Sutenhotep three thousand years ago, begin casting a series of spells to bring their long-dead ruler back to



life. Twenty-four hours later, they fall to the ground in worship as they claim success. Their leader has returned to fulfill his prophesy of life over death. Sutenhotep once again walks among the living.

Believable? Who knows? What is certain is this: Khem, the small island in the Pacific, was unheard of before. Despite numerous sailing voyages during three millennia of travel, there had never been a documented sighting of or landing on the island. But over the course of the next few years, this island would reach international recognition as the secret island retreat of the pulp villain known as Dr. Mobius.

Dr. Mobius, who completely vanished from Terra several years ago, was one of the first "pulp villains." Unsettlingly intelligent, and unbelievably psychotic, Dr. Mobius made his mark a lasting one. My research into his background (and believe me, you don't want to meet *any* of the people I had to in researching this) exposes Dr. Mobius as a brilliant whacko. According to these unnameable sources, Dr. Mobius believes himself to be the resurrected persona of Sutenhotep.

In theory, the saga of Sutenhotep continues long after his brutal murder. My sources say that Sutenhotep's few remaining loyal disciples, primarily priests and a handful of soldiers, whisked away his body before it could be desecrated by the celebrating masses. They were chased by a small mob, but eventually made good their escape upon reaching the Red Sea. From there it is unknown as to how they travelled, but it is rumored that the priests ventured to and remained in India for several years before they finally settled much further east on small island in the central Pacific.

Once on the island of Khem, Sutenhotep's followers began preparation of a ritual that could be cast only once every one thousand years. The descendents of the original priests maintained their isolation by utilizing Egyptian magics to mask the island's presence and quietly let the centuries pass by. They continually kept watch

on the skies and prayed, asking the Egyptian gods to align the stellar constellations and planets prematurely so that their leader could be returned to them. But, unfortunately for Sutenhotep, either the gods weren't listening or Amat-Ra's curse still had power, because the descendents were unable to perform the ritual for not only one thousand years, but not for *three* thousand years. During the first two stellar conjunctions, Khem was wracked violently as two monstrous monsoons raged across the island. The first was so intense that during the course of the storm the oceans rose high enough to engulf the entire island. Only the elaborate underground vaults that were built during their ten-century waiting period allowed the priests to survive. Finally, the third time proved to be the charm as the priests were able to perform their ritual without interference from nature.

Sutenhotep's Journeys

After his resurrection, Sutenhotep immediately began studying the world in which he had awoken. His servants, having made occasional forays onto the mainland, kept their civilization from being lost in time. For the next two and a half years, Sutenhotep spent every waking hour poring over the tomes which his followers brought him. Then Sutenhotep went to investigate the world about him.

Sutenhotep reached the American West Coast on February 3rd, 1900. Like many immigrants, he arrived in San Francisco full of wide-eyed wonder. It wasn't the American Dream that Sutenhotep sought, but knowledge. Sutenhotep set out in search of everything he could use to regain power and what caught his interest the most was technology. Sutenhotep was awed by the newly-discovered wonders of electricity and industry. Being a man of three thousand years ago, he had never witnessed the developments of

electric lights and trolley cars. And, unlike the magics of his priests, this seemed to have a firm foundation in the real world. It was a constant force which could be produced accurately and controlled and manipulated with amazing ease.

Sutenhotep became fascinated with this constant, controllable power and was led by his curiosity to spend some time studying at the University of California at San Francisco. There he made his greatest discovery. Having been thrust entirely into the world of modern science without the intermediate development years, his studies were not clouded by those restrictions that Newton and Edison had floundered in. Combined with his own knowledge of magic and their unnatural effects, his concepts of science were not limited to the realm of Newtonian physics. His genius allowed him to see beyond the scientific community's nearsightedness and discover the world of "weird" science.

This discovery rekindled Sutenhotep's spirit. He had only been awake six years and already he had discovered something that no one else had and it was something which could be used to his advantage. Sutenhotep returned to Khem in 1903 where he set his evil genius in motion towards the creation of the first of his world-domination plans. He spent much of his time designing and testing new devices, but he soon began to run short of materials and funds.

Dr. Mobius' Adventures

This lack of wealth led Sutenhotep to return to the United States in 1906. This is when, according to Khemite history, Sutenhotep began his life of crime and adopted the alias "Dr. Mobius" to fulfill his promise to Kerkeremtis that he would rebuild his empire and beat eternity. His first few adventures were flawless, but unfulfilling. Still a little untrusting of





Jaime Lombardo & Ron Hill



his own discoveries, his early capers were simple, small-time robberies. Inexperience led him to make some early mistakes, but quick-thinking kept him from getting caught. During the first six months, Mobius only managed to steal about \$5,000, but with time, he was becoming bolder and more daring.

Unfortunately for Dr. Mobius, his grace period was over. The strange nature in which his crimes took place brought unnecessary attention to him. Reports of vanishing men and strange devices caused the summoning of a physics professor from the University of Chicago. A young prodigy by the name of Dr. Alexis Frest arrived in San Francisco after classes ended in June. By mid-July, Dr. Frest, whose intelligence seemingly matched Mobius' own, was able to determine how the crimes were being committed. The next week a trap was laid.

Mobius' blind obsession led him to create a predictable pattern in his crimes. Confident in his ability to avoid capture, Mobius moved in a specific pattern during his crime sprees. But once Dr. Frest was able to determine how Mobius was escaping, Mobius was handed his first major defeat. In the past, Mobius had used an invisibility-generating device to mask his presence. He would commit the crime and simply sit in plain sight until everyone left, following his potential captors out the door. This time, however, Dr. Frest advised that someone wait inside until Mobius became tired of waiting. Predictably, Mobius did tire, tried to escape, and was captured.

The Weird Science Cover-up and GAWSI

Within a few hours of the arrest, government agents from Washington arrived at the office of police Capt. Edwards and the home of Dr. Frest. In the interests of national security, public safety and government bureau-

cracy, Frest and all of the military and civilian officers involved in the case were ordered to remain quiet. The agents rationalized that with the hostilities beginning in Europe that the discoveries related to this case could fall into the wrong hands if they weren't covered up. The police captain was given a promotion to keep him silent and Frest was given the option to stay on as the head of a new Government Agency on Weird Science Investigations (GAWSI). Dr. Frest agreed and was named the agency's first director after swearing to a policy of non-disclosure and secrecy.

Mobius Escapes!

Even with his genius, Mobius realized that someday he might make a mistake and get captured. Since it was awfully tough to rebuild an empire from jail, Mobius had set up a contingency plan in the eventuality that he was imprisoned. The night after Dr. Frest agreed to start GAWSI, a follower of Mobius' activated a backup device which teleported him out of jail and back to Khem.

This time, Mobius remained on Khem for two years before returning to America for his third visit. In 1908, he decided to move to the other coast and take on New York. This proved wise as Mobius was quite successful in his new location for nearly two years.

Unfortunately, his good fortune did come to an end. Haste and poor footing led to his second capture at the hands (well, actually fists) of a private detective named Rex McMasters. Mobius had just robbed another bank and was making good his escape when he blindly ran into McMasters' back. Rex, acting instinctively, turned and took a blind swing at his unknown assailant. He connected and sent Mobius over backwards. Mobius' misfortune was compounded when the fall broke his invisibility device, revealing his position. Suddenly, police officers that had been searching in vain were able to capture Mobius.

The First Hero

Throughout the war (see the next chapter, "History 201"), papers across the country began reporting on sightings of a masked man. Apparently the man, whom they dubbed the Guardian, had been helping the innocent victims of crimes. Various descriptions began pouring in, but the most consistent one was of a white male, about six feet tall, wearing a dark blue coat and mask. After the first few reports, this unknown hero acknowledged his fame by adding a golden "G" to his mask. In all of the reports, the Guardian appeared during a purse snatching or mugging and stopped the criminals with a diamond-tipped cane that delivered some sort of electrical shock.

Rumors abounded as to the Guardian's identity because he never stayed more than a few seconds after the crime. He saw to the victim's safety and then disappeared back into the night. It wasn't until after the war that more would be learned about this man.

GAWSI was on the scene within hours. Dr. Frest was brought in with a huge thought-scanning device which he used to determine how Mobius had escaped the first time. Before Mobius' servants were able to enact a second jail break, Frest removed the small transporter-locking device that had been overlooked after their first confrontation, and Mobius spent some real time in jail.

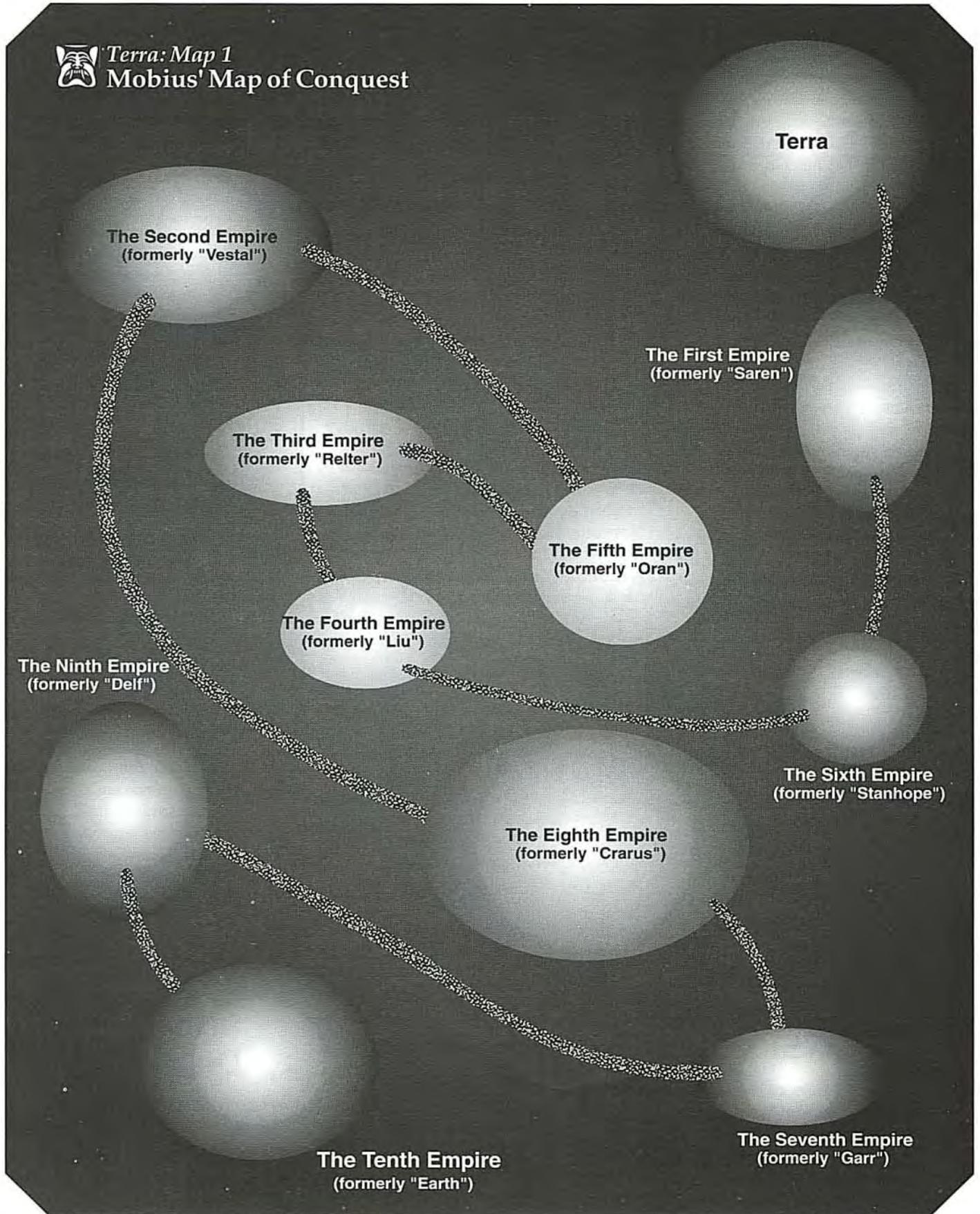
Dr. Frest Disappears

Without his transport device or any means to contact his followers, Dr. Mobius spent the next three years in prison. But lax security and Mobius' strong yearning for freedom eventu-





Terra: Map 1
Mobius' Map of Conquest



Note From Joe:

Contained throughout the *Terra* sourcebook are several dates and events which occurred in both Terran and Core Earth history. As a disclaimer, many of Terran historical dates may not match exactly their Core Earth counterpart. Likewise, time doesn't seem to pass the same in both cosms. One year in Terran time might be two in Earth time, or less than six months. I don't pretend to understand how this works but, for ease of reference, I've tried to list most times in Terran references when possible. I'm sure I'll mess it up occasionally but, on Terra, we've learned that knowing the *sequence* of events is more important than knowing exactly *when* something happened.

ally provided him with the means to escape. Toward the end of his third year, Mobius began slowly collecting strange pieces of discarded prison equipment. When questioned, Mobius claimed that he was going to repair them to save the prison money. This pleased the warden who was delighted to see the normally-disruptive Mobius working towards a useful goal. Even if he wasn't successful at repairing the equipment, it kept Mobius out of trouble. The warden's lack of caution was a huge mistake, however, as one late night, Mobius used the various electronic components to jury-rig a small weird science explosive device. After waiting for evening lockdown, Mobius activated the device and broke out of jail.

His first action once free was to strike back at his arch-enemy, Dr. Frest. In three years of incarceration, Mobius had become friends with many of New York's sleazier elements. Utilizing their contact base, Mobius was able to determine Dr. Frest's background and the location of his family. After escaping, Mobius used this information to arrange the kidnapping of Frest's wife and son. A week later, while back on Khem, Mobius managed to abduct Dr. Frest himself. A note left at Frest's Washington apartment kept GAWSI from following up. Mobius stated in no uncertain terms that Dr. Frest was not to be sought out. Failure to comply with this order would result in the murder of Dr. Frest's family.





Chapter Two

HISTORY 201: Politics of War

Prelude to War

While Mobius played with his weird science, the rest of the world continued along on its own pace. Just like on Core Earth, there was a very heavy expansionist period throughout the 1800s. Over the course of fifty years, every single European power raced to capture as much territory as they could — and America was not too far behind. Countless thousands of tourists and diplomats rushed to explore the previously unexploited continents of Africa and Eastern Asia. This was good because it kept the peace back at home. Wars between European powers had been common as relations between Britain, France and Prussia were cold at best. The colonization of the New World in the 1700s and the aggressions of leaders such as Napoleon kept people on edge throughout the first half of the 1800s.

This expansion benefited one leader in particular — Prussian prime minister Bismarck. When the colonial front finally began to settle down in the mid-1800s, Bismarck kept the peace going (and a bit of German superiority) through savvy alliances and isolationism. Treaties and foreign lands were tossed about like pinochle cards. Bismarck did this to keep his adversaries constantly a bit off-center. They didn't trust him, but remained casual because he was helping them. It was because of Bismarck that Prussia rose to become a world power.

Prussia, which eventually became Germany, had only one major fear — France. A long enmity between these two dated back well before Napoleon's

march across Europe. Therefore, while diplomacizing, Bismarck set out to make sure France remained without allies. Austria, a long-standing ally of Germany, was no threat, but Bismarck still made the occasional friendly overture to them because it allowed for the formation of another, more important, alliance with Russia.

A French-Russian alliance, while unlikely, was a consideration. Given its current might, Germany could easily withstand any advance by France, but a two-front war by both Russia and France would be devastating. Therefore, Germany made certain that Russia remained friendly by controlling Russia's greatest fear, Austria. As long as Germany could keep Austria from invading the Serbian lands which sat between Russia and Austria, Russia remained neutral.

The other major threat, Great Britain, was the easiest to buy off. Primarily a colonial power at this time, Great Britain was unconcerned with the petty bickering on the continent. Therefore, whenever Bismarck offered concessions abroad to appease Great Britain, Great Britain willingly accepted and remained neutral.

In addition to Austria, Russia and Great Britain, Germany remained on good terms with Italy. Although their position and weak strength made them a minor threat at best, Italy still could be problematic in a war if France were to woo them. Germany therefore beat France to the punch and established a protective alliance with Italy.

Spain, France's last possible ally, cut itself out of the European picture by losing a costly war with the United



New York Sentinel

July 11, 1914

WORLD AT WAR!

Border wars continue along southern Texas. Spain is embroiled in internal revolution. The protectorates of Africa feud with each other and their tribes swear to overthrow their "Foreign Oppressors." China and Japan deal with internal hostilities and overwhelming public demands to oust foreign influences. And now, war in Europe. Last week, the last of the European nations finally committed itself to the bloodshed which

began last month. In its first public proclamation on the matter yesterday, Great Britain's prime minister announced:

"Germany's aggressions against our allies in France and Russia require us to assume our own defensive stance. Last month, we issued a direct warning to Germany to cease its naval activities in the North Sea to prevent the possible loss of civilian lives while venturing in that area. Last week, they re-

sponded by firing upon a routine British patrol vessel. This, combined with their heartless attacks on the defenseless nation of Belgium, allows us no other alternative at this point than formally declaring war against the Kaiser of Germany and ordering our fleet into the North Sea. It is for the protection of our own country that we take this stand."

This proclamation truly makes this a world at war.

States. Spain's personal recovery left France completely unsupported against a rising Germany.

Kaiser Bill's Big Blunder

Unfortunately for Bismarck and Germany, his policies of diplomacy went unappreciated by his boss Kaiser Wilhelm II. Wilhelm became tired of being in charge of a country without actually getting to run anything. By 1890, he was sick of Bismarck's endless card deck shuffling of African and European diplomacy. By 1900, he wanted to play himself.

Wilhelm developed the notion of *Mitteleuropa*, a Europe all neatly united under his German flag. While seemingly impossible, this very well could have been what happened if Wilhelm

had left Bismarck to his diplomacies. France was quickly becoming helpless and the slightest provocation on the part of the French would have given Germany the go-ahead to march all over France. No one would have come to France's aid and, once that keystone of Europe was taken, it is doubtful that anyone could have prevented the remainder of a European takeover.

But instead of sitting back passively, Wilhelm attempted a forceful takeover of Europe that ignored Bismarck's careful diplomacy of the last several decades. First, Wilhelm violated the alliance between Great Britain and Germany. In preparation for a major war, northern Germany set up to begin producing a massive naval fleet. Being the unchallenged master of the seas, Great Britain was immediately taken aback by this action. It saw no

need for a land power to develop a sea-based force to fight a land war. Great Britain thought that Germany already had enough troops to ransack all the way to the French coast and consequently gave them an ultimatum to withdraw from the North Sea. Wilhelm ignored this demand and continued to pour ships out into British dominated waters.

This set off a chain of events that neutralized the other major defensive alliance that Germany had. As Germany prepared for war, Austria began to get similar notions. Austria began to seriously contemplate taking the Serbian lands and Russia immediately became defensive. Czar Nicholas II of Russia informed Wilhelm that, if he was unable to control Austria, their alliance could be considered null and void. Wilhelm ignored the whining of his eastern ally, confident that



he could easily withstand a retaliatory Russian advance. Unfortunately, he forgot about the possibility of a two-front war.

These two simple judgment errors on Wilhelm's part radically shifted the balance of power in Europe. Under Bismarck's alliances, the balance was three strong alliances (Germany, Austria and Italy) and two weak alliances (Russia, Great Britain) against lonely France. With Wilhelm's aggressive blunders, the odds quickly became three on three with Russia, Great Britain and France united against the aggressive Germany.

Pre-War America

The United States remained out of the European picture in the pre-war years. Instead, it became embroiled in Spanish and Mexican politics much closer to home. In an effort to end

Spanish power in the Caribbean around the turn of the century, McKinley and Roosevelt passed through Congress the measures necessary to increase the United State's naval power in the region. During the course of their administrations, the US fleet produced ten new battleships by 1905 and effectively doubled the navy by 1910. Once the Europeans withdrew to prepare for their impending war, the US took complete control of the Caribbean.

This left Mexico in trouble. Porfirio Diaz, the Mexican president, met with presidents Roosevelt and Taft to request aid. He pleaded with them for economic and military help because he felt that, with Spain's and Germany's withdrawals, Mexico would soon be wrought with bloody revolutions. He further contended that such a revolution could spill up into the US if support wasn't supplied.

This prompted the US to send workers and money to Mexico in excess of 50,000 people and one billion dollars.

Despite these measures, a revolution still occurred in 1910. Francisco Madero won the support of a starving general populace and easily lead a revolution against the aging Diaz with the aid of former bandito Pancho Villa. Knowing that the Americans had been supporting Diaz, Madero quickly moved to make peace with President Taft. He pointed out that even with the enormous sums of American aid, 95% of the Mexican public lived in complete poverty. Taft noted this and agreed to give Madero a chance to prove his policies.

Madero's government proved to be even more ineffectual than Diaz's. Although his intentions were good, the 5% of the Mexican population that weren't poor were the land owners that were the most affected by



Brian Schomburg



Madero's new policies. One land owner in particular, Victoriano Huerta, was so upset over increasing taxes and overheads that he led Madero's own troops against him in 1913. Madero requested aid from the US and initially received it, but lost it when Huerta presented false evidence of Madero's economic grafts and private wealth stockpiling. Without US support, Madero lost power on February 18th after only ten days of fighting. Huerta ordered the execution of Madero four days later.

The Great War

Although I've heard that Core Earth has had two of these beauties, Terra has still only had one great World War (but we're working on a second). While Mexico began to bleed internally, Austria and Serbia began to tussle. Taking cues from its aggressive partner Germany, Austria began to set up for some expansion of its own. Austria started to trade blows with Serbia in 1910 and 1911. A series of border disputes and limited excursions sent temperatures soaring in the Balkan states — naturally making Russia stand up and watch very carefully.

Wilhelm was still able to hold Nicholas in check for a few more years. He continued to maintain the strained alliance because he wasn't ready for war yet. But, eventually, everything fell apart when in 1914 things got too hot for him to handle.

Despite numerous warnings and death threats, the heir to the Austrian throne, Archduke Francis Ferdinand, visited the besieged country of Bosnia. When the Archduke arrived in Sarajevo on June 28th, a Serbian terrorist tossed a bomb into his car. He was able to get rid of it before it exploded, but was unable to dodge the hail of bullets that riddled his car the next day. The Archduke watched helplessly as his wife was shot twice in the abdomen before he was shot himself repeatedly in the chest and throat.

Less than a full day after

New York Se

July 11, 1916

STRANGE LIGHTS OVER RUSSIA

War rages on in Europe and Asia, but stranger still is the bizarre blast which rocked the Russian countryside two nights ago. Reports from sources abroad claim that, on July 9th, a tremendous blast occurred somewhere in Russia, probably near central Siberia. Even more strange than the still-unexplained blast are the after-effects of the blast. The explosion is supposedly linked to a series of mild tremors throughout the region and even as far away as the eastern front in Rumania and, last

night, reporters throughout the war zone informed us that even well after midnight, the sky was so well-lit that one could read outside without aid. Russian scientists refused to comment on the origin of the explosion and have blamed the night-time phenomena on a "rare, extremely powerful solar flare that has affected the Aurora Borealis." At this point, because of their silence, we can only wonder if their claims are true.

Ferdinand's assassination, Austria declared war on Serbia and Serbia replied in kind as Austrian forces marched in. Russia, finally confronted with its worst fears, moved quickly to Serbia's aid. Having spent the last ten years preparing for war, Germany finally made its move. Wilhelm broke his alliance with Nicholas and backed Austria. This mistake finally freed France from its stranglehold. France quickly joined with Russia and Serbia, causing Italy to side with Germany in its own defense. Faced with the possibility of losing both the North Sea to Germany and the Mediterranean Sea to Italy, Great Britain was reluctantly pulled into the war on France's side.

These alliances created two huge

military forces. The central European nations of Germany, Austria-Hungary and Italy formed the Triple Alliance. The outlying powers, Great Britain, France and Russia, created the Triple Entente. The early days were somewhat one-sided. The Alliance's early successes were aided significantly by Austria's efforts at keeping Russia centered on itself rather than Germany. The lack of a two-front war favored Germany, and despite its diplomatic shortfalls, Germany was still pretty damn good at war. Reliving the glory of Bismarck's early days, Germany marched all over Belgium and into France. Germany was also aided by an intelligent handling of Great Britain. Rather than directly taking on the num-



ber one naval power in the world, Germany used a defensive offense to keep Great Britain at bay and to slow the transfer of supplies to France. Even in wartime, the most effective way of dealing with the French was to isolate them.

The United States and the Great War

The United States wasted absolutely no time in declaring itself a neutral party in the war for Europe. The huge influx of European immigrants that had begun arriving since the beginning of the 1900s prevented the United States from clearly choosing a side. While the relations between the US and Germany weren't entirely cordial (stemming back to incidents in the Caribbean), powerful factions of German immigrants seated in government kept the US from allying with France. It was decided that the best policy was to have no policy. "We won't attack you if you won't attack us" was the message president Wilson sent to the European embassies in Washington.

This turned out to be a fortuitous decision. In 1914, as Germany declared war, the US became involved in a war itself. A third Mexican civil war broke out in December 1913 as Venustiano Carranza rebelled against Huerto's oppressive dictatorship. Wilson, somewhat upset over the unnecessary execution of Madero, turned on Huerto in 1914 as the evidence of Madero's setup came to light. He sent a small armed force to Carranza's aid. Huerto responded by ordering Pancho Villa to raid first Carranza's estates in Coahuila and then New Mexico. One week later, Huerto himself led a Mexican army of 20,000 against El Paso, Texas, razing it to the ground.

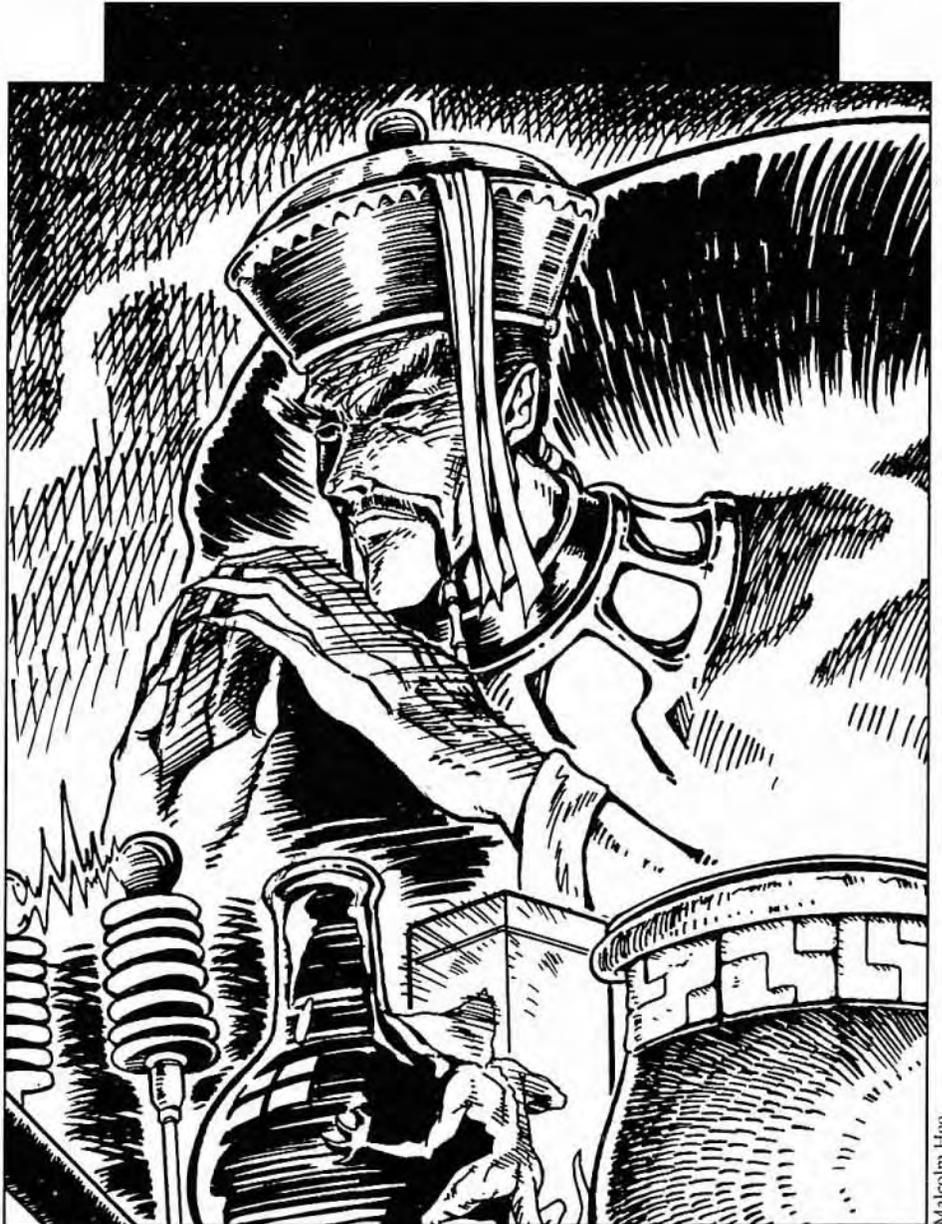
The War Concludes on Core Earth

Now, far as I can tell, much of this except for the Mexican situation, is just like what occurred on Core Earth. How-

ever, this is where the two histories begin to radically diverge. On Core Earth, for those that have forgotten, things got much worse in Europe. Germany continued to sweep and crush everything in its path until it committed a fatal mistake. The *Unterseeboot*, also known as the U-boat or submarine, became one of Germany's greatest weapons. Silent, hidden, lethal, it struck dead whatever it hunted. Submarines were thought to be the solution to the long, laborious trench warfare that had

formed across France. Wilhelm figured that his submarines would force Great Britain to back out of the war completely, fearing the loss of its transports. This would then cut supply aid to France and cause them to lose the war due to attrition.

Instead, it backfired dramatically. Great Britain, the world's greatest naval power, was forced to put up or shut up. No longer just in support of France, Great Britain began to fight back aggressively and, by mid-1915, both Great Brit-



Malcolm Hee



ain and Germany were in the midst of a tremendous naval conflict in the North Sea. This was bad because it made Germany's war on the Western Front a concentrated two-on-one confrontation.

This led to the situation which spelled Germany's downfall. On Core Earth, the US became upset with the naval war. Germany's declaration of unrestricted submarine warfare in the North Sea and the areas around France and Great Britain infuriated President Wilson. Because innocent, neutral US lives were being lost in the U-boat attacks, Wilson demanded that Germany cease and desist. But Wilhelm's refusal to comply combined with possible evidence of a German-Mexican alliance against the US drew Wilson into the war.

In 1916, just as Russia began to fall out of the war, the US entered and swung the tide of battle to the side of the western allies. With their entry, the minor and major skirmishes of the last six years came to a close within two years. Germany simply could not withstand the bombardment of three allies, especially as Austria began to fade and Italy ran. On Core Earth, the Kaiser abdicated with public opinion of the war wavering and Germany surrendered, ending nearly ten years of fighting.

The Weird Science Solution

The aftermath of the war and war reparations caused severe economic hardships across the globe. People in each of the wartime nations, including the United States, would be hit by their worst recessions ever. This, combined with lingering hostilities, would eventually lead to yet another war on Core Earth.

On Terra, however, the Great War was ended much differently. Dr. Frest's disappearance in 1913 set in motion a change in GAWSI. While he was in charge, the agency's goals were primarily innocent scientific discovery and protection against villains like Dr. Mobius. Frest had become enormously intrigued by the world of weird science.

This one of the factors that led to his kidnapping by Mobius. But his disappearance brought an end to the innocence of GAWSI's research.

Prior to Frest's disappearance, a small but powerful faction of Congress became inspired. These men, the same ones who helped found GAWSI, noted the ease with which Roosevelt and Taft had handled their scuffles with Spain and became convinced that the US no longer needed to play patsy to the European powers. They determined that it was time to make the United States a world power at last.

When Dr. Frest was kidnapped, this faction re-examined the purpose of GAWSI. Given the change in relations between Mexico and the United States, they decided to place one of their own in charge of the agency and center the agency's research on more practical, military uses. In 1916, GAWSI produced its first weird science invention with military applications — a warplane.

Now, although standard planes were already in use in the war, they were problematic. They were extremely useful in reconnaissance and aerial attacks, but they still required the training of pilots and were vulnerable to return attacks. This meant that they were expensive to maintain in time, lives and money. GAWSI, however, developed a reasonable compromise. In 1916, during a border skirmish at Laredo, GAWSI unveiled its prize creation, a remote-control drone aircraft. In addition to its long-range capabilities, it was able to generate a limited defense shield to protect itself from gunfire. A cavalry regiment along with five support drones were able to cause a rout among Huerto's forces. This didn't immediately end the war between the United States and Mexico, but it did prove to GAWSI that it could develop effective weaponry.

The Great War Finale

As the war continued in Mexico, it also became more apparent that the United States would not be able to remain neutral in the European war. Public opinion began to sway against Ger-

many because American passengers travelling abroad were becoming casualties in Germany's U-boat war. And just like on Core Earth, people began to call out to President Wilson for intervention. Wilson, however, continued to adhere to his policy of total neutrality and that cost him the election in '16, despite recent US victories in Mexico. People wanted to go to war.

His successor was Alexander Givens, a former soldier-turned-senator from Texas. Givens was elected because he very clearly stated his surprising intentions for US involvement in the European war. He energetically called the public to arms:

"When, not if, America enters this terrible war, we must enter on our own terms and unaligned. We must break free of our ties to our ill-mannered relatives and develop our own self-identity. We cannot continue to rely upon our past if we are to have a future. Therefore, when we enter, it will be to protect American lives and American interests. Our men will not die for foreign gains."

He campaigned hard on his declaration that there could be no choosing sides. He reminded the voters that there were too many conflicts of interest in choosing a single side. During his election speeches, large numbers of immigrant voters became convinced that a French-allied America or a German-allied America would cause more internal, domestic strife than American-allied America. He capitalized on the visions of the American Dream that brought so many of the immigrants to the United States in the first place. Voters agreed and Wilson was ousted.

The President's Directives

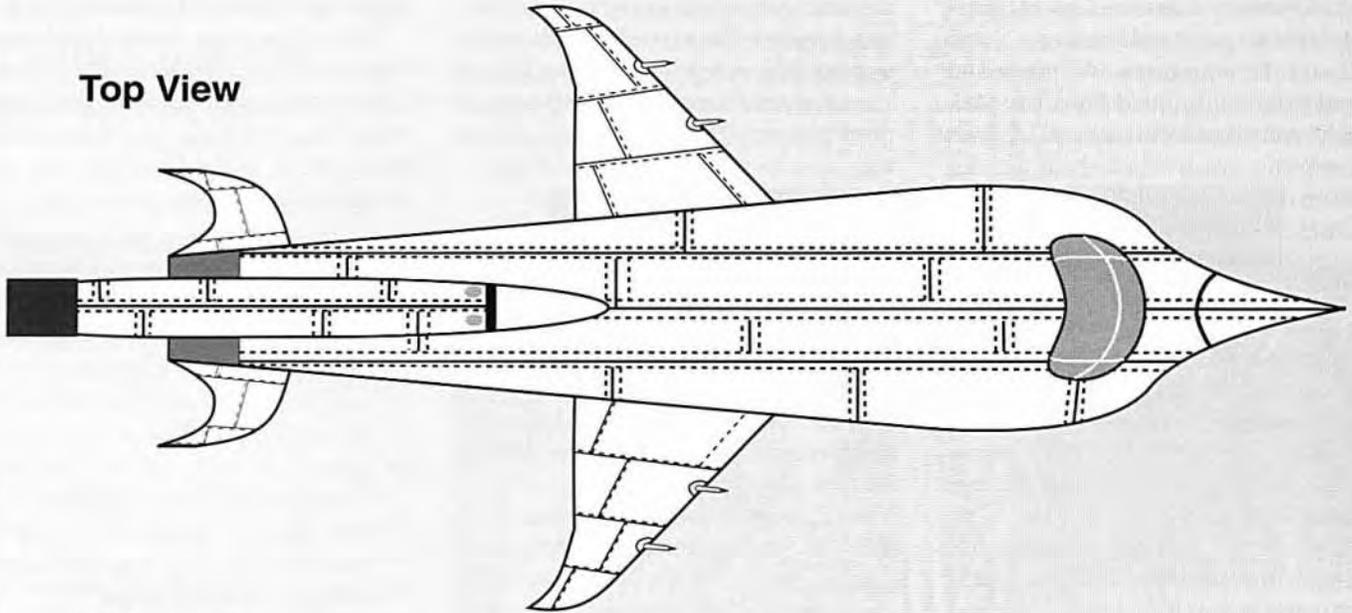
Givens moved immediately to fulfill his promise. Unknown to the general public, Givens was also the current director of GAWSI. Upon his inauguration, he ordered the creation of several hundred more aerodrones and then held a military conference with



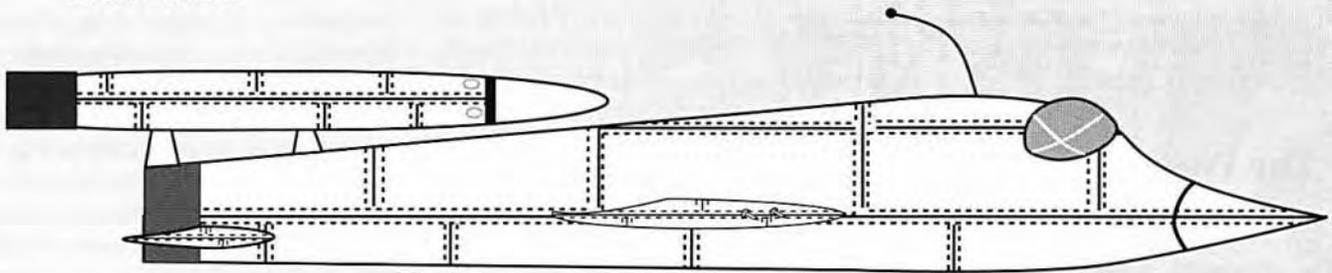


Terra: Diagram 2
The Aerodrone

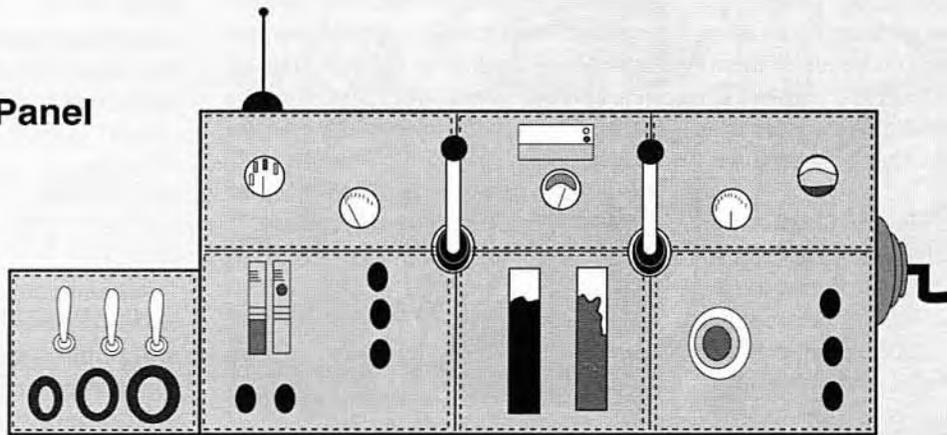
Top View



Side View



Control Panel



W Weird Science Mass Production

One thing Americans learned during the harsh winter was an equally harsh fact: most of the Rocket Ranger battlesuits, and other "weird science" gadgets, seemed to resist any sort of standardization and mass production. It seemed that the more used a single blueprint was, the less reliable the end product would become. It soon became apparent that "weird science," while an important key to American superiority, was not going to be as easily deployed as once thought.

Great Britain, France and Germany. Givens warned the warring European powers that further loss of American lives in the war would not be tolerated:

"Every commercial passenger ship that carries American civilians will be accompanied by a squadron of remote drones, regardless of the nationality of the vessel or its destination. Any attempts at the destruction or capture of such protected ships will be met with firm retaliation. Furthermore, if the European powers cannot reach a committed 'peace without victory' — the only true peace with honor — by year's end, the United States will be forced to enter the European conflict on the behalf of your own war-weary subjects."

The reaction from abroad was as Givens expected. The French premier Clemenceau attempted to get the US to enter on his side. But, instead of diplomatically requesting the aid, he demanded that the US help France and her allies. He informed Givens that even a "fledgling" nation such as the United States should be able to see that the Germans were the instigators and aggressors of this war and, fur-

thermore, that if the US was not an ally of France, then it was an enemy of France.

The Germans, on the other hand, made no such gestures to "woo" the United States. Instead, they ridiculed the newly-elected Givens who had been injured early on in the war with Mexico. Wilhelm made fun of the fact that "ignorant" Americans had elected a leader that could not even beat a simple-minded Mexican cur. He ignored Givens' threats, stating that there was no possible way that US troops could beat seasoned German soldiers and that the American aerodrones were no threat to his underwater submarines.

Great Britain, already involved in a cool distrust of its former colony, simply ignored its President's warnings.

Instigation of War

On March 2, a French cruise ship fired on a neutral commercial vessel. All hands aboard the *Alexander* were lost and nearly eight hundred people died including more than one hundred' and fifty American civilians. When Givens demanded a public apology and restitution, Clemenceau ignored him, claiming that the vessel had been a secret military transport carrying German sympathizers and weapons. Three days later, a second passenger ship carrying Americans was lost in a similar attack by the Germans. Like Clemenceau, Wilhelm gave no apologies for the "acceptable" loss of American lives.

On March 7, 1917, Givens went to Congress. Although Congress was

ork Sentinel

December 26, 1917

NOT EVEN COAL

Christmas was bleak for our boys in green. Their holiday was ruined by yet another unexplainable disappearance. Like so many before it, another US supply ship, this time the present-bearing *Mistletoe*, has vanished. In an interview held with Port Authority officials, one representative stated: "Radio contact was lost about 24 hours after *Mistletoe's* departure from Boston Harbor.

Rocket Rangers performed sweepsurveillance in a 90-mile circle around the ship's sailing plan, but turned up no sign of the *Mistletoe*. No other vessel, European or American, was reported in the vicinity either. This is the ninth such vessel to disappear, thesecond this week alone. At this time, we have no leads as to the vessels' whereabouts.



unable to agree on the decision to declare war against either France or Germany, they did agree that it was time to give definitive support to the claims Givens had made in the January conference. Givens was allowed to deploy his aerodrones and the planes' remote operators were given standing orders to attack *any* aggressive European forces. In addition, all military units not involved in the conflict with Mexico were shifted to active status in the event of retaliation for aerodrone attacks.

The aerodrones proved very effective against both enemy ships and *Untersee* boats. Each one was a deadly, guided missile, and each loss was only a gain for the United States—more money and materials were shifted into aerodrone production, and it looked like America had her protective squadrons.

Arms Escalation

An aggressive stalemate lasted for five months. None of the European nations were willing to commit to a war with the US lest they leave themselves vulnerable to a attack by their real enemies. At the same time, however, they had to continue to pursue what they believed to be enemy supply ships. Unable to individually solve their collective problem, the leaders of Great Britain, France and Germany decided to gather for a rare, peaceful conference. At this conference, British prime minister Lloyd George suggested that a more intense war with Mexico might force the US to withdraw from Europe. Wilhelm agreed and Clemenceau grudgingly went along with the plan. The next week, each of their respective foreign ministers would approach president Huerto and offer any aid that he requested in his war with the United States.

Givens was able to prevent this from happening. Expecting some sort of eventual alliance against him, Givens used the original invisibility belt taken from Dr. Mobius to get a spy into the meeting. As soon as he was informed of the conspiracy, Givens returned

again to Congress. After a two-day meeting, it was finally decided that the European war was to be given priority.

Givens first sent a private message to each of the conspirators and then ordered a first strike on Mexico. GAWSI supplied a unit of just 75 troops with a prototype rocket armor suit. These first "Rocket Rangers" were then directed to push back Mexican forces, all the way to the capital if possible.

They weren't quite that successful, but their attacks did generate some pleasing results. The first was that the in-the-field flight tests enabled GAWSI to pinpoint and correct the final few errors in the rocket suits. The second result was that the attack was a very effective demonstration to Europe that the US was not joking around anymore. After hearing how quickly seventy-five Rocket Rangers defeated 425 Mexican bandits — without sustaining a single casualty to enemy fire — France backed out its agreement with Mexico.

The next two attacks were against British bases in southern England followed closely by several attacks against German-occupied positions in Belgium. By mid-November, the number of European soldier surrenders was at 2,677 with only 800 of these being wounded and with only 68 casualties. Against these numbers were the Rocket Ranger's 230 wounded and 34 deaths. And, of those wounded or killed, roughly one-third were due to rocket malfunctions and not direct combat.

A Long Winter

A harsh winter caused the Americans to lose some ground at the year's end. The rocket suits became extremely unreliable in the cold of England and Northern Europe, and especially at sea. For the first time since conflict had begun in October, Givens had to use conventional troops to continue his struggle. Morale also became a problem as soldiers, spending their first

Christmas in Europe, saw supply ship after supply ship mysteriously hijacked (see "Not Even Coal" article).

German and English forces capitalized on the winter. Having already fought during three winters, they managed to make the American casualties finally mount. By the end of March, when the weather finally began to become warm enough for the Rocket Rangers to return, nearly 30,000 Americans had been killed or captured. France was also aided by the weakened American position as supply lines between Great Britain and France began to flow again. Troops stuck in the trenches were able to receive oil and coal for fires and much needed medical supplies were distributed throughout the war zone.

The Mexican War Ends

While winter raged in Europe, the Rocket Rangers were moved back to Mexico. They began by patrolling the gulfs surrounding Mexico and then began invading inland. By March of 1918, Mexico's forces were in full retreat. Huerto was deposed in another Mexican revolution, this time by his own general, Pancho Villa. Villa quickly met with President Givens to talk of peace and issue a plea for clemency. Villa escaped mostly unpunished after stepping down in favor of a Mexican-American businessman. Pancho Villa was then returned to his estates for a period of house arrest and Valeno Castilla became the new Mexican president.

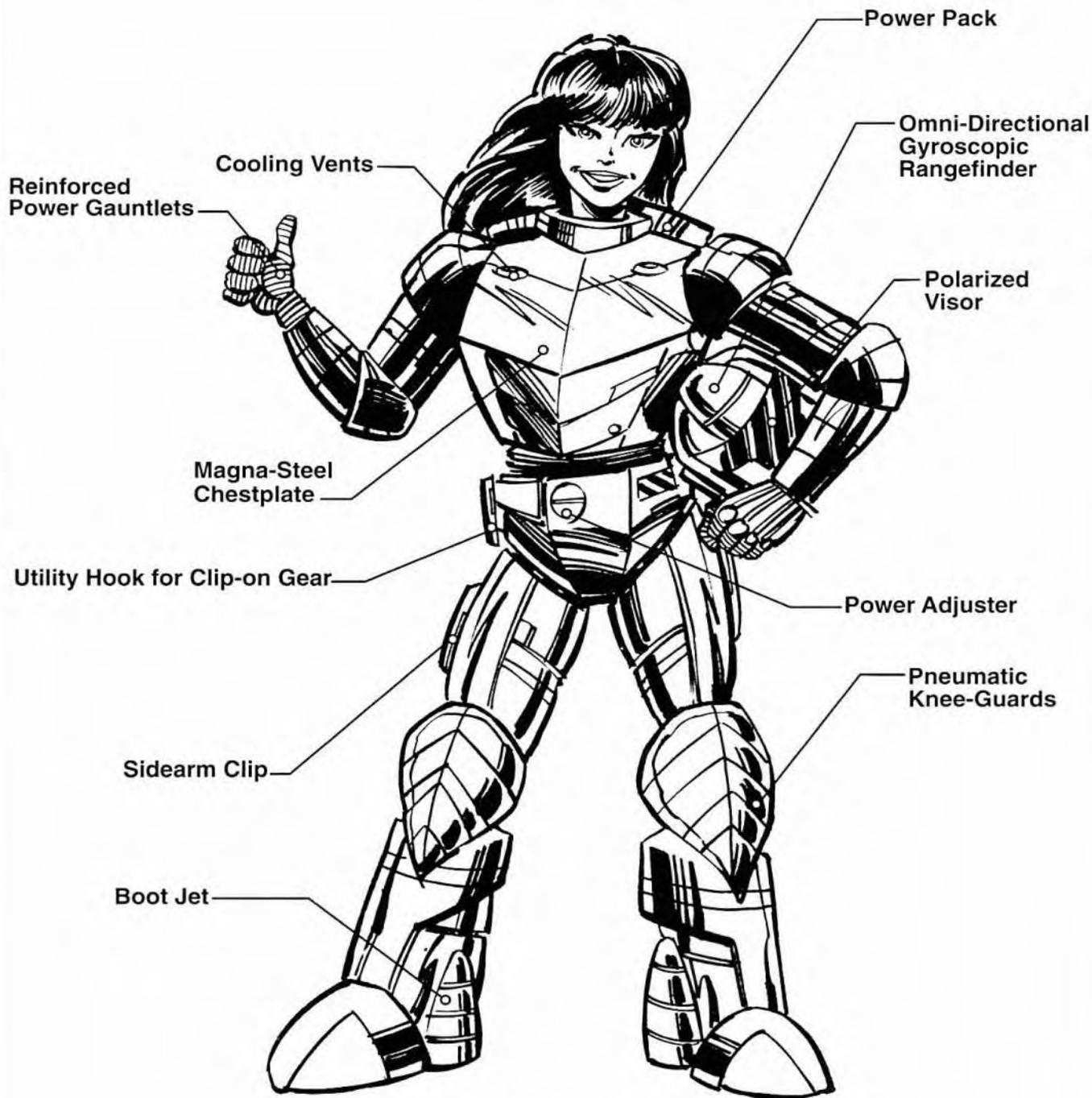
The European War Ends

Despite their manufacturing problems, the Rocket Rangers eventually proved to be the ultimate weapon in the war in Europe. Once warm weather returned, all of the Rocket Ranger units were reassigned to posts in the northern Atlantic and surrenders soon





Terra: Diagram 3
Rocket Ranger Suit



started mounting again. During the spring of 1918, they proved to be virtually unbeatable in infantry situations and their maneuverability and speed made certain that they could avoid the larger, deadlier foes such as tanks and planes. In mid-April, after several one-sided victories, the United States opened peace negotiations with France. By early June, Great Britain was at the tables. Fearful that it might get allied against, Germany joined two weeks later. Givens declared the war officially over on July 4th, 1918, the United State's Independence Day.

The Five-Point Plan

Givens' demands were simply stated in his "Five-Point World Peace Plan."

[1] England, France and Germany are mandated to withdraw entirely from one another's countries back to those borders officially recognized in 1914.

[2] Belgium is to be given its full independence. In addition to independence, Great Britain, France and Germany are further mandated to give just compensatory war reparations. The Serbian states, as well, are to be given their independence. They may, at their desire and for their protection, form into a single nation or, if they choose, remain separate. Once the nation's status has been settled, Austria, Russia, Italy and Turkey shall all give reparations to the Serbian state(s) for their roles in the harmful invasion of said state(s).

[3] The United States will receive similar recompense for the lives lost in ending the war. As a neutral nation, it should be rewarded for its clarity of thought and its definitive ability to end a such a senseless conflict.

[4] Reparations on the part of England, France and Germany with one another are not a consideration of this article. All three of these nations shall be held accountable only to themselves for their involvement in the war. Furthermore, in this time of global expansion, world nations such as these should be more concerned with improving the global environment than increasing their personal wealth. In order to mandate this, the three countries will pay sufficient funds to begin the formation of a united League of

How'd They Do It?

Why was the United States the only one to develop weird science based weapons? Surely, upon seeing the capabilities of the Rocket Rangers, the other nation's would have raced to build their own devices?

Well, they did try; they just weren't very successful. During the first few months of "weird science expansion," European troops tried in vain to retrieve Rocket Ranger suits, but heavy victories on the part of the United States thwarted every attempt. And, even later, as the number of Rocket Rangers increased and suits were finally captured, European scientists were still baffled because they couldn't figure out how they worked — they didn't make sense scientifically. After that, Europe tried to send wave after wave of spies to ferret out supposed Rocket Ranger centers from which to steal the information, but this too failed. Through-

out the war, GAWSI's existence remained the most closely-guarded secret of Americans. On top of that, only a single, heavily patrolled, impenetrable production facility was ever used to make the Rocket Ranger suits. President Givens took no chances that might cause his country to lose sole possession of the know-how on creating weird science devices.

What's the Secret?

The secret that eluded European scientists was the knowledge of what powered the suits. All their research could only determine that it was an element completely unknown to them. In the early days of his resurrection, Mobius' religious background had allowed him to discover the traces of possibility energy that existed in certain personal possessions that were left over from his first reign. Fur-

ther experimentation led him to the first synthesis of *eternium* and, consequently, the discovery of weird science. It was by using minute amounts of the eternium as a power source that Mobius was soon able to create his first gadget.

[Game Mechanics Note: This minute trace of eternium is what powers possibility capacitors, the building block of all weird science gadgets. It is the rarest of elements, and its existence is a closely-guarded secret.]

Later, after Dr. Frest defeated Mobius, the United States came into possession of this knowledge and this material. In a raid of the criminal San Francisco apartment, Dr. Frest secured many of Mobius' early notes and this is what led to the formation of GAWSI. Keeping this knowledge secret is what put the United States on top of the war scene.



Free Nations. Its base membership shall include: the United States (as its chairman), Great Britain, France, Germany, Austria, Russia, Italy and Turkey. A two-year advisement position shall be granted to Belgium, Mexico, China, Spain, and Japan, after which time these nations may apply for full membership. The League of Free Nations shall be responsible for those items of global interest including, but not limited to, the settlement of border disputes, the guardianship of foreign-

owned colonies and newly formed nations, the validation of declarations of independence, and the overseeing of military weapons production. Each member nation, excluding those in advisement positions, shall also provide a number of common troops as determined by the whole League. These non-aligned forces shall be activated to deter hostile forces in any warring nation where civilian lives are considered to be in jeopardy.

[5] Votes which involve League

members directly (upon evidence of such) shall require a two-thirds majority vote. Votes involving non-aligned territories or other minor matters shall be passed by a simple majority. Other nations may join the League only upon receiving the sponsorship of a current League member. If their nomination passes a simple majority vote, they will be placed on a two-year probation. After the probation, a two-thirds vote is required to become a full League member.





Chapter Three

HISTORY 301: After the War



And a great blackness fell over the crowd. Their screams of terror silenced as they stared, wide-eyed and open-mouthed, at the imposing form of the Shroud. And yet, despite their fear, none of them would run. They had all heard the tales, all read the articles and all saw the photos, photos of victims who had fled. Instead, they stood there and let the Shroud do as he was wont to do. If they didn't resist, perhaps he would let them live.

— A reporter describing an attack by the Shroud in Toronto's theater district.

Image is everything. It doesn't matter what you can do, it only matters what they think you can do. And will do.

— The Shroud

So what happened after the war? On Core Earth, the 1920s were marked by extreme wealth and excess, ending in severe recessions and depressions as European nations struggled to pick up the pieces of World War I. Even the United States succumbed to domestic economic troubles. This led to the downfall of at least two major governments, revolutions in other countries and a second, even bloodier World War.

But this is not what happened on Terra. Here's a glimpse of how things worked out for us:

The First Age of Heroism

Immediately after the war, even as the League of Free Nations was forming, Dr. Mobius returned. This time he

wasn't quiet about his actions. Using new devices of his and Dr. Frest's designs, Mobius began a new worldwide crime spree. The first was which stopped by the mysterious Guardian in 1920. After a long chase through the streets of New York City, Mobius finally gave up running when he reached the Brooklyn Bridge. Mobius ambushed the Guardian and held the hero back for nearly thirty minutes, but eventually the Guardian managed to overcome Mobius' devices and capture him for a third time.

This was not the end of the crime waves, however. All throughout his crime spree, Mobius' exploits were highly-publicized. There was something in his high-profile adventures that sold newspapers. Perhaps after nearly a decade of conflicts, people needed the little fantastic retreats that his daily exploits touted. And, as a direct result, several other less than good-willed personalities began to show up as well. Seeming to leap right out of the dime novels, the first wave of "pulp" villains looked to Mobius as their role model and began similar careers of crime.

Pulp Villains

Jonathan Blackman, aka the Silk Panther, victimized New York first in 1918. A cat burglar of uncanny ability, the Silk Panther is believed to have stolen in excess of three million dollars in jewels, precious gems and artwork over the course of his two-year career (he was shot and killed in 1920 by a rookie police officer).



took the law into their own hands to mete out justice. While spectacular, the Lightning Raider's crime career was short-lived once he ran into the Protector. The Protector, a former electrician, developed an insulation suit against the Lightning Raider's electro-gun and managed to stop him in the midst of another bank robbery. The Crimson Shroud's heroic counterpart arrived in 1920 as Toronto's first pulp vigilante: the Blackguard with his weird science autogiro patrolled the theater district. The Flower of Florence met his match when Alexandria LaGrieve, a self-styled water daredevil and fascinating heroine pursued him across the high seas and beat him at his own game.

Villains of Terra

The Silk Panther, aka Jonathan Blackman

DEXTERITY 14

Acrobatics 17 (19), dodge 16, fire combat 15, lock picking 16, long jumping 17, melee weapons 16, maneuver 16, stealth 19, unarmed combat 16

STRENGTH 9

Climbing 15

TOUGHNESS 10 (13)

PERCEPTION 9

Evidence analysis 10, find 11, tracking 12, trick 13

MIND 8

Survival (urban) 13, test 10, will-power 11

CHARISMA 11

Charm 13, persuasion 12, taunt 14

SPIRIT 8

Reality 9

Possibilities: 8

Inclination: Good

Pulp Powers: *super skill (acrobatics)*

Equipment: Panther costume (armor value TOU+3/18); panther claws (+2 to climbing totals, STR+4/17 damage value); grappling hook; panther bag (black bag for loot); \$500 in booty

Description: The Silk Panther became a pulp figure early on in the "pulp revolution" but, unlike other



Malcolm Fice

In 1919, Philadelphia was besieged by the Lightning Raider who used a gun-style version of the Guardian's electro-cane to rob banks and armored cars. The Crimson Shroud (also known as just "the Shroud") flitted about Toronto's nightlife, attacking late-night theater attendees for their jewels and furs. And overseas, the Flower of Florence, a high-stakes, high-living criminal, raided the Mediterranean and Atlantic coastal estates of the

wealthy with a finesse and style that captured the attention of newspaper readers and radio announcers across the globe.

The Heroes

But always, coming to oppose this new breed of criminals were the pulp heroes. Using the Guardian as their inspiration, several private citizens



characters of the time, he avoided being typecast as a hero or a villain. In a world of black and white, he was perhaps the only grey.

Jonathan Blackman was a public defender with an uninspired career. He was an idealist who sought to protect the “little guy’s” rights, but he constantly met with frustration. Refusing to defend criminals whose trials he knew were bought, Blackman instead pursued those cases that were hopeless — the ones bought the other way.

His last case as a public defender came when a young man was charged with the murder of a known racketeer and legbreaker named Jonny “Fishbait” Fishburn. According to eye witnesses (who refused to testify, but would talk to Blackman personally), Fishburn and some of his “boys” were putting the “arm” on a small-time shopkeeper who refused to run numbers for them out of his back room. Fishburn got a little enthusiastic, and the shopkeeper got dead. It was all hushed up by the police, and evidence disappeared right and left, so nothing ever went to trial — Fishbait had the right attorneys.

But the goon couldn’t lay off. The shopkeeper had a son — an ex-soldier with an impressive record (rumor has it he was even with the Rocket Rangers for a time, though the government never confirmed this) named Paulo Escaré. Paulo reopened his father’s shop after the funeral, and Fishbait paid him a visit the next day.

Sometime during the visit, there was a shoving match, and it drew quite a crowd. Fishbait and three of his goons decided to teach Paulo a lesson, so they took him outside and tried to work him over with axe handles.

Apparently, they’d never heard the phrase “Special Forces Training,” or seen a man out-numbered four-to-one attack.

When the smoke cleared, three men went to the hospital, one went to the morgue. Paulo went to the police station to report the assault, and he was promptly locked up. It seems one of

Fishbait’s men was a local crime boss’s son, and he wanted Paulo made an example of — in court.

Blackman took the case, knowing it was a set-up. And he made such a stink in the national press about “War Hero Charged With Murdering Gangster,” that the local judge had to let Paulo go.

Paulo Escaré was murdered the same day he was let out of lock-up. No charges were ever filed.

At this point, Blackman snapped. He became the Silk Panther almost overnight. But, instead of becoming a hardened vigilante, the Silk Panther hit the crimelords where it hurt — he stole their money and spread it around. He “visited” the homes of those on the take and relieved them of their dirty profits. It got to the point that judges and police were refusing bribes because they knew the Silk Panther would just come along and take the money away.

It is ironic that, when Jonathan Blackman was killed, he *was* killed by a young, idealistic officer who, if he’d known the man’s true story, probably never would have shot him. But Blackman was portrayed, at best, as a “misguided Robin Hood” and a criminal.

May he rest in peace.

Dr. Alexis Frest(updated stats)

DEXTERITY 6

Beast riding 8, dodge 9, fire combat 12, lock picking 10, maneuver 8, unarmed combat 11

STRENGTH 8

TOUGHNESS 8

PERCEPTION 14 (13)

Evidence analysis 16, find 16, first aid 17, land vehicles 15, language 19, scholar (cosm theory) 22, scholar (engineering) 20, trick 17

MIND 13 (15)

Medicine 18, science (various) 23, survival 19, test 20, weird science 27, willpower 16

CHARISMA 10

Charm 11, persuasion 16, taunt 11

SPIRIT 9

Reality 19

Possibilities: 30

Inclination: Good

Pulp Powers: *Super attribute* on his *Perception* and *Mind* attributes (but Dr. Frest has “worked off” his flaws by spending possibilities); various one-shot gizmos that he constructs, including a *fog screen* chemical with a value of 12; various gadgets including hyperlenses (*x-ray eyes* value of 16, *mega-sight* value 16, *ultra-sight* value 13), boom belt (*teleportation* value of 11), stun gun (*electro-ray*, value of 15, but each wound counts as three shock instead).

Equipment: Miscellaneous lab supplies, gizmo parts, real and synthesized eternium

Description: At the beginning of the Possibility Wars, Dr. Frest sent the Mystery Men (who were willing) to Core Earth to fight Dr. Mobius, and then he went to work on his Mountain Fortress.

But the Fortress, located in the Rocky Mountains, was never completed. Dr. Frest grew disturbed at GAWSI’s and the United States government’s attitude regarding pulp powered people, and he thought it best to disappear. When the villains of Terra united and killed off many of the Mystery Men’s sidekicks, and pulp heroes became almost extinct, Frest decided he had to do something.

Currently, Dr. Frest has taken a more active role in Terra’s pulp hero activities. He has been avoiding the authorities and contacting pulp heroes and adventurers across the cosm — occasionally helping them out with information, gizmos, or whatever else they need. He himself avoids conflicts with pulp villains — this attracts too much attention — but he is definitely a hero in his own right.

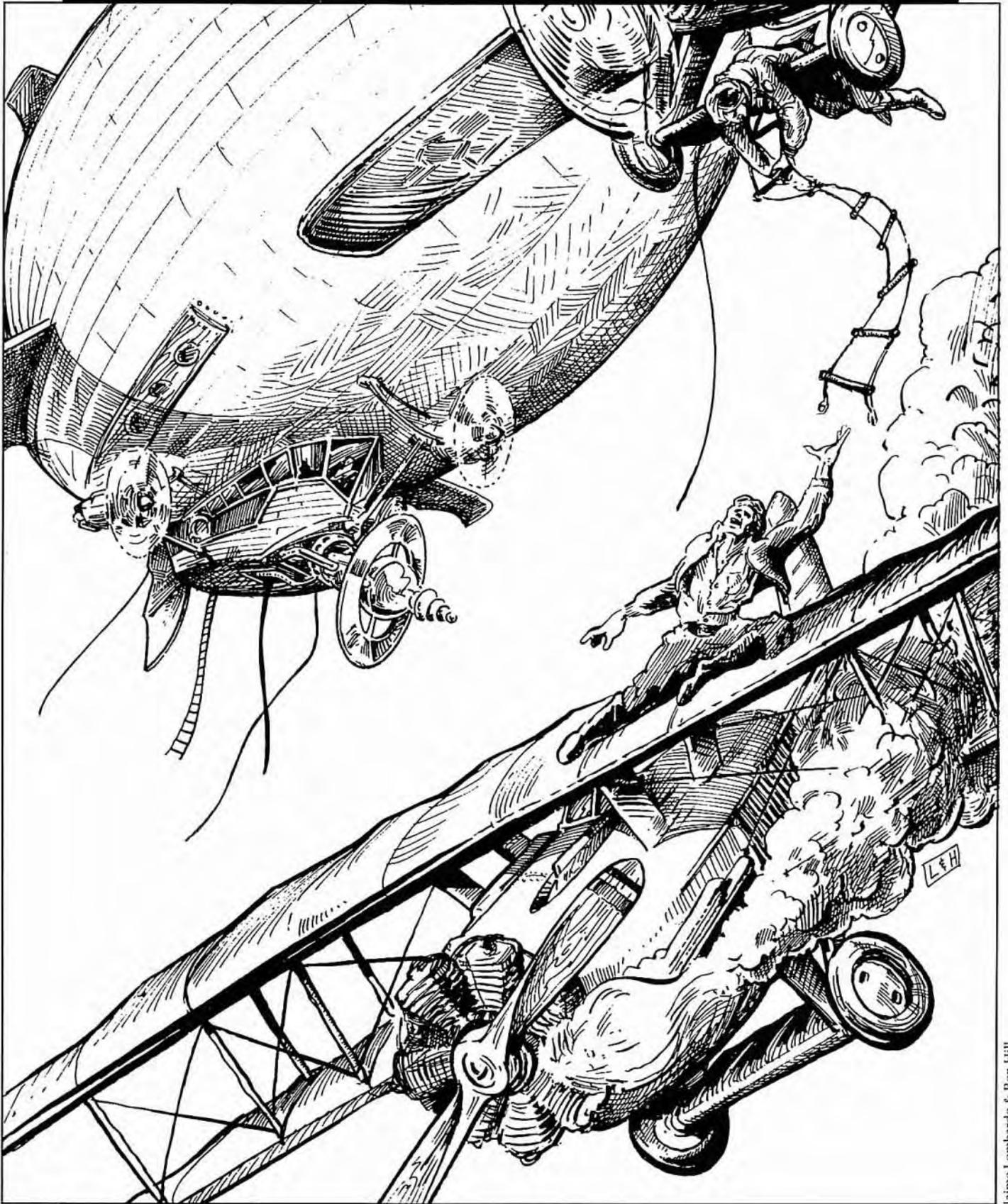
The Guardian (updated stats, real name unknown)

DEXTERITY 13 (16)

Acrobatics 19, dodge 19, fire combat 17, maneuver 23, melee weapons 20, running 18, stealth 17, swimming 17, unarmed combat 27

STRENGTH 14 (15)





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Climbing 18, lifting 17

TOUGHNESS 11 (13)

PERCEPTION 12

Disguise 15, find 14, first aid 13, land vehicles 15, language 14, tracking 13, trick 13

MIND 9

Test 13, willpower 12

CHARISMA 9

Charm 12, persuasion 13, taunt 11

SPIRIT 10

Intimidation 12, reality 16

Possibilities: 40

Inclination: Good

Pulp Powers: The Guardian has two *super attributes* spread out among his *Dexterity*, *Strength*, and *Toughness* stats, but he is also under a curse inflicted by a High Priest of Anubis. Whenever a character with *faith* in the Egyptian religion generates a *focus* total equal or greater than his *Spirit*, the Guardian loses his *super attributes* for the rest of the scene (this is worth 12 possibilities). He also has an *electro-shock* cane with a damage value of STR+5/22 (the cane has the *power limitation* flaw — it must be used as a melee weapon — and the *charges* flaw — only five charges). The cane also delivers an electric shock when it hits at a damage value of 18 (do not add a bonus number). Finally, the Guardian usually wears a fabri-steel coat that adds +6/19 to his *Toughness* and an *ultra-sight* mask (action value 14).

Equipment: Varies — most often, the Guardian only uses his costume, his rep, and his cane to fight evildoers. but, of late, he has tried out different types of armor and even conventional weapons against particularly powerful foes. He has terrific resources — at least \$10,000 at his disposal at any time.

Description: The Guardian normally wears a long, dark blue coat and a dark blue mask with a gold letter “G” embroidered on it. He carries a long black cane with a diamond tip.

His costume is currently under revision — due to the more grim nature of Terra these days, the Guardian has experimented with different types of armor, and even a few unusual weapons (gamemaster’s option as to what).

The Guardian knows of other cosms

and of the Possibility Wars. It is rumored that he did travel to the Nile Empire at least once (with the help of Dr. Frest), spent over a year there, and returned (taking almost no time in Terra). The Guardian has a special hatred for Dr. Mobius, so it is quite possible this happened.

Right now, the Guardian knows he could be closing in on the latter end of his career (especially if he aged in the Nile Empire), so he has decided to see what he could do about saving his world. He is currently engaged in discovering more about the Martians, and he has worked undercover in Europe and Asia, and in trying to win the public back over to the side of pulp heroism — despite government opposition.

It is not uncommon to encounter the Guardian in the company of Dr. Frest. Alone among the remaining (or “new”) Mystery Men, the Guardian seems to be able to contact the good doctor at will.

The Lightning Raider
(**True Identity Unknown**)

DEXTERITY 10

Dodge 12, energy weapons 16, fire combat 12, maneuver 13, melee weapons 14, unarmed combat 11

STRENGTH 8

TOUGHNESS 8

PERCEPTION 10

Find 13, land vehicles 14, scholar: electricity 14, trick 11

MIND 12

Weird science 17

CHARISMA 7

New York Se

July 31, 1919

MOBIUS ASSAULTS MUSEUM

Once again, one of our fair country’s museums has been robbed. And again, the crime was perpetrated by the distressingly familiar Dr. Mobius. The self-proclaimed master of crime broke into the museum sometime late last night around 11:30 PM. Museum curators have informed the police and the *Sentinel* that Mobius managed to find a way into their private preparation rooms and stole several key pieces from a new “Wonders of Europe” display.

The exhibit, due to open next Monday, was to feature artifacts pertaining to early European ethnic and religious history. The artifacts, which were recovered last month from a devastated museum in Germany, are valued at close to \$400,000. Museum curators reluctantly declined to say when the exhibit would be ready, but they are soliciting anyone with information that would lead to the recovery of the artifacts.



New York Sentinel

September 12, 1918

SILK PANTHER SLAIN !

A legend passed away last night. Jonathan Blackman died at approximately 10:32 p.m. while under protected care at St. Mercy hospital where he was attempting to recover from a gunshot wound to the chest. Faithful readers of the *Sentinel* knew Mr. Blackman as the much-idealized cat burglar, the Silk Panther. Notorious for his almost Robin Hood-like escapades, the Silk Panther was caught in the midst of yet another daring robbery. He was shot while trying to flee the scene of his latest, and last, crime by New York Police Department officer Edward Warren. The rookie officer, who was devastated by the news of Blackman's death, stated that he was merely performing his duty.

When questioned, Warren had this to say, "I warned him several times. I didn't want to do it [shoot at Blackman], but I had to. Although I thought the Panther wasn't a bad guy, the academy taught us that the law is the law — and he was breaking it. I just wanted to stop him, but he was moving too fast. That's why I got him in the chest. It was an accident."

The Silk Panther was best known for his strange ethics. The Silk Panther only targeted the extraordinarily wealthy and, although he kept most of the loot himself, the Panther often left secret packages of money at church shelters and orphanages — along with his familiar calling card: a stray kitten in a pet box. It is believed that almost \$350,000 of

his three million dollar career haul was given to various charitable groups, none of which ever came forward to return the "donations." Perhaps this was his way of repaying the system which brought him up.

Blackman, who was 34 when he died, was believed to have been guided through his formative years by the ladies at the Sisters of Tolerance orphanage on 122nd street.

Although he was a criminal, he will be missed. His memory should not live alongside the true villains of this age, men and women like Dr. Mobius, the Scarlet Mayhem, and Lady Morte; the Silk Panther was in a class by himself.

Persuasion 8, taunt 12

SPIRIT 9

Reality 10

Possibilities: 12

Inclination: Evil

Pulp Powers: Lightning Gun (*electro-ray* in a gadget, damage value 17; *stymie* flaw if the *electro-ray* hits and does not cause any damage — and the target did not spend possibilities to cancel damage)

Equipment: Bullet Proof Costume (armor value TOU+5/20) with lightning bolt insignia and mask; electric-proof bag for loot; at least \$10,000

in cached booty

Description: The Lightning Raider's origin is currently unknown. When he was captured, he refused to give his name, place of birth, or any other facts about his history. This won him a contempt of court charge, but he just shrugged and went off to prison. It is likely he has an escape plan.

Some facts about the Lightning Raider were gleaned from inadvertent admissions and hypotheses by the Guardian:

- The Lightning Raider is obviously an accomplished weird scientist, and

he learned his trade from someone other than GAWSI. He has referred to a "teacher" occasionally, but no identity has been established.

- His accent suggests that he comes from the American southwest or, perhaps, Mexico. He is an Anglo, but he has very dark features. He does know some Spanish, though he refuses to tell how much. He has been caught trying to trick the authorities into thinking he does not know the Spanish language.

- He once had a well-paying job, and



The United States: The Gangster Era Begins

While not exactly pulp villain material, the late teens of this century also saw the founding of one of the first professional crime syndicates. Wally Shoreman, aka the Diamond King of Crime, was a former ballplayer who turned mob boss in 1919. After returning from action overseas, Shoreman found that his talents were no longer needed by baseball. To exact his revenge, Shoreman used his sizeable pre-war earnings to finance the building of a gang of gunmen, confidence artists, and racketeers. Later that same year, he used his new contacts to bring shame to the World Series in one of the most famous betting scandals ever.

But his career in crime wasn't a successful one after that "bright" inception. After a series of loan-sharkings and protection rackets, Shoreman spent the next several years dodging the Feds. He was eventually arrested in 1927 and charged with nine counts of tax evasion, thirty-two counts of racketeering, nine counts of illegal alcohol sales and one count of murder for the drive-by shooting of a federal investigator. The first true "gangster" still resides quietly in a maximum security federal penitentiary in upstate New York.

it is likely he became the Lightning Raider after being frustrated in his career. As a result, he may have some skills not listed above, but he has refused to acknowledge what they might be.

- When the Guardian knocked him unconscious, he muttered something about a woman named "Maria" leaving him, but he has since gotten another prisoner to perform deep hypnosis on him — he no longer talks in

his sleep at all.

- He has suggested that the booty from his crimes is stored in a secret hideout. Whether this is true or not, much of his loot remains unaccounted for.

- It is almost certain that he once belonged to some military organization or other. There are no records of him in the American military (though it is possible), and the Mexican government is so messed up that it may never be known if he was a member of one of their armies. He could have fought in the Cuban-American War, but only if he is much older than he looks (he looks about forty).

The Crimson Shroud (True Identity Unknown)

DEXTERITY 11

Dodge 16, fire combat 15, flight 14, maneuver 15, stealth 16, unarmed combat 15

STRENGTH 13

Climbing 14

TOUGHNESS 12

PERCEPTION 12

Evidence analysis 16, find 14, trick 16

MIND 11

Test 16 (19), willpower 15

CHARISMA 9

Taunt 17

SPIRIT 8

Intimidation 17 (20), reality 11

Possibilities: 30

Inclination: Evil

Pulp Powers: Deep-red cloak (gadget with *flight* powers — with the *power limitation* flaw; the Shroud can only glide on the winds); *darkness* power, action value 18 (the darkness actually has a burgundy hue); Crimson Gun (actually a weird science-boostered gun that does really nasty damage — damage value 20)

Equipment: Reddish-black costume, mask, getaway car (of unknown type), unknown amount of loot (in excess of \$15,000 dollars).

Description: While the Crimson Shroud's true identity has yet to be established, there is much about his

background that is known. The Shroud is a black man of impressive bearing and build (about six foot five, two hundred and thirty pounds), though his color is not apparent when he is wearing his full-body costume.

He is a Canadian citizen, and he speaks French fluently. He has made several references to the "secessionist" movement growing in Quebec (though it is very unpopular in Terra, since the US is such an aggressive world power), though that does not seem to be a controlling factor in his life.

His motivations appear to be greed and fear. He enjoys frightening those he preys upon, and he is known to kill those who try to flee — but he occasionally kills his targets for no apparent reason as well. "When the Shroud comes down, all men see death" is his favorite tag line.

Germany: A Period of Silence

As the saying goes, "It was quiet, too quiet." Strangely enough, after the Great War ended, Germany remained passive. Whether it was due to fear of Givens' weird science or the domination of the League, no one knows, but regardless of the reasons, the 1920s were a period of reflection for the Germans.

It was also a period of progress for Germany. The early years of the 1920s were filled with rebuilding efforts to erase the damage done during the Great War. Afterwards, the people continued to divert their attentions from war by channelling their energies into other uplifting pursuits. By the end of the 1920s, Germany's economy was the second richest in the world, second only to the United States, and it was quickly developing a scientific community that would soon match Givens' own GAWSI.



Great Britain: An Age of Depression

Of the four western powers (France, Germany and the United States being the others), Great Britain was hardest hit by the Great War peace treaty signed in Versailles. France was given some recompense for being a slightly unwilling stomping-ground for the Germans, but Great Britain's own pleas for economic support went mostly unheard. It was decided by the council at Versailles that Great Britain's decision to enter the war was uncalled for, given the fact that it was primarily a European land war. Great Britain's reaction to Germany's entrance into the naval corridors of the north were determined to have been hasty and ill-advised. Consequently, Great Britain was left on its own as far as rebuilding efforts go.

This plunged Great Britain into a major depression immediately following the war. Reconstruction of southern England took nearly ten years and, even when it was completed, labor strikes and food lines were still common. The problem was worsened still by InterNet's inability to break the pulp villain/gangster strangleholds that existed in London, Birmingham, Manchester and many other major cities. All throughout the 1920s, several great works of arts and invaluable treasures were stolen throughout Great Britain, many of which are still unrecovered.

There is a \$5000 reward for the Crimson Shroud's capture and a \$10,000 reward for his death (a thing unheard of in Canadian law, and it is being fought about in the courts right now) since he is such a ruthless killer. The reward for capture, however, will only be paid if the Crimson Shroud spends at least a night in jail — he has been

captured a few times, but he has never even made it to the nearest station house. Some say he has a store of one-shot gizmos that allow him to either *teleport* or *disperse*, others admit he is just too hard to hold.

League Crackdown

The early 1920s were much worse. As the number of pulp-style heroes and villains increased, so did public paranoia. Private citizens, particularly wealthy, connected ones, began to call out to their governments to halt the heroics, even as the poor and the dis-

possessed cheered their heroes. It seemed to the wealthy that the self-proclaimed protectors were actually causing more harm than aid. Wherever a hero showed up, there was sure to be a villain and this almost always led to money loss and property damage. United States President Givens, who was re-elected in 1920 by these wealthy citizens and their supporters, was more than happy to oblige. In fact, it had already been a concern of his considering his connections with GAWSI. He saw the independence of these heroes as a threat to his own power. Although they weren't all dependant upon weird science, these crimefighters and vigilantes severely

France: Unease

France, like Germany, was quiet for most of the 1920s. Clemenceau was definitely the most afraid of the three European leaders and he bowed graciously before Givens whenever given the opportunity. This worked in his favor as a small recompense was finally given to his country for the Great War damages. This allowed France to begin the same tedious rebuilding efforts that were occurring throughout Europe.

Economic conditions weren't fantastic but they remained stable. Only one minor repression hit France between the war and the 1930s, and that was quickly cured by a heavy emphasis on reindustrialization and an increase in American tourism. This increased France's self-dependence and even caused other nations to start coming to it for monetary loans and trade. By 1930, nearly one and a half million of France's workers were immigrants which consequently brought in more foreign travelers and gave a huge boost to the tourism industry.

One final interesting side

note about France during this time was its feeling on the increase in adventurers. As tourism increased in France, so did cultural pride, arts and entertainment. Nowhere except perhaps in the big cities of the United States were the "Roaring Twenties" so evident. Social balls, parties and get-togethers of all kinds could be found almost nightly, in any city throughout France.

The wild, hair-raising stories that came along with the pulp heroes and villains went perfectly with this rebirth. Therefore, many in France openly welcomed members of the pulp scene and often gave them preferential treatment. France became a kind of "hero/villain" resort or adventurer's Mecca. Many villains retreated to France, using the country as a hideout while foreign nations fought in vain with French bureaucrats who delayed extraditions as long as possible. Even some heroes came to France, simply in order to meet and converse with their "enemies" — though notables such as the Guardian were conspicuously absent.



downplayed the uniqueness of his Rocket Rangers and that had to be stopped.

In 1921, Givens approached the Free League of Nations with this problem. Great Britain was happy to throw in with the US this time and work toward a solution—especially considering their recent troubles with pulp villains. It was bad enough that the police had to deal with normal criminals. Crime in Great Britain following the war was at an all-time high. Labor strikes and food short-

ages led to all kinds of stealing and property destruction. It was the arrival of the pulp heroes that finally pushed the flood waters over the levee because with them came hoards of treasure-looting pulp villains. Even before Givens approached the League, Great Britain was the first to enact anti-vigilantism laws and even curfews in those cities hardest hit by crime.

In Germany and Austria, the prime ministers were outraged mostly because the heroes were seemingly more pow-

erful than themselves. Russia wasn't beleaguered by these problems, but other internal problems (see Chapter Four) prompted them to just go along with the crowd. France's reaction to this situation was the only objection, considering how large part of their economy had begun to cater to the pulp hero jet set (see the France sidebar). But France decided prudence was her best course, and she followed the United States' lead on paper.

So, despite France's quiet objections, the rest of the League determined that there was to be an international crackdown on vigilantism and pulp villainy. They all agreed to enact strict regulations concerning non-sanctioned law enforcement, and resolved that criminals deemed to be of the "pulp villain" class would be dealt with harshly. In order to enforce these edicts, the League made the first use of its private army to create *InterNet*, an international network of government agents charged with the task of tracking down and capturing the vigilantes and the criminals alike.

The League's new organization was partially successful at stemming the tide of pulp personalities. Over the course of the next few years, several pulp villains were brought to swift justice and many vigilantes all but disappeared. Those that remained were forced to move underground (or flee to France) to escape the ungrateful governments who they freely helped.

It should be noted that *InterPol* probably never would have succeeded without the cooperation of many pulp heroes and "reformed" villains who joined up and used weird science against the vigilantes and heroes. Many government-employed "pulp agents" remained in costume throughout this period.

Dr. Mobius, the Kefetiri Idol and the Mystery Men

Throughout this, Dr. Mobius was free. Back in 1921, this time after only a month behind bars, Mobius man-



Brian Schomburg





Jaime Lombardo & Ron Hill

aged to find a yet another way to beat the penal system. He briefly visited Khem to check up on his private slave, Dr. Frest, and then returned to his life of crime in the US. This is the period most people associate with Dr. Mobius.

After a series of humiliating defeats in 1922 and the new edicts of the League, Mobius decided to lay low for a little while. During this time, Mobius sought out anything that might swing the odds in his favor once again. The solution came to him in the form of an ancient legend. Great power and status were attributed to an artifact called the Kefetiri Idol. Thought to be created by Mobius' patron deity, Sebek, the idol supposedly held the power to conquer Terra. It would also allow Mobius to travel beyond his own world and into other realities. Given his already enormous knowledge of possibilities and eternium, this was a prom-

ise of power too great for Mobius to pass up, so he began his search.

In 1925, the trail of the Kefetiri Idol led to a museum in San Francisco. Intent on not leaving a stone unturned, Mobius broke into the museum late one night and this led to another fight with his nemesis, the Guardian, who had remained active despite InterNet. This was the same fight in which Mobius accidentally let slip the source of his gadgets. The Guardian pressed Mobius' ego and he buckled, revealing the kidnapping of Dr. Frest and his family.

Two weeks later, the Guardian was able to track down the location of Frest's family. After beating up hoards of Mobius' henchmen, the Guardian then made his way to the secret hideaway and freed them. He hoped that in some way this would help the still-missing Dr. Frest.

This did indeed help Dr. Frest. Dur-

ing his service to Mobius, Frest had devised several escape plans, but fear of repercussions on his family kept him from executing any of the schemes. The news of the Guardian's rescue (coming from the mouths of talkative guards) was a godsend because it meant that Dr. Frest could finally escape.

Dr. Frest quickly reunited himself with his family and met for the first time with the Guardian. Dr. Frest thanked the hero for saving his family and also revealed to him Mobius' plans to find the Kefetiri Idol and conquer Terra. In response, the Guardian called in a few favors and held a meeting with several other underground pulp heroes. This meeting led to the foundation of the Mystery Men whose primary objective became the capture of Dr. Mobius. I'm sure you are aware of the rest of the history between the Mystery Men and Mobius.



Timeline of Crime

To clarify Mobius' exploits, here's a brief timeline of his career on Terra. Again, keep in mind that time on Terra passes differently than time on Core Earth — I understand, for example, that Dr. Mobius has been conquering cosms for thirty years — well, according to Terran calenders, he left our cosm only something over a decade ago.

- circa 1144 BC: Sutenhotep is born the illegitimate son of Egyptian pharaoh Amat-Ra.
- circa 1119 BC: After the murder of his brother, Sutenhotep is exiled. Sutenhotep vows to his mentor to beat eternity.
- circa 1104 BC: Sutenhotep returns from exile and overthrows his father. Amat-Ra replaces a curse on Sutenhotep.
- circa 1103 BC: Sutenhotep is slain by a disgruntled peasant assassin.
- 1897 AD: Sutenhotep is resurrected and affected with spells keep him from aging. He spends the remainder of the 19th century catching up on the last three thousand years.
- 1900: Sutenhotep visits the United States and begins his studies at the University of California.
- 1903: Sutenhotep discovers weird science. Returns to Khem.
- 1906: Naming himself Dr. Mobius, Sutenhotep returns to the United States as a criminal. He uses his weird science devices to steal in order to finance the rebuilding of his empire. Dr. Frest arrives in June and Mobius is captured a month later. GAWSI is formed.
- 1908: After escaping, Mobius retreats to Khem for two years before coming back to the US.
- 1910: Mobius is captured again, this time at the hands of Rex McMasters.
- 1913: Mobius spends three years in jail before escaping. Upon his escape, Mobius first kidnaps Dr. Frest's family and then Dr. Frest himself. He forces Dr. Frest to begin building more gizmos to further Mobius' goal of conquering the world.
- 1918: Mobius begins a new world-wide crime spree, this time using the works of Dr. Frest's labors. Other pulp villains follow.
- 1920: The Guardian tracks down Mobius in New York and captures him during a fight at the Brooklyn Bridge.
- 1921: Mobius escapes and renews his crime sprees.
- 1922: Mobius discovers the first clue regarding the Kefetiri Idol. He learns of the cosmverse and begins making his plans to establish empires on other worlds.
- 1925: The Guardian frees Dr. Frest's family. Dr. Frest learns of this and escapes himself. Once united, Dr. Frest, the Guardian and a third pulp hero, Dr. Mystico, form the Mystery Men.
- 1926: Mobius finds the Kefetiri Idol itself. He flees Terra entirely and uses the darkness device to conquer his first empire. To avoid further problems with the Mystery Men, Mobius uses his darkness device to remove Khem from Terra. But Mobius does vow to one day return to Terra and conquer his old foes, the Mystery Men.
- 1936: As a result of a successful 30-year career (note the time discrepancy between Terra and other cosms) during which he has rebuilt his empire and conquered nine others (destroying six in the process), Mobius is approached by the Gaunt Man. Mobius is invited to join in the invasion of Core Earth. Mobius accepts and he opens up the gateway to begin his tenth invasion. Dr. Frest and the Mystery Men finally track Mobius down and follow him to Core Earth to prevent his success.
- 1938: The present.





Chapter Four

HISTORY 401: The New Age of Heroism



I see a whole new world out there, one which our country has refused to take control of. Our enemies bask in the protection of the United States and the weakness of our leader. I say now is the time to let ring the call to battle and overthrow Wilhelm. First, we will recapture our own heritage, then we will recapture our own country and then we will forge a new world.

— An anxious Adolph Hitler, days before the reconvening of the German assembly in 1935

I see a whole new world out there, one which our compatriots refuse to take control of. Our enemies are few as the Mystery Men have vanished, leaving the United States unprotected. I say now is the time to let ring the call to battle William. First we will capture the Mystery Men's sidekicks, then we will capture this country and then we will capture the world.

— the mysterious Silent Partner, days before the rampage of William the Terrible in 1936

The Inquisition of the Early 1930s

Little changed concerning the suppression of heroism in the last half of the 1920s and the beginning of the 1930s. In 1928, Givens moved to head the Free League of Nations himself. Many of the problems of the first age

of heroism still existed, so he relinquished the presidency in favor of fellow GAWSI member Thomas Cross. This brought a new spark back into the GAWSI and InterNet which led to a new campaign against the pulp vigilante problem. In the United States, this campaign held more resemblance to colonial witch hunts than anything else, and Cross and Givens committed large numbers of League agents, Rocket Rangers and finances to the capture of every known gadget hero and villain. In addition, special committees were set up and dozens of helpless innocents were mercilessly grilled over their suspected ties to blacklisted scientists and their immigrants' ties back to European countries.

In Europe, Great Britain also committed itself to the eradication of the pulp hero. Over the course of three years, some 275 citizens, all suspected of being or harboring a pulp hero or villain, were thrown in jail, many with no trial at all. In Italy, mafia dons willingly produced false evidence of pulp activities and turned over scapegoats to take the heat off of their own activities. And even in France the new premier, Anton Pinoit, reversed several vigilante-protection laws.

By 1931, almost all of the pulp heroes had vanished. The only major heroes that remained were all members of the Mystery Men. Dr. Frest had seen what Givens was up to and asked his companions to act quietly. Simi-



larly, the only villains that remained were the most high-powered ones with enough common sense to stay out of the limelight and the lucky few low-powered crooks that had thus far avoided capture. But even a casual observer would notice that the villains of Terra now outnumbered its heroes by at least four to one.

Explosion!

By the mid-1930s, things looked as if they had finally settled down. Europe was surprisingly calm, with Great Britain, France and Germany too embroiled in internal politics to concern themselves with their neighbors. Russia, China, Japan and the rest of Eastern Asia remained as silent as they had been for nearly fifteen years. Even people in the United States were beginning to calm down. The Roaring Twenties gave way to the "Prohibi-

tion Thirties" that Givens and Cross had placed upon the nation in the interests of "moral guidance." Even Dr. Frest's group of heroes had disappeared, truly becoming "mystery" men. With the help of the Rocket Rangers and GAWSI's pulp-powered agents, prohibition on Terra was much more successful than on Core Earth. It looked like things were under somebody's control.

Then things got weird.

Just as Cross, GAWSI, the League and InterNet relaxed, thinking their power absolute, everything exploded at once.

Germany, March 1935

After years of very careful research and espionage, German spies and scientists finally tracked down a crucial piece of information about weird science. Linking a series of bizarre re-

search papers written by a student at the university of San Francisco (i.e., Dr. Mobius) to an essay on the properties of the captured Rocket Ranger suits, Professor Helmut Wells discovered the process to synthesize eternium, just as Dr. Frest had in the over twenty years ago. When the scientist reported his findings to his superiors, they, in turn, informed their political supporters, a minority group known as the Nationalsozialists (Nazis) which, at that time, had just elected a new leader, Adolph Hitler.

Japan, June 1935

A second League nation began causing problems for Givens during the summer of 1935. Perhaps as a result of being in such close quarters with other expansionist nations, Japan finally tired of being a small island power. As an Asian country, the Europeans



Jaime Lombardo & Ron Hill



looked upon Japan with scorn and, as an island power, the Europeans ridiculed them. This angered Emperor Hirohito and, in retaliation, he ordered his prime minister and military leaders to begin a conquest of Eastern Asia.

In the spring, Korea was quickly annexed by Japan. The attack was made to look like a response to a Korean first strike, but it was, in fact, started by Japanese espionage agents in the Korean army. Russia surprisingly made no move to aid Korea, so the whole conflict was over within two months.

This outraged Korea's other neighbor, China, whose pleas for protection fell upon deaf ears in the first half of the year. Everyone in the League still remembered China's Boxer Rebellion over thirty years ago and the Empress Dowager's obvious opinions regarding Westerners. They were also under the opinion that the Japanese-Korea Conflict was provoked by Korea and Japan had been justified in its actions. It wasn't until June that they realized they may have made a mistake. On the 23rd of that month, Japan began its first of many attacks against China.

Pittsburgh, October 1935

Some years ago, back when Russia had experienced its mysterious explosion, several radical astronomers claimed that the Earth had been struck by a huge meteorite. This would have been acceptable had it not been for their additional claims that the meteorite was an invasion from Mars. Had they not included this opinion, more people might have taken them seriously when they started claiming that a second meteorite (again from Mars) was fast approaching the Earth.

And so, on Halloween night, October 31st, a second meteorite did indeed appear in the heavens. It fell with a tremendous explosion on the metropolis of Pittsburgh. It left a crater nearly a mile across and its impact was heard as far away as Maryland. Over

50,000 lives were lost in the first night alone as radio broadcasters kept a mid-night vigil on the events that transpired:

Reports are coming in from all over the city. Fires. Earthquakes. Mass destruction. The death toll is unguessed as yet, but must be horrendous. It is as if the wrath of God has been visited on the city of Pittsburgh.

The fires from the explosion lasted for over two weeks and the eventual death toll attributed to the Great Pittsburgh Inferno was placed at 350,000. This was an especially important disaster as GAWSI's main production facility had been in Pittsburgh. While other sites had been set up since the Great War, this was still a major setback for much of GAWSI's more experimental work.

The Broadcast

It should be noted that, at the same time the Pittsburgh disaster was occurring, one radio station was not carrying news of this horrible occurrence. A radio announcer, a Mr. Welles, continued to broadcast "The War of the Worlds," a report many later skeptics concluded was a fictional account of a Martian Invasion of New Jersey.

In later years, many people have theorized that the New Jersey invasion was the true invasion, while "The Pitt" disaster was only a terrible "distraction."

Russia, January 1936

Throughout its post-war years, Russia remained very quiet about its internal activities. Their war with Austria had been pretty much a draw since Germany had remained concentrated on France. Because of this, Russia didn't suffer many of the hardships that its Core Earth equivalent did. Tsar Nicholas II remained in power after the war and things went along steadily under his guidance — for some reason, Lenin and the communists never

became a factor in Terran Russian history. Nicholas reported to the League as requested and occasionally formed trade agreements with other countries to get the necessary goods to keep his people happy — he, apparently, was a much more enlightened Czar than Russia had ever had in the past. It appeared to the outside world that Russia had finally found peace and stability with its position as a semi-industrialized nation. It didn't appear to be making any serious attempts at breaking into the twentieth century technologically, however.

This, of course, all changed in the dead of winter of 1936. The first indications of trouble came from Nazi spies who intercepted a Russian communique concerning the possible Russian development of weird science capabilities. Unfortunately, it didn't arrive fast enough. Before anyone could react to Russia's sudden technological leap, that country led a major offensive against its long-time enemy Austria. Not caring for the League, the Treaty of Versailles or the Serbian peoples, Nicholas himself led a huge tank drive straight into Romania and then into Hungary. Within a week, Russia had captured Budapest.

In the next week there came an even greater shock. A new form of aircraft was introduced by the Russians that seemed to defy all current radar devices. They were saucer-shaped vehicles that seemed to have no means of propulsion other than a spinning centrally-located disk. From these aircraft came violent rays of death that rained all over Eastern Europe paving the way for even more Russian aggression.

Chile, February 1936

Hot on the heels of the Russian discovery of weird science came a nearly-fatal blow to GAWSI's dominance. A Mexican scientist emerged from his retreat in Chile to announce a new chemical, one which, when properly refined and combined with a sec-





Jaime Lombarido & Ren Hill



ond invention of his, could grant certain individuals their own pulp powers. Two weeks later, the scientist was found murdered in his villa and the blame was placed upon the American President Thomas Cross.

This sent GAWSI into chaos and effectively removed the United States from the first part of the Euro-Russian war. Although Cross truly had nothing to do with the assassination, conspiracy theories flew like confetti and Givens offered up Cross and his Vice-President Alfred Denton as sacrificial lambs. Cross and Denton were impeached and arrested as Givens sent GAWSI into deep seclusion.

This worst part of this whole fiasco for Givens was that the scientist's formula had been snatched by someone else who had begun distributing it at random. People with pulp powers began to re-emerge all around the globe. Previously, only scientific "accidents" or mischance had given pulp powers to people instead of gadgets — now, it appeared, the process could be synthesized.

Washington, May 1936

William Johnson, soon to be a major international figure, arrived in Washington the day before the new President's inauguration. At eight o'clock the next morning, he quietly ate his breakfast while reading the recent reports of the Russian advances in Austria. At nine o'clock, he stopped by a local barbershop for a trim and shave. At ten o'clock, he boarded a trolley that took him to the National Zoo where he spent two hours feeding various animals. At twelve o'clock he strolled along the museums of the United States Smithsonian and at two o'clock, he reached Capitol Hill.

At 2:02 p.m., William assassinated the newly-inaugurated President Martin W. Browning by shooting him in the head and quietly *flew* away.

An hour later, William was seen in Baltimore where he reportedly killed

that city's mayor. Two hours later, the mayor of Philadelphia was similarly attacked and, at 6:15, Cleveland Davidson, the mayor of New York, was assassinated. Three hours later, another unknown man made a public broadcast on several radio networks calling for the immediate surrender of the Mystery Men and their sidekicks.

At midnight, a few Mystery Men and their sidekicks complied and were coldly slain "for their idealistic heroics" at the hands of the man now known as William the Terrible. William then disappeared.

William "the Terrible" Johnson

DEXTERITY 9

Dodge 11, fire combat 16 (19), flight 11, maneuver 12

STRENGTH 8

TOUGHNESS 10

PERCEPTION 8

Disguise 12, find 10, tracking 12, trick 14

MIND 8

Test 10, willpower 10

CHARISMA 6

SPIRIT 8

Reality 10

Possibilities: 15

Inclination: Evil

Pulp Powers: High-powered, boosted rifle — damage value 22, ammo 6, range 5-30/250/750, +3 to hit at any range above short; *flight* belt (value 16), *super skill* (fire combat). William also has a *setback* flaw — if successfully *intimidated*, he will panic and "forget" how his *flight* belt works and he will attempt to escape using normal means.

Equipment: Normal clothing, glasses (he doesn't need them), disguise kit (+2 to any male *disguise*), \$250

Description: William Johnson is not just evil, he is psychotic. But he is not mad in the globally dangerous way that Dr. Mobius is, or evil in the sadistic way of the Crimson Shroud. He is evil and insane in an up close, personal way that strikes terror deeper into the heart than any other villain on Terra.

While William "the Terrible" has

disappeared, his history was easy to trace. He worked for GAWSI in its early years, but was transferred to a civilian military advisory position in the late teens of this century. He was part of a Congressional appointment that oversaw the maintenance of the Rocket Ranger suits.

William Johnson never attracted any attention — good or bad. When interviewing old co-workers, no one was ever sure exactly what William *did* in the group, only that he always did "it." He never received a report — good or bad — about his work habits, and his raises and promotions only came as a matter of course. The man who gave Johnson his last in-staff promotion could only say, "He was with us for so long it seemed like the thing to do."

William Johnson was unremarkable.

William the Terrible, however, drew many remarks.

No one knows for certain, but perhaps it was this "non-recognition" that drove William to steal an experimental rifle and flight device from GAWSI. If so, he has only himself to blame — he never did anything positive that would *gain* him recognition.

But he has it now.

William's personality profile suggests that, after taking these extreme actions, William will continue his terrorist crusade against the government, pulp heroes, and anyone else he feels like blaming for his own inadequacy. He could kill anyone, anywhere, any time. And, with his bizarre skill, that statement is not just an idle threat.

France, September 1936

France once again reversed its policies regarding pulp heroes. A second hero-friendly premier, Renard DuPrie, was elected in September and, over the course of the next few months, he reversed many of the previous administration's edicts on weird sci-



ence and pulp powers. While this had no immediate effect on the country's economy or stability, France again became a "headquarters" for many pulp heroes and a few villains — though the proportion there was more even than in the rest of the world.

Great Britain, February 1937

In light of the re-emergence of pulp villainy, the parliament of England convened for a special meeting. At that meeting they determined that the possession of weird science gear or the display of weird science powers or abilities was a capital offense. One for which, for the first time in nearly a hundred years, called for the arming of England's police force.

Germany, March 1937

Adolph Hitler used his party's discovery of weird science as a means to power. Obsessed with the occult and weird science alike, Hitler ordered the Nazis to loot domestic and foreign collections and museums where they quickly found several large stores of eternium in ancient German and European artifacts. With these devices, the Nazis forced their way into the General Assembly and took control of a 20% share of the power. The only thing that kept the Nazis from gaining greater power was Germany's general satisfaction with Wilhelm's defense against the Russians. So, instead, Hitler was forced to begin a hunt for more artifacts. This would give him even more eternium and even more power with which to attack Wilhelm. At this

point, many nearby observers began to think of Adolf Hitler as a pulp villain.

Russia, July 1937

While spying on a private Russian function, Turkish agents uncovered Nicholas' hideous secret — the most important discovery since Mobius' development of weird science.

Czar Nicholas II of Russia, beloved by his people and feared and respected by his enemies wasn't *human*.

In fact, during that party, several highly-placed Russian dignitaries let down their guards and their identities at the private party and the agents were disgusted by the sight of hideous creatures. They were bare-skinned, clammy creatures slightly resembling spiders, but with only four legs instead of eight. Their hands had only four, suction-cupped fingers and they had large bulbous eyes. They maintained their human disguises through the use of a belt device which masked them with a bipedal form.

The agents were unable to discover any more information after retreating, disgusted by the creatures' culinary tastes (they consumed in mass quantities some sort of large, live worm-like creature that the aliens could drain of nutrients using their fingers). Fleeing to their own country the agents spread the word that Russia was no longer controlled by humanity.

Rather quickly, scientists reasoned that the false Nicholas is most probably a Martian and that there may be several thousands more on Terra. Theories abound about their invasion, which many believe began that night back in 1916 and which was continued in Pitts-

burgh. The reasons behind their invasion of Terra are unknown, but apparently they have infiltrated their way into our society at every level. Russia and America seem the most likely places to find a Martian, but they have been found in every other major industrial nation as well.

The general populace of Terra is unaware that they have been invaded, but most highly-placed government agents know the secret ... one way or another.

New York, November 1937

On the 15th of November, the resolution calling for the disbanding of the Free League of Nations became official. With its primary supporter (Givens) missing, several League members at war with each other, and the League's failure to deal with a possible alien invasion, the effectiveness of the League became minimal to say the least.

And So ...

Well, that's enough history from me. I never was really found of the stuff, but Chief insisted, seeing as how you are out-of-towners. This pretty much gives you an outline of what's been going on for the last thirty-five to forty years. Next up is a bit of rules and then I'll get to some adventuring tips in case you haven't already got a bunch in mind.

Watch your back, watch the government, and, above all, watch the skies.



Chapter Five

Terran Axioms and World Laws



The Ivory Ibis gleamed in the sunlight, resting silently on its dusty pedestal. It looked hauntingly alive, and I felt its eyes appraising me even as I surveyed it. I hope it liked what it saw, because we were going to be seeing a lot of each other. I didn't come through all those deadly traps, hostile natives, and mind-numbing mazes just to give up now.

— Jack Bombay, in an excerpt from his memoirs, *Archaeology: A Swell Way to Make a Living*

Just like Core Earth, the Nile Empire, Orrorsh and each of the other realms of the cosmverse, Terra supports its own system of rules and axioms which govern her people's reality. In fact, you may already be aware of many of these laws as it is Terra's unique world which allowed the development of Dr. Mobius' Nile Empire. And, if not for Terra's strange bend on the physics of the world, you probably never would have seen the wonders of the "weird" science which lends itself so well to designs of the personal rocket suits, invisibility belts and dimension-shattering transporters.

Aren't you happy about that?

Terra's Axioms

The basic rules that govern reality in each of the invading cosms are called axioms. Terra, being another cosm, is no different. Just like Core Earth, it has the four axioms: *Technology*, *Social*, *Magic* and *Spiritual*. As a person travels from another cosm to Terra, she

immediately becomes subject to its laws (for more information on the breakdown of axiom levels and everlaws, see pages 91–102 of the *Torg Rulebook*). Terra's basic axioms are:

Technology	21
Social	21
Magic	11
Spiritual	9

Technology: 21

As you would expect, most of Terra has a *Technology* level similar to that of Core Earth in the late 1930s. Militarily, this translates into primitive tanks, fighter planes, long-range submarines and a few bombers. Commercially, flight is possible, but costs are still somewhat prohibitive for the average Joe. The most common way to travel cross-country is still by train, but there are now regular flights traveling between large cities in America and Europe. In the United States, routes exist between New York, Chicago, and San Francisco. In Europe, Paris, Berlin, Lisbon and Rome all have readily-accessible airports. In addition, many countries, including Germany, Western Europe, and Southern Europe, have zeppelin-runs — zeppelins continue to be popular in Terra, as many of the disasters that occurred in Core Earth history never happened on Terra.

On the oceans, things aren't much different. Trans-oceanic journeys are still made almost entirely upon luxury liners and steam ships rather than airplanes or zeppelins, but, just for your information, the major transatlantic flights are generally available from



What about Mobius and the Nile Empire?

Since Mobius is a High Lord and he originates from Terra, why aren't Terra's axioms and world laws exactly the same as the Nile Empire's?

First, the Nile Empire's axioms *were* at one time the same as Terra's. When Mobius found the Kefetiri Idol and removed Khem from Terra, the darkness device merged Mobius' remembrance of Ancient Egypt with modern Terra. The result was his Nile Empire — a separate, but not entirely unique, realm.

Second, Mobius never pursued the conquest of Terra as a High Lord. He has gone on numerous successful realm-raiding campaigns (nine to date, with one pending), but he has never attempted to take over Terra using his darkness device and his High Lord powers. Instead, Mobius' limited ventures on Terra since his ascension have been in his old role as a pulp villain. It seems to give him greater satisfaction taking on the likes of the Mystery Men as a master criminal than as a High Lord. This may either be some form of ego-stroking or possibly a side effect of the curse of Amat-Ra.

Finally, since Terra was never conquered, it has flexible world laws and axioms — much like Core Earth. Since Mobius left Terra and established the Tenth Empire of the Nile, Terra has changed a little. Those changes are reflected here.

New York and Boston to Paris and London. Those desiring transPacific flights usually book passage from either San Francisco, Hong Kong or Shanghai. Other ports of call tend to be unreliable at best. For more information on Terran travel routes and times, check out Chapter Nine, "Equipment."

Medically, Terra supports the same advances as the Nile Empire. Immunizations to some childhood diseases are available, but diseases such as smallpox and malaria can still break out with deadly results, despite the advances of weird science. Terra's pulp flavor makes it far more likely that a rare, tropical disease originating from deepest Africa would have a cure than the far more common rheumatoid fever, however, and heroic scientists are much more likely to come up with last-minute cures here than on Core Earth. Of course, more dramatic diseases and afflictions are also present.

Besides the strange medical situation, weird science has made for many other contradictory developments on Terra. Although Terra sits plainly in the 1930s, several advances have already been made that didn't occur in Core Earth for decades. Terra has even made a few advances that *still* haven't occurred on Core Earth. All of this is, in part or in whole, thanks to the efforts of Dr. Frest and the other masterminds in and out of labs across the globe — most of whom are now outlawed. Because of this, weird science allows a boost in Terra's *Tech* axiom up to 31 occasionally. However, any advance above *Tech* 21 must be based upon some weird science principle. Thus, a supersonic jet is a contradiction on Terra, but a rocket aerodrone developed under the guidance of weird science physics will perform perfectly well. Under Terra's *Tech* axiom, it is fairly easy to believe that the Speed Wizard has developed his own perpetual motion-based power pack that never needs recharging while the search continues for atomic energy elsewhere.

This split *Tech* level carries over to items being brought into Terra. Any item up to *Tech* 21 can be brought in without any problems, but items from *Tech* 22 to *Tech* 31 only function without contradiction if they were developed using weird science. Anything above *Tech* 31, weird science or not, is a contradiction. Conversely, items leaving Terra become subject to the

Tech axioms of other cosms. Items developed using weird science are fine as long as the destination realm supports the *Tech* level of the item. For instance, Professor Furioso's weird science rocket plane (*Tech* 23) is fine in Core Earth (*Tech* 23), but it suffers the same problems as the supersonic jet in the Living Land (*Tech* 7).

Just to make things a little more twisted, while using a weird science item in another reality might not be a contradiction, using weird science in any reality other than Terra or the Nile Empire is a contradiction. So, Professor Furioso might fly his rocket plane without contradiction in Core Earth, but he couldn't repair it without contradiction if it broke down.

The Social Axiom: 21

Full industrialization and urban development are supported at this level, and multi-national governments are developing (the Free League of Nations) and the socio-economic concepts of communism, fascism and capitalism have all been understood for years (though both communism and fascism are not nearly as evidenced in Terra as they were in Core Earth). In the work force, the blue collar worker makes up the largest cross-section of urban societies, while there are still many third-world nations still trying to figure out proper irrigation to avoid yet another famine.

Society has gone through the Roaring Twenties and into the High Thirties with a fanfare. Gin club jazz is the rag, society gals and guys change their fashions at the drop of a hat and everyone is trying to learn the latest dance steps of Gene Astaire while listening to the tunes of "Big Band" Benny Bigtone and "Skip Jazz" Glenn Riteman. Despite prohibition, which has still yet to be abolished in Terran America and Europe, everyone finds some way to drown their sorrows or celebrate their joys.

So, even though Terra is experiencing global upheaval — especially in





Jaime Lombardo & Ron Hill



Medical Dilemmas

Despite the advances of weird science, there are many diseases still uncured in the 1930s. Although they are less common in urban centers, adventurers travelling the wilds of South America or Africa had best watch out for the diseases listed below. Fighting a disease generally consists of making a *Toughness* roll once a character has been subjected to the conditions under which the disease is caught. Each disease's specific resistance roll is detailed in its description.

Note: successful use of a *medicine* skill will not cure a victim, but it will give a bonus number to a character's *Toughness* roll equal to the Power Push of the result points generated by comparing the *medicine* total against the disease's strength. Game-masters, at their option, can substitute the appropriate *survival* skill (jungle, desert, forest, swamp, etc.) for the *Toughness* rolls against contracting the disease, but *Toughness* rolls are still needed to fight off the disease.

Disease: Anthrax

Cause/Symptoms: Transmitted through close contact with cattle, sheep and other livestock. Wool products may also carry the bacteria which will cause facial lesions and hair loss.

Game Mechanics: Adventurers in contact with infected animals can make a *Toughness* vs. 10 total to avoid contracting the disease. Once contracted, *Toughness*, *Strength* and *Dexterity* are all reduced by 3. Every two days the victim is given another *Toughness* vs. 10 to fight off the bacteria. Bad failures (those missing by 5 or more result points) can cause scarring boils and hair loss.

Disease: Cholera

Cause/Symptoms: Severe thirst and diarrhea brought on by drinking improperly sterilized water.

Game Mechanics: The bacteria *vibrio cholera* will cause death by extreme thirst unless the character can overcome a *Toughness*

vs. 12 roll. Only this daily roll can cure the character, drinking clean water will not. Characters dying of thirst will last *Toughness*/2 days, half this time if the character is active or in a desert, one quarter this time if active and in a desert.

Disease: Hepatitis

Cause/Symptoms: Transmitted by the ingestion of contaminated food or water, or through unclean cuts or lacerations, hepatitis causes severe weakness.

Game Mechanics: For every five days that the disease remains in the victim's system, reduce his or her *Toughness* and *Strength* by 1 point. The character also has his shock total halved until the *Toughness* vs. 14 roll is made (i.e., the character can only take half his *Toughness* in shock points before going unconscious.)

Disease: Malaria

Cause/Symptoms: Mosquitos are the carriers of one of the most common diseases amongst adventurers.

Europe and the Far East — and a secret invasion from outer space, things are pretty lively for the affluent. The Depression of Core Earth was only a slight recession in most of Terra — at least everywhere that counted, according to most sources — and the rumblings of war are still only rumblings that most people can ignore.

The Magic Axiom: 11

Although the common person on the street will never encounter a demon of the sixth plane or witness a villain escape in a puff of smoke that doesn't have to do with a weird science gizmo, magic is possible — and relatively prolific if you know where

to look — on Terra. See Chapter Seven, "Pulp Magic," for a full explanation of magic and its availability on Terra.

The Spirit Axiom: 9

This is, perhaps, the largest difference between Mobius' Nile Empire and Terra. In the Nile Empire, it seems that long-forgotten Egyptian gods (and even a few Greek ones) are once again able to walk the domain of the living. But on Terra, they still remain mostly forgotten, only known to a few bookworms and persistent archaeologists. Christians, Catholics and Protestants make up the leading religious factions of Europe and the West, Muslim surrounds the Arab lands and Africa and

Hinduism and Buddhism are quite prevalent in the Far East. Miracles of faith are still considered miracles — meaning they are infrequent. Only the most devote practitioners of religions are able to perform them.

The exception to this is the presence of mystical objects and religious relics. As pulp archaeologists and mystic relic seekers dig up the world, more and more unexplainable objects of power are being turned up, much to the delight of those factions which would seize them for their own diabolic purposes (read: the weird scientists). These objects are the equivalents of eternity shards (see sidebar and below).

An interesting development note for Terra should be fairly clear. As the



Social axiom is starting to flex and expand again (or collapse, if things go bad), the Spiritual axiom is getting neglected. Men and women of Terra are turning to science (*weird* and *non-*) for their answers nowadays, and churches are almost always emptier than speak-easies and dance clubs. It would not be too unlikely if the *Spiritual* axiom of Terra took another drop fairly soon.

New Eternity Shards

The *Terra* sourcebook opens up a new realm of roleplaying in the *Torg* infiniverse. Instead of fighting High Lords, Storm Knights now can pursue more personal goals. Instead of being freedom fighters, they can be high-stakes adventurers. Because of this, it is necessary to point out that not all eternity shards exist for the sole purpose of defeating the High Lords or even for defending their home realities. Eternity shards are merely concentrated manifestations of Apeiros which are created by excesses in spiritual devotion. Their abundance on Core Earth is a result of the spiritual turmoil that the realm is undergoing in defending itself from the predations of the High Lords, but this does not have to be case.

In this section several eternity shards which may be found on Terra are presented. These shards are more like the cinematic prizes which evildoers seek for world domination and good-hearted archaeologists desire to see honored in museums. All of these treasures of the ancient world have the same form and definition as normal eternity shards but they have less reality-inclined powers and restrictions.

The Ivory Eagle

Cosm: Terra

Possibilities: 25

Tapping Difficulty: 18

Purpose: support German national pride.

Powers: Perseverance



Scott Rosema

Perseverance enables a person to subsist on minimal food, water and sleep. While in possession of the shard, the owner can live on a single day's food and water for a week and can remain alert on catnaps of two to three hours per day.

Group Powers: *Uplift* (see new Group Powers below)

Restrictions: The Eagle can only be used by those of Germanic descent or by those who are working in the inter-

ests of the German peoples (not necessarily the good of the state).

Description: The Eagle is a carved ivory bust approximately 0.5 meters tall and four kilograms. It is believed that the knight had the eagle mounted upon a standard which he carried proudly while riding. The Iron Eagle emblem of Hitler is based upon this item.

This artifact is believed to have been created by an unknown German arti-



san for the birth of Jesus. However, the artisan died mysteriously on his way to the babe's birth and the Eagle became lost. Several centuries later, it was supposedly found by an English knight during a campaign of the Crusades. When the knight returned to England, his heart was crushed when he witnessed the hardships placed upon the Saxons (who were of German descent) by Prince John and the Normans. The legend then claims that the knight and the Eagle were lost somewhere in France after the knight had sought out and freed an imprisoned King Richard (it was Richard who returned to England and dethroned the usurper John, much to the joy of the Saxons).

The Tome of Blackness

Cosm: Terra

Possibilities: 35

Tapping Difficulty: 19

Purpose: unite the powers of evil

Powers: The Tome reduces the difficulty of any spell cast by the holder by three if the caster is of evil inclination. It also reduces the cost of the *sorcery* pulp power by two possibilities for evil characters (see Chapter Seven, "Pulp Magic").

Group Powers: Enslave (see new Group Powers below)

Restrictions: Besides being evil, the character must swear an oath to the deity of evil/death of the character's religion (Satan, Kali, etc.). Once the oath is sworn, if the sorcerer is ever *setback* during a dramatic scene where the Tome has been in use, that deity decides the character is no longer worthy of the Tome and sets forth his minions to reclaim it (slaying the useless character if possible).

Minions of the Tome

DEXTERITY 12

Dodge 15, flight 13, maneuver 13, stealth 14, unarmed combat 15

STRENGTH 12

TOUGHNESS 15

PERCEPTION 8

Find 9, tracking 10, trick 10

MIND 7

Test 10, willpower 10

CHARISMA 7

Taunt 10

SPIRIT 8

Reality 9, intimidation 11

Inclination: Evil

Natural Tools: Claws (STR+5/17), Fangs (STR+3/15), Wings

Possibility Potential: Some (25)

Description: (Of the Minions) The Minions generally assume the form of devils or demons from the character's religion, but their true forms are of humanoid, shadowy beings with fiery red mouths, eyes, and claws.

Description: (of the Tome) There is no writing on the surface of the Tome, and only a person of Evil alignment can open the book — or a person of tremendous willpower and unquestionable Good alignment. An Evil person who opens it sees foul spells and incantations written there — theoretically, all the evil works of magic that have ever been performed in Terra are listed there — but even the most Evil person has never been able to read the book. A Good person who opens the pitch-black volume (though none are known to have ever done it) will be beset by Minions of the Tome in greater numbers and power than ever seen on Terra. If he manages to beat the demons (unlikely, because they will increase in power as they depart the Tome), the book will be destroyed. If the Minions win, they will drag the person back into the Tome for never-ending torment.

Coins of Gold

Cosm: Terra

Purchase: 4

Use Cost: 3

Range:

Possibilities: 35

Tapping Difficulty: 19

Purpose: Rebuild the glory of the Incas

Powers: Any action taken towards the restoration of Incan power has its difficulty reduced by 1.

Group Powers: Conversion (see new group powers below)

Restrictions: Any person of Spanish descent will take one shock every

round that they hold one of the coins.

Description: These artifacts are believed to be the first coins minted from the gold stolen from the Incas by the Spanish. Legends claim that one day their rediscovery will usher in the return of Incan glory. It is unknown whether or not the coins reside somewhere on the Caribbean Islands, were lost at sea, or if they made their way back to Spain. Given the hardships of the Spanish the last few years, it is almost probable that they did make it back to Spain and are somehow exacting a measure of vengeance for the Spaniards' greed.

New Group Powers

These are some of the group powers known to exist on Terra. Other group powers, including those present in Core Earth's reality, probably exist as well.

Conversion

Purchase: 20

Use Cost: 3

Coordination: 8

Difficulty: 15

Range: 10 (100 meters)

Duration: The reality skill value of the character measured in seconds.

Effect: This power is only available in those artifacts of religious significance. It converts the Terran World Law of Morality (see "World Laws" to follow) into the Law of Religion. For this purpose, worshippers of the religion are treated as Good and non-believers as Evil. Inclination Detection becomes Religious Detection, which allows an *alertness* card to be played to determine a person's faith. Inclination Seduction becomes Religious Conversion with skill tests being made with *faith* skill rather than *Charisma*. Any non-believer that fails the *faith* test becomes converted to the target religion and must follow its tenets. It converts all but one of his adds in his previous faith to the new faith, caus-



ing a strongly religious person in one religion to become strongly religious in the new one). Victims who had no faith adds will automatically gain 1 in the new religion.

Example: A tribe of Hovitos discovers that the Coins of Gold are in fact still in South America and they reclaim them. As a splinter group of the original Incan Empire, they decide to rekindle their former glory. Their first victim is a Christian missionary, Eric O'Reilly, who recently arrived to preach to the "misguided" tribe. The Hovitos quickly purchase the conversion power and Aluito, their tribal leader, makes a Religious Conversion on Eric. Aluito's faith is a 12 and he rolls a bonus number of zero. Eric's faith is stronger at 13, but he rolls a 10 (-1), tying Aluito's total of 12. But, since the purpose of the Coins is being fulfilled (rebuilding Incan

might), Aluito's difficulty is reduced by 1, so he does succeed in converting Eric. Eric's faith (Christianity) adds of 3 now become 2 adds in faith (Incan) giving him a new faith total of 12. The remaining add in faith (Christianity) remains, but is submerged and he can't use it (unless he is somehow converted back to Christianity).

Most gamemasters will want to keep in mind that a character has been a victim of conversion because the new religion is not really one of the character's choice. Eventually, the character will probably fully adopt the religion (forgetting all he's ever known about the old religion), but, until then, there should always be the chance he will "snap out of it" and go back to his true faith (there are no game mechanics for this; it is a simple roleplaying exercise).

Enslave

Purchase: 20

Use Cost: 4

Coordination: 10

Difficulty: 20

Range: voice

Duration: A measure equal to the character's reality value

Effect: Usable only by groups of Evil Inclination, it saps the will of its victims. To use, the lead villain (generally a cult head) generates a *test total* versus the victim's *Mind* or *willpower*. If successful, the victim is *stymied* versus the group. This affect lasts until the victim makes a *Mind* roll versus a DN of 25. As with any other action, if enslavement is used against a group of people, the *test total* becomes a "One-on-Many" attempt (but, remember, other members of the group can support the usage of an eternity shard's group power).



Jaime Lombardo & Ron Hill



Example: Li'l Jonny, sidekick to the Terran adventurer Kansas Jim, foolishly tries to take out the villain known as "the Drifter" on his own. Unfortunately, the Drifter has just discovered the Tome of Blackness and allied his gang with Lucifer, a Terran Lord of Evil. The Drifter's test is 12 and he gets a +2 bonus for a total of 14. His lackey Vito supports successfully, making the coordination roll. The Drifter's final test total becomes a 15. Jonny gulps, knowing that his lowly Mind of 8 (he is a sidekick after all) probably isn't up to the challenge. He rolls a 19 — a good try, but that only gives him a defensive total of 14. Poor Jonny becomes enslaved.

Characters who are enslaved are not actually forced to obey their "masters," but most find themselves sapped of will and power (being stymied will do that to you).

Uplift

Purchase: 20

Use Cost: 10

Coordination: 12

Difficulty: 22

Range: 9 (60 meters)

Duration: one Scene

Effect: This group power modifies the effects of certain cards and interaction results. The lead character attempts to make a *reality* total greater than the power's difficulty of 22. This difficulty is modified by the number of people she is trying to uplift (using the standard One-on-Many modifiers). Once successful, uplift reduces all *intimidation*, *test*, *taunt* and *trick* effects on the "Combat Results Table" by one level. For example, a *setback* becomes a *stymied* (regardless of whether the result points were 10 or 14) and an *up/setback* becomes a *setback*.

During combat situations (using cards), the side benefiting from the uplift has their situation modified as in the following chart:

When heroes possess the power,

Card Condition	becomes	New Condition
Confused		Ignored*
Fatigued		Confused
Stymied		Unskilled
Setback		Stymied

When villains possess the power,

Card Condition	becomes	New Condition
Fatigue		Ignored*
Stymied		Unskilled
Setback		Stymied
Breaks		Setback

*Treat this condition as if there were no condition.

Characters of the Nile Empire

Terra, as was stated before, is distinct from the Nile Empire. Although the Nile Empire was based upon Terra, they now have distinct axioms and world laws. What does this mean for existing characters?

The answer is simple. Characters that have been fighting Mobius during the Possibility Wars have become characters of the Nile Empire — even if they started as Terran characters. Alexus Frest, the Mystery Men and all of the other adventurers that originated in Terra have remained the same during the course of their adventures, while the Terran cosm has changed. It wasn't a conscious choice or direct transformation that caused this change, but rather a mild change caused by the progress of Terra. Any characters that have travelled from Terra to the Nile Empire fairly recently were slowly incorporated or transformed as the "old" reality (with its new elements) sought to define itself and now, perhaps without even realizing it, they have changed over completely to the new reality.

For new characters, the "formative" transformation is no longer

The World Laws

Since Mobius left for his invasions, the World Laws of Terra have also changed. These World Laws are an integral part of Terra and all adventurers in Terra.

The Law of Morality

[This world law is essentially the same as the world law of the same name in *The Nile Empire* sourcebook — it is reiterated for clarity here. Its use does not cause a contradiction in the Nile Empire.]

possible. Terra is now fully distinct from the Nile Empire and characters from Terra are guided entirely by the Terran axioms and world laws. Similarly, new characters created in the Nile Empire must follow Mobius' separate reality. Neither will experience the reality change that existing characters underwent and the transformation of characters between the two realms is handled the same way that it is between any other pair of realms (see the basic *Torg* Rulebook for more on transformation between realms).

What does this mean as far as game play and contradictions? Since pulp powers and weird science are supported by both Terra and the Nile Empire, neither of these causes a contradiction. Nile heroes and Terran vigilantes can both utilize their utility belts and pulp powers on either realm with equal ease. However, the usage of magic is susceptible to a contradiction in cosm-hoppers (see Chapter Seven). Whenever a Terran character or a Nile Empire character attempts to do something not supported by the other's realm, make sure a contradiction check is still made.





Malcolm Hee



All great pulp novels have one basic plot: the battle of good versus evil. Whether it be a tale of the lowly street detective taking on organized crime, a patriotic soldier defending his home from invaders from afar, or costumed crusaders duking it out for the Lost Chalice of Alet-Su, there are always two sides to the battle. And *only* two sides (even though people on either side might not always work together). Reflecting this is Terra's most basic law, the Law of Morality. Every man, woman and child has an inherent "goodness" or "evilness."

For most people, approximately 90 percent of the population, their morality is good. A good person is one who general looks out for the well-being of other people. Typical "good" people are your loving mother and father, who, without question, raised you in the accepted ways of society; the shopkeeper next door, who every now and then gives the little kid a free piece of candy and, of course, the pulp hero.

Falling into the "evil" category are those heartless few that are concerned first and foremost for themselves. Gun-toting gangsters, heartless second grade teachers that give F's for the sheer joy of watching little boys cry, and maniacal pulp villains bent on world domination are a couple of examples of who could be deemed evil.

Note that enemies in a war are not necessarily evil. In Terra's Great War, the Entente was not made up entirely of Good people, and the Alliance was not made up entirely of Evil people. Most of the soldiers and civilians were Good — they were simply following the conscience of their countries. Of course, a soldier on one side might think that all soldiers on the other side are Evil, but that's only a perception, not a reality.

Acting Good and Evil

The distinction between the two is usually fairly easy to detect. The cub scout that helps the little old lady across the street is obviously acting in a good nature, while the psychopath that runs

that same little old lady down is fairly easy to mark as evil. Generally, a good person is one who follows the accepted social behaviors of the majority. For instance, a patriotic soldier who fends off hordes of martian invaders to defend his family is categorized as a good character. An evil soldier is one who follows, without question, his leader's order to murder a helpless woman and newborn babe. Compassion is a good indicator of a good action. A good action is one that helps others or, at a minimum, does not cause harm to another.

Of course, the insidious nature of Evil has crept into Terra as well. Part of the world's "progress" has been the fact that many Evil people can suppress their evil tendencies enough to "pass" as Good. This does not cause a contradiction, as it is detectable through inclination deduction (below), and it has been in Terra for quite some time — it's just becoming more prevalent now.

Good and Evil in Play

Every single Terran character has an *inclination*, and all characters from that cosm must align with Good or Evil. (Player characters, "Storm Knights," can only be of Good inclination.) Once a character's morality is determined, that character must strive to live up to it. A Good hero will, ideally and almost always in reality, put aside personal safety when it means that he can save someone else from harm (not doing so should be penalized). An Evil villain will constantly be plotting his next diabolic act, and Evil villains will often try to convert Good characters to Evil.

For normal Ord-rated personalities, this is an absolute. A Good reporter will always act in the best interest of his public audience, even if it could cost him his job. The slightest sign of corruption or unpatriotic intrigue would force a reporter to investigate so that it can be stopped. Similarly, the selfish, conniving sleaze investigator won't let a single scandal slip by unno-

ticed — but only because it will advance his own career at the cost of another's. An Evil reporter will take bribes to suppress a story, however, and he will also "bend" the truth to make the story more "interesting."

Possibility-rated characters have a bit more flexibility, but it comes with a cost. Sometimes the line between good and evil is razor-thin and it may be crossed. For every act against one's morality, the cost is one possibility. For instance, the Dark Avenger who watches callously as his foe is swept into a raging whirlpool could be considered Evil for a moment. Overall, he is probably still good, because the death of his foe will save lives, but such a cold act would still cost a possibility because justified murder is still murder. Be warned, however, this sort of action must be closely monitored. If a character is deemed to be "ignoring" his chosen morality excessively, the gamemaster might penalize him more than one possibility at a time, or he may even end up switching sides. If so, this dramatic change causes the character to forfeit *all* of his possibilities.

[This part of the Law of Morality is an addition to the Nile world law and may be adapted for use in the realm. It is not a contradiction — just a new slant on the same idea. Note that a character who has no possibilities when he or she is penalized automatically switches inclination immediately.]

Inclination Abilities

A character's morality is considered an inclination. A character has an inclination for good or evil. With this come additional, special abilities that Terran Storm Knights have at their disposal.

Detect Inclination: Any possibility-rated character who plays an *Alertness* card can detect the inclination of another character with a successful *Perception* total against the target's *Spirit* total. A character can only make one such roll against a target *per adventure*, unless the target acts in accor-



dance with his true inclination often.

Two final notes on the ability: one, the detecting character must be able to see his target. The target can be unaware of the action, but he must still be visible so that the subtle clues that give away a person's inclination can be viewed. Two, gamemasters may, at their own discretion, allow their non-player characters to invoke this ability without an *Alertness* card by spending a possibility instead.

Example: Kansas Jim, hot on the trail of his enslaved sidekick, has followed a lead down to a waterfront warehouse. There is a guard outside, but Kansas Jim is still a bit hesitant. The guard could just be a union working stiff stuck working the night shift. Kansas Jim tosses his Alertness card and generates a Perception total. His perception is an 11 and he rolls a 9 (-1) giving him a total of 10 for his detection. The unknowing guard is not able to generate a Spirit total (because he doesn't know this is happening), and his base is only 8. Kansas Jim can tell by the way the man acts, and by the way he kicks stray cats into the harbor, that he is Evil.

Inclination Seduction: Another tool in a Terran character's belt is the ability to sway any enemy. History is filled with misguided heroes, reformed criminals and other pulp turncoats. This is because the forces of good and evil are powerful indeed. A possibility-rated character can, once per act, attempt to seduce a foe over to his own side. This inclination seduction requires a successful *Charisma* roll against the target's *Spirit*. The result points are tallied and checked one the "General Push Results Table" with the following results:

A *Good* result or less does not successfully sway the opponent, but it does cost him a possibility. If the opponent has no possibilities to lose, then his or her inclination is changed.

A *Superior* result causes the victim to have to decide. He can either switch to the opposite inclination or forfeit two possibilities. As with a *Good* re-

sult, a lack of possibilities forces the seduction.

A *Spectacular* result forces the inclination change or a forfeiture of three possibilities.

Note: Morality changes due to Inclination Seduction under the Law of Morality do not cause the forfeiture of all of the target's possibilities (see above under "Good and Evil in Play"). This is the *only* exception to this rule.

Also note that, in order to perform an Inclination Seduction, the character must roleplay the situation. He must talk to the other character and try to persuade (roleplaying-wise, not skill-wise) the target character to change inclination. A player who roleplays well should achieve bonuses to his character's Inclination Seduction attempt, while one who does not should receive penalties. Just saying "Turn to Good/Evil!" is not very motivating, but a villain who straps down a hero, tortures him, endangers the hero's family, and threatens the character's pet dog has a significant edge. Likewise, pointing out to an Evil character how his life of crime will lead only to death and despair (probably in the near future) and negotiating from a superior position will make a big difference.

Think about appropriate movies and comic books for ideas.

The Price of Evil: Being able to willfully ignore your morals for self-glory does not come without a cost. Dimension-hopping characters of evil inclination will always find it difficult to win their battles when coming home. As a result, every time a an evilly-inclined character returns to Terra, he loses a possibility. It is Terra's subtle hint that it favors the side of good over evil. This penalty should only be applied once per adventure.

The Law of Drama

[This world law is also nearly the same as the world law of the same name in *The Nile Empire* sourcebook, and it does not cause a contradiction in the realm.]

The Law of Drama has no real game

mechanics. It is primarily a notice to the gamemaster to make sure that every adventure is inundated with pulse-pounding trials and tribulations. By no means should a hero's adventure be a walk through the park. Cliffhangers are the name of the game when it comes to writing tales of daring-do and every adventure should contain their fair share of pitfalls and traps.

For instance, Kansas Jim, after sizing up the guard, decides to make his move. He figures the guard to be asleep at his post. Either that or the guard is *really* interested in the deckwork of the wharf. Jim drops down quietly and prepares to thwack his foe with a board just when the warehouse door opens, introducing another gangster (Obstacle One).

The new guard shouts and raises his gun, waking the first guard. Now Jim is face-to-face with two guns and holding a board. He decides that a quick retreat around the corner would be best while he draws his own gun. He steps around the corner right smack into a third gangster (Obstacle Two).

The two collide and Jim spirals backwards. He recovers, but not in time. Jim raises his gun for a shot and the first guard rushes him. Jim hits the guard first, but still gets swept backwards by his forward momentum and splashes into the cold waters off the dock (Obstacle Three).

A few action-filled rounds later, Jim successfully gets back up to the warehouse after gunning down the second guard and pulling the third into the water. He finally reaches the door when there suddenly appears another foe, the enslaved Jonny (Obstacle Four) who glares menacingly at his mentor and begins to open fire.

This is the sort of pacing that a typical Terran adventure should follow. It shouldn't be overdone, but a healthy dose of "gotchas" livens up even the simplest fight. A good target to shoot for is four to five plot twists per scene. Even better is to end a night's adventure at a cliffhanger like "How





Jaime Lombardo & Ron Hill

is the heroic Kansas Jim going to stop his entranced sidekick Jonny without harming the helpless boy or being killed himself?"

Also, every Act of a Terran adventure should have two dramatic scenes — usually one leading right into another. Sometimes, the *beginning* of an adventure will contain a short, dramatic scene that gets things going (and that is the first of two dramatic scene in the adventure). Terran adventures probably have fewer Acts than other *Torg* adventures, but many more scenes — brief pauses instead of long ones, leading into more excitement and danger.

The Law of Action

Adding to the adrenaline level of every fight is the Law of Action. This world law states that every possibil-

ity-rated Terran can spend two possibilities on a single action, taking the better roll of the two. These possibility expenditures are naturally limited to only those actions which wouldn't cause a contradiction on Terra.

Back in our story, Jim examines his situation. Jonny's finger is beginning to twitch, ready to release a barrage of red-hot lead at his former companion. Glancing upwards, Jim remembers Li'l Jonny's fascination with the stars and decides to *trick* his sidekick while disarming him at the same time. Jim points at the sky, yelling "Look — Kohoutek!" and rushes Jonny. He rolls a miserable 5 on the die, giving him a bonus number of -5 to add to his *trick* of 10 and *unarmed combat* skill of 13 (hey, Jim's new to this). With the multi-action penalty, Jim's *trick* total becomes a 3 and the disarm is a 4. Jim decides this would be really smart time to spend a possibility, but he only rolls an 11 with

the first one. Since that isn't going to help a whole lot, Jim invokes the Law of Action and spends a second possibility. And it probably would have been a great idea, too, but, unfortunately, the Drifter finally makes his appearance behind Jonny and cancels the second possibility (Obstacle Five). I guess Jonny finally gets to shoot someone.

Spending two possibilities works this way: the Terran character declares he is going to spend the first possibility. He then waits to see if it is cancelled. If it is, he can then declare he is going to spend a second possibility, which may or may not be cancelled as well.

If the first possibility is not cancelled, then the Terran character rolls. If he likes the roll, he sticks with it. If he doesn't, he spends another possibility (which, if cancelled, still lets him use the first one, since it wasn't cancelled).



If that isn't cancelled, then the Terran character gets to choose which one he'll use — they aren't combined.

[This section of the Law of Action is slightly different from the one in *The Nile Empire* sourcebook, but it can be adapted for use in the realm as well, if the gamemaster likes it. If not, then it is a modification for Terran characters only.]

Law of Heroism

[This is a new world law and it *does* cause a contradiction in *The Nile Empire*.]

Closely tied to the Law of Action is the last of Terra's world laws, the Law of Heroism. This law states that any *Drama* or *Hero* cards played on Terra must be for a significantly heroic or villainous act (regardless of the character's inclination). Terran roleplaying is dull when a powerful *Drama* card is spent on jumping across a five-foot pit. This law forces a hero to save that card for a really important time, like when that same pit has become a fifteen-foot ravine with a forty-foot drop into a raging river stocked with hungry pirhanna. It becomes even more important when that ravine is what prevents the hero from escaping the rampaging hoards of the entire Zulu nation which are hot on his heels. Now *that* is heroic!

Note to Gamemasters: This, unlike the Law of Drama, may cause some problems in your campaigns. The Law

of Heroism relies strongly on your deciding whether or not an action is heroic or villainous. Generally, this should be fairly easy to decide, but in those rare cases where it isn't, avoid fighting with your players. If it does

become a matter of contention, simply let the player go ahead and use the possibility. Since the action isn't a critical one anyway, it doesn't really matter if the player uses the card and it just may make things more exciting later. Terra demands action, not arguments.

Reconnection Numbers

Whenever a character comes to Terra from another realm, there is always a chance that the character may disconnect. If he disconnects, he immediately become subject to all of Terra's world laws. In order to reconnect to his original realm, the character must generate a *reality* total greater than or equal to the numbers listed below.

Character is From	Reconnection Number
Aysle	10
Core Earth	6
Cyberpapacy	12
Orrorsh	8
Land Below	6
Living Land	9
Nile Empire	3
Nippon Tech	9
Star Sphere	12
Tharkold	14
Tz'Ravok	8
Aztec	8
Atlantis	8
Avalon	10

Terran characters are just as likely to disconnect as any other realm runner. Should one of your characters suddenly lose his grasp on the pulp reality, he must generate a reality total equal than or greater to these numbers:

Terran Characters in Reconnection Number

Aysle	10
Core Earth	7
Cyberpapacy	10
Orrorsh	9
Land Below	6
Living Land	9
Nile Empire	3
Nippon Tech	9
Star Sphere	12
Tharkold	13
Tz'Ravok	9
Aztec	8
Atlantis	8
Avalon	10





Chapter Six

New Terran Skills and Pulp Powers



Welcome to your doom, Mr. Burden. I've enjoyed our cat-and-mouse game quite thoroughly, but I'm afraid I've been neglecting my other chores, such as launch my bid for world domination! So, I say to you 'farewell' Mr. Burden, for now our game ends."

Jack Burden struggled with his bonds, but to no avail. He assumed he was finally done for. He cursed himself for being led into the trap so carelessly, but he had little time for self-pity as the water began to rise. Perhaps, he would get Zalek the Sorcerer in the next life. If only he had some kind of special power ...

— "Danger in Delhi," *The Ultimate Dime Novel* #29

Already I can tell, adventurers are beginning to ask, "Where do we fit in?" And I respond, as I always do, "Anywhere you want." Terra's possibilities are limitless, with people from all walks of life — and, these days, from a few new walks — are making their marks on Terra. Some honestly, like Joe Wojoski, opening a small corner store grocery; some dishonestly, like Vito Papadoc, who starts his first caper by robbing Joe. Some make their appearances heroically, like Kansas Jim, the renowned detective who tracks down Vito and "reprimands" Vito for his misguided actions; and some arrive villainously, like the Drifter, who breaks Vito out of jail to recruit his talents for some horrifying act of terror. But all of them are driven by a common cause: self-fulfillment. Joe's comes in the form of dreams of capitalism, Vito's as dreams of the easy life, Jim's as dreams of the glory of good deeds, and the Drifter's are in his

dreams of power.

Now, unlike on Core Earth, there are no High Lords here. Players may not have such an easily defined enemy as Dr. Mobius or the others I've been told about. Here, the enemy could be the little man next door, who secretly deposits the brains of helpless young coeds into the bodies of hulking gorillas. The enemy could be a bank robber, a burglar, or a pickpocket — but it could just as easily be a corrupt police officer shaking down shopkeepers, an evil banker manipulating funds, or a dirty politician stuffing ballot boxes.

Or it might be some psycho in tights and a cloak who swings from rooftops and laughs evilly in the night. You never know.

In creating a character, many of the templates available in the Nile Empire or Core Earth are fine for Terra. A standard Terran character can choose from these templates:

- Adventurous Scholar (WB)
- Amazon (NE)
- Covert Operative (WB)
- Dark Avenger (NE)
- Fast Hero (WB)
- Gadget Hero (WB)
- Intrepid Reporter (WB)
- Jungle Lord (NE)
- Mystery Man (NE)
- National Hero (WB)
- Old Professor (NE)
- Soldier of Fortune (WB)
- Private Detective (NE)
- Rocket Ranger (NE)
- Tough Hero (WB)]

WB = templates found in the basic *Torg Worldbook*

NE = template found in *The Nile*



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Empire sourcebook

With a little modification, any of the above templates can be used on Terra. But beyond these, there are a few additional templates which have not as yet made their appearances on Core Earth (but are listed in the back of this book).

Adventuring Archaeologist
Beat Cop
Ex-Gangster
Government Spy
Pro Pilot
Pulp Sorcerer

Skills

There are many skills which exist in Terra that are barely covered by *Torg's* basic skill lists and there are even a few that are still undefined. This section contains eight new skills for Terran adventurers:

Perception:

Espionage
Journalism
Photography
Politics/Diplomacy
Research (different than the Orrorshan skill)

Mind:

Science: archaeology
Science: cartography

Spirit:

Petty crime

Additional Skills

The skills listed below are not included in the *Torg* boxed set or the *Terra* sourcebook, but they still may be of use to Terran adventurers. They are listed by *Skill (Ability): Source; page number*.

(HLG = *High Lords' Guide*; IV1 = *Infiniverse Update Volume One*; NE = *The Nile Empire*; O = *Orrorsh*). See the individual sources for more information.

Egyptian Religion (Perception): NE: 64

Hieroglyphics (Perception): NE: 65

Mathematics (Perception): NE: 65
Nile Martial Arts (Dexterity): HLG:

45
Pulp Power; power (variable): IV1:

50
Research (Perception): O: 68
Scholar; Master Criminal (Perception): NE: 65

Engineering (Mind): NE: 66

Hypnotism (Mind): NE: 66

Weird Science (Mind): NE: 67]

New Perception Skills

These skills are for use with the *Perception* attribute. Whether they can be used *unskilled* or not is listed under each entry.

Espionage

This skill is the generic government agent/spy skill. Every member of a national or international law enforcement agency should probably have some training in this skill. *Espionage* covers all of the basic technical procedures of spy-novel skills such as wire-tapping, message encoding/decoding, surveillance, etc., and the usage of any associated equipment. It is not, however, a measure of *evidence analysis* or *stealth*, or any other single skill listed in other *Torg* books (though there may be some overlap).

A character's *espionage* total should be matched up against the difficulty of whatever operation is being attempted. If a character wants to put a basic wire-tap on a phone line, the difficulty might be 9 (depending on how secure the gamemaster thinks the line is). More sophisticated or monitored techniques naturally increase the difficulty. To encode a message, a character simply generates an *espionage* total. That total then becomes the difficulty of any decoding rolls unless the translator knows how it was encoded (in which case, no roll is needed to decode). Surveillance is more or less just like *Perception* with the exception that it is geared towards watching for specific details such as a subject's attempt to hand-off a package, facial gestures

and/or hand signals, etc. — it doesn't help with general *Perception* rolls like *find* or *evidence analysis*. It also conveys the basic knowledge of surveillance equipment such as binoculars, listening devices, and radios. A target's stealth is the difficulty for a surveillance check.

Espionage may not be used *unskilled*.

Journalism

Billy Star, Ace Reporter here. Just how well can you report the day's events? Well, just check your *journalism* skill, silly. *Journalism* is the skill that measures a character's ability to convey standard types of information one can find in a newspaper.

To do this, *journalism* works in two ways. First, it is a measure of a character's interviewing or "finding out" ability. In most instances, *intimidation* isn't really an effective interviewing technique. Useful information is generally more effectively gained through subtle interviewing questions than overt demands for answers. To utilize one's *journalism* skill to gain information as measure of interviewing prowess, use the target's willingness to divulge the information as an attitude level against which a reporter checks his skill on the "Charm/Persuasion" column of the Combat Results Table.

Note: Sometimes, the information for a news article may not be gathered from a living subject, but rather through journalistic investigation. In this case, the "Charm/Persuasion" chart is still used, but with the difficulty of discovering the information determining the attitude level.

In addition to holding interviews, every journalist must eventually write an article based on this information. The success of *journalism* in these cases depends on how well the character wishes to write down the facts. A simple article generally only requires a total of 8 or less, but a front page-quality piece might need a 9 or 10 to fully coordinate. If the author wishes to write a scathing editorials in order



to sway or convince a reader, the difficulty is a 15 and Pulitzer Prize articles are only possible if the total exceeds 25 or more. (Note that a journalist can also “slant” articles to make the DN easier — if he knows that his readers are interested in details about fires, for example, any article about fires would gain a bonus).

Journalism may not be used unskilled.

Photography

Jimmy Star here (and no, I'm not Billy Star's brother. I really wish people would stop asking that). So you wanna be a professional photog, hunh? Well, let me check your *photography* skill. Do you know what a camera is? Do you know which end to point at your subject? How about flashes? Do you use powder or bulb? Night shots or day shots? Hunh, Hunh? Come on, now; I haven't got all day. Just take the picture already. The development room's on your left and please remember to check to see if the red light's on *before* you go in.

Photography, as my illustrious companion attempted to point out, is the basics of operating a camera, handling film, determine lighting and exposure times, developing film, etc. This is a must-have skill for every freelance clicker, and it isn't bad for a private investigator or cop either. Just like the journalist, basic pictures are an average difficulty of 9. Don't even bother attempting the front page unless you can handle a difficulty of 15 and *Life* magazine doesn't consider anything that requires a difficulty of under 20.

Choosing subjects is also a part of the photographer's skill. By making a skill roll versus a basic DN of 12 will help the character find the “best” picture. Read this result against the DN on the “Power Push” column and add the bonus to any *photography* skill total made right then.

Photography cannot be used unskilled.

Politics/Diplomacy

Since much of what exists in Terra is or revolves around the government (and if you haven't figured that out

yet, go back and read the history section), characters may find that they will need to wine and dine members of the political scene. This skill will come in extremely handy in these situations. *Politics* allows a character to know the particulars of the political world. This includes: knowing the names of important political figures, what government's current status is (Is it at war? Are they experiencing domestic troubles? etc.) and even current political borders. In all of these instances, treat *politics* like a *scholar* skill with an emphasis on government figures, countries, major laws, and political history.

The degree of difficulty is related to the obscurity of the knowledge being sought. An example of an *Easy* (difficulty 3) skill roll might be the name of a major political figure such as Wilhelm II or the knowledge that there was a Great War. *Average* difficulty (8) might correspond to lesser known, but still important facts such as the name of the Empress Dowager of China or the independence status of Belgium. More difficult recollections may be the mayor of a major city, whether or not Uganda is at war with Kenya, etc. Knowing the martians have taken over Russia is up near 25 at least.

In addition, this skill is a degree of the character's *diplomatic* skills. When dealing with foreign dignitaries, one should really know ahead of time whether or not they shake hands or bow politely. After all, countries have been known to go to war over such matters. And because of the somewhat specialized knowledge needed, *politics* should be used in place of *Charisma*, *charm* or *persuasion* during interaction rolls of these types. A person can be an all-around swell guy who charms the pants off *regular* people, but when he walks up to the war minister of Germany and metaphorically spits in his face, all the charm in the world isn't going to help. Only *very* polite diplomacy and political kowtowing is going to keep him out of jail.

Politics may be used *unskilled*, but the *diplomacy* aspect of the skill may not.

Research

The *research* skill actually already exists. It was first presented in the *Orrorsh* sourcebook (page 68) as a specialized form of *evidence analysis*. There, *research* defines the basic gathering of evidence through a special magical ability. A degree of psychometry allows Orrorshan characters literally read additional information from objects and places a subject has touched or been. And in Orrorsh, too much *research* can lead to obsessions and the loss of *perseverance*.

However, for the rest of the free cosmos, *research* is merely the ability to gather information from second-hand sources with no additional side-effects (except maybe the occasional “bookworm” comment). It differs from *evidence analysis* in that it does not come from the scene of a crime or from examining dead bodies. Instead, *research* relies almost entirely upon printed text. Whether it be through library searches, newspaper clippings or detailed investigations of police files, *research* often divulges much more than is available through visual observations.

To determine the difficulty of a *research* total, gamemasters should figure out how well-documented the information is. Information that can be found in a basic encyclopedia would require only a three to learn. Information that requires diving into stacks of newspapers, old magazines, or card catalogs might require a 9. Items that only show up in hard-to-find books that only major libraries or universities carry should be at least a 12 or 13 difficulty. *Research* on the occult or other subjects which may have very rare or obscure sources will have at least a 16 for a difficulty. Finally, *researching* hidden knowledge (government secrets or buried records) should require a 20 or higher at the least.

Research may be used *unskilled*.



New Mind Skills

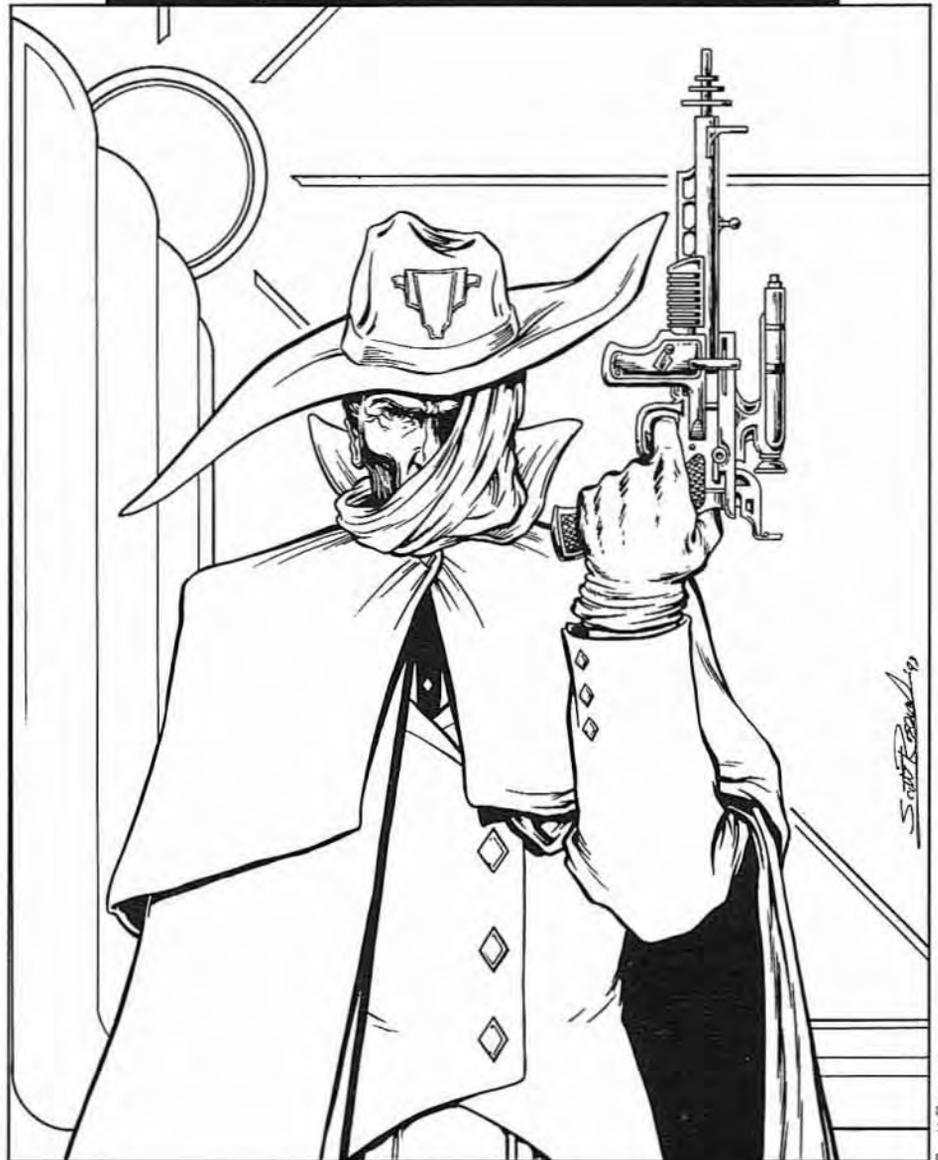
These skills are for use with the *Mind* attribute. Whether they can be used *unskilled* or not is listed under each entry.

Science: Archaeology

Characters with this skill possess the ability to study and learn about historic or prehistoric peoples and their cultures. This is done through careful analysis of their artifacts, inscriptions, monuments and other remains. At this time in Terra, demand for well-read professors and professional archaeologists are at an all-time high. As various governments and private individuals make hurried searches of tombs and other once-lost sites, they are blundering into a variety of ancient traps. Only archaeologists, who have specialized in learning all about these sites are prepared to deal with what may occur.

In terms of game play, any archaeologist can use his skill to learn about an ancient culture. This can either be direct study of an uncovered site or through second hand library research. This skill is sort of a specialized use of *evidence analysis* combined with *research* (though most archaeologists also use *research* in their libraries). In addition, archaeologists can use their skill to determine the origin and nature of ancient death traps. All throughout the world there are adventuring places that are wrought with these traps. It is the knowledgeable archaeologist that can spot and tell the procedures for disarming these lethal situations.

To determine how much an archaeologist's knowledge helps in these situations, gamemasters can call for a roll against the basic *Torg* Difficulty Number Scale. A basic, common place trap (dart holes in a pyramid wall) can be spotted on a *archeology* total of 8 or less. More difficult or obscure traps are harder to avoid. A giant suspended boulder and guidance track might require a 16 to detect while a pressure plate's exact weight tolerance could require anywhere from a 15 to a 20 to figure out.



Scott Rosema

Note that the skill *archaeology* does *not* actually let the character bypass the trap in question—but it will point it out. The character might even gain information critical to avoiding the trap through use of *archaeology*.

Archaeology may not be used *unskilled*.

Science: Cartography

Map making and map reading is still something of an inexact science at this

point. While aerial reconnaissance has improved the quality of many maps, certain locales such as deep, dark Africa are still only charted by inaccurately-scrawled maps. To provide better guidance in these situations, the skill of *cartography* may come in handy. Simply put, *cartography* allows any adventurer to accurately convert the real world into a pictorial representation. This includes noting significant landmarks, a degree of direction sense



and proper scaling.

To create a basic map that gets the job done, a cartographer needs only to overcome a difficulty of 10. Any result points higher (or lower) become the map's understandability factor. This understandability factor is in turn used when someone reads that map. To retranslate a map back into the real world, a character must make a *cartography* or *Mind* roll versus ten minus the understandability factor — points below the original difficulty are negative, so they *increase* the DN. A successful roll means the character can follow the directions correctly while a failed roll can mean anything from a simple misstep to a complete reversal in direction.

Note: modifiers can be made to either the creation or the reading roll considering the situation. If a character is lost himself, his map creation isn't going to be that great, so gamemasters can feel free to increase the difficulty as required. Characters reading especially old or weathered maps may encounter similar trouble because despite having a good map, it still must remain legible to be understood fully. It's a real pain when that last clue regarding a trap over the entrance just happened to have been ripped off. The understandability factor should be reduced in cases of old or weathered maps.

Science: cartography may not be used *unskilled* for making maps, but it *may* be used *unskilled* for reading maps.

New Spirit Skills

This skill is for use with the *Spirit* attribute. Other *Spirit* skills, such as new *faith* skills, may exist, but this is the primary new skill.

Petty Crime

Petty crime covers all of the basics of low-level petty larceny such as games of chance, numbers rackets, and confidence games. No pulp world should be without their fill of skills, con men, and stings.

A character with *petty crime* has the ability to swindle other characters using the audacity of his or her manner, as well as some trickery and planning. *Petty crime* is a skill that reflects the use of scams, cons, and set-ups.

Petty crime uses the "Charm/Persuasion" column of the Combat Results Table. A character uses his skill to influence another person and convince him or her to hand over money, perform favors, or do what the character wishes. The difficulty level of the *petty crime* attempt is equal to the target's *willpower* or *Mind*, adjusted for how resistant the character is. For example, using *petty crime* to con a man out of a bus token would go against his *willpower*, but the level of resistance would probably be somewhere around *friendly* or *neutral* — it's not that much of a con. Getting someone to purchase a public works station (like a toll bridge or a monument) would be *enemy+* or more.

But characters using *petty crime* also use the skill to "set up" the crime. They can use *petty crime* to contact other criminals — those with *forgery* (to produce fake bills of sale or monetary notes), pick pockets, safecrackers, etc. — in much the same way a character could use *streetwise*. But *petty crime* can only be used like *streetwise* when a character is trying to set up a scam, or detect a scam.

This latter use of *petty crime* is really the only one characters of good inclination should use. Certainly, they can con and scam bad guys for good reasons, but they'll mostly use *petty crime* to try to find out if a scam is being run. A character with the *petty crime* skill can use it as a resistance to *petty crime* attempts *instead* of their *Mind* or *willpower* skill values.

Petty crime may not be used *unskilled*.

Pulp Powers

In addition to new skills, character on Terra may possess *Pulp Powers*. On Terra, a pulp power is a living exten-

Definitions

Adventure cost is the number of possibilities which must be spent per adventure to maintain a power (this cost must be paid either at the beginning of the adventure or when the power is used).

The *action value* lists the formula used to calculate the power's value. Remember that additional attribute points can be spent to increase these action values (as listed in *The Nile Empire* sourcebook).

The *range* is the distance over which the user may project his power. Combat-oriented powers have a range rating similar to those given to weapons, while others have a simple distance limit. A range notation of "value" means that the range of the power is equal to the power's action value. For example, a character with the *x-ray eyes* power and an action value of 8 could use that power on objects up to 40 meters away.

The *tech rating* is a measure of how technologically sophisticated the gadgets and devices are that feature the power. See Chapter Eight for the details on the effects of tech ratings on gizmos.

The *system limit* is a particular power's system limit value when incorporated into a gizmo. As with *tech rating*, see Chapter Eight for more on gizmos.

The *ritual difficulty* is the base difficulty number for any *sorcery* spell that mimics the power. See Chapter Seven for more details on spells and pulp sorcery.

sion of the physics of weird science. In addition to supporting strange gizmos and gadgets, Terra allows characters themselves to possess the personal abilities of flight, super-strength, invisibility, or a host of other things. Here are several such powers along with their rules. More pulp powers



exist in *The Nile Empire* sourcebook, the *Torg Worldbook*, *Infiniverse Update*, vol. I & II, *High Lords' Guide*, *The Land Below*, and *The Storm Knights' Guide to the Possibility Wars*.

Dark Vision

Adventure Cost: 3
Action Value: PER+5
Range: Self (own range of sight)
Tech Rating: 24
System Limit: 20
Ritual Difficulty: 23

Characters with *dark vision* possess the ability to see in near and complete darkness. Under these conditions (and only under these conditions), such characters are allowed to use their *dark vision* total instead of their *Perception* total. The character receives no modifiers for darkness.

This power can also be used to counter the effects of the *darkness*

power. Simply take the action value of the darkness as the difficulty number for a *dark vision* total. If the *dark vision* total is higher, then the darkness can be ignored. Otherwise, the character is affected normally.

Emotion Control

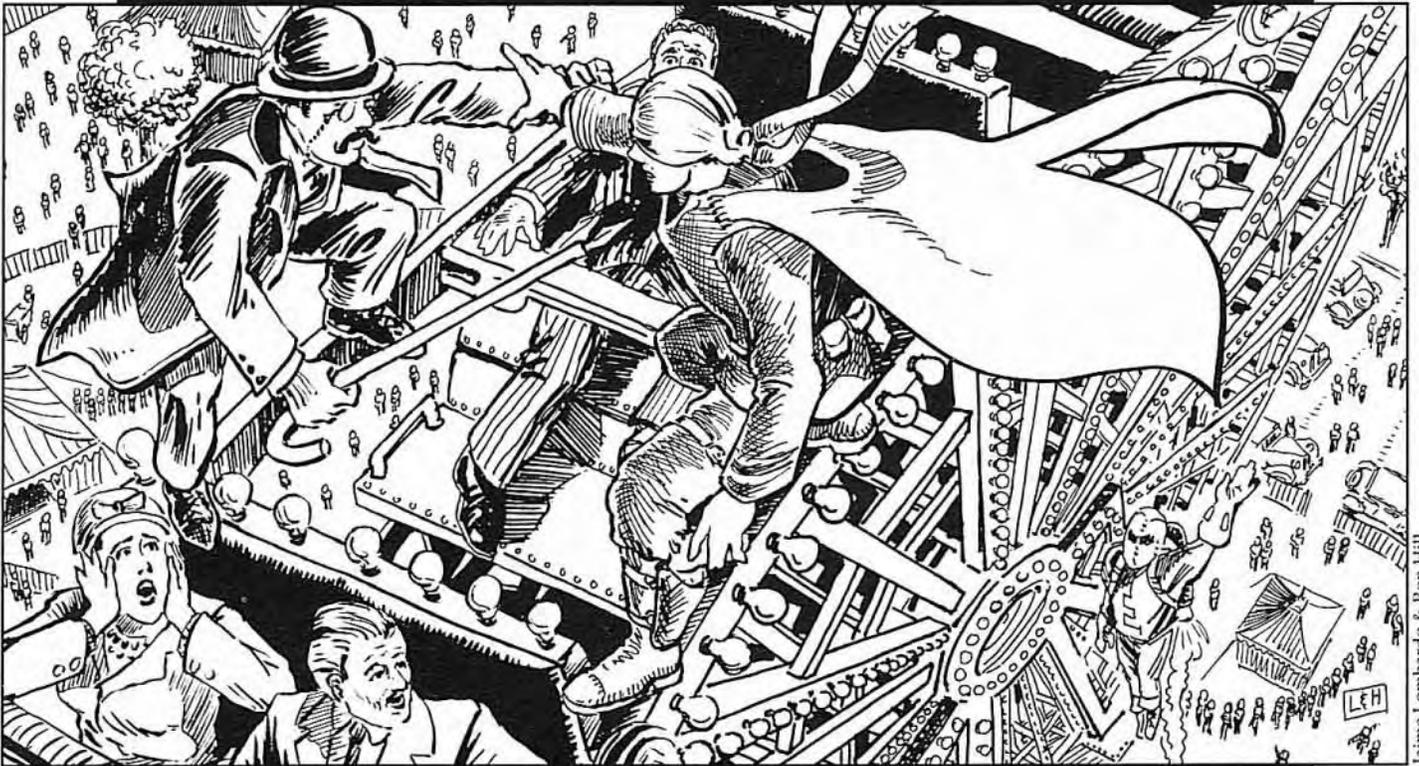
Adventure Cost: 5 (per emotion)
Action Value: CHA+5
Range: 5 meters to establish control, unlimited thereafter
Tech Rating: 28
System Limit: 8
Ritual Difficulty: 28

Emotion control is a much stronger version of *charm* and *persuasion* that is not quite the same as *mind control*. A character with this pulp power is given the ability to force an emotional state upon a subject. It is not done through the subtle manipulations of *charm* and *persuasion* but rather a direct arousal

of a victim's more base instincts. It does not fall under the auspices of *mind control*, however, because the victim is still free to act as they desire — provided they perform actions appropriate to their current emotional state.

The emotions that can be aroused include, but are not limited to: hatred, love, desire, sadness, pacifism, and despair, but the character must pay the adventure cost for *each* emotion picked. The power does not include the emotion fear which is covered specifically by the power *fear*. The method by which this is done is left up entirely to the player's imagination. It could be a love/hate ray, it could be animalistic pheromones, or it could even be included in gizmos such as gas pellets.

To establish an emotion, the character must generate a power total against a difficulty number equal to the target's *Mind* or *willpower*. If the controller is attempting to make the



Jaime Lombarido & Ron Hill



target feel the emotion towards more than one person (i.e. make a villain feel love for the character's entire party), then the number of the controller's allies is used as a "One-On-Many" interaction check. Likewise, if the *emotion control* is being used on a crowd, the number of foes is also a "One-On-Many" interaction.

Once established, the target continues to act and think freely (remember, this isn't *mind control*) as long as the emotional state is followed. This means if a target was instilled with love for the controller, then he couldn't turn around next round and shoot the controller. But, at the same time, he doesn't necessarily prevent the loving target from attacking one of the controller's allies instead.

The normal duration of the emotion control is the time value of the generated power total (a power total of 21, for example yields a duration of just over four hours). This may be broken early depending on the target's original attitude. For each attitude level above Loyal (Friendly (1), Neutral (2), Hostile (3), Enemy (4)), the target originally felt, the target is given one chance to shake off the effects of the *emotion control*. These opportunities will be evenly spaced over the duration of the control. To shake off the effects, the target must successfully make a new *Mind* or *willpower* total against the original *emotion control* power total. However, this total is reduced by 1 for each subsequent shake-off roll.

For example, with our previous duration of four hours, a *hostile* target would be able to take an immediate shake-off attempt next round at *Mind* minus one, one at *Mind* minus two after one hour and twenty minutes, and a final one *Mind* minus three at two hours and forty minutes. If all of these fail, then the target would have to wait for the full four hours to pass.

The one negative side effect to *emotion control* is that a non-willing target's attitude is worsened by the control. After the effects wear-off or are shaken off, the target's attitude towards the character are worsened by one level.

That is, a once *loyal* follower now is only *friendly*, a once *neutral* person would become *hostile*, etc. An *enemy* remains an *enemy*, but he probably just a little bit more miffed.

Finally, the gamemaster might want to establish modifiers and effects for certain types of emotions. For example, if a target is already angry, and the character wants to enrage him, the character should get a few points (one to three) of bonus in his attempt. If a character is enraged, the gamemaster might decide he was *stymied* in all attempts at non-physical actions because he's so mad.

Gravity Control

Adventure Cost: 4
Action Value: STR+5
Range: 10 (100 meters)
Tech Rating: 28
System Limit: 13
Ritual Difficulty: 27

Gravity control allows characters to manipulate that force which binds us to Terra. This can be used to decrease gravity enough to lift objects or to increase gravity enough to crush objects or push them down. To affect an object, a character first generates a *gravity control* total and compares it against the target's *Dexterity* or *dodge*. Stationary objects have a difficulty of 5 to hit with *gravity control*.

After hitting a target, the controller can either decrease or increase the gravity in regards to that target. To decrease gravity, the character compares the generated *gravity control* total against the weight value of the object or person being lifted. The result points are the speed (in meters per round) at which the object is levitated upwards. Objects raised in this manner can be lifted up to the power's range of 100 meters. If lifted beyond that point, the object breaks free and begins the possibly dangerous freefall back to Terra (normal falling damage applies). Grabbing a falling object within the controller's range has a DN of 8 plus the range value of the object (a target in this situation cannot *dodge* unless he

or she has the *flight* power or another way of flying).

Increasing gravity is done by making a *gravity control* total against a target's *Toughness*. The result points are read on the "Damage" column of the Combat Results Table. The Power Push of that number is also subtracted from the character's *Dexterity* for the remainder of the round.

There are other applications to *gravity control* as well — for example, if a character is standing on a wooden floor, he might fall through if his gravity were increased. A character who zooms up against the ceiling of a building might go through — or get hurt. These things can be figured out using the *gravity control* action value and the result points on a case-by-case basis.

Gravity control has a duration of one round and it must be applied every round (if you want to continue its effects). A character can use *gravity control* to go up into the air himself but not fly — *gravity control* can only increase or decrease gravity, not bend it.

Power Neutrality/Resistance

Adventure Cost: 2/5 (variable; see text)

Action Value: none
Range: self
Tech Rating: 31
System Limit: 15
Ritual Difficulty: 26/31

This power is the "anti-pulp power" power. With it, characters are given the ability to reduce or negate the effects of other pulp powers that are targeted on them. *Power neutrality/resistance* has two basic forms.

Neutrality: This is the cheaper of the two forms and it has an adventure cost of 2. When *power neutrality* is chosen, a player also chooses a pulp power to which their character is to be considered "neutral." Thereafter, whenever the character is attacked or otherwise targeted by that pulp power, the attack simply fails to succeed or affect the character in any *direct* manner. For attack powers, this translates into a





Jaime Lombardo & Ron Hill

lack of damage. The attacker may still hit, but the power has no effect on the neutral character. For control-type powers (*mind control*, *emotion control*, *fear*, etc.), the character is similarly immune to their effects. Against detection pulp powers (*Mega senses*), the character is only detectable if they would be detectable normally without the using of the detection power (a character who has *mega senses: sight* would still see the character with *neutrality: mega senses* if he was standing out in the open, but not if there was some obstruction that would require *mega senses* to see through).

Note on invisibility: *Invisibility* causes its user to become transparent to visible light and in no way affects other people. Therefore, since *neutrality* does not confer any special perception bonuses, there is no *neutrality: invisibility*.

Note on x-ray eyes: *X-ray eyes* only

gives its possessor the ability to see through objects. It does not give any special detection powers to see other objects or people beyond the object looked through. Therefore, *neutrality: x-ray eyes* does not hide a character from another character who has *x-ray eyes*. It simply means that the viewer can not look through the neutral character. Of course, you could build a gizmo (such as a wall) with the power *neutrality: x-ray eyes* that the character could not see through.

Note on super attributes and super skills: A character who chooses *neutrality* to *super skill* has *neutrality* against all direct use of *super skill*. For example, if a character possessed a *super skill* of *charm*, the *neutral* character would not be affected by those *super skill* adds. However, the character would be affected by any non-*super skill* *charm* adds the character had.

If a character wants to have *neutral-*

ity: super attribute, he can achieve the same effect, but he must pick *one* attribute to be *neutral* to. For example, a character who has *super attribute: Strength* could not use his *super attribute* points when inflicting damage on a character with *neutrality: super attribute (Strength)*, but he could use his *Agility super attribute* normally.

Note on Pulp Sorcery: If *neutrality: sorcery* is chosen, then no ritual can be cast against (or for) the *neutral* character. However, if the character chooses *neutrality* to a non-sorcery power instead, then the character is still subject rituals that mimic the *neutralized* power. See Chapter Seven for more on *sorcery*.

Note on Gadgets and Gizmos: One cannot be immune to gadgets and gizmos; the character must pick powers. If the character picks *neutrality: electro-shock*, then he is immune to *electro-shock* whether it comes out of



another character or a gizmo.

Note on *Neutrality*: This power is meant to be a specific resistance, not an over-balancing ability. If a character is constructed with several types of *neutrality* that seem to overlap and make the character virtually invulnerable to pulp powers (since *neutrality* cannot be used to block non-pulp power effects), then the gamemaster should seriously consider outlawing specific uses of *neutrality*. Always err on the side of caution. If a particular use of *neutrality* looks abusive, it probably is.

Resistance: Instead of becoming completely neutral to a single pulp power, a player can instead make his character slightly resistant to *all* pulp powers for an adventure cost of 5. This translates into a +5 bonus number for any resistance rolls that the player must (or may) make against interactions involving pulp powers. In the case of physical attacks, this bonus is applied to *Toughness* totals. It does not make the character any less likely to be hit, but it does reduce the resulting damage if he is hit. For other control powers, the bonus number is applied to *Mind*, *Charisma*, or whatever is used as the defense. For powers which don't have a resistance roll (i.e. detection powers), increase the attacker's DN by 5 (i.e., *mega-sight* still functions normally, but it will only detect a resistant character if it can do so with a +5 added to the DN).

Note on *invisibility*: Unlike *neutrality*, *resistance: invisibility* has some effect. Add +5 to the bonus number of the character with *resistance: invisibility* when he or she tries to use *Perception* or *find* to locate the invisible target.

Note on *sorcery*: *Resistance: sorcery* is treated as all of the other powers are. Damage spells have their effect value reduced, *Perception*-spells have their difficulties increased, etc. It does not affect the caster's difficulty. See Chapter Seven for more on *sorcery*.

Note on *super attributes* and *super skills*: Instead of completely neutral-

izing the attributes and skills, a *resistant* character makes her opponents lose the first 5 adds/attribute points that the enhanced power gives them. If the enhancement power does not give the character five adds/attribute points, then the character loses what adds/points he has—versus the *resistant* character only, of course.

Telecommunication

Adventure Cost: 2
Action Value: *Mind* + 5
Range: action value
Tech Rating: 27
System Limit: 10
Ritual Difficulty: 24

Telecommunication, or "TC," is the ability a character has to send and receive messages through the power of the mind. The character possessing the power sets up a "mental switchboard" through which linked characters can communicate.

To establish a switchboard, the character possessing TC generates a power total against a DN of 15 + the *Torg* Value of the number of people to be linked. The number of results points is the value of the maximum range any linked character can be from the TC character. The duration of a link is one hour. Should the need arise to add more people to the switchboard once it is established, a new TC total must be generated.

Example: Mentat and his evil henchmen, the Thought Mongers, are set to go ahead with a bank robbery. Mentat wants to direct the holdup from the sidelines, while his nine henchmen do the dirty work. He sets up in a small sidewalk cafe thirty meters from the bank.

Mentat needs to generate a power total (using his Mind attribute of 12 plus 5 as the action value) against a DN of 15 plus the value of ten people (Mentat plus his nine henchmen) so he can communicate with them. The Torg value of 10 is five, so the DN is 15+5 or 20. Mentat gets a bonus number of 6

which he adds to his action value of 17. That's a 23. He has three result points. On the Torg Value Chart, that translates to a measure of four meters. Either Mentat has to go into the bank with his gang, or he has to do one of two things: reduce the number of henchmen involved in the telecommunication link or just try again and hope for a better roll (not very likely).

In order to reestablish *anything* about a TC link *besides* having a character leave the range of the switchboard, a new link has to be established. A new link *always* wipes out the result of the old link. However, if a character leaves the range of the link and comes back before the duration is up, the character can rejoin the same link automatically by coming back into range.

Note that *telecommunication* is *only* communication—no mind reading or seeing through others' eyes. It is just as if you were sitting around talking to the people in the link. You can talk, they can talk back—but you actually have mentally *talk*. Characters cannot "read" each others' minds.

Telekinesis

Adventure Cost: 4
Action Value: *Mind* + 5
Range: action value
Tech Rating: 28
System Limit: 12
Ritual Difficulty: 27

Terran pulp *telekinesis*, or "TK," is similar to the Space Gods' psionic power of the same name. It can be used to lift objects by the power of the mind up to a range equal to the Power Push of the power's action value. When doing so, objects can be thrown to cause damage equal the ability to move objects with the power of the mind. Picking up objects is automatic provided the object is stationary and has a *Torg* mass value equal to or less than the character's TK power value (no skill roll is necessary, but this does count as an action during rounds).

The difficulty to hit a target with the



object then is the target's normal defense plus the mass value of the object. The damage caused by successful TK attacks is equal to the mass of the object plus the bonus number rolled when throwing the object. The TK power value is used when rolling to hit instead of *thrown weapons*.

Example: The Solid Specter has a TK action value of 18 (a Mind attribute of 13 plus 5 for the power). He can lift an object with a mass of 4000 kilograms (4 tons) or less when using his power. He picks up a small car easily (it has a mass value of only 15). The car is only five meters away, so it is well within his range (the Power Push of his action value is 7, or 25 meters, on the Extended Power Push Table). The next round, he decides to throw it at Colonel Cairo, who has a dodge value of 22. The Colonel gets to add the object's mass value to his dodge (since bulky objects) are hard to hit with, so the Specter needs a 37 to hit. His action value is equal to eighteen, so he needs a bonus number of 19. Good luck.

Of course, if the Specter does hit, he'll do damage equal to the bonus number of his attack (at least nineteen) plus the mass of the object — 15. That would be a damage value of at least 34.

Ouch.

TK can also be used as an *active defense* to stop incoming ranged attacks. Essentially, instead of generating a bonus number and adding it to the character's *dodge*, *telekinesis* is used. Note that only objects the character can *see* can be influenced by *telekinesis*, so bullets and energy attacks (which aren't objects) are unaffected. Nearly any missile or thrown weapon is affected, however.

Note: Because of the extra concentration necessary for TK, there is *no* minimum bonus number for an *active defense*. However, if a character using *telekinesis* gets a *Good* or better success against a thrown weapon or a missile, the character has actually *caught* the missile (if it masses a small enough amount — if it doesn't, he can't block

it anyway) and can turn it back on its wielder or discard it at his or her leisure.

Telekinesis cannot be used to lift a person or being that does not want to be lifted (though a willing character is treated like an object). TK cannot be used for fine motor functions — such as flipping switches or pushing buttons — though the character may attempt to use objects to perform that function (the same way a character might throw a rock at a button in an attempt to turn a machine off).

Purchasing Powers

To choose a character's power(s), a player merely looks over the list of choices and spends one possibility for

each power that they would like their character to have. **Note:** purchasing powers in this manner can only occur normally during a character's creation. There may be special instances where a gamemaster will rule otherwise, such as when a power's emergence occurs during a planned scenario.

Maintaining Powers

In addition to purchasing a power, characters must pay an *adventure cost* to use the power during an adventure. Every power has its own cost, and when the character *first* wants to use it during an adventure, he pays the cost in possibilities. Then, if he wants to use it again during the adventure, he can do so for "free."

Pulp Powers vs. Super Powers

As the number and variety of pulp powers increases, some players and gamemasters begin to question how faithful we are remaining to the pulp genre. For instance, isn't a power like *gravity control* much more in the realm of the superhero than the pulp hero? The basic answer is yes, but only if taken from the standpoint of a *person* possessing the power. If one really wishes to remain true to the genre, the only real powers that heroes or villains should possess are enhanced attributes and super-skills. Very few of the personalities of the pulp novels actually possessed "powers"; they were more "super-human" than super-powered. They had more skills and better physical characteristics but few actually had *powers*.

However, this should not prevent us from creating these new powers, because none of the powers are limited exclusively to people. While personal flight

may seem far-fetched in pulp novels, a personal rocket pack certainly is not. Similarly, a gravity control device operated by a mad scientist is right in-line with the genre even if a gravity-controlling character is not. Lastly, with the inclusion of *sorcery*, many of these seemingly "super" powers are perfectly acceptable as 1930s "Mad Magician"-style spells.

Just remember the Golden Rule of Gaming: *ROLE*-play not *ROLL*-play. There isn't a power listed here that a pulp hero or villain can't reasonably use while remaining inside the bounds of pulp fiction, as long as the gamemaster doesn't let things get too out of hand. In most cases, this means restricting characters in the number of powers they can have — usually, one or two actual *powers* is sufficient, while the powers *super skill* and *super attribute* are much more flexible.



Powers that are not used during an adventure start to “fade.” A character who does not make a *meaningful* use of any of his powers (gamemaster’s discretion as to what a meaningful use is) should start to lose the power. After two or three adventures, the character should start losing the power, and when it is gone, it is gone *permanently*.

The intent behind this rule is to keep players from selecting a bunch of powers at the beginning of the game and then just using them when they want. In reality, no character should have more than two or three powers (*super attributes* and *super skills* don’t always fit into this limit), and the character *certainly* shouldn’t be able to go through a menu of powers during an adventure.

Gadget Heroes and Sorcerers

The exceptions to this rule are the gadget heroes and the sorcerers. These two types of characters seldom have their own powers but rely on the use of pulp sorcery and weird science to produce effects through the use of rituals and gadgetry. These types of characters should be able to mix and match their powers occasionally—that’s their whole purpose for existing. But they should have limits as well—gadget heroes have to spend time and money building gadgets, and sorcerers have to find new spells. These are adventure hooks in and of themselves.

Power Flaws

In *The Nile Empire* sourcebook, a basic system is presented for invoking “power flaws.” These flaws were designed to help player characters pay their adventure costs for their different powers—and to make their characters more interesting.

In the first case, it succeeded. *Stymie*, *setback*, and other flaws certainly come across with the possibilities, giving the character a chance to pay his costs.

However, in the second case, they are a little flimsy. Fortunately, since

Terra is so removed from the Possibility Wars, it has developed a different style of power flaws. These *advanced flaws* give more “character” to the powers a character has, making them and the character more interesting, and they provide a fun challenge for roleplaying.

Advanced Flaws

These power flaws are cost-reducing flaws instead of possibility-generating flaws. That is, when these flaws are taken, they reduce the net adventure cost of a power rather than awarding the character freebie possibilities every time a particular situation comes up. These flaws are chosen at the same time as the power is chosen and their point reductions are listed below. Multiple flaws can be combined upon a single power and similar flaws may be applied to for more than one power powers as well. However, a character can never have an adventure cost of less than one for any power, regardless of how many powers he or she has.

Most of the power flaws listed have variable *reduction rates*. This is either because they have variable effects or they are keyed to certain power levels. Read the descriptions below as you decide what types of advanced flaws you want to select.

Activation: In order to use a power with this flaw, the character must perform a particular action first. Usually, this action is related to the power in a thematic sense. For example, Meteor Lad might have to touch a piece of the meteor he gained his *flight* power from before he can fly. This advantage flaw reduces the cost of a power by one if it is something the character can usually do easily (like the above example), or by two points if it is something not automatically performed (perhaps the character has to generate a *Mind* total of 8 or better to “contact” the power of the meteor).

Activation Time: Powers can also take time to “warm up” before they

can be used. Once the character declares that he wants to use his power, he must wait the time chosen below before he can actually use it. The reduction rate depends on two things: first, how long the activation time is, and, two, whether the character can use the power repeatedly thereafter.

If the character has an activation time between one round and three rounds, then the reduction rate is a base of one possibility. If the activation time is between four and ten rounds, then the base reduction rate is two possibilities. For any activation time greater than ten rounds, the base reduced rate is three possibilities.

If the character can then use the power until the end of the Scene he or she is in, then use the base rate as the reduction rate. However, if the character must re-activate the power every time he wants to use it, add one to the reduction rate.

Example: Nero, a Terran villain with the fire blast power needs to pay an adventure cost of 5 every time he uses it. However, if he takes the activation time advanced flaw, he can reduce this. The gamemaster decides that Nero has to rub his hands with wicked glee to produce the friction necessary for the fire blast (this is a standard activation, but the fact that it takes him one round to do this is the activation time). That’s a one point reduction (plus one point for the simple activation). The gamemaster also decides that Nero has to do this every time he uses the power, so that’s another point. Nero gets to reduce the adventure cost of the fire blast power from 5 to 2 (two points of reduction for the activation time and one point for the activation).

Activation time always takes time. A character who has a power with a one-round activation has to spend the *entire* round doing nothing but that (no other actions, that is—the character can usually perform simple actions as well as the *activation* involved). So, if Nero, from the example above, was performing his *activation time* during a



flurry, he would not get two actions; he would be *activating* for both.

Activation time does not always have to be combined with an actual *activation* — though it usually is. A character might just have to “summon” the power and wait for it to work. A character who cannot abort a power use (i.e., once he states that he is activating his power he can’t stop) gets to add one more point to his *activation time* reduction rate.

Burnout: Powers with this disadvantage have a chance to burn out whenever they are used. The chance of a power burning out (i.e., going away) is where the reduction rate comes from, and when it comes back (if ever) is another. Use the chart below to determine *burnout* reduction rates.

Burnout Reduction

Die Roll to Burnout	Power Comes Back ...	Reduction Rate Bonus
1 (or lower)	End of Act	1
2 (or lower)	End of Adventure	2
3 (or lower)	After an intervening adventure	3
4 (or lower)	Never	4

If a character uses a power with a *burnout* flaw, he has a chance that the power will go away for a time (or forever) every time he uses it. For example, a character with *electro-ray* might *burnout* on a die roll of 2 or lower (that’s worth two points of reduction) and the power may go away until the end of the next adventure the character goes on (that’s worth another three points, for a total of 5 points). Or, perhaps, the power only burns out on a 1 (one point) but, if it does, it never comes back (worth another four points, for a total of 5 points again). Any combination is possible. The fact that the *burnout* occurs on a

die roll makes the result truly random.

Notes: A character who rolls a *burnout* may spend a possibility to roll the die again and add. If the possibility is not cancelled and the die total is higher than the *burnout* number (which will always happen if the die roll is not cancelled), then no *burnout* occurs.

If a character has a *burnout* flaw in a gadget, then the gadget doesn’t work until the time period elapses (it burns out just like a character). If the gadget has a “never returns” *burnout* result, then the gadget is broken permanently and cannot be repaired. In addition, the character can *never* build another gadget just like the other one (since the design was obviously flawed). This is a story element to keep gadget heroes from avoiding *burnout*.

Naturally, only powers that have skill rolls involved with their use can have *burnout* — either that, or the player must roll a separate die every time the power is used to determine whether *burnout* occurs.

Power Reserve: This power utilizes a store of energy within a character than is slowly used up over the course of an adventure. When the reserve is empty the power can no longer be used. Each usage of the power costs one point of reserve energy.

The number of points the character can use determines the amount of reduction the character can claim. Use the chart below to determine the energy points/reduction rate relationship.

Energy Points

Energy Points	Reduction Rate
1	5
2	4
3	3
4	2
5	1

So, a character who has *x-ray eyes*, with an adventure cost of three, might decide to have only four energy points — this would mean he could use *x-ray eyes* only four times during an adven-

ture, but he’d only have to pay the minimum adventure cost of one possibility for his power.

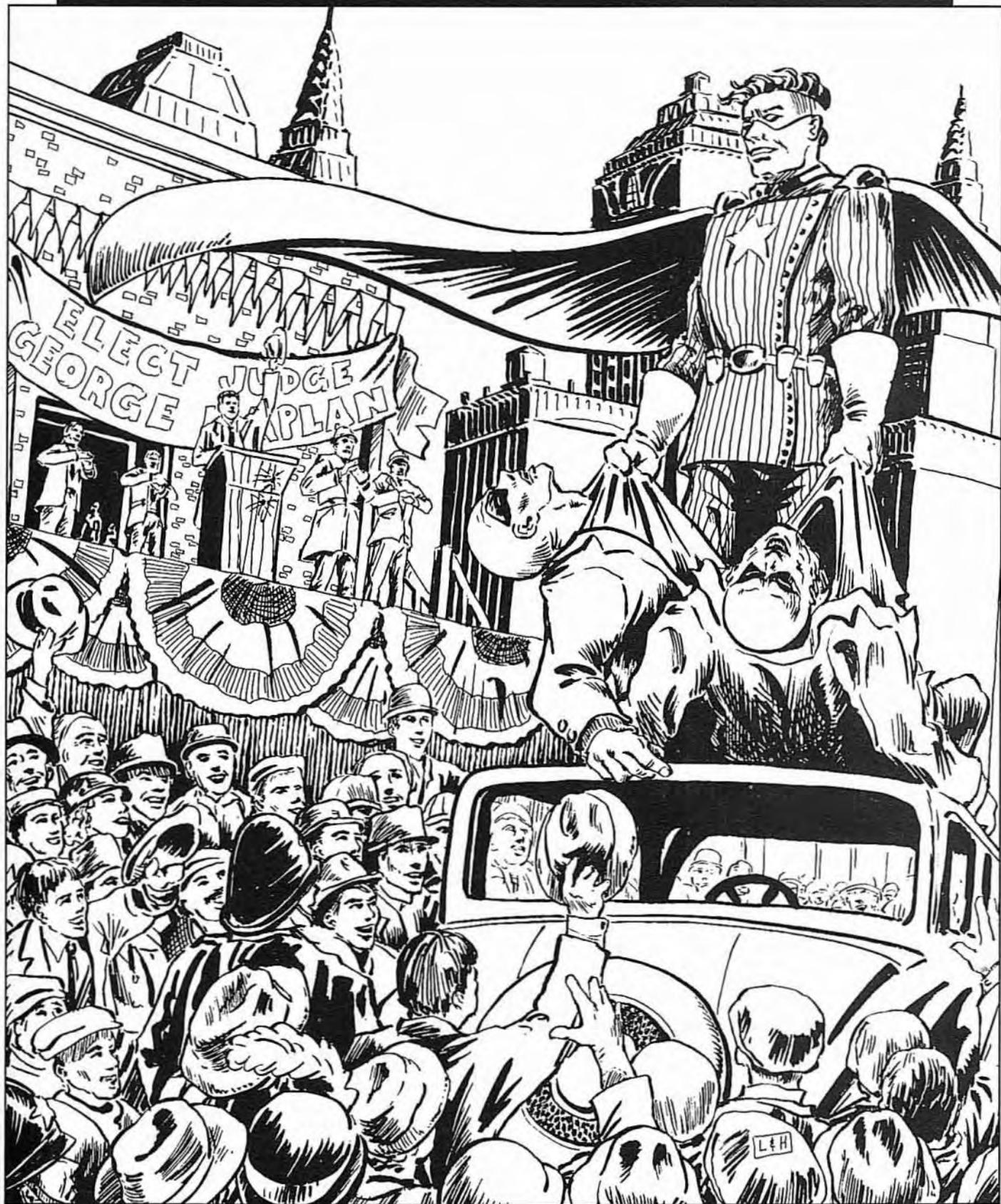
Power Limitations: Players and gamemasters may work together to limit power effects, ranges, and abilities if they want. These are good ways to produce reductions. For example, *water breathing* has an adventure cost of two points and the character can breathe underwater indefinitely. Perhaps, instead, the character can only breathe underwater for one hour before having to come up for air — that might reduce the cost of the power by one point.

Power limitations should be taken on a case-by-case basis (which is why they aren’t expanded upon here). Power limitations should be *real* limitations. In the above example, if the gamemaster didn’t think the character would ever have to spend more than an hour underwater (and decided then and there to never make this a necessity in an adventure), he might not award the reduction. Either that, or he might decide ten minutes was a good duration.

Limitations can make powers less useful, characters less skillful, or their use less versatile. The above example is a good one of making a power less useful — the character can only stay underwater for a limited amount of time. Another power limit might be a limit on a skill or action value. For example, the *chameleon* power has a *Charisma*+5 action value. Perhaps, if the power was only equal to the character’s *Charisma*, it would be worth one less possibility (four points instead of five). An example of a less versatile power could be given for *telekinesis*. Normally, TK can be used to lift anything (other than a person) or block missile attacks. Perhaps a suggested limitation would be that the character can only use TK to block missile attacks. That would probably reduce the cost of TK by two points (since the character only gains the benefit of the weaker half of the power).

Situational Modifiers: Instead of





Jaime Lombardo & Ron Hill



having an *activation*, perhaps the character has to wait for a particular *situation* to present itself before he can use his power. For example, the character might only be able to use his power at night, when enraged, or after eating a good meal. Depending on the situation, the gamemaster can award reduction to the adventure cost.

Situational modifiers are handled the same way as *power limitations*. The gamemaster judges how difficult the

situation will make the character's life (and use of the power) and give it a reduction rate comparable to that.

Using Reduction Rates

Always be cheap when awarding reductions for powers when you have to make judgement calls. Players will, naturally, try to come up with situations and limits that give their characters the most benefit for the least cost.

As the gamemaster, you have to come up with ways to make them *pay* for their reductions. The gamemaster should keep notes on situational modifiers and limitations and other flaws, making sure to work them in as often as possible.

Linking Powers and Flaws

Normally, every flaw must be linked to a particular power. A power can have multiple flaws, but, normally, flaws only affect one power at a time. However, if you want to get tricky, you can allow characters to link flaws and powers to get better numbers and more creative flaws.

For example, *mega-sight*, *mega-scent*, and *swimming* all have adventure costs of three. If a character were built with these powers, he might want to defer the cost of the powers with some flaws. But, because of the "minimum cost of one" rule, he could only take three two-point flaws (or up to six one-pointers) as a maximum. Not terribly exciting.

But, if the gamemaster wanted, he could do the following: the character could "link" the powers. The player would agree that, whenever he paid the cost for the powers, he would pay the cost for *all* the powers *at once*, instead of when he used them. So, if he needed *swimming*, he would pay for *mega-sight* and *mega-scent* at the same time (a total of nine points).

So far, no benefit.

However, because the powers are "linked," the character can have flaws that affect *all three* powers equally, or even unequally but in a semi-balanced manner (we recommend the former, but it won't always work out). This would, effectively, mean he could buy a few big flaws instead of lots of little ones, applying the reduction against the whole nine-point adventure cost instead of the three three-point costs.

Example: Water Lord has the powers mentioned above at an adventure cost of nine Possibilities. He wants to have a big flaw that affects all his powers so he can reduce the cost of the whole



Scott Rosema



package at once. He agrees to pay the final cost the first time he uses any of the powers during an adventure.

The flaw he selects is burnout. Whenever Water Lord uses his powers, there is a chance he will overload his senses/abilities and lose his powers. He decides that he can lose his powers on a die roll of four or lower, until the end of the adventure. That's a total reduction rate of 6, meaning Water Lord only has to pay three possibilities for his powers as an adventure cost.

Multiple flaws may be linked to multiple powers, with the following rules: all linked powers are *forever linked* (barring gamemaster intervention). What happens to one power happens to them all. Flaws cannot affect individual powers within a link without express gamemaster approval (which is not recommended — it leads to a terrible amount of bookkeeping), and powers cannot be moved in and out of a link.

Finally, the minimum adventure cost for a complete link is the number of powers in the link. Since no power can have a modified adventure cost of less than one (no matter what), each power in the link has to cost at least one point. The character must *always* pay this adventure cost to keep *any* of the powers. If Water Lord, from the example above, needs *swimming* but not his other two powers — tough, he has to pay the cost for all three anyway, or go without. "Fading powers" (see "Maintaining Powers" above) are also handled on a link basis — though the gamemaster may wish to make an exception here. If Water Lord went several adventures without using his *swimming* power, but he used *mega-scent* and *mega-sight* quite often, the gamemaster might want to begin to "fade" *swimming* out of the picture — with game mechanics and modifiers assigned as he sees fit.

Ords and Powers

Ninety-nine out of one hundred characters with pulp powers are Possibility-rated. Most Ords who have powers have them only through gizmos (given to them by Possibility-rated characters "on loan"). Henchmen, sidekicks, etc. might have gizmos that emulate the use of powers.

But what about that one-in-a-hundred? How does he pay his adventure cost?

Simple: the gamemaster *cheats*.

Every once in a while, you may decide an Ord in your campaign should have a power for some reason or other. Usually, the character gains the power through the course of an adventure and then gets to become a Possibility-rated character at some point (or dies). But, in the meantime, how do you rationalize his or her use of a pulp power? The character can't pay the adventure cost. Who does?

The cost is paid in one of two ways: First, a powerful character might choose to use weird science to "bestow" powers on a character. Usually evil characters will do this (anybody seen *Frankenstein* or any of a number of pulp movies?), since this is the trademark of Mad Scientists (experimenting with the helpless, the innocent ... oh, the humanity!). Besides, it's *dangerous*.

In that case, the Mad Scientist pays the initial adventure cost (not the one possibility per power *acquisition* cost — the actual *adventure* cost) for his experiment. Perhaps this is why experiments are almost always flawed — Mad Scientists are notoriously cheap with their resources. The character can use the power until the end of the adventure. By that time, the character is either dead (he went evil and got killed or martyred himself for good),

Possibility-rated (the character makes a choice for Good or Evil and becomes a Terran hero or Pulp villain), or loses the power and returns to normal ("saved"!). Where we go from there is anybody's guess.

The other option is the creation of a new character. Nobody pays the adventure cost — no individual, that is — the *cosm of Terra* does! The way this works is simple: the Terran Law of Drama is keeping things moving. For some reason, possibility energy was building up and it needed an outlet. To get the Law of Drama moving again, the Everlaws of the Infiniverse trigger an event that causes some poor slob to be struck by lightning, bitten by a radioactive insect, rocketed from a distant planet, scared half to death by a flying rodent ... whatever. The upshot of this is that the character spontaneously gains pulp powers, and the cosm takes over the cost. In most cases, the character becomes Possibility-rated pretty darn fast (suddenly, you're stronger than an elephant, faster than a train, and more handsome/beautiful than a star/starlet — are you going to go about your daily business as normal?). In the event that the bozo *doesn't* do anything to make the jump, then the powers eventually wear off (this shouldn't happen in a Terra adventure) or the sap is killed by someone who can detect the change and wants to find out why it happened (serves the jerk right for not using his/her powers).

So That's It

The next chapter covers pulp sorcery, the magic of Terra, and Chapter Eight discusses gizmos and gadgetry. Read over those two sections before coming up with a Terran hero — they have some interesting suggestions as well.



Chapter Seven

Pulp Magic



Blackness fell over the countryside. It wasn't the blackness of night or the dim shades of gray generated by heavy clouds, but the kind of blackness that comes only when the sun is blotted out by an unnatural presence. Such a blackness came as the hoards of demon flies arose from their late-morning slumber to once again feast upon the livestock of the local village. Such was the blackness as it had been everyday at noon since the town mistakenly angered a wandering minstrel, a wandering minstrel by the name of Blackheath the Terrible.

— Prologue, "Blackheath the Terrible," *Tales of Magic* #12

Magic and sorcery have long played a part in the world of the pulps. These were tales of strange beings with unexplainable powers, some of heroic proportions, some of quiet, mechanical genius, and others of more mystical origins. Throughout pulp fiction, one could find many strange hermits sitting quietly in their mountaintop retreats, practicing arts long thought lost to modern society. But on Terra, these hermits don't merely exist on pages of fiction — these strange hermits truly exist in the real world. Among these characters are holy mages, sworn to teach the paths of responsibility, devout scholars who take on those corrupt sorcerers bent on conquering the world through mystical domination, and daredevil sorcerers who seek their own fortune and fame through life-threatening adventures.

Throughout Terran adventures, characters are bound to show up who want to add their own unique flair to their pulp powers by expressing them in more mystical ways. They don't

necessarily want follow the same paths as a mountaintop hermit and they certainly don't want follow sterile sciences of the gadgeteers. But somewhere in between, they want to find a happy medium. Enabling them to do this is specialized pulp power known as *Pulp Sorcery*.

Magic vs. Pulp Sorcery

In order to mimic this seeming contradiction in occult philosophy, two different styles exist on Terra. Just like technology, which has been segregated into the normal and the weird, Terran wizardry has been divided into two schools, *Magic* and *Pulp Sorcery*. Practitioners of the first school are known as magicians while, appropriately enough, the second school is followed by sorcerers. We start by discussing Terra and its relationship with *magic*.

The Magic of Terra

On realms such as Aysle and Orrorsh, the standard style of magic has become accepted. Mages and gypsies cast fireballs and weave fortunes with little effort. It is in their very nature. It is their worlds' nature. Terra has a *Magic* axiom of 11. A realm with an axiom of 11 means that characters in it are capable of a wide range of spells. Alterations, minor conjurations, and divinations are all possible. Therefore, Terra supports many of these magics. Any standard spell of an axiom level of 11 or less can occur on Terra without contradiction. It also means that anyone from another realm, such as Aysle, which supports magic, will



Egyptian Magic

Mobius' Egyptian magic is a actually a factor of his own realm (Khem) and not Terra's. However, because of the natural link between Khem and Terra, Egyptian magic is not a contradiction in Terra, even if the axiom level of the spell cast is over Terra's level (Khem/The Nile Empire only has a *Magic* axiom of 12 anyway).

be able to continue to practice their skills on Terra.

This doesn't seem much of a contradiction yet. But remember I said *Terra* supports magic, not *Terrans* support magic. At least not without help. Although the pulps were filled with masters of the occult, they did not reach their road easily. Apprentices spent long years in their master's retreats studying long hours and painful days. This is because Terra does not share its penchant for magic easily.

Hundreds of years ago Terra fully supported "normal" magic. The tales of lost Atlantean sorcerers and medieval mages were based in fact. Merlins and LeFays were regularly winning the wars for their kings hundreds of years ago. But as the world aged, their magic became lost in the hustle and bustle of modern society. People became more concerned with that which they could prove. The age of Industrialization and Science was disastrous to the age of magic. No longer did families fear the night. It was brightly lit by gaslights and the demons of yesteryear were cast into the shadows. Long sweatshop hours simply didn't allow people to have the time to fear the unknown. The struggle for normal life was hard enough. Therefore, Terrans lost their ability to use and recognize magic. Their world still allowed it, but their own abilities were extinguished as they sold out to science.

In game terms, this means there are very few believers in magic in Terra. Those that do exist are people whose

obsession or natural abilities have led them to seek out knowledge at great cost. Most of the magicians of Terra belong to secret societies, cults, or other organizations and seek to mask their abilities. This is wise — magicians would be treated in much the same way as pulp characters are by the governments, and they are not usually as capable of defending themselves — especially when their powers first manifest.

The most recent upsurge in magic was caused, not surprisingly, by Dr. Mobius. His resurrection of Egyptian mythology brought with it the powers of Egyptian magic (as described in *The Nile Empire*). That is the only major magic system known in Terra — others are crude derivations of magic similar to that of Aysle.

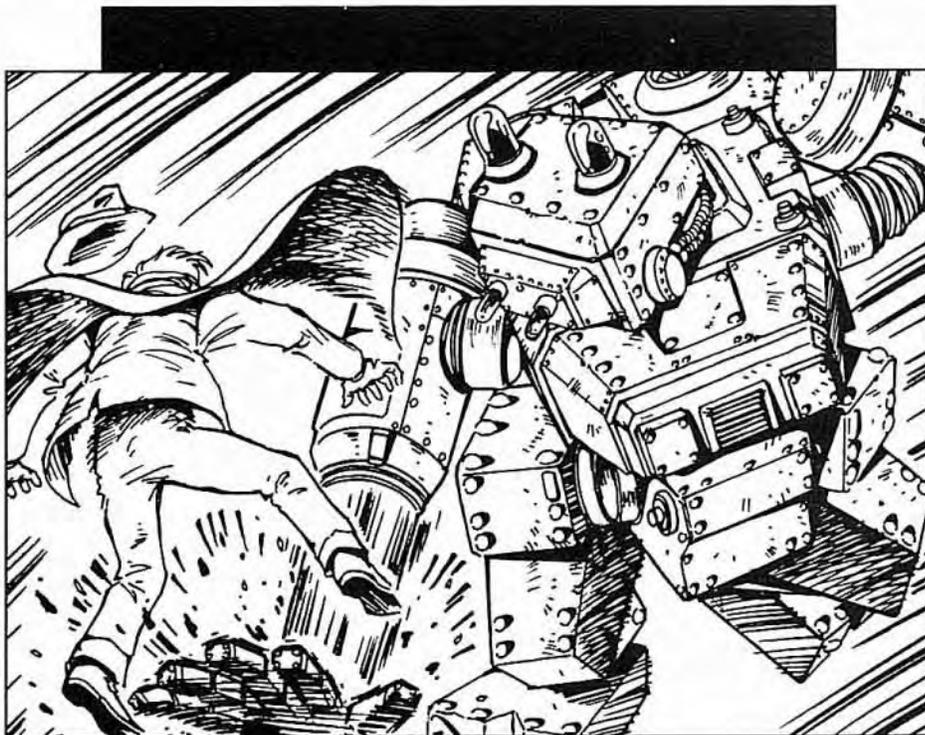
How Does One Learn Magic?

The answer is relatively simple. For any caster from another realm, magic works exactly the same. Ayslish mages

still have their arcane knowledges and magical skills and Nile mathematicians still have their planets to align. They generate totals versus their difficulties and backlashes just as they would back at home. All they have to worry about is disconnection and exceeding the axiom limit of 11.

For Terran mages, the case is the same. In supporting the magic of other realms, it also supports the magical systems of other realms. The "ways of the ancient world" are reflected in a Terran student's ability to learn from reading ancient scrolls, tomes and receiving the guidance of their masters. This also any Terran character to learn the standard magical skills of *alteration*, *apportation*, *conjunction* and *divination* (or *mathematics* and *engineering* if the student is using the Nile Empire/Egyptian magic system). Along with this ability, they can learn all of the arcane knowledges and any spells based upon them just as any other realmrunner can.

Spell creation, however, can be a problem. Since full-powered conjuration is not open to Terran spell casters,



Malcolm Hee



spell creation is haphazard at best. When a character designs a spell (using the magic system presented in *Aysle* or *Pixaud's Practical Grimoire*) he or she should expect some problems with the spell.

Most often, these "problems" take the form of *side effects*. In addition to possibly taking backlash from a spell created on Terra (at any time) or by a Terran mage, the gamemaster should check to see if a side effect occurs.

After a spell has been cast, but before its effect is described, flip over the top card on the Drama Deck. Check the appropriate action line (standard or dramatic) and look next to the appropriate side (player or gamemaster).

If there is a line there (no effect), then no side effect occurs. Every other result causes something strange to happen. See the "Side Effects" chart for details.

Note that these effects do not apply the same way combat round effects do — they only interact with the spell. They may affect the rest of the characters involved, but only by affecting the spell.

Pulp Sorcery

Across the mystic arts table from magic is sorcery. This form of spell-casting has its basis amongst pulp

powers. A new power, *sorcery*, functions as a "cap" power to all of the other pulp powers and, because it is a pulp power, causes no contradiction on Terra when being used. The basic background behind how *sorcery* works is that a pulp sorcerer mimics the abilities of other pulp powers by creating pseudo-magical rituals. For instance, instead of purchasing the *flight* power, our villain-of-the-day, the Drifter, purchased the *sorcery* power and created a *flight* ritual.

Purchasing Sorcery

To initially get the *sorcery* power, a player purchases it during character creation for one possibility — just like any other pulp power. Afterwards, the adventure cost of *sorcery* is variable. The base cost of *sorcery* is 6 possibilities per adventure. Adding to this, a sorcerer must calculate the cost of his *rituals*. For each pulp power that is mimicked, increase the adventure cost of *sorcery* by the mimicked power's cost *minus two*, with a minimum cost increase of 1. And, because *sorcery*'s adventure cost does depend on the rituals used, the total cost may vary from adventure to adventure.

For example, in his first adventure, the Drifter utilized his *sorcery* to cast spells mimicking the pulp powers of *brainbuster*, *fear* and *sense magic*. This means his adventure cost would have been 10 — 6 for the base *sorcery* + 1 (3-2 for *brainbuster*) + 2 (4-2 for *fear*) + 1 (minimum 1 for *sense magic*). On his next adventure, however, the Drifter found that he didn't need to *sense magic* and ended up only paying 9 for his *sorcery* and the two powers.

There are two final notes on *sorcery*'s cost. First, *sorcery* can be used with the alternate power flaws listed in Chapter Six. However, this may only be used to modify *sorcery* and not any other powers mimicked by sorcery rituals — no linking is allowed. This is because many of the alternate power flaws have been converted into ritual modifiers (see below) to further enhance the flavor of *sorcery*.

Side Effects

Action Line Effect	Side Effect
Flurry	The spell goes off as expected, but with some extra, fast-paced benefit (the spell works faster, doubles its effect, or whatever the gamemaster thinks is a proper <i>flurry</i> reaction)
Inspiration	The character takes no backlash, no matter what the result of the skill total
Up	If the character's spell succeeded, all characters on the same side receive an up for their next action. If it failed, then all characters on the other side receive an up for their next action.
Break	If a villain receives a <i>break</i> result after casting a spell, all magical ability "leaves" him until the end of the scene or until he gets an <i>inspiration</i> result from some source.
Confused	The spell goes wild. Bizarre effects occur, probably having nothing to do with the spell's normal effect. Things go very wild for a round.
Fatigued	The character automatically takes two points of shock from additional backlash, regardless of whatever skill total he achieved.
Setback	The spell "blows up" in the caster's face. Double the backlash. Other effects are as normal.
Stymied	The spell, if it worked, peters out in half the duration, or has half the normal effect (gamemaster's option — attack spells should nearly always have half effect).





Jaime Lombardo & Ron Hill

Second, you have to have a system by which characters learn new rituals and begin the game with rituals. When the sorcery power is purchased, it only allows the character to learn rituals and cast them — there are no actual rituals automatically learned.

Before beginning adventuring, a character can purchase up to three rituals for one possibility each — just as if he were picking more powers. He has to pay the adventure cost when he uses them, but at the reduced rate for sorcery (above).

After the initial adventure, characters can learn more rituals only by seeking out and finding sources for sorcery spells. Gamemaster character-teachers are a good source, as are ancient books of knowledge and otherworldly demons. Pulp heroes and weird scientists are no help — they achieve their powers through weird science, not sorcery.

When a character finds a teacher or a source of knowledge, he may pay the adventure cost of the new ritual (modified by the *sorcery* cost formula) to learn the new ritual between adventures, or the actual adventure cost of the ritual to learn the ritual immediately.

Example: The Supreme Sorcerer finds an ancient grimoire in the middle of an adventure on Terra. It holds the key to the ritual of illusion. The Sorcerer can either take the book and learn the ritual between adventures — when it will cost him the adventure cost of the power illusion (6), minus two, possibilities, or he can pay the whole six right now and have the illusion ritual right away.

If a character learns a ritual immediately, he can use it immediately (usually, it takes some time to learn a ritual, but the gamemaster can “bend” this if

it suits the Law of Drama), but he has to not only spend the possibilities to learn it, but the adventure cost of the ritual to use it — just as if it were one of his normal rituals. Learning a ritual and using it immediately can be a heavy-cost enterprise.

Using Sorcery in an Adventure

Despite the minor complications with adventure cost, *sorcery* is fairly simple in its usage. In order to mimic the kind of on-the-fly casting of the 1930’s novels, a sorcerer develops a free-form casting ritual. To do this, the sorcerer first finds the mimicked pulp power’s base ritual difficulty. After finding this, the sorcerer then is given the option of including various ritual modifiers to generate special effects and add atmosphere to the magical





Scott Rosema

style. The sorcerer then generates a quick *pulp power: sorcery* total against the final ritual difficulty with success and results being determined just as in the mimicked powers normal use.

Note: The base ritual difficulties for existing pulp powers are listed on page 75 for all pulp powers that can be used as rituals (virtually all of them). The difficulty numbers deliberately run high so as to encourage the use of the modifiers to flavor spellcasting (multiple modifiers can be placed on the same ritual). Try to imagine Hadji (from the cartoon show *Jonny Quest*) without his trademark “Sim sim Salabim!” command and you get the idea of what spells without modifiers are like. A few examples on ritual modifications follow; more can be added as players and gamemasters come up with them.

Ritual Modification

Simply subtract the modifier from the ritual difficulty of the ritual. No

ritual can have its difficulty cut by more than *half* its base difficulty.

Material component: A ritual’s difficulty can be modified by requiring the usage of specific material to contribute to the spell’s formation. The degree of modification depends on the accessibility of the component.

Multiple components may be used in a ritual, as long as each component is, in the gamemaster’s judgement, unique. Material components may also be disallowed if there is no reason for

their inclusion. For example, a ritual involving *electro-blast* might involve the character holding a lightning rod (average, -1 to ritual), but why would the blood of a virgin help? If the explanation is more than a few lines, then it doesn’t fit.

Verbal Command: Modifiers can be made depending on the difficulty of a command word, phrase or incantation. If the caster is gagged or cannot utter the phrase, the ritual can not be used.

Multiple voice commands cannot be used — they are just more complex ones. However, voice commands don’t always have to make sense. Nonsense words and doggerel poetry are often used by pulp sorcerers, and reading an effect backwards is one of the great old ways of performing sorcery in the pulps.

Physical Gestures: If the caster desires, he can get himself into the ritual by requiring the usage of motions such as hand gestures or other physical movements. Speech or mouth movements are not applicable as they are covered under “Verbal Commands,” above.

Multiple gestures can be employed, as long as they are distinctly different — otherwise, they are just more complex gestures.

Extended Casting Time: The default casting time for a ritual is one round (this does not count any sorcery advanced flaws, such as application time). The round in which a ritual is cast is the same round in which it takes

Gesture Modifiers

Modifier	Action
-0	No gesture
-1	Simple gesture that in most cases can not be prevented easily (a head nod, a pointing finger, etc.).
-2	Gestures that can be inhibited fairly easily (complex hand gestures, foot movements, etc.).
-3	Complex gestures which require a <i>Dexterity</i> total of 6 or better to perform (a complex dance, an acrobatic maneuver, etc.).
-4	More complex gestures that require a <i>Dexterity</i> total of 12 or greater.



Sacrifice Modifiers

Modifier	Sacrifice
-0	No sacrifice is required.
-1	Small animal (bat, mouse, fish). This works well as a "cauldron" ritual for witches.
-2	Large animals (goats, cows).
-4	Dangerous animals (Tiger, Cobra). This level of sacrifice should require some danger and often a skill roll (though not always) to kill the creature.
-6	Live person.
-7	Virginal person.

Verbal Modifiers

Modifier	Phrase
-0	No phrase
-1	Single word (abracadabra, allakazam)
-2	Simple phrase or rhyme. This phrase must be based upon the specific conditions during casting time (light for night, fire for spire, Blackness leave Loch Ness, Wisdom of Solomon aid me, etc.).
-4	Complex phrase or incantation. Such a phrase must be read or recalled from memory. If memorized, a <i>Mind</i> roll vs. 12 must also be made either before the ritual is cast or as a multi-action.
-6	Reading from a passage or incantation in an unknown tongue. This must be read <i>and</i> a <i>Mind</i> vs. 15 must be made to utter the phrase correctly.

Base Ritual Difficulties for Pulp Powers

Pulp Power	Ritual DN	Pulp Power	Ritual DN
absolute vision	23	mega hearing	23
adrenaline	24	mega scent	25
animal companion	24	mega sight	23
animal friend	24	mind control	28
brainbuster	26	mind reading	28
chameleon	27	power drain	29
claws	23	power neutrality/ resistance	26/31
darkness	25	regeneration	30
dark vision	23	running	20
dazzle	18	sense danger	28
dispersal	31	sense magic	15
electro-ray	26	shrinking	28
emotion control	28	360° sight	23
far vision	22	sonar	23
fear	26	sonic scream	28
fire blast	30	super attribute	25
flight	22	super skill	14
fog screen	19	swimming	18
force field	30	telecommunication	24
gravity control	27	telekinesis	27
grow	30	teleportation	30
ice blast	30	wall walking	25
illusion	29	water breathing	23
invisibility	30	webs	26
jump	20	withering touch	35
magnetism	25	x-ray eyes	23

Note: Any pulp powers not listed here are not normally available as rituals, but gamemasters may choose to overrule that decision and create DNs for those rituals. If so, then use the above numbers as examples.

Material Modifiers

Modifier	Component*
-0	Easily obtained (no component, rocks, cloth, paper)
-1	Average (cooking ingredients, fire, herbs, blood)
-2	Medium (rare herbs, live animals, precious metals, personal possessions, blood of a virgin)
-3	Hard (the blood of a virgin born during the first full moon of the year)
-4	Very Hard (the blood of a virgin born during the first full moon in 1921)
-6	Extremely Hard (the blood of a virgin born during the first full moon of 1921 at precisely 12 midnight)
-8	Virtually impossible (the blood of a child born three hundred years ago)

*Material components do not include live animals or people used in sacrifices. That is a separate modifier detailed below.





Jaime Lombardo & Ron Hill

effect. However, a pulp sorcerer can reduce his difficulty by increasing his casting time. The spell then takes affect at the end of this casting time.

For every extra *round* the character must take to perform the ritual, subtract one from the ritual difficulty. So, if a ritual had a difficulty of 25, and the character took five rounds to perform it, the difficulty would be 21 (the last

round is the round the effect occurs and is not an "extra" round). If the caster performs any other skill use during this time (even though he is only going to have to make one sorcery roll for the whole effect), the entire time is wasted and the sorcery attempt fails.

Fatigue: For every point the charac-

ter reduces the difficulty by, he takes one shock point. If the character goes unconscious during the use of the ritual, the ritual still takes effect (if possible). Possibilities can be spent to keep the character from going out, as if the character were taking damage normally.

Sacrifice: This modifier can only be taken by those of Evil Inclination. The modifier is conferred when the sacrifice is killed.

In order for sacrifices to work, the sacrifice must be made right before the ritual is cast. Also, the sacrifice must be conscious and aware of what is going on — being bound or even drugged is okay, as long as the character is aware of what is happening. Mind-affecting drugs do not allow for good sacrifices.

Two additional modifiers: willing sacrifices ("life person" or "virginal person" only) add an additional five to the modifier (a willing virgin would have a total modifier of -12), but the character must be really willing. Heroes can do this to save their friends (willing under coercion), and fanatical followers can also accomplish this.

Other Modifiers: Come up with whatever you want. Most modifiers should range between one and five points, and only very unusual modifiers should subtract more from the ritual difficulty.

The Permanence of Modifiers

Once a modifier is built into a ritual, that's it. If the Drifter has a flight ritual that involves a sacrifice, that's the only way it can be used. Other modifiers cannot be added on, and the sacrifice cannot be avoided. Characters can learn multiple rituals with the same effect, but those are exactly that: different rituals. Rituals cannot be changed once they are initiated.



Chapter Eight

Gadgets and Gizmos



In *The Nile Empire* sourcebook, there is an involved gadget-creation system designed for use with the weird science realm. This system was used by Dr. Mobius when he created his first gizmos, and by Dr. Frest when he began his research. It is the same system that produced the first Rocket Ranger suits, and many of the gizmos and gadgets that have been seen in the Nile Empire and on Terra since.

This is not that system.

The Evolution of Weird Science

Dr. Mobius was a madman and an evil genius. No one will seriously debate the fact that he was the father of weird science. Certainly, there were other inventors who used some of the basic principles of weird science in their experiments — John Franklin, discoverer of electricity, had to use weird science to control his initial experiments; Hank Ford's first automobile had elements of weird science in it; and even Johnson Carver, a pioneer in agriculture, used weird science chemicals to increase the nutritional value of many vegetables and fruits.

But all of these famous men found, as others had before, that weird science was too unpredictable, too bizarre in its effects, to harness on a regular basis. Abandoning their "frivolous" experiments, they used hard work and "real" science to create more lasting wonders. All throughout history — from Aristotle to Galilei —

weird science has been the dream, *real* science the reality.

Until Dr. Mobius.

Mobius was strange enough, desperate enough, and talented enough to discover rules for the unruly wonders of weird science. His principles and laws formed the basis for Dr. Frest's research. They were able to harness what others could not tame.

But they did it in such a *strange* way.

The Confusion of Weird Science

After Dr. Frest's kidnapping by Dr. Mobius (indeed, about the time Mobius left to conquer other realities), a young woman was interning at the GAWSI lab in Pittsburgh. Her name was Dr. Emily Blachek, a young scientific prodigy of Italian-Czech origin. She had fled the terror of the Great War in Europe with her parents, and now she was giving her all to help her country. Like Maria Curie, she was a female pioneer in what was predominantly male world.

Socially, this was a disaster. Dr. Blachek was younger than any other scientist at GAWSI by over ten years (she was nineteen when she started), and her male peers and overseers strove to keep her down. Instead of being the head of a project, she was always the "swing man" (a sexist title in and of itself), forced to move from one project to another. And, since the remaining GAWSI scientists lacked the ingenuity and abilities of Dr. Frest, this usually meant she moved from one mess to another, cleaning things



up as she went — and getting less pay than the other scientists and hostility instead of respect.

During “down” times (which were frequent), Dr. Blachek spent her time performing experiments and tinkering with broken or abandoned gadgets. Since she was only considered an intern with the GAWSI project, she was not given material request permission or funds. She had to work with the cast-offs of others. And so she did — late into the night and early in the morning. She buried herself in her work, letting it become the outlet for her frustrations and energies.

And, as many great scientists discover, all Dr. Blachek’s work culminated in one bright flash of inspiration. While working on a particularly annoying gadget, she discovered something no one else had ever found before — weird science, the way Dr. Mobius and Dr. Frest had developed it, and the way GAWSI scientists tried to mimic it, was *wrong*.

Or, at least, not as right as it could be.

The Blachek Streamline

Though it would never be officially called by this name, Dr. Emily Blachek’s notes called her “weird science revisions” the “Blachek Streamline,” and that’s what it was. Dr. Blachek found that many of the “principles” of weird science could have their “fat” boiled away and disposed of, making the gadgets and gizmos created much more reliable and easier to produce. Not as easy as “real” science, of course, but easier than they were.

The final note regarding Dr. Emily Blachek is this: after perfecting her process, she took it to the United States Patent Bureau and, somehow, got it authorized. As it turned out, because Dr. Blachek was only regarded as a lowly intern and not a full scientist, a loophole in her work contract allowed her to do this — and the GAWSI agents

who always patrolled the patent bureaus must have been out to lunch. After doing this, she revealed her new process to her seething “superiors,” leased it to them for a huge amount of cash, and disappeared.

Three days later, Pittsburgh was hit by the “meteor” from outer space, and the GAWSI lab Dr. Blachek worked at was totally destroyed. Rumor has it

she left for South America and has been performing experiments there since. GAWSI has been, thus far, unable to locate her.

And so, this chapter has been reconstructed and revised from her notes. The basic weird science principles (as presented in *The Nile Empire* sourcebook) are the same, but there have been a few changes.



Jaime Lombardo & Ron Hill



Gadgets and Gizmos

In Dr. Blachek's notes, she distinguished gadgets and gizmos—the products of weird science. Dr. Blachek always thought of gadgets as the “permanent” creations of weird science—stable items like Dr. Zap's Flight Belt, the Crimson Cloak's Bow & Arrows, and Colonel Cairo's Ball & Chain—and gizmos as impermanent, unstable, “one-shot” creations of weird science—such as those used by Professor Furioso (his “disappearing powder” and the “Serum of Strength,” being two of the most notable of his creations) and several other weird scientists.

Gadgets take longer to make than gizmos, and they often require more components and more research. Gizmos are extensions of weird science principles, but in a very raw form. They are built to be used once, and once only, and then they break down or are used up and have to be constructed again.

[**Note:** Since the terms “gadget” and “gizmo” are used interchangeably everywhere else in *Torg* supplements, only *this chapter* will use the definitions presented here without further explanation. Unless otherwise specified, other *Torg* products will refer to “gadgets” and “gizmos” as the same thing.]

The Makings of a Gadget

All gadgets have a skeleton of components that they are built around. These are listed here, along with their descriptions.

List every component you have on a copy the “Gadget/Gizmo Construction Check Sheet” on page 91. If there isn't enough room, write on the back.

The Housing

The *housing* of a gadget is what the gadget is “built into.” This could be an item of clothing (a belt, a cloak, a hat, a suit of armor, etc.), a weapon (gun, club,

spear, etc.), a vehicle (car, plane, etc.) or anything else you can think of.

In most cases, the housing is an actual item with some function before the weird scientist gets hold of it. Professor Furioso's Rocket Plane was a standard aircraft before he modified it; Colonel Cairo's Ball & Chain was a pretty nice weapon before it was made better; and Dr. Zap's Flight Belt was a really gaudy, oversized belt before he tinkered with it.

Sometimes, however, the housing has to be built from scratch. An electro-ray might be shot out of a specially-made steel pole or a sleep-gas could be produced by the mixing of two strange elements in a specially-designed container. But, even there, you might want to just use a lightning rod and a beaker.

The reason you need to know what the housing is is twofold: first, you have to know how big it is, initially, and what it looks like. Secondly, you have to know what its *Toughness* is. Generally, you can guess at that—melee weapons and armor have *Toughness* ratings around their maximum damage/protection values. Standard, everyday items have variable *Toughnesses*—cars and planes are between 15 and 25, depending on their uses, on down to glass and fragile items with *Toughnesses* below five. If all else fails, give the housing a *Toughness* equal to its mass value.

Systems

Many gadgets have more than one *system*. The system is the mechanism by which the weird science effect is achieved. If the gadget is supposed to emulate a pulp power, simply label it by the power name and put the system limit value next to it. Limit values for new pulp powers can be found listed with the power descriptions. Other powers are listed elsewhere.

If the system is simply a *booster* (see “Optional Components” below), then list the attribute it is boosting here. The system value is simply the target of the booster (i.e., if this is a suit of armor that is going to be increased in *Toughness*, you could list it as “Bullet Proof Vest” with a “system value” of “+6/

22”; or, if the system was designed to increase a character's *Strength*, then list the character's current *Strength* here).

Possibility Capacitors

Possibility capacitors provide the reality-shaping energy necessary to make weird science work. Every possibility capacitor holds a small amount of *eternium* (the strange element integral to eternity shards), or *synthesized eternium*. This is the “reality battery” of the gadget and keeps its weird science energy flowing through it. Whatever weird science effects are produced begin with the possibility capacitor.

Note: synthesized eternium is much easier to get than true eternium, but it can cause problems in some systems. In most cases, synthesized eternium breaks down after less than a month of use and the supply has to be replaced. True eternium is, naturally, eternal (unless all the energy is sucked out of it by something like the Omegatron or the Gaunt Man's power).

Optional Components

The following components may or may not be found in various gadgets. They usually are designed not to make the gadget work, but to make it work *better*. In some cases, they are necessary. In others, they are not.

The Power Plant

Many weird science gadgets have mundane usages as well. For example, the legendary Black Car, a weird science-enhanced sedan used by the Whisper, can be driven around town like a normal car—but when it goes into “Whisper Mode,” it is absolutely silent and impossibly fast.

When a weird science gadget is performing “mundane” operations, it gets its energy from a *power plant*. The power plant uses normal fuel (it might be a normal battery or a gas-powered engine) and must, occasionally, be recharged (because of the Law of Drama,





Brian Schomburg



it only usually needs recharging between adventures or at a critical moment). But the power plant is necessary in many gadgets to make the machine work.

Some examples of items that don't need power plants: an invisibility belt, an electro-ray gun, a flight pack, a stealth suit, or a rope-gun. All these items are only used in their "weird science" mode and run entirely off their possibility capacitors.

Some examples of gadgets that do need power plants: any type of vehicle, an automatic door-opener, any gadget working on a timer, or a weird science computer.

Basically, if you have any doubt in your mind as to whether a gadget needs a power plant, it does. There is no harm in putting a "redundant" power plant in — the Blachek Streamline only shaves away scientific fat, not personal error. Such is the way of weird science.

Only one power plant is necessary for any gadget, but more than one power plant may be installed. This might be a good idea sometimes — if you are flying a weird science planet that has auto-targeting guns and you get a *setback* or something that causes your guns' auto-fire power plant to fail, you don't want to have the whole plane shut down because they're running off the same plant, right? So, if you want to have more than one power plant, list it on the Check Sheet, along with the systems it powers. Don't worry about the value right now — that will be filled in later.

Boosters

Other than power plants, *boosters* are probably the most common optional components installed. Boosters are used to "boost" system values past their limits, or to enhance non-systems (like character attributes).

For example, a character who has a weird science suit of armor might want to increase its *Toughness* bonus — or its maximum armor value. Let's say the armor is a Bullet Proof Vest. That has a *Toughness* bonus of +6/22. By

installing a booster, the weird scientist could increase either the "plus rating" of the BPV (the +6) or the "max rating" (the 22) above its normal limit.

Another character might just want to create something that increases his *own Toughness*. This is possible. Maybe he creates a weird science exoskeleton that boosts his *Toughness* by hardening his muscles and epidermis. This would apply the booster against his *own Toughness* value. But, remember, the maximum *Toughness* for any character on Terra is 14 (or 13, if he already has one attribute at 14 normally — see *The Nile Empire* sourcebook). That's the limit value of the boost — the max rating. So, the max rating would have to be increased as well as the character's plus rating (of zero, unless he has natural armor) to make it higher than the limit value.

But always remember the following rule: "one booster, one boost." The Bullet Proof Vest cannot have its plus rating and its max rating increased by the same booster — two (or more) boosters would have to be installed.

But installing boosters affects the performance of the gadget. Boosted gadgets break down much easier, and they are harder to use. This is because they have been boosted past their limits and are much more complex and fragile.

Compensators

Compensators are, in many ways, the companion of boosters. Boosters increase the effect of a gadget, but they also increase the difficulty/fragility of the gadget. Compensators make the gadget more durable and easier to use. They do not affect the gadget's effectiveness at all.

Visually, compensators are strengthening-points and supports that hold the gadget together. A gadget with a lot of boosters has exposed wiring and Van Der Graph generators flickering. A compensator covers the wiring and secures the fastenings, and puts a bulb on that electrical nightmare.

Determine how many compensa-

tors you want to have and what you want them linked to (system-wise), and record this information. If you have more than one system in a gadget, each needs its own compensators (just like each needs its own boosters) if you want to compensate for it.

You may not install compensators on a system with no boosters, and you can never have more than one compensator per booster.

Constructing Gadgets

Now you need to know how to assemble all the parts and put them together into a workable mess.

Step One: Component List

Determine what components you need (if you haven't already done that) and list them on your Check Sheet with any values you know. Use the descriptions above to determine what you want. Then proceed to Step Two.

Step Two: Order of Installation

The order of installation is as follows (optional components are listed in parenthesis):

- The Housing
- The System
- The Possibility Capacitor (The Power Plant)
- (The Boosters)
- (The Compensators)

Step Three: "Installing" the Housing

In most cases, you won't need to do anything here. If you have an object you want to use as the housing, just write down its name, its *Toughness*, and any other pertinent information on the Check Sheet.

At this point, however, you do need to generate your first skill total. Make a *weird science* roll (or *science*, if you are using that) to prepare the housing for its modifications. This is the *Housing Value*, and it is important.





Jaime Lombardo & Ron Hill

The Housing Value is the maximum value for *anything* installed in the housing (except the housing's unboosted *Toughness* — if the *Toughness* of the item, unboosted, is higher than the Housing Value, that's okay. But if the *Toughness* of the housing is going to be boosted, then the maximum boosted value is equal to the Housing Value). The System Value may not be higher than the Housing Value, and it may not be boosted *past* this number. You may spend Possibilities on this roll, and it is recommended that you roll high — since this is the highest value of the entire gadget.

Example: Dr. Seiden has a weird science skill of 15. He wants to create a suit of super-armor, much like the Rocket Ranger Battlesuits. He starts with a housing of full plate armor (Housing Toughness Value 25, with an armor value of +5/25). This

means that, if Dr. Seiden wants to boost the Housing Toughness later on, he'll have to generate a weird science total of more than 25, since that is the current Toughness of the gadget. If he is not going to boost the armor rating later on, then it doesn't matter if the weird science total is less than 25 or not. Dr. Seiden decides to play it safe and go high.

He ends up spending a Possibility and getting a weird science total of 29. That is now the Housing Value and the maximum value for anything in the gadget.

Step Four: Installing the System(s)

First, determine what system, or systems, you are installing in the gadget. If these are systems that emulate pulp powers, write the name of the pulp power under "System" along

with the limit value.

Then, generate a *weird science* total for each system. This is the *System Value* for that system. Each system has its own System Value. If the System Value is higher than the Housing Value, then write in the Housing Value instead — that becomes the System Value.

The System Value(s) may be boosted later on to get higher system limits, until the Boosted System Value equals the Housing Value.

If the system you want to install does not emulate a pulp power, then it is a "booster" system — it "boosts" some attribute or value of your character's or the housing. Do not generate a *weird science* total at this time for the booster system — that is taken care of below, under "Installing Booster Systems."

Example: Dr. Seiden wants to incorporate three systems into his Super



Armor — flight, electro-ray, and mega-sight. He writes each down, along with their limit values:

Flight	12
Electro-ray	7
Mega-Sight	10

Dr. Seiden also wants to enhance the armor's Toughness plus rating, so he can protect the wearer. The armor has an armor value of TOU+5/25, so the limit value is 25.

Extra Toughness 25

Even though "Extra Toughness" is not a weird science power — it is a booster — it has to be listed here, because Dr. Seiden has to note that he is making that modification. The limit value of the armor is 25 — the maximum value for plate armor.

Dr. Seiden generates a weird Science total for each of the systems. He gets a 14 for flight, a 9 for electro-ray, and a 17 for mega-sight. He does not generate a total for the Extra Toughness here, because that is a booster system — it is actually installed below, under "Installing Boosters." He writes the other values in the "System Value" column. If any of these numbers had been higher than 29, the Housing Value, it would have been reduced to 29.

Step Five: The Possibility Capacitor

Possibility capacitors must be hooked up to each system in the gadget, and mounted onto the housing. The base difficulty for hooking a possibility capacitor into the gadget is twelve, plus a "One-on-Many" modifier for each individual system — you can't install one system at a time. There only needs to be one possibility capacitor in a system — indeed, more than one almost always causes an overload — so only one roll needs to be made. You don't need to record the weird science value of the possibility capacitor installation roll; just note that it was installed properly.

If a possibility capacitor is installed incorrectly to some systems but correctly to others, it can either be re-

moved and installed again, or you can strip the useless systems off the gadget. For example, if you were trying to hook five systems into a capacitor, you'd need a weird science total of $12 + 8 = 20$ to hook up all the systems correctly. If you got a total of, say, 17, then you would have gotten three out of the five systems hooked up — the first three listed on your check sheet (so decide what are your most important systems). The other two could be cut right out automatically, or the scientist could try again (trying again takes time — see "Time spent constructing the Gadget," below).

Example: The mad Dr. Seiden (not crazy — he's mad because of how much he had to pay for his possibility capacitor) is going to try to hook up four systems to his capacitor, meaning he'll need to generate a weird science total of 18. He gets a 17, which means his Toughness booster won't be hooked up. Rather than abandon it, he goes through the whole process again and this time gets a high enough total to link all the systems.

(Step Six: The Power Plant)

Installing a power plant is just like installing a possibility capacitor, only easier. For one thing, you can have multiple power plants for multiple systems if you want, so you don't have to generate a "One-on-Many." For another thing, any value is good enough to hook up a power plant to a system — just generate a weird science value for each hook up (separately — you don't even have to do a "One-on-Many" if you have the same power plant running separate systems) and record the Power Plant Value. This value, plus eight, is equal to the amount of time (as read on the Torg Value Chart) the system can operate without being recharged. Subtract two from this value for every system after the first hooked up to the same power plant.

Example: Dr. Seiden did not intend to install a power plant in the Super Armor he is creating, but the gamemaster says he has to, citing that his flight power and his Toughness

system both will use power. While this is not according to the normal rules, Dr. Seiden lets the gamemaster get away with it, because he does not want to be pestered with details at this point.

Dr. Seiden gets an amazing total — a 32 — for his weird science skill roll. He subtracts two for the extra system, for a Power Plant Value of 30.

Unfortunately, this value is higher than the Housing Value of the gadget (which is 29), so it is automatically lowered to 29. Both systems will run for over a day before needing a recharge.

(Step Seven: Installing Booster Systems)

Booster systems are another optional feature used to increase the output of a weird science gadget. Boosters, as described above, increase powers and abilities above and beyond their limit values. There are two types of boosters: power boosters and attribute boosters.

Power boosters increase the effectiveness of powers by increasing their limit values — for example, the pulp power *flight* has a limit value of 12. That means, if a character were wearing an unboosted flight belt, the maximum speed at which he could fly would be at a value of 12 (250 meters) a round (assuming he achieved the maximum System Value for installing the *flight* system).

Power boosters can be installed to bypass that "cap." Simply generate a weird science total against the limit value of the system (or the current System Value, if that is lower), and read the result points on the General Push Results Table, using the Power column. The "plus value" on the push is added to the Limit Value of the power (or, if the System Value is lower, then add it to that). However, the parenthetical "shock value" come into play as well — every time a system is used, it takes a number of shock equal to the shock value of all its boosters (that's once per round). When that shock reaches the



C hanges in Boosters

The reason for the change in the use of boosters comes from the fact that boosters can be very powerful — they can take the limit values of the old system and chuck them right out the window. In pulp fiction, gadgets were always “blowing out” or “overheating” or whatever. They didn’t operate like “normal” science.

If, however, you are uncomfortable in using the new “shock system,” simply allow the gadgets in your campaign to have “booster switches.” By throwing a booster switch, a character can disable the booster on his gun, belt, or whatever, and operate at the limit value (or System Value, if that is lower) of the device.

For example, if a character has a *flight* system with a limit value of 12, but a boosted value of 16, it takes between 6 and 10 shock every round it is used at its boosted value. But, if the character throws the booster switch, it can operate at its limit value of 12 and take *no* shock at all. If the system had multiple boosters, the switch could turn off one or more boosters at a time.

Also, a character might choose to limit the effectiveness of a booster. This is done as if the booster were a push performed by a character. Say a weird scientist gets five result points on the Speed Push Table for an effect of +2(10). He might not want the booster to blow so fast, so he could automatically decrease the effect of the booster to the next highest value — four result points, or +1(1). Then, he could install another booster and do the same thing, getting the same effect but much less shock.

Booster switches have a DN of 15 to install, but they can be installed separately to avoid “One-on-Many” penalties.

Housing Value, the gadget shuts down and needs to be repaired. A *weird science* total equal to 12 plus two for every booster in the system is required to repair a blown system. If the system does not blow, all shock goes away after one minute of disuse — regardless of how much shock has been taken.

Note that only systems actually in use count toward the total shock of the system. For example, if an *electro-ray* gun also has a *darkness* power installed, and both have +3 (6) boosters, when the *electro-ray* is used, it causes the gun to take six shock points but the *darkness* booster gets one round to “heal” since it wasn’t used.

Attribute boosters are used to boost either the attributes of the device, or of the character using the device. For example, a booster might be installed to increase the speed value of a car, or to increase the *Strength* of a character. Two very different gadgets, but really the same system.

A *weird science* total is generated against the Limit Value of the “system” to be boosted and read either on the Speed or Power Push column of the General Push Results Table (whichever is appropriate). The “plus value” is added to the appropriate system, and the “shock value” is recorded.

For example, if a car were having its speed value boosted, the character would read the result points of the push on the Speed column. If the car had a current maximum speed value of 12, and the weird scientist got a 19 for seven result points, the new speed of the car would be 14, with a shock value of 8. The weird scientist could keep that value or reduce it to “+1(1)” if he wanted.

Multiple Boosters

As many boosters as a character wants can be attached to a system. However, their total cannot push the value of the boosted system past the Housing Value, and the character must, most likely, keep track of the additional shock.

When applying a second, or consecutive, booster, use the boosted value as the system or limit value (as appro-

priate) as the DN. This means that applying several boosters to one system gets harder each time.

When armor is boosted, the weird scientist has to decide whether he wants to boost the plus value of the armor or the max rating. Sometimes, he’ll need to apply boosters to both.

For example, a character has a suit of armor with an armor value of TOU+6/19. The character could already have a *Toughness* of 14, making further boosts to the armor’s plus rating useless. Or, the character might have a *Toughness* of 6, making increases to the max rating illogical. Of course, boosters can be applied to each “system” as you wish.

If the plus rating is being boosted, that number is the DN of the boost. So, if the character with the +6/19 armor were boosting the plus rating, he would make a *weird science* total against the DN of 6. The result points would be read on the Power Push Table, and recorded. The shock, in this case is *ignored* — this is one of two exceptions to this rule.

If the max value is being boosted, again, that number is the DN of the *weird science* total, and the results are read on the Power Push Table. Again, add the plus to the max value and *ignore* the shock — the second exception.

More than one booster can be applied to armor as well, or to different systems. *Remember*, the Housing Value is still the limit of the boost — if a character has armor with a boosted value of +8/22, but the Housing Value is 20, then *that* is the max value of the armor. So, if a character with a *Toughness* of 14 were wearing the armor, his armored value would only be 20.

Finally, if a character wants to create a system that boosts his attributes, he constructs a complete booster system. This could be a “Mind Enhancer Helmet” or an “UltraStrength Suit” or whatever. The limit value of the “system” is equal to the limit value of the attribute — 14, if the character does not already have an attribute of 14 (otherwise it would be 13) — and this is the DN of the boost.

The *weird science* total is read against the limit value on the Power Push





Brian Schomburg



Table. The plus rating is added to either the character's attribute or the limit value (depending on which is being boosted). The shock is recorded, and it is applied to the character every time the booster system is used.

For example, a character wants a *Mind*-enhancing helmet. He has a *Mind* of 12 and his limit value is 14. He decides that, since he is so close to the limit value, he will boost the limit value first. The character gets a *weird science* total of 24, for ten result points. That means the character can add +4 to the limit value of his *Mind* attribute when he wears the helmet, but he takes eight shock. He decides to decrease this to +3(6), which is a little better.

Then, he pushes against the boosted limit value to boost his own *Mind* when he wears the helmet. He gets another 24, but this time it's only worth seven result points (since he's performing a multiple boost and has to use the boosted limit as the DN), for a +3(8). He decreases this all the way down to a +1(1), meaning the helmet boosts his *Mind* by +1 whenever he wears it, but it does him seven shock points. Ow!

Finally, when boosters are applied to a system, increase the DN of the system by +1 for each booster. This means that the *Mind*-enhancer, above, would be useless — every time he used the system he'd gain +1 to his *Mind*, but also +1 to the DN of using the system. This means an *electro-ray* gun with two boosters could be shot for greater effect, but it would have to increase the DN of the shot by +2.

Again, armor gets off light — since no DN is being tested by wearing armor, there is no penalty for wearing boosted armor. If the gamemaster wishes, he might want to impose "side effects" — maybe the character gains +3 to the DN of all *Dexterity* actions performed while wearing armor with three boosters.

Note that the DN penalty is applied per booster, not per boosted point. A gun with a +5 and a +3 booster gains +8 to some value, but only +2 to the DN.

Example: Dr. Seiden's Super Armor is coming along. He decides to boost the

electro-ray (currently set at its limit value of 7), and the Toughness of the armor.

Dr. Seiden gets a 19 versus the electro-ray's limit value of 7. That's 12 result points, for a booster of +5(10). The gamemaster reminds him the Housing Value of the armor is 29, so he reduces the boost to +4 (6) — it's new action value is 11. This means Seiden can shoot the electro-ray four times without disabling the electro-ray system.

Dr. Seiden then rolls against the armor's plus value of +5. He gets eight result points this time, for a bonus of +3(6), making the armor value of the Super Armor +8/25. Dr. Seiden doesn't have to worry about the shock of this booster, because that rule does not apply for armor.

Dr. Seiden considers. He has a Toughness of 8. Adding another eight means his armored Toughness will be only 16 — well below the armor's normal max rating of 25. He won't need to boost that. But, he does want some more protection. He decides to install another booster.

This time, Dr. Seiden generates his total versus the DN of the boosted system — 8. He gets five result points, for a bonus of +2(1). Now his armor is rated at +10/25. He stops there.

*The gamemaster notes that the Super Armor has one booster in its electro-ray and two in its Toughness. He declares that there will be a +1 to the DN of all energy weapons attacks performed using the electro-ray, and a +2 to the DN of all *Dexterity* actions the wearer performs (including flight) because the armor's boosters are so bulky.*

(Step Eight: Installing Compensators)

If your system has boosters, you might want *compensators*. A compensator can negate some, or all, or the harmful effects of boosters. However, only one compensator can be installed per system — no matter how many boosters were installed.

The DN for installing a compensator

is the value of the boosted system. So, if a *water breathing* apparatus had a limit value of 6 and a boosted value of 12, the DN to install a compensator would be 12.

There are two ways to install compensators. One way is to use the compensator to reduce the DN penalty caused by a booster or boosters. Generate a *weird science* total against the DN of the installation and read the result points on the Power Push Table. Then, subtract the plus rating from the DN penalty — the minimum DN penalty is 0. Ignore the shock of the compensator-push.

The other way to install compensators is to "cushion" the shock of the boosters. Instead of subtracting the results of the push from the DN modifiers, subtract it from the amount of shock the gadget withstands when used (or the amount of shock it passes on to a character).

But, remember, only one compensator per system. You can't reduce both the DN and the shock caused by the booster.

Also remember, when armor is affected, it is often affected by two different systems. Plate armor boosted from +5/25 to +10/30 has two systems. A compensator can be applied to the plus rating booster and another can be applied to the limit value booster. This goes for attribute boosters as well.

*Example: Dr. Seiden's Super Armor has two boosted systems: the electro-ray has one booster with a DN modifier of +1 and a shock value of 6, and two boosters on the armor's plus rating, adding +2 to the DN of all *Dexterity* actions.*

Dr. Seiden chooses to cut down on the shock from the electro-ray. It's boosted value is 11, so that's the DN. He makes a weird science roll and gets a 16 for five result points. On the Power Push Table, that means he received a +2, which he can subtract from the shock the gun takes when he uses it. Now, the electro-ray gun only takes 4 shock when it is fired.

*Dr. Seiden decides to live with the *Dexterity* penalty.*





Jaime Lombardo & Ron Hill

Step Nine: Totalling the Numbers

At this point, you should add up all the numbers and values and make certain that every component is accounted for. What is the Housing Value of the gadget? Is it the highest value of the gadget (except, possibly, for the gadget's Toughness)? What is the System Value, or are there several System Values?

Is the Possibility Capacitor hooked up to every system? If there is a Power

Plant, how long can it go without recharge, and what is its Value? Are there boosters? Does each booster only boost one value? What are the effects of the boosters (in pluses, DN's, and/or side effects)? Are there compensators? There can only be one compensator hooked into a system, and there have to be boosters on that system.

Finally, anticipate any rules or story questions about the gadget. What does it look like? How big is it? What do I do if "this" happens (fill in "this" with as

many options as possible)? Make up as many rules as you have to, but try to keep things simple.

Caps, Diagrams, and Other Abandoned Rules

So, what happened to those neat diagrams and those strange "caps"? Why were the shock rules changed? Where is *<insert missing rule here>*?

Well, this system is meant to be both a change and a supplement of the *Nile Empire* system. If there are rules missing, or rules you liked that have been replaced with rules you don't like, simply mix and match using that system and this one. Terra's system *should* be a little different from the *Nile Empire's*, for reasons explained above, but it does not *have* to be.

Finally, diagrams are still very useful in constructing gadgets. You can use them if you want, with one exception: *caps* are no longer necessary. Dr. Blachek figured out a way to "build in" caps and regulate leads simply, so that they are no longer necessary.

Time Spent Constructing the Gadget

In general, constructing a gadget using the Terra system should take a time value equal to the Housing Value of the gadget or, if you want to "push" for time, the Housing Value of the gadget minus the Power Push of a *weird science* total versus the Housing Value. So, in the "Dr. Seiden" example, where the Housing Value is 29, it would either take Dr. Seiden a week to construct his Super Armor, or one week minus the result points of his *weird science* total versus the 29 DN (Dr. Seiden has a *weird science* skill value of 15, so good luck).

The minimum time for constructing any gadget is *one hour*, regardless of the results of a push.



Step Failure

If a character fails in a step, or if he gets a result he is not happy with, he may go back and start again at the *beginning* of that step. So, if a character is preparing the housing and generates a Housing Value that is too low for his purposes, he can simply roll again. However, if the same character was at "Installing Booster Systems" and he attached five boosters to various systems before rolling really badly on a booster he needed, he would have to start the *whole step* over again.

This is because weird science is still an inexact science. Blowing a step usually means something *bad* happened — wires fused together, cathode tubes exploded, etc. — or that you have to go in and try a whole new approach if you want a different result. You can't just erase the latest part of the process and start over.

Blowing, or rejecting, a step costs time as well. Every time a character blows a step, he adds 10% onto the construction time of the gizmo — and this is 10% of the original time *value*. So, if the construction time (after any pushing for better time is done) is 20 and two steps are blown, the character adds 10% of the time value of 20 *twice* (2), for a time value of 24.

Adventure Costs and Gadgets

When powers are built into a gadget, the character using the gadget has to pay the normal one possibility to "get" the gadget, and the adventure cost (minus one, minimum of one) in possibilities every time a power is used. So, if a gadget had the power of *dispersal* (adventure cost 5) and *fear* (adventure cost 4), the whole gadget would have an adventure cost of seven (five minus one, plus four minus one). The adventure cost is actually paid as if the character had the powers and was using them (see Chapter Six and *The Nile Empire* sourcebook for more information).

Gadgets can be built with flaws (see Chapter Six as well), and these are applied the same way as regular power flaws. If the power requires an activation time, then the gadget needs to "warm up." If the power causes *fatigue* to the user, then the gadget has "feedback." But the minimum adventure cost for each power is one possibility.

Using the Science Skill

In *The Nile Empire*, characters were able to use the *science* skill to construct gadgets. In Terra, that is only possible to a limited degree. A character can use the *science* skill to construct a gadget that does not use pulp powers. For example, a scientist could boost armor or the speed of a vehicle, but not install the *flight* power in a gadget.

When characters use the *science* skill, they may *only* use the Speed column of the General Push Results Table — they may *never* use the Power Push column. This is because scientists must stay within the bounds of the "nearly possible." Only weird scientists can leap past those bounds.

Damage and Breakdowns

Aside from the booster shock damage noted above, gadgets in Terra use the same rules as in the Nile Empire for taking damage. Breakdowns, however, are caused when the shock damage of a gadget is pushed past its Housing Value — and that is covered above, under "Installing Booster Systems."

Shock "heals" from a gadget all at once. After one minute of "rest" (the gadget has not been used for a minute), the system recovers. Remember, if a gadget has multiple systems, *all* shock goes against the Housing Value *cumulatively*. So, if a gadget takes six shock from firing an *electro-ray*, four shock from firing a *darkness ray*, and five shock from being used to turn invisible, the Housing Value has taken a total of 15 shock.

A minute after the last *electro-ray* shot, six shock heal. A minute after the last *darkness ray* shot, four more shock heal. And a minute after the *invisibility* is turned off, five more shock heal. This shock is different from damage taken from attacks and should be recorded separately.

Finally, *inspirations* and *fatigues* affect gadgets as well, if the character uses the gadget during the appropriate round.

Constructing Gizmos

Gizmos, in the *Terra* sourcebook, are different from gadgets, as explained above. They are "one-shot" or limited-term creations that a weird scientist can whip up on the spur of the moment to use during an adventure.

For example, let's say the adventurers encounter an evil monster in the mountains of Tibet. They have been unable to defeat it, and their normal gadgets have been destroyed or are useless. The weird scientist of the group elects to build a *teleport* gizmo so that one character can go for help.

Building the gizmo works exactly the same way as building a gadget works, with the following important exceptions:

First, the gizmo construction time is equal to the Housing Value of the gizmo, *minus ten*, with a minimum of ten minutes (a push will lower this to a minimum of ten rounds, or 100 seconds, if you want to try it).

Gizmos do *not* require possibility capacitors — the possibility energy necessary for a gizmo's use is taken from either the user or the builder (see below).

Gizmos cannot "heal" shock damage. Once a gizmo takes as much shock as its Housing Value, it is destroyed.

Gizmos aren't built to hold together for long, so they usually break down immediately after use or, at best, at the end of the Act in which they were first used.



Why Gizmos are Useful

A character can create a gizmo at any time—during an adventure or between adventures—as long as he can get the parts for it. He can cobble together an electro-gun out of old electronics parts, or supe-up an old jalopy with a monkey wrench, some wire, and a little gum.

Gizmos are built by *weird science* but held together by possibility energy. When a weird scientist creates a gizmo, he may “power it up” without using a possibility capacitor (a capacitor turns a gizmo into a gadget, and that means it takes as long as a gadget to build). The weird scientist might opt to give it to another possibility-rated person to “charge it up” if he prefers. It is up to the weird scientist.

After constructing the gizmo, *someone* has to pay a cost to activate it. When the gizmo is activated (i.e., the power can be used), someone has to pay the *full* adventure cost of the power (minus one possibility for the power being in a gizmo, minus any possibilities for any flaws in the gizmo that are applicable, to a minimum of one possibility) *immediately*. Then the gizmo can be used.

Paying the Cost: Creator vs. User

If the creator wants, immediately after building the gizmo, he can sacrifice some of his possibilities to activate it. Once these are spent, anyone can use the gizmo at any time, for as long as the gizmo holds together. That means the creator could use it himself, give it to someone, or have it stolen—it doesn’t matter; it will work for anyone who knows how to use it. (The creator can put “safeguards” on it if he wants—generate a *weird science* total and make that the *Mind* or *weird science* total needed to figure out how to work it.)

Or, the creator can just turn it over to someone. Then they, or anyone else who gets hold of it, can put the requisite number of possibilities into it to get it to work. Only one person can contribute

possibilities, and that person has to put them in all at once.

Activating Booster Gizmos

Because booster systems aren’t powers, they don’t have adventure costs. To activate them, simply spend one possibility per *booster* (not per plus). A suit of armor that was temporarily boosted with three boosters of +3, +4, and +5 would cost three possibilities to activate—the same cost as any other three booster combination.

Using the Gizmo

When the gizmo has been “activated,” it can be used at any time. It might sit in a hero’s utility belt or on a weird scientist’s lab table for any amount of time, but when someone eventually uses it, the clock starts ticking.

Once the gizmo is used, the gamemaster should declare how long it will be useful *for*. Usually, the gizmo should work until the end of the current Act, but the gamemaster may choose to lengthen or shorten this time period as he or she sees fit. *No* gizmo should be allowed to work for more than one Act or into another adventure.

This is purely a story-element. Because there is no possibility capacitor, the gizmo is flimsy and cannot hold itself together for long—weird science is a defiance of “natural” laws, after all. Usually, the more effective or potent the gizmo is, the shorter the usage time. For example, a kind gamemaster might let the *teleport* gizmo (from above) work long enough to teleport the whole group out of danger, or he might only allow one character to use the device before it shuts down (probably the latter). But a median-powered weapon, like an *electro-ray* gun with a damage value of around 15 would probably work for an entire Act (it would be pretty useless if it worked only once, unless it was *really* powerful).

Also, the less flawed a gizmo is, the longer it should work. If a character

builds a gizmo with no flaws at all (and, thus, a high activation cost), it should hold together longer than one with a lot of flaws (and a low adventure cost). It has more possibility energy coursing through it.

Gamemasters, use your judgement with gizmos. Discuss the gizmo with your players and come up with a solution everyone would like. For example, if a character works out a way to boost his *Strength* with a gizmo-serum by ten or so points, warn him that the serum will burn itself out in a few rounds. If he wants a longer effect, he should lower the increase.

If the gizmo can take a certain amount of shock damage before experiencing “burn out” (below), then that might be your time limit. That is the one case where a gizmo *might* stretch between adventures (though it still shouldn’t) and probably could stretch between Acts. If a gizmo had a Housing Value of 15 and it took one shock every time it was used, it could be used 15 times before burn out—regardless of how long this took. The gamemaster should judge whether this is how the gizmo burns out or not.

Setbacks and Gizmos

If a character has been using a gizmo at all during a time when he experiences a *setback*, the gizmo overloads and “konks out.” It is now useless.

Burn Out

Once a gizmo experiences a *setback*, takes a number of shock equal to its Housing Value, or has just been used its allotted amount of time, it *burns out*. The gizmo becomes useless and can never be repaired.

This is a result of the construction of gizmos. Gizmos are one-shots or limited-runs. They are built, usually, for a specific purpose and, when that is served, they are taken away. They may be constructed again from scratch, but they are seldom exactly the same.

Burn out usually destroys the housing. If a car were “gizmoed” into running very fast for a short amount of time,



the engine would probably be totally destroyed during burn-out. An electro-gun might melt.

At the gamemaster's option, weird scientists might be able to save their housings by performing "extractions" before the gizmo burns out. They do this by ceasing use of the gizmo and generating a weird science total equal to or above the Housing Value of the gizmo. If they succeed, they can remove the weird science components and save the housing for other use. While doing this to an electro-gun makes it useless (just a shell of a toy-like ray gun), doing this to a gizmoed car saves quite a bit of money.

If, however, the gizmo experienced a setback, there is no way to save it. This is the same as burning it out over use — the gizmo is fired. In addition, there is probably some additional bad effect

(gizmos tend to *explode* during setbacks or do other annoying and dangerous things).

Gizmo Heroes

Quite a few adventurers have become "gizmo heroes." These are Terran heroes who rely on lots of different disposable gizmos instead of permanent gadgets for their repertoire of powers.

There are quite a few advantages to this. For one thing, they don't have to find possibility capacitors (easily the rarest element to the gadget). For another, they aren't bugged by gamemasters for building lots of gadgets (gamemasters, if you remember, are discouraged from letting characters have access to too many powers they

don't use all the time — gizmo heroes are the exception). Finally, they don't have to pay any cost for the gizmo until they use it.

Gizmo heroes should come up with three or four gizmos they can construct and make "blueprints" for them (not diagrams — just write-ups of the DNs and the effects). Usually, gizmo heroes should be allowed to carry one or two each of these gizmos with them, and perhaps construct more as they go along. Gizmo heroes are always stripping down evil scientists' labs for parts, or tinkering with their friends' gadgets.

This type of hero often has no powers of his own — except perhaps *super skill: weird science* or a *super attribute* or two. He is inquisitive and fun to have around. He can also be versatile without being too overly powerful.



Scott Rosema



Terran Gadget/Gizmo Check Sheet

Step One _____

Housing Description: _____

System(s): (1) _____ (2) _____ (3) _____ (4) _____

Possibility Capacitor(circle one): Yes No

Power Plant Attached to System(s): _____

Boosters: (1) _____ (2) _____ (3) _____ (4) _____
(by system)

(5) _____ (6) _____ (7) _____ (8) _____

Compensators: (1) _____ (2) _____ (3) _____ (4) _____
(by system)

Step Two _____

Diagram/Illustration

Order of Components:

- The Housing
- The System
- The Possibility Capacitor
(The Power Plant)
- (The Boosters)
- (The Compensators)

Step Three _____

Housing Value: _____

Step Four _____

System

System Value
(or Max)



Step Five _____

Possibility Capacitor
 Properly Connected?
 System #1: Yes No
 #2: Yes No
 #3: Yes No
 #4: Yes No

Step Six _____

Power Plant Value
 System #1: _____
 #2: _____
 #3: _____
 #4: _____

Step Seven _____

System	Booster	Boosted System Value	Shock Rating
_____	_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____	_____

Step Eight _____

Boosted System	Current DN Modifier	Current Shock Rating	Compensated DN Modifier	Compensated Shock Rating
_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____	_____	_____

Step Nine: Summary _____

Housing: _____ Housing Value: _____
 System(s): _____
 Final (Boosted) System Value(s): _____
 DN Mod(s): _____
 Shock Rating(s): _____
 Adventure Cost(s): _____
 Effect: _____

Notes:



Chapter Nine

Equipment



axioms and world laws, check. Skills and powers, check. Weird science gizmos, check. All that's left now for our new

Terran characters is some equipment. Below is a list and the prices for the basic adventure gear that every new archaeologist, crime fighter or gangster needs for his daily life.

Note: these prices are in Core Earth dollars. Because of the time and economic differences, a good rate of exchange between Core Earth and Terra is 10:1. That is, one Core Earth dollar is worth about ten Terran dollars. This may not be true everywhere your character may adventure once supply, demand and local economy are factored in, but the exchange rate is a good average. Also, for simplicity's sake, individual rates of exchange between Terran countries are not bothered with. Any gamemasters wishing to create such a system are free to do so on their own.

The rate of exchange between Nile Empire royals and Terran dollars is even. One royal = One Terran dollar. Prices for items listed in *The Nile Empire* can be used directly. The reason Core Earth monetary units are used here is to make conversion for more different types of characters easier.

General Gear

See page 134 of the *Torg Rulebook* for the basic adventure gear. Anything of Tech 21 or less is available — just remember to divide these prices by 10 to get the Terran cost. **Exceptions:** Microwave ovens (listed as Tech 21) are not available on Terra, but a Terran equivalent to the climbing cable (Tech 23) is available.

Nile Empire Gear

This is a list of some basic gear listed in *The Nile Empire* sourcebook, but which is included here as well for ease of reference. These can all be considered Tech 21 or less. They are "typical" adventurer's gear. Their costs have been modified to fit with Terra's current economy and the prices are in Core Earth dollars.

Backpack: Holds 20 pounds. Cost: \$50

Basic Adventurer's Clothing: Cost: \$100 to \$150 depending on style and cut.

Basic Rations: One day of generic food. Cost: \$10

Binoculars: Negates Perception DN modifiers at ranges up to extremely long. Cost: \$70

Blanket: Cost: \$15

Camera: Flash bulb-style of every cub cameraman. Cost: \$35. Rolls of B&W film: \$3. Color film: \$6

Carpenter's Tool Kit: Hammer, wrench, pliers, screwdrivers, saw. Cost: \$80

Crowbar: +2 to *Strength* to pry items loose; damage value STR+5/20. Cost: \$15

Duffel Bag: 25 pound capacity. Cost: \$12

Eating Utensils: Cost: \$5

Flashlight: Range 30m. Cost: \$8. Batteries cost \$1 for 2 batteries.

Gas Mask: *Toughness* 15 versus gas attacks. Cost: \$35

Geiger Counter: Radiation detection at 5m. Cost: \$500

Handcuffs: *Toughness* 18, *Lockpicking* difficulty 12. Cost: \$50

Holster: Cost: \$20

Jungle Adventurer's Pack: Pith Helmet, insect repellent, and mosquito



netting. Use of these gives +1 to *survival (jungle)* (+3 vs. a malaria check). Cost: \$45

Lantern: 10m radius of light. Oil flasks last about two hours. Cost: \$18. One night of oil (4 flasks): \$1

Lighter, refillable: Cost: \$1

Making the Conversions

On the surface, it may seem that the monetary conversions don't always seem to balance out. Some Terran goods seem ridiculously expensive when converted to Core Earth cash, and others are incredibly cheap. Well, that's because Terra is a different world, not just a different country. The best thing to do when bringing new characters to Terra is to acquaint them with the fact that some items of value in Core Earth are not nearly as valuable in Terra, and vice versa. Most are comparable (gold is valuable in both worlds), but sometimes it isn't (automobiles in Terra are more expensive, proportionally, than those in Core Earth, for example).

This is because, while Terra and Core Earth are two very similar cosms, they have had different developmental influences. Terra's history and evolution closely parallels Core Earth's, but not exactly. Interested characters might find that, for example, the Terran version of the Magna Carta wasn't signed by King John of England, but rather Richard, who used the document to keep his realm from fractionalizing while he was on the Crusades. At the twentieth century end of history, this has very little noticeable impact — on the economy or anything else — but there is a difference. These differences should not only be emphasized in cash-for-cash transactions, but in appearances and perspectives.

Lockpicking Tools: Necessary for use of the *lockpicking* skill. Cost: \$30

Phonograph: Cost: \$30

Pulp Magazine: The general action or suspense dime novel is indeed, one dime (Terran currency). Cost: one penny

Shovel: Cost: \$4

Telescope: Adds works like the binoculars (above), but add +2 to the Perception total. Cost: \$100

Tent (1 Person): Single person portable (4 kilos). Cost: \$40

Tent (3 Person): Weight: 12 kilos. Cost: \$60

Typewriter: Smith-Corona regular. Cost: \$80

Wire Cutters: Cost: \$10

Writing Supplies: Fountain pen, pencils, inks, 200 sheets of paper, envelopes. Cost: \$1

New Equipment

This is a list of some new adventuring paraphernalia. These items are also listed in Core Earth dollars.

Archaeologist's Tool Kit: Shovels, dusting equipment, dating chemicals, hammer, chisel, compass. Cost: \$50

Daily Newspaper: Cost: one penny

Electrician/Construction Tool Kit: Wires, wire cutters, solder, heat gun, crimps. Necessary for every weird scientist. Cost: \$125

Fishing Gear: Basic pole, line, hooks and sinkers. Perfect for catching extra provisions while on the go. Cost: \$15

Kerosene Heater: Small portable heater required for arctic adventure or high mountain climbs. Cost: \$20. One day's kerosene: \$1

Mechanic's Tool Kit: The torque wrenches, jacks, and other necessary equipment needed for fixing up cars and planes. Cost: \$125

Medical Tool Kit: bandages, pain pills, antiseptic, splints, thermometer, etc. The complete field doctor's pack. Cost: \$75

Movie Camera: Wind-up camera with film canisters. Cost: \$75. Film canister (3 minutes, B&W): \$10. Movie Projector: \$125. Backdrop: \$2 (cheap

cloth), \$25 (professional stand), \$200 (movie theater silver screen)

Personal Hygiene Kit: Soap, shaving razor, comb, toothpaste, pocket mirror. Cost: \$5

Sewing Machine: Ripped your favorite shirt? Cost: \$30

Steamer Trunk: 50 pound capacity, waterproof. Cost: \$25

Wind-up Alarm Clock: Cost \$5

Wages of War, Sin and Adventure

Since many characters may have to work for a living, here are some typical occupations and their average monthly (unless otherwise specified) wages. In this case, the units are Terran dollars. This is what the characters will actually receive for their services (or what gamemaster characters receive), so they have to make the conversions themselves.

Adventurer: \$500–\$5000/adventure depending on the dangers and who's financing the expedition. The right friends can do wonders.

Athlete: \$45–\$125 depending on ability and sport (baseball players make the most at this point, while there are no actual professional track stars, for example).

Beat Cop: \$75 (honest); \$250 (dishonest)

Bookkeeper: \$75–\$100 (Mob bookkeepers can make as much as \$500/week for their services)

Club or Big Band Musician: \$50–\$125. Big names can get much more (\$25–\$50/night)

Dilettante/Playboy: \$1000–\$5,000 depending on the size of Daddy's wallet.

Doctor: \$300 (personal practice), \$200 (public hospital)

Factory Worker: \$35 (Line managers: \$75–\$150)

Freelance Photographer: \$5–\$10/roll depending on the quality. Scandalous or headline pictures can generate \$50–\$500 depending on who you sell them too since the papers aren't





your only clients.

Hired Hand: \$10 + R/B

Journalist/Independent Reporter: \$55

Lawyer (private): \$200–\$400 depending on record.

Lawyer (public defender): \$100–\$200

Movie Writer: \$75

Movie Star: \$100–\$500. Big names can make \$5000–\$10,000 per picture (usually shot in a month).

Newspaper Editor: \$100–\$250

Office Worker: \$60

Retail Clerk: \$30

Pilot (Commercial Airline): \$200–300

Pilot (Private): \$100–\$500/flight + expenses

Police Detective: \$100

Private Businessman (Factory Owner): \$500–\$1000

Private Businessman (Shop Owner): \$125–\$250

Private Investigator: \$5–50/case + expenses. Special cases can bring in more money, but generally not without trouble. That's what makes them *special*.

Pulp Fiction Writer: \$60 (sometimes more, often less, on royalties)

Salesperson: \$20 + commission

Soldier: \$35 + R/B

Thug (low level hired criminal; Louie, Joey): \$75–\$100.

Thug (big name; Eddie "Fingers" Fishburn, "Waterfront" Jonny): \$500–\$750/contract. More for big contracts.

University Professor: \$200

Weird Scientist: \$500 or more for a government; dead if not (governments are nasty that way)

R/B=Room and Board (living quarters and 2 meals/day)

Costs of Living in the Pulp

Generally, characters don't need to know how much basic living costs are for people in the game world—they're adventurers, and such things are "below" them. But it's not a bad idea to get some picture of what people around you are spending their money on.

Blue Collar Worker/Retail Clerk: These people spend most of their money on rents, food, and clothes. Insurance and credit are still primitive, so a family can be financially wiped out if a breadwinner comes down sick. Some of these families can put a little money aside, but, for the most part, discretionary income is beyond them.

Factory Worker/Store Manager: Most of these "upper blue collar" people spend their money on rents and food, or mortgage payments for their homes. A few have cars. A "night out" might consist of a trip to the local diner and/or a movie. A little savings is not uncommon.

Tradesman/Shopkeeper/Public Servant: Most of these people are a little better off. Cars are common to



these households, and most have some sort of savings and credit. Home ownership is high in this bracket, though mortgage payments are common. Older members of this class might have their mortgages paid off and are waiting for a decent retirement.

Factory Supervisor/Superior Tradesman: The upper middle class. Riding the bus or trolley is unusual — cars and even occasional cabs are common. A regular night out might include visits to smaller clubs or decent restaurants, and movies are the rage. A savings is a given, and a house is usually owned. A two-car family is possible, and yearly vacations are a regular thing.

Small-time Entrepreneur: The owner of the department store, the local bank, or the small factory has a decent amount of cash and credit. A car and a house is a given, and a small vacation home not unlikely. These people usually do a lot of hard work for their money, but they are able to wear fine clothes and jewelry, and go to clubs and fine restaurants. They might even be members of country clubs or other organizations.

Wages and Prejudice

Terra is a fictional world, so we're going to let prejudice — racial, religious, and gender-based — take a back seat to action and drama. Consider that anyone can be of any working (or non-working) class unless you feel it is important to mirror unpleasant history. Since Terra is an exciting, trouble-sewn world itself, prejudice against races, religions, and genders might be more of an annoying addition than a motivating factor. Let people be prejudiced against other countries (not necessarily *people*) in Terra or against people with pulp powers or other oddities — these are based on fictional circumstance and are more appropriate for a roleplaying game.

Upper Class: The owner who works, but lets his/her office run things. This person is definitely “on top” and does not usually have to push too hard to get things he or she wants. Taking hours or days off at a moment's notice is not uncommon, and a second home or a mansion is expected. This person makes enough in a week to pay a family's expensive for a year or two.

The Rich: After that, the sky's the limit. The “jet-set” crowd (if there were true jets) work when they want to, not when they have to. They have money to spare, and they usually spend it amusing themselves. It is not uncommon for the Rich to be somewhat “inbred” philosophically — most come from families that have been Rich since it didn't matter.

Traveling the World

As mentioned in the World Laws chapter, globe-hopping is possible and likely (for adventurers). Here are some typical vehicles and passage costs.

Note: for GM's wishing to run vehicle chase scenes, the basic rules are in the basic *Torg Rulebook* on pg. 81. Advanced rules can be found in the appendix of the *Kanawa Land Vehicles* (KLV) book on pages 70–79.

Speeds are given in meters per round/kilometers per hour/miles per hour/*Torg* action value. All *Tech* values are considered *Tech* 21 unless noted otherwise.

Land Vehicles

Rolls Royce Phantom (KLV-21): 400/145/90/13; 5 passengers; TOU 15; maneuver +1/ Cost: \$11,000

BMW 315/L (KLV-22): 400/140/90/13; 2 passengers; TOU 15; maneuver +1/ Cost: \$8000

Mercedes-Benz W125 (KLV-23): 1000/320/200/15; single passenger; TOU 12; maneuver +2; Cost: \$12000

BMW R.71 Motorcycle (KLV-32): 400/125/78/13; 2 passengers with side-car; TOU 13; maneuver +2/+1 with side-

car; Cost: \$2000

Sunbeam Model 90 Motorcycle (KLV-33): 400/150/90/13; single passenger; TOU 12; maneuver -3; Cost: \$2000

Ford Coupe: 600/200/125/14; 5 passengers; TOU 13; maneuver +1; Cost: \$500

Roadster: 775/280/175/15; 2 passengers; TOU 15; maneuver +2; Cost: \$15000-\$20000. These are the sporty little two-seater convertibles of the fast lane drivers. No actor or actress will be seen without one.

Nash Sedan: 600/250/150/14; 5 passengers; TOU 16; maneuver +2; Cost: \$1000-\$2000. These are the archetypal cars of the gangster era. Be warned if you see one approaching with gunmen on the running boards. Available as a hardtop or convertible.

Note: In chase scenes, a *Strength* roll is necessary to remain on a running board. Use the action value of the vehicle's speed as the difficulty number. *Dodging* bullets while holding on is a deadly multi-action.

Safari Sailer: 400/150/90/13; 4 passenger; TOU 17; maneuver +0; Cost: \$2000-\$4000. This is the open air, all-terrain vehicle generally found roaming across Africa. In chases across the loose dust and sand of the desert, add +2 to all *land vehicle* difficulties.

Air Vehicles

Grumman FF-1: 1000/400/250/15; 2 passenger; TOU 19; maneuver +2; Cost: \$17,500. A quick dogfighting plane that is armed with the equivalent of two Spandau machine guns, one for the pilot and one for the observer.

Boeing P-26: 1500/475/300/16; single passenger; TOU 20; maneuver +2; Cost: \$20,000. A little pricier than the Grumman and only a single seater, but it has a higher top end and is more reliable. It comes armed with two Spandau machine guns, just like the Grumman.

Sikorsky S-42: 1500/450/275/16; 10 passengers; TOU 21; maneuver +1; Cost: \$35,000. The Sikorsky is a seaplane which has been known to save the day for adventurers lost at sea.





Brian Schomburg



Water Vehicles

Z-16 Dragonfly: 400/150/90/13; 3 passenger; TOU 20; maneuver +2; Cost \$5000. Gangsters just love this light-

ning fast speedboat to handle water-front escapes.

U-Boat: 100/40/25/10; 20 passengers; TOU 27; maneuver -2; Cost: \$100000. This is the infamous vessel of

the Great War. A U-boat usually has 10-15 torpedos of speed 150/60/35/11; range 1k-20k; damage 34; cost \$100,000.

T ravel Times and Distances

Since adventurers surely won't be staying in one place, below is a list of the most common ports of call.

Guide to Listings:

Travel Route (Distance in kms; most common travel type; travel time).

Time by air calculated using a twin-propeller airplane (145 kph). Time by land calculated using an automobile travelling at 30 kph, (halve the time for railways moving at 60 kph). Time by water calculated using an ocean liner (50 kph).

Cairo to Berlin (2,890/air/20 hours)
 Cairo to Bombay (4,355/air/30 hours; ocean/87 hours)
 Cairo to Calcutta (5,699/air/39.25 hours; ocean/5 days)
 Cairo to Cape Town (7,208/air/50 hours)
 Cairo to Johannesburg (6,267/air/43.25 hours)
 Cairo to Lagos (3,915/air/27 hours)
 Cairo to Nairobi (3,536/air/24.25 hours)
 Cape Town to Bombay (7,974/air/55 hours; 8,508/ocean/7 days)
 Cape Town to Calcutta (9,459/air/66 hours; 10,154/ocean/8.5 days)
 Cape Town to Melbourne (11,292/ocean/9.5 days)
 Chicago to Mexico City (2,726/air/18.75 hours; auto/91 hours)
 Chicago to New Orleans (1,340/air/9.25 hours; auto/44.5 hours)
 Chicago to Washington, DC (959/

air/6.5 hours; auto/32 hours)
 London to Berlin (928/air/6.5 hours)
 London to Cairo (3,508/air/24.25 hours)
 London to Madrid (785/air/5.5 hours)
 London to Moscow (2,498/air/17.25 hours)
 London to Paris (342/air/2.25 hours)
 London to Rome (1,431/air/10 hours)
 London to Stockholm (1,515/air/10.5 hours)
 London to Warsaw (2,456/17 hours)
 New York to Berlin (6,385/air/44 hours)
 New York to Cairo (9,020/ocean/7.5 days)
 New York to Chicago (1,145/air/7.75 hours; auto/38 hours)
 New York to London (5,572/air/38.5 hours; 4,131/ocean/82.5 hours)
 New York to Madrid (5,781/ocean/5 days)
 New York to Mexico City (3,364/air/23.25 hours)
 New York to Moscow (7,510/air/51.75 hours)
 New York to New Orleans (1,884/air/13 hours; auto/62.75 hours; 3,157/ocean/63 hours)
 New York to Paris (5,836/air/40.25 hours)
 New York to Rio de Janeiro (7,777/air/53.75 hours; 8,839/ocean/7.5 days)
 New York to Rome (6,888/air/47.5 hours; ocean/6 days)
 New York to San Francisco (4,138/

air/28.5 hours; auto/6 days)
 New York to Warsaw (6,870/air/47.5 hours)
 New York to Washington, DC (330/air/2.25 hours; auto/11 hours)
 Paris to Berlin (876/air/6 hours; auto/29.25 hours)
 Paris to Cairo (3,210/air/22 hours)
 Paris to Lisbon (1,454/air/10 hours; auto/48.5 hours)
 Paris to Madrid (1,054/air/7.25 hours; auto/35 hours)
 Paris to Rome (1,105/air/7.5 hours; auto/37 hours)
 Rio de Janeiro to Buenos Aires (1,953/air/13.5 hours)
 Rio de Janeiro to Cape Town (3,781/ocean/75.5 hours)
 Rio de Janeiro to Caracas (4,546/ocean/91 hours)
 Rio de Janeiro to Lagos (6,035/ocean/5 days)
 Rio de Janeiro to Mexico City (7,693/air/53 hours; ocean/6.5 days)
 Rome to Cairo (2,133/air/14.75 hours; ocean/42.5 hours)
 Rome to Calcutta (7,219/air/49.75 hours; ocean/6 days)
 Rome to Lisbon (1,861/air/13 hours; ocean/37.25 hours)
 Rome to Madrid (1,369/air/9.5 hours)
 San Francisco to Bangkok (12,761/ocean/11 days)
 San Francisco to Chicago (2,991/air/20.5 hours; auto/100 hours)
 San Francisco to Hong Kong (11,110/ocean/9.5 days)
 San Francisco to Honolulu (3,858/air/26.5 hours; 3,879/ocean/77.5 hours)
 San Francisco to Melbourne



T ravel Times and Distances (continued)

(12,640/ocean/87 hours)
 San Francisco to Mexico City (3,036/
 air/21 hours; auto/101 hours)
 San Francisco to Moscow (9,468/
 air/65.25 hours)
 San Francisco to New Orleans
 (3,098/air/21.25 hours; auto/103
 hours)
 San Francisco to Peking (9,522/
 ocean/8 days)
 San Francisco to Shanghai (10,267/
 ocean/8.5 days)
 San Francisco to Singapore (13,878/
 ocean/11.5 days)
 San Francisco to Tokyo (8,286/
 ocean/7 days)
 San Francisco to Washington, DC
 (3,927/air/27 hours; auto/5.5
 days)
 Singapore to Bombay (9,944/
 ocean/8.5 days)
 Singapore to Calcutta (2,897/air/
 20 hours; ocean/58 hours)
 Singapore to Hong Kong (2,599/

air/18 hours)
 Singapore to Melbourne (6,048/
 ocean/5 days) Singapore to Mos-
 cow (8,428/air/58 hours)
 Singapore to Sydney (6,300/ocean/
 5.25 days)
 Singapore to Tokyo (5,321/air/
 36.75 hours; ocean/106 hours)

Most of these times figure in standard delays and customs, but the gamemaster should "enhance" the travelling experience for characters when appropriate. Flip over a card on the Drama Deck, read the appropriate action line (probably a Standard scene), and wing it. Good things, like *flurries*, *ups*, and *inspirations* mean good things are happening — the customs' agent you'll have to get past lets you off with only half the bribe you thought you'd need; the plane from it; or whatever.

Bad results, such as *stymied*,

fatigued, *setback* or *confused* means your travel plans have to be changed. The boat you want to take is in need of service, so you have to select an alternate route (that's a *stymie* — a *setback* might mean you're swimming!); the railway car you're on is packed to double occupancy, so you are all tired and frustrated when you finally do arrive; the bus you take "can't get you there from here" and you are very confused as to which way to proceed; etc. Sometimes, a standard adventure can be made fun for the players as they try to roleplay their characters' frustrations with what should be simple travel — "I bought a ticket; what do you mean I can't get there?!" Singapore to Sydney doesn't decide to land in Indonesia for a ten-hour layover (like it's done the last ten times you've flown





Chapter Ten

Cities of Adventure, People of Power



As night fell across the Eastern Front and the evening's temperatures dropped, they began their attacks anew.

Revitalized by the coolness of the starlit night, the Martians slid out of their crafts and moved into the village. Few people remained, but those that did were terrified beyond belief. Even though they had heard the reports and seen the papers, nothing could prepare them for the disgusting sight of these invaders from another world.

— Excerpt from the *Life & Times* magazine article, "Terror on the Eastern Front"

As you should be able to tell by now, modern day (well, modern for us) Terra is a pretty exciting place. But what *exactly* are the details? Let's find out. In this chapter, I'll give you the final tour of Terra by taking you right out onto the streets of her most famous adventuring sites.

Jungle Heat

Okay, so the first site doesn't have streets, but let me assure you it does have adventure. This area, primarily Columbia, northern South America, and Central America offers a lot for the modern hero. For the bookworm types, relics abound amongst ruins of ancient South American temples and villages. Many of these treasures bring hundreds or thousands of dollars in the museum circuit, not to mention the prestige associated with their findings. It, and the Amazon jungle to the southwest, are also home to thousands of species of rare insects, animals and

plants. Any one of these is that prize zoologists and botanists the world around would search for.

For the adventurous, these same treasures and their values have attracted dozens of unsavory characters. Thieves, tomb robbers, and even neo-Nazi treasure hunters all frequent the many sites of northern South America. On top of this, there are all of the local dangers, poisonous snakes, deadly insects and ... natives.

Adventure Hooks

As mentioned back in the World Laws chapter, the Incan Coins of Gold are probably somewhere in Central or northern South America. One possible resting place is within the sacred burial grounds of the Malatmu Indians. Gamemasters can lead their players through a jungle adventure either from the west or up the Amazon River in the east to the tribe's home. Once there, they can either try to strongarm the Indians or use subterfuge to steal the Coins.

The tribal leader, Chalelatsu, is not aware of the Coins, but will willingly sacrifice his tribe's lives to defend them if he discovers their existence. Good characters should be warned that taking the Coins by force is considered an evil act. The only way they could recover them "rightfully" is if the Malatmu are kept uninformed or if they somehow convince Chalelatsu that they should have them. To do this, characters will have to undoubtedly perform quests or meet tribal requirements (most likely both). This



could lead to a whole series of adventures.

Oh, yeah, there's one additional complication. The Malatmu only speak Malatmu. Language students or archaeologists can attempt to speak Malatmu if they have another Indian dialect. The difficulty is a 10 for basic commands (come, stay), a 12 for more complex concepts (friend, foe, put the spear down) and a 15 for specific statements (no, really, we don't taste good with blackened herbs).

Malatmu Indian Warrior (30)

DEXTERITY 10

Dodge 12, melee weapons 13, missile weapons 14, running 11, unarmed combat 12

STRENGTH 10

TOUGHNESS 11

PERCEPTION 9

Find 11, tracking 11, trick 10

MIND 8

Survival (Jungle) 11, test 10, will-

power 10

CHARISMA 9

Charm 10, Persuasion 10, Taunt 10

SPIRIT 9

Faith (Spirit Realm) 11, intimidation 11

Possibility Potential: some (60)

Inclination: Good

Skill Notes: These are just the values for general tribe members. The Medicine Man will have at least 3 adds in *first aid* and perhaps two or three in *medicine (primitive)*, and at least three adds in focus and a few more in faith. He will also have miracles, selected from those available to Core Earth priests. The Warrior Chief (the warlord, not the tribal chief) will have four to six more adds in various combat skills and increased physical statistics.

Equipment: Throwing Spear (damage value STR+4/18), Hunting Bow (damage value STR+7/23), Blowgun (damage value STR-4/14 plus poison — if the Malatmu's poison darts hit,

add the bonus number to a damage value of 18. The result points of this, versus the character's *Toughness* without armor, equal the damage the character will take every hour until the character is healed with a *medicine* total of 21 or the antidote the Malatmu possess).

Chalelatsu (Malatmu Tribal Leader)

DEXTERITY 9

Dodge 11, melee weapons 11, missile weapons 13, running 11, unarmed combat 11

STRENGTH 10

TOUGHNESS 11

PERCEPTION 9

Find 11, first aid 11, tracking 12, trick 12

MIND 9

Survival (Jungle) 14, test 12, willpower 12

CHARISMA 10

Charm 12, persuasion 12, taunt 11



Scott Rosema



SPIRIT 10

Faith (Spirit Realm) 13, focus 13, intimidation 12, reality 12

Possibilities: 10

Inclination: Good

Equipment: Throwing Spear (damage value +4/18), Hunting Bow (damage value +7/23), Blowgun (damage value STR-4/14 plus poison — if the Malatmu's poison darts hit, add the bonus number to a damage value of 18. The result points of this, versus the character's *Toughness* without armor, equal the damage the character will take every hour until the character is healed with a *medicine* total of 21 or the antidote the Malatmu possess), valuable headdress and accoutrements (worth over 1,000 dollars to a collector).

Or try a few of these adventure hooks:

[1] Building on the Malatmu adventure, matters could be complicated by the addition of an opposing group. This group could be a group of Spaniards looking to reclaim "their" lost gold, a group of rival archaeologists seeking new wealth, or even corrupt, local guides. If the adventurers are pulp heroes, then throw in a few villains to make things interesting.

[2] A botanist has heard of a rare plant that grows along the Amazon and hires the group to help him find it. This adventure could pit the characters against similar tribesman or better yet, the dangers of the creatures of the Amazon listed below.

[3] Dr. Emily Blachek has, supposedly, been working in and around Argentina with another group of weird scientists. Rumor has it that they fund their research by selling pulp powers and gadgets to those with the money to buy. The adventurers might want to try to find their hidden base — either to shut it down (if it turns out they are selling to villains), to gain powers and/or gadgets themselves, or to protect it from falling into the wrong hands. In any event, there should be lots of natural, or seemingly natural, "guardians" and traps (including the creatures listed

below), and, perhaps, some rivals and some fortifications to overcome.

The Amazonian Spider

These cousins to other spiders are vicious predators. They rule the world of the insects in the jungle. A mother spider will build a nest and birth up to a thousand soldiers that will conquer everything within a two-kilometer radius. It is not unusual for most nests to attack even larger prey such as birds and small mammals. A typical swarm that may be encountered will have twenty to thirty spiders.

Amazonian Spider

DEXTERITY 8

Acrobatics 13, stealth 16, unarmed combat 14

STRENGTH 3

Long jumping 15

TOUGHNESS 6 (8)

PERCEPTION 4

MIND 1

Test (20)

CHARISMA 1

Taunt (25)

SPIRIT 3

Intimidation 5 (25)

Possibility Potential: None

Natural Weapons: Furry hide (TOU+2/8), poisonous bite (damage value STR+5/8 plus poison — if the victim takes any damage at all, the spider's poison automatically doubles the number of shock taken, before possibilities are spent to reduce. A wound from a spider's bite adds plus four to the healing check or to any medicine checks made during the next day as well).

In addition to a tough hide and a deadly bite, these spiders can "jump" up to two meters, sufficient enough to attack a person's face from the ground. If this attack is successful (considered a *vital blow*), not only is the damage increased by +4, but the victim is automatically *stymied* the next round.

Cayman

These are the South American relatives of the crocodile and alligator. They are a bit slower than their coun-

terparts in the Nile, but they are much stronger and deadlier in the waters of the Amazon. They tend to make river travel more than a little interesting.

Cayman

DEXTERITY 8

Maneuver 10, running 10, stealth 12, swimming 15, unarmed combat (bite) 16 (tail) 17

STRENGTH 16

TOUGHNESS 14 (18)

PERCEPTION 3

Tracking 10, trick 8 (16)

MIND 2

Test 10 (18)

CHARISMA 1

Taunt (20)

SPIRIT 3

Intimidation 14 (20)

Possibility Potential: none

Natural Weapons: Bite (damage value STR+5/21), tail (damage value STR+3/19), leathery hide (armor value TOU+4/18)

Berlin

This is the heart of the Fatherland. It is from here that Wilhelm II hopes to rule Europe, but, unfortunately, he is facing hard times both from within and from without. Internally, he is having trouble with the upstart Nationalsozialists. Externally, he is preparing for an impending war with the Russians/Martians.

The Nazis are causing problems because they feel that Wilhelm II has let them down. During the pre-war years of the Great War, they supported his maneuvers, many even participating as platoon leaders, tank captains and foot soldiers on the Western Front. Since then, however, they have repeatedly watched Wilhelm perpetuate one failure after another. First, he failed to defeat Britain with the use of the U-boat, then he failed to defeat the upstart Americans and their "weird science," and, eventually, he lost the Great War entirely. After that they cited Germany's numerous humiliations at the hands of the League and the failure to get weird science for



Germany.

Then young Adolf Hitler arrived. A relative unknown in the party for years, he jumped to the forefront with his ties to the German discovery of weird science. After riding that discovery to prominence, he used his own personal charisma, and the peoples' own fears, to gain the party's leadership. Over the next few years he furthered his power base by gaining a 20% share of the national assembly.

These days, Hitler has become even more obsessed with his goal to take over Germany and Europe. Knowing that the key to his victory is weird science, he has sent out dozens of agents and hundreds of support troops across the globe in search of possibility rich objects. Religious and historically significant artifacts are also under siege by the Nazis as well—Hitler has unconsciously made the connection between their significance and their power as eternity shards.

His successes have made him dangerous to factions within Germany other than his own. Seeing his vision as the only true vision, he has begun to hunt down those he sees as "impure." This includes anyone of non-Germanic descent, Jews, and blacks — and, of course, anyone who disagrees with him. About the only people it is rumored that Hitler will deal with is the Japanese. Some of reporters think that it is because he sees their takeover of Asia as the same sort of ethnic reclamation that he is attempting. As long as they stay far away from Hitler's own goals, he will be friends with them.

But Hitler is not Wilhelm's only worry. The Martians and their dominated Russian troops are making swift work of Austria-Hungary. The Serbian lands provided little resistance and Austria-Hungary isn't faring much better. The relatively public revelation of the Martians' true identity helped briefly as other European nations and the United States joined in the battle, but the Martians are a deadly foe. We understand very little of their physiology, technology or culture, but we do

know that they are vicious in combat and that you don't want to be taken prisoner. See "Budapest" (below) for more on the Martian's progress in Europe.

Adventure Hook

Hitler and his Brownshirts are far and away the most dangerous opponents in Germany. Wilhelm's troops have grown complacent and tired.

Hitler's soldiers have a youthful vitality that won't be extinguished until they achieve his vision. To that end, they are willing to do just about anything to advance their cause. The player characters can become involved in any number of skirmishes with Nazi Brownshirts and weird science villains.

If the player characters do not wish to "get involved" in Europe, they will still encounter Nazis across the globe — treasure hunting and the like. Also,



Jaime Lombardo & Ron Hill



pulp powered individuals are the greatest targets — non-German “super agents” are, in Hitler’s own words, “the greatest threat to the Fatherland that the people have ever known.” He has vowed to eliminate all pulp powered individuals who will not work “for the glory of the Fatherland.”

[1] The communists are one of the thorns in Hitler’s side. Not only are their views against his own, but they are one of the power groups keeping him from expanding his ranking in the national assembly. Therefore, he has begun to plot their downfall. If successful, the communists could lose favor and the Nazis could gain a majority in the next general election, scheduled just two weeks from now.

The adventurers become involved when they overhear a plot while eating in a Berlin bar. A drunken Dutch communist and a few of his friends begin spouting taunts at a party of Nazi-aligned officers at another table. They become even more loud and obnoxious, proclaiming that they could even burn down the parliament and the Nazis would not be able to overcome them.

Especially perceptive characters (i.e., those making a *Perception* total of 13 or more) overhear the officers mutter, “We’ll just see about that.” After returning to their barracks and reporting the incident, the officers are given the go-ahead to burn down Berlin’s Reichstag building so that the communists standing is damaged. They are also given the talents of *Der Feuerteufel*, the Firebug, a pulp-powered Nazi. The adventurers’ mission in this adventure is to stop the arson and, perhaps, capture the villain.

Nazi Arsonists (6)

DEXTERITY 9

Dodge 10, fire combat 11, lock picking 10, maneuver 11, melee weapons 10, running 12

STRENGTH 9

Climbing 11, lifting 11

TOUGHNESS 10

PERCEPTION 8

Find 9, forgery 9, land vehicles 10,

trick 11

MIND 8

Science (demolitions) 10, test 10, willpower 10

CHARISMA 8

Persuasion 9, taunt 11

SPIRIT 7

Intimidation 9

Possibilities: none

Inclination: Evil

Equipment: Gasoline canisters, lighters, Terran Luger pistol (damage value 15; 3-10/25/40; ammo 8), 3 grenades (damage value 19; radius 1-6/15/40)

Der Feuerteufel (translation: The Firebug)

DEXTERITY 11

Dodge 13, fire combat 14, heavy weapons 16, lock picking 13, maneuver 13, pulp power (fire blast) 15, running 12

STRENGTH 9

Lifting 11, Climbing 11

TOUGHNESS 10

PERCEPTION 9

Find 11, flight 10, forgery 11, trick 10

MIND 8

Science: demolitions, test 9, willpower 9

CHARISMA 7

Persuasion 9, taunt 11

SPIRIT 8

Intimidation 9, reality 10

Possibilities: 15

Inclination: Evil

Equipment: gasoline canisters, lighters, Terran Luger (damage value 15; 3-10/25/40; ammo 8), flame thrower (damage value 23; 2-5/7/10; ammo 10), Rocket belt (*flight* value 11)

Pulp Powers: *Fire Blast*/*Fire Wall* power (damage value 19; 3-10/25/40)

Flaws: The Firebug has a psychological flaw: he feels uncomfortable with his pulp power because of his leader’s view of pulp characters — so he’ll use the flamethrower until it proves ineffective or is destroyed. He’ll then use his internal power to try to destroy his enemies or escape.

Personality: The Firebug is the quintessential pyromaniac. He doesn’t

work for Hitler out of love for Germany, he does it because he likes blowing things up. Already he has been responsible for numerous strikes against Nazi opponents. However, despite his flamboyancy, he is not the bravest of souls. Confronted by equal or superior force, he will run or, possibly, surrender. Apply modifiers to *intimidation* and *interrogation* attempts based on the Firebug’s strategic position.

[2] Hitler would just love an army of super soldiers and, because of this, he has devoted much of his party’s resources to the development of a power “serum” — one that could be administered to loyal troops to lead his armies to victory. Under Berlin, there is a secret laboratory/fortress devoted to this task. This fortress serves as a meeting place for many of the Nazi party’s top leaders.

Since having a secret laboratory is a legitimate activity in Germany, the party might have some problems with storming the fortress. As an incentive, the party should be given the opportunity to stumble upon a secret Nazi plan to take over Belgium with the “super” soldiers once the serum is developed. An alternative solution could be the Nazi’s kidnapping of test subjects. Either of these should convince the party of the evil intent behind the laboratory work.

Finally, the characters might get some help from non-Nazis and from the current government of Germany. Wilhelm does not want Hitler to succeed in finding a formula for pulp powers (he’d like to himself), since that would surely sound the death of his power.

Nazi Brownshirts (15)

DEXTERITY 10

Dodge 12, fire combat 14, maneuver 13, melee weapons 12, running 12, stealth 12, unarmed combat 13

STRENGTH 9

TOUGHNESS 10

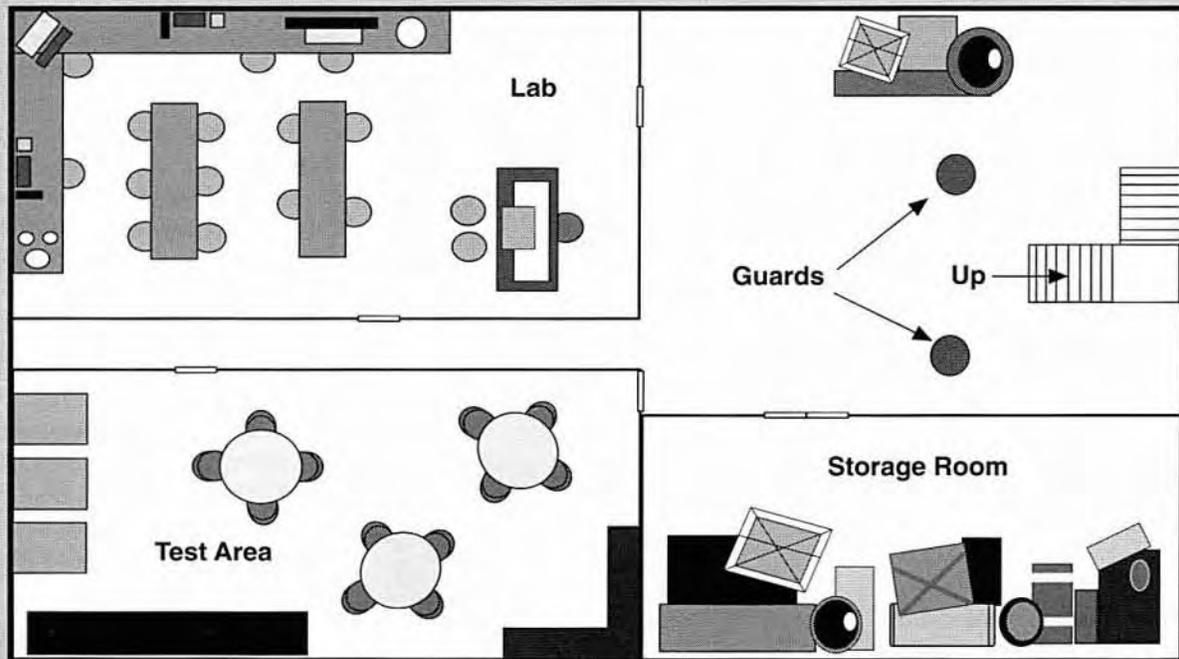
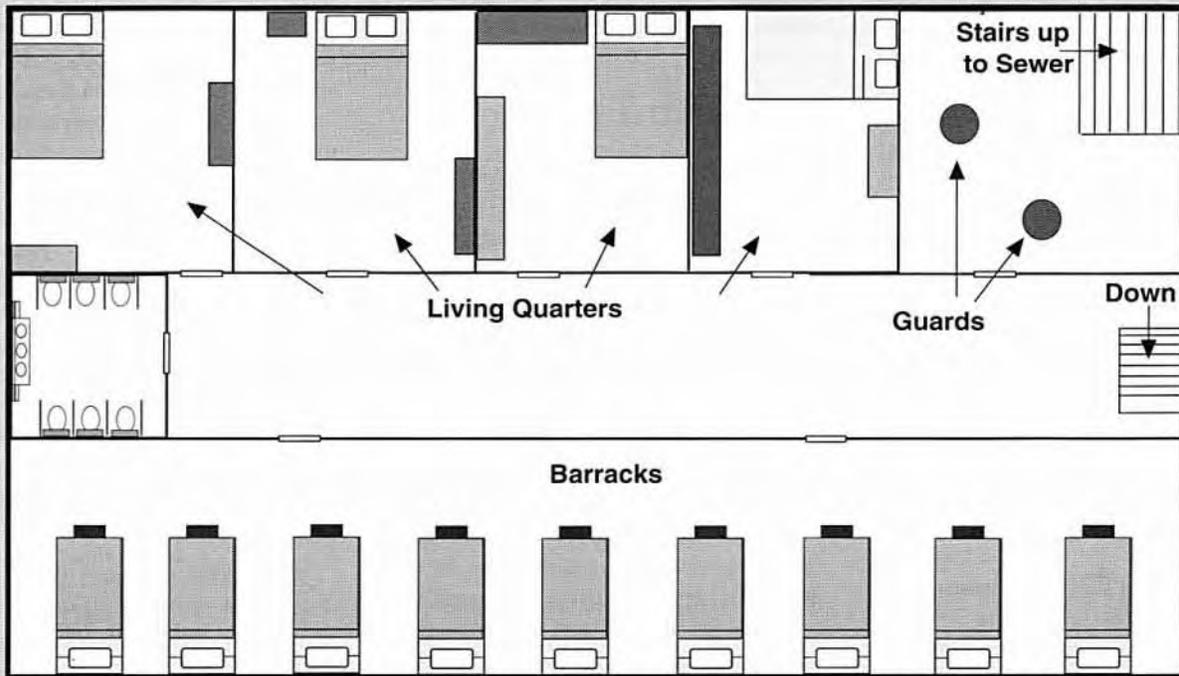
PERCEPTION 9

Espionage 10, evidence analysis 10, find 11, land vehicles 12, tracking





Terra: Diagram 3
A Nazi Weird Science Lab



11, trick 11

MIND 9

Test 11, willpower 11

CHARISMA 9

Charm 10, persuasion 10, taunt 12

SPIRIT 8

Intimidation 11

Possibility potential: some (30)

Inclination: Evil

Equipment: Terran Luger (damage value 15; 3-10/25/40; ammo 8), Schmeisser MP40 (damage value 17; 3-15/40/100; ammo 11), several clips of ammo, hand radios

Description: The guards are the most loyal Hitler could find, and about the brightest. They not only patrol the halls of the underground fortress/lab, but they watch the scientists and try to make certain they are working. They will summon help from "regulars" if necessary, but it will take at least two minutes for any help to arrive.

Nazi Scientists (5)

DEXTERITY 8

Dodge 9, fire combat 10, maneuver 9, stealth 9, unarmed combat 9

STRENGTH 7

TOUGHNESS 9

PERCEPTION 9

Evidence analysis 12, find 12, scholar (various) 10, trick 11

MIND 10

Medicine 12, science (various) 13, test 12, weird science 14, willpower 12

CHARISMA 9

Persuasion 12, taunt 10

SPIRIT 9

Intimidation 11

Possibility potential: some (15)

Inclination: Evil (some, 10) or Good (some, 20)

Equipment: laboratory supplies, labcoats, miscellaneous odds and ends (Evil scientists all have Terran Lugers as well)

Description: Most of the Nazi scientists are Hitler-loyalists, but one or two may be of Good Inclination. It is quite likely that the best or brightest scientist is actually a weird scientist captured from the West or taken from a minority group out of favor with the Nazis and being forced to work on Hitler's projects.

The scientists are all worried about who has how much favor with Hitler, and they are all worried about spies. Even the most loyal scientist knows that Hitler would execute him or her if there was any suspicions about that scientist's loyalties.

Budapest

Budapest is a city under siege. The Eastern Front has advanced well into Austria-Hungary with almost half the country behind the Martians' line. We can only assume that they will continue westward across Europe, and, from there, who knows? The last days of the League barely succeeded in revealing their true identity, so we still do not even know what their intents are. What we do know is this:

Physical Description: The Martians' true form is a large spider-like insect. They have eight stringy appendages and possess the ability to move about on either four or eight of them. When in a "standing" position, the four forward appendages can act as arms. Each appendage has four digits. They have two bulbous eyes which grant them approximately 180 degree vision. Their skin is a reddish clammy covering which is somewhat transparent revealing a diamond shaped heart. They can breath our atmosphere but the differences in nitrogen content and the heavier gravity to cause them some problems, but they have begun to adapt.

Martians

DEXTERITY 9

Dodge 10, fire combat 10, energy weapons 11, maneuver 11, stealth 13, unarmed combat 12

STRENGTH 11

TOUGHNESS 12

PERCEPTION 15

Air vehicles 17, find 16, first aid 16, land vehicles 16, space vehicles 17, tracking 17, trick 17

MIND 14

Science 17, test 15, weird science 16

CHARISMA 7

Charm 8, persuasion 8

SPIRIT 4

Taunt 14, intimidation 14

Possibility Potential: some (25)

Inclination: Unknown. While the Martians seem to be Evil, there is evidence that they may not be subject to Terra's World Law regarding inclinations — they may actually define a new "side" of the coin.

Equipment: Personal radio receiver, medical kit

Gizmos: Magna Ray Gun (*electro-ray* value 23; range 3-25/60/100), X-ray Lenses (*x-ray* value 12), Rocket Cycle (*flight* value 12), Chameleon Belts (*chameleon* value 14)

Pulp Powers: Some Martians (very few; 1 in 1024) possess the ability to control the thought patterns of humans. This power has the same effects as Terran Mind Control. It is unknown whether Terran Martians can obtain other pulp powers.

Mentality: As stated before, we don't know why they have decided to invade our world. Astronomers can only guess that perhaps they have outgrown or overexploited their own world and require ours as a replace. They also surmise that none of the other planets in the solar system would be capable of supporting their life. The outer planets are too cold for them and anything closer them the Earth appears to be too warm. Even Earth's cooler areas are tough on their systems.

Their four-fingered hands appear to be a clue to their mentality. Their most common groupings are in singles, fours or sixteens, all multiples of four. However, additional units of 2 and 8 have been seen as well. Military units generally come in flights of 16 or 32 ships.

Note: Terran Martians seem to be of a different race, but not species, then Martians who invaded Core Earth and the Nile Empire perhaps the crossing of Maelstrom bridges affects Martians in some bizarre, unknown way.

Technology: They seem to be capable of understanding our own technology and they definitely have an understanding of weird science. Many of their forces have commandeered Rus-



sian tanks and planes.

Their spaceships seem to ride upon magnetically-powered "legs." They are also capable of generating brief-duration force fields of enormous strength. While their shields are in place, no Terran weapon can reach them. The energy beams mounted in fixed forward positions on their spaceships are devastating in power; they can level buildings with ease. Fortunately, in our atmosphere, their ships are relatively slow.

Adventure Hooks

[1] The most obvious adventure is a defense of Budapest, the chief city along the front. A group of adventurers could be assigned as special agents of the Austrian army with the intent of breaching and capturing a Martian vessel. Scientists have begun to explore the possibility of biological warfare against the Martians. Using the remains of the Great War's mustard gas research, it may be possible that

Martian Ships

Tech: 31

Speed: 60 kph/40mph/11 value (they seem to be restricted to a maximum altitude of a few hundred feet before they must kick in their "orbital accelerators" and head straight up).

TOU: 25

Passengers: 8 Martians (approximately 12 humans)

Weapons: focused Electro-Magnetic Ray; damage value 35; range 3-100/600/1k

Defenses: Magnetically-powered force fields; armor value TOU+10/35. The longest a shield has been seen to last is about 8 1/2 minutes (512 seconds, or fifty-two rounds).

Military Units are broken up into 4, 16 or 32 ships. A full wave of attacks usually consists of 4 or 8 units, with the largest recorded wave consisting of 256 ships.

there is a weakness in the Martian physiology which can be exploited.

This adventure could be expanded by having the characters search for a rare plant or mineral which can be synthesized into a weapon. It could be a gas which is harmless to humans but lethal to Martians, or it might be equally deadly to both.

Chicago

Gangland, USA. The Windy City seems virtually immune to the concerns of Europe. Instead, it is in the midst of mob warfare, prohibition, alcohol runnings and mayhem. Chicago is broken up into four main districts.

Central Chicago

The central district covers the primary wards of the city's bureaucracy. Not much as far as gang activity goes down here because this is the mayor's domain. Although his police forces have lost control of the other wards, Edward Riegan still maintains a tight grip on central Chicago.

Northern Chicago

This section of town is made up of mostly working-class Eastern European immigrants. Poles, Slovaks and Russian refugees all reside here. The primary gang leader here is Stanley Wojoski. A one-time member of the Shoreman gang who fixed the 1919 World Series, he eventually became a mob boss in his own right a few years after Shoreman went up river (it is even rumored that Wojoski is the one who set Shoreman up). He is the most pleasant of the Chicago bosses and perhaps the most dangerous. He charisma and charity has blinded many officials to his underworld connections and he may run for the next mayoral race in 1940.

Wojoski's primary undertakings are prostitution and casinos (part of the reason he is popular with Chicago's

elite is that many of them attend his facilities). His lieutenants are "Lefty" Luzinski, Benny "The Books" Fleisher and Harold Fleisher. Wojoski is the only mob boss in Chicago that employs Jewish gang members.

Stan Wojoski

DEXTERITY 9

Dodge 10, fire combat 13, melee weapons 10, unarmed combat 12

STRENGTH 9

TOUGHNESS 9

PERCEPTION 11

Find 12, forgery 14, land vehicles 12, politics 14

MIND 9

Business 11, streetwise 15, test 10, willpower 10

CHARISMA 11

Charm 14

SPIRIT 8

Intimidation 13, petty crime 16, reality 10

Possibilities: 12

Inclination: Evil

Equipment: Convertible Nash Sedan, Thompson SMG (damage value 20); pinstriped suit

Western Chicago

This is the domain of Alfred Capone and the Italians. Working out of his own neighborhood, Capone makes sure he stays in control by promoting a sense of "family" amongst his wards. He supports his working class neighbors and treats them as he would want to be treated. This, of course, is what he expects in return. He will place a great deal of trust in a person, but should that person betray the trust, nothing can stop Capone from exacting revenge.

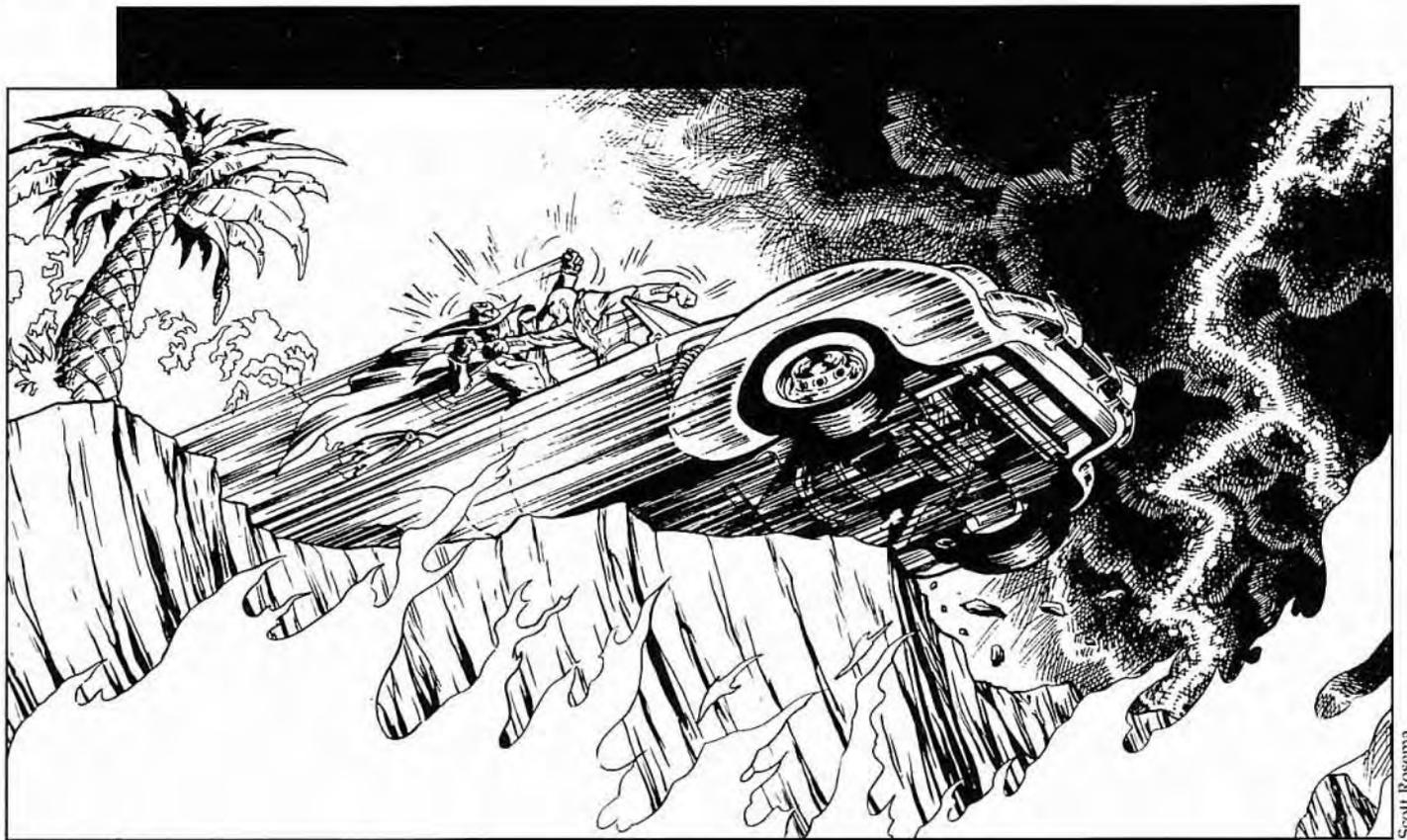
Capone's principal interests lie in alcohol bootlegging and protection scams. His mob has several infamous enforcers. Jacob Guzik, Charlie Fischetti, Anthony Accardo and of course, Franklin Nitti.

Franklin Nitti

DEXTERITY 10

Dodge 12, fire combat 16, melee weapons 13, missile weapons 13, unarmed combat 10





Scott Rosema

STRENGTH 9
TOUGHNESS 9
PERCEPTION 10

Find 12, forgery 12, land vehicles 12, tracking 11

MIND 10

Business 16, streetwise 13, test 11, willpower 11

CHARISMA 9

Taunt 13

SPIRIT 8

Intimidation 17, petty crime 14, reality 9

Possibilities: 8

Inclination: Evil

Equipment: Customized Thompson SMG (damage value 22; 3-15/25/100); pinstriped suit; knives (damage value STR+2/17)

Description: Coming from a background nearly identical to the Core Earth "Frank" Nitti, Franklin moved a little faster than his counterpart. In-

stead of spending so much time as a button-man and enforcer, Franklin got into the business end of Capone's dealings much faster and much deeper. While this has cost Capone's organization a little of the fear "Frank" Nitti inspired, it has gained more business savvy from a more subdued Franklin.

Alfred "Al" Capone

DEXTERITY 9

Fire combat 14, melee weapons 12, unarmed combat 12

STRENGTH 9

TOUGHNESS 11

PERCEPTION 11

Find 12, forgery 14, land vehicles 15, politics 15, Water vehicles 12

MIND 8

Business 19, streetwise 14, test 10, willpower 10

CHARISMA 10

Charm 13, taunt 13

SPIRIT 9

Intimidation 15, petty crime 17, reality 10

Possibilities: 20

Inclination: Evil

Equipment: Thompson SMG (damage value 20; 3-15/25/100); pinstriped suit; baseball bat (damage value STR+3/18); bullet-proof Sedan (TOU 25)

Description: In comparison to his Core Earth counterpart, Alfred, or "Al," Capone is even nastier and more effective — but also more subtle. Moving up in the rackets during the '20s, Al saw the costumed types and the heavy hitters on both sides of the ball — and he knew from the start that common crooks were going to have to get smart or get out of crime. It was either be a much more politic criminal, a stooge for a pulp villain, or a dead loudmouth ... those were "Big Al's" choices. He made the right one, and he has not regretted biting down on his temper a few more times than he thought necessary.



Southside

Chicago's Southside is controlled by another Italian mob, the Catazarro gang. The mob don is Vito "The Barber" Catazarro. Vito runs the largest meathouse in Chicago and controls the railroads. His nickname comes from the "close shaves" which he gives his victims. His sons, Gaspari and Antonio run the day-to-day rackets which include bootlegging (through the railroads), prostitution, protection and numbers rackets.

This gang is known for being extremely violent and were probably the perpetrators of last February's St. Valentine's Day Massacre. The four leaders of the then rival Castellano mob were gunned down inside their own southside meat packaging warehouse and over thirty other known gangsters were shot in various clubs throughout Chicago.

Gaspari Catazarro

DEXTERITY 12

Fire combat 16, melee weapons 14, missile weapons 14, stealth 13, unarmed combat 15

STRENGTH 9

TOUGHNESS 11

PERCEPTION 10

Find 12, forgery 14, land vehicles 13, politics 11

MIND 9

Business 10, science (demolitions) 10, streetwise 13, test 10, willpower 10

CHARISMA 8

Taunt 13

SPIRIT 8

Intimidation 13, petty crime 14, reality 10

Possibilities: 12

Inclination: Evil

Equipment: Colt .45 (damage value 16; 3-10/15/40, ammo 6); Thompson SMG (damage value 20; 3-15/25/100); shotgun (damage value 17; 3-15/25/40; ammo 2); Brass Knuckles (damage value STR+3/12); Knife (damage value STR+2/17); pinstriped suit

Description: The fact that his gang is, at best, second to Al Capone's, galls at Catazarro. He is volatile, and he has

provoked other gangs, law enforcement agencies, and even pulp characters needlessly. His gang is the most likely to seek out pulp villains for hire, or to work for a pulp villain.

The Martians in Chicago

The Martians have been exploiting Chicago's "interesting political climate" for who knows how many years. Those

who know about the Martians and the gangs theorize that many smaller bosses, and perhaps a few larger ones or their lieutenants, are Martians. The Martians are definitely using the Chicago gangs as infiltration connections in America and Canada, and they are there ... somewhere.

Not Quite the Untouchables

While the government has not yet formed a special "hit squad" targeting



Jaime Lombardo & Ron Hill



gangs in general and Al Capone specifically, there is a small group of federal agents in Chicago. Their target: Martian infiltrators.

Led by Roger Marz (the son of Jewish-German immigrants), this unit of crack agents was picked for two reasons: one, every man and woman on the "Marz Squad" has had some contact with a Martian or Martian manipulations of Terrans and, two, each of them is single and orphaned (Marz is the sole exception — his mother is still alive, and there are rumors he has a sister back in Germany).

The Marz Squad has taken on the gangs on several occasions — most gang bosses don't care if they are running liquor across the border from Canada, or picking up air drops of weird science parts in Lake Michigan. The Marz Squad has crossed paths with all the major gangs in recent years.

More rumors state that the Marz Squad is hiring independent operatives — mostly pulp-powered adventurers — in direct violation of government mandates. Right now, the Washington bureaucrats and local authorities are too busy with other problems than to worry about this, but if the "pulp hunters" of Congress ever sight in on Marz, he could be in serious trouble.

Pittsburgh

The Martians took out a good portion of Pittsburgh when they landed, but then their "invasion forces" disappeared. Rumor has it that the government uncovered hundreds, perhaps thousands, of Martian bodies in "the Pitt" of Pittsburgh — so, perhaps, the Martians were not aiming for this area of Terra at all, but crashed accidentally.

But other rumors state that there were too many survivors of the Pittsburgh holocaust. Could it be that this was all a planned Martian invasion? Did they sacrifice many of their own kind in order to get others in, impersonating (using their special chame-

leon suits) unfortunate holocaust victims?

This rumor has been spread by an irresponsible media. Survivors of the Pitt, who once thought they were fortunate to make it to the homes of friends and family outside of Pittsburgh are now not so sure they were the lucky ones. Some disappear in the night, others are turned out by their kin, and still more are dying under mysterious circumstances — or from mob violence as the rumors spread. Fortunately, the news blackout concerning the Martians has kept these last things from happening too often, but the dam could burst any moment.

Shanghai

Shanghai. Jewel of the Orient, gateway to Asia, wondrous mouth of the Yangtze. That's what the travel guides tell you. Cesspool of the Orient, gateway to the Asiatic drug trade, voice of oppression, that's what I say — and I'm a hard-bitten journalist. Now don't get me wrong. Shanghai's a wonderful town. It single-handedly harbors 45% of China's imports and exports and contains more raw opportunities for wealth than any other single city outside America. The problem is that the opportunists are usually preyed upon by the Far East's vast criminal underworld, drug overlords, prostitutes and cutthroat pirates. This makes Shanghai a fun place to visit, but a deadly place to stay (to say the least).

Modern Shanghai was founded in the mid-1800s by the British. As a small encampment on the mouth of the Yangtze, it soon grew in popularity as it was occupied by the French and Americans in addition to the British. By the end of the 19th century, overcrowding became a major problem. Weak geological support refused to allow high-rise expansion and people were packed like sardines in whatever housing they could find. The port was literally built over the waters of the river mouth.

This atmosphere lent itself quickly

to criminal activity. Opium was the commodity of choice around the turn of the century as desperation turned many into its open arms. The Boxer Rebellion and the evacuation of many Westerners caused additional troubles that virtually handed the port over to China's criminal overlords. In the recovery years of World War I, they strangled the city and awaited the return of western trade.

The net effect of this takeover means that Shanghai is a black market the size of a city. If it's available anywhere, there's at least one floating somewhere on the junks filling Shanghai's harbor. This is also a great place for out of work criminals, pirates, mercenaries and other assorted deadbeats to find work. It is also a place where people come to get drunk, drugged, and/or lost.

Adventure Hooks

[1] Eloise Rockefeller is a well-known name in the upper echelons of society. Wife of famed builder/designer Eldred Rockefeller, she is known as *the* preeminent "society dame." That's why when she is kidnapped, the group of player characters are called in to rescue her. Mrs. Rockefeller was kidnapped (perhaps even while the characters are attending one of her famous charity balls) by a group of gang members who are obviously Chinese. The adventure then leads the characters on a chased-filled escapade from the ball to the airport and across the country and the Pacific ocean finally ending in Shanghai.

Once there, the characters can attempt to coerce information out of the local waterfront wharf rats. They must deal with the bee's nest of danger spread throughout the hundreds of curio shops, opium dens and floating junks. Eventually, the characters will learn the identity of the kidnappers (perhaps they mention a distinctive tattoo) and the mastermind behind them, Tao Kuang-hsu.

The end of the adventure will have



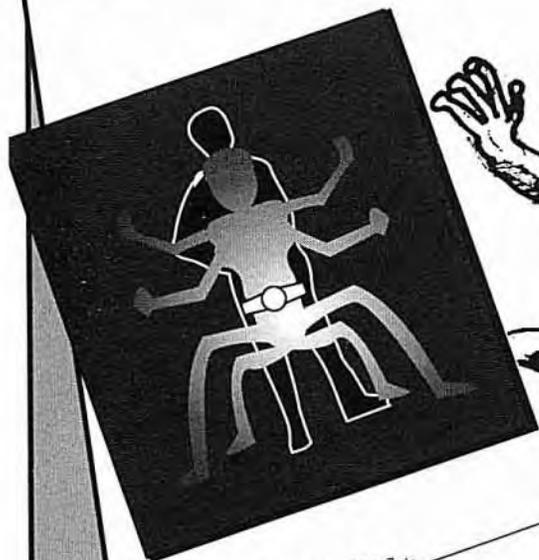


Terra: Diagram 4
Terran Martian

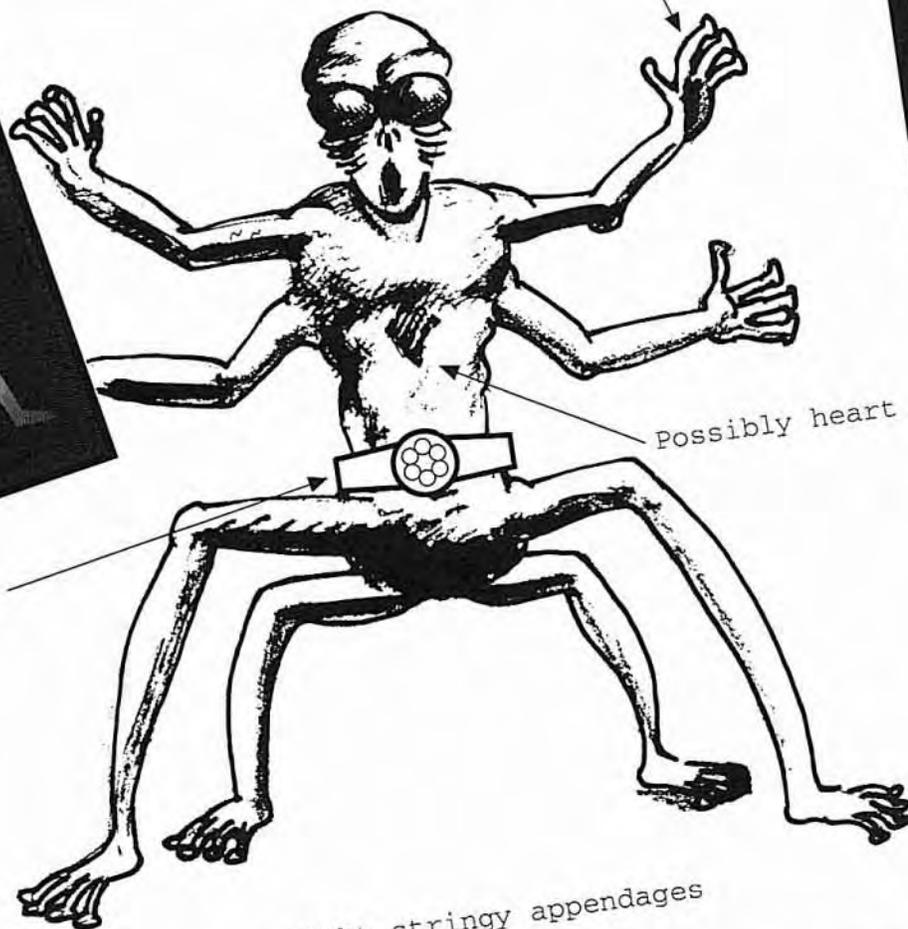
FEDERAL BUREAU OF INVESTIGATION
WASHINGTON, D.C.
CONFIDENTIAL

From: Roger Marz
To: Marz Squad
Subject: Martian Sightings

Four digits
per limb



Chameleon Belt



Possibly heart

Eight stringy appendages



the characters meeting face to face with one of China's great overlords aboard his junk. Perhaps, this confrontation will teach them to respect the East.

Tao's gang (25)

DEXTERITY 9

Dodge 11, fire combat 12, lock picking 10, maneuver 10, melee weapons 11, missile weapons 11, running 10, stealth 11, unarmed combat 10

STRENGTH 9

TOUGHNESS 9

PERCEPTION 7

Language (English) 8, trick 10

MIND 8

Test 9, willpower 10

CHARISMA 8

Taunt 11

SPIRIT 8

Intimidation 10, petty crime 10, reality 9

Possibility Potential: some (30)

Inclination: Evil

Equipment: Three throwing knives (damage value STR+3/17), tonfa (damage value STR+4/18) or nunchaku (damage value STR+5/19), Schmeisser MP40 (damage value 17; 3-15/40/100; ammo 11), firecrackers, lighter, lockpicks, smoke grenades.

Tao Kuang-Hsu

DEXTERITY 13

Dodge 16, fire combat 16, flight 15, maneuver 15, missile weapons 14, stealth 15, unarmed combat 14

STRENGTH 9

TOUGHNESS 10

PERCEPTION 10

Evidence analysis 11, find 12, language (English, French, and German at the same levels) 16, politics/diplomacy 12, scholar (mysticism) 12, trick 14

MIND 11

Medicine 12, pulp power (Sorcery) 17, test 14, willpower 14

CHARISMA 9

Taunt 13

SPIRIT 10

Intimidation 13, petty crime 15, reality 15

Possibilities: 15

Inclination: Evil

Equipment: Knife (damage value STR+3/17), Schmeisser MP40 (damage value 17; 3-15/40/100; ammo 11), silk robes and incense

Pulp Powers: Sorcery; develop up to five rituals for Tao.

Description: Tao is a manipulator and an evil genius. He would, however, rather turn over Mrs. Rockefeller unarmed than risk incurring the wrath of the West. However, he will try to get some profit out of the deal, even if it is not the one he was looking for. He will not fight to the death if he does not have to — but he will “mark” the characters for later manipulation and/or revenge.



Scott Rosema



Tibet

I suppose it is somehow mystically fitting that we end our guidebook to Terra with a look at one of the places that holds perhaps the greatest secrets. That place would of course be the high mountains of Tibet. Tibet, contrary to realm-runner opinion, is not a snow-filled realm. Instead, it is a wind-swept country that rarely sees more than ten inches of precipitation annually. What it does have instead is a near year-round gale-force wind that threatens to wipe clean the face of the Himalayas upon which northern Tibet rests. It is often bitterly cold, but the lack of any cloud protection leaves the area dry and open for bouts of baking heat. Even more bizarre, these two extremes in temperature can occur in a single day, reaching nearly one hundred degrees Fahrenheit during scorching noontime, while dipping well below zero once the sun sets. With wind chill, the temperatures after dark can reach as low as 30 or 40 below zero.

Nestled in these poorly-treated mountain nooks and crannies are dozens of small villages, shrines, and temples. Northern villages are comprised mainly of sheep and livestock herders while the more mild climate southern villages support a small farming trade. Between them there is a steady trade business that is also supported strongly by outside travellers. Marking a division between India, Pakistan and China, many Asian travellers pass through the villages of Tibet bringing each other objects from both sides of the Himalayas.

The travellers also come to purchase some of the objects made by Tibet's third largest sect, the priests. Approximately 20 percent of Tibet's native population is a full-time member of a religious order. That means one in every five citizens of Tibet is a priest, cleric or monk of one of the dozens of various schools of religion found in the monasteries that intermingle with the villages. From these orders come teachings of faith, life, the afterlife, and enlightenment. To sup-

port themselves, they create vast libraries of scriptures which are traded to travellers for food and clothing (no money; most monks rarely own more than the clothes on their backs). They also make hundreds of religious art objects which are sold to spread their wisdom to the four corners of the globe.

In addition to scrolls and art, many monks supply teaching. Many orders are open to outsiders provided they vow to uphold the tenants of the order while they stay within the confines of the monasteries. These restrictions include celibacy, frequent fasting, the celebration of religious holy days and other rituals meant to instill a sense of order within the practitioner. It is only by following these guidelines that the monks believe they can attain the next stage of the life-cycle, eventually hope to attain full enlightenment and reaching the afterlife.

Between these rituals come the studies of religion, life, and occasionally magic or miracles. Gamemasters who allow their characters to venture into the world of mantras and mysticism are free to have them learn any of the miracles listed in basic *Torg* rulebook, provided they first gain at least one add in *faith* (Tibetan) and then one additional add in *focus*. Due to the difficult nature of spirituality in Terra, neither of these skills can be used *unskilled* and both must be taught. Therefore, each add will cost five possibilities. In addition, to simulate the time and discipline required by the various religious orders, at least twelve months must be spent in Tibet.

Once purchased, a character is taught two basic rituals (character's choice) and additional rituals can be learned at a rate dependant upon the ritual's spiritual rating. For every two points of spiritual rating, it must be studied for one month. For example, *bles*, which has a spiritual rating of 9, must be studied for 4 1/2 months before the monk can use it.

Magic can be similarly taught, however it is a bit more difficult. Each of the basic skills of magic, *alteration*, *apportation*, *conjuration*, and *divination*

cost five possibilities for the first add. Upon learning a magic skill, a student can begin gaining arcane knowledge adds. Just as with the basic skills, knowledge adds can only be taught and can not be used unskilled. The time cost for an initial magic skill add is at least six months in a monastery and the time cost for the first knowledge add is three months. Learning basic spells is also a costly process. While the possibility cost remains the same as listed in the basic *Rulebook* (1 point per spell), the time cost for learning a spell is a number of months equal to the spell's skill requirement.

Example: Our nemesis, the Drifter, spent a number of years in Tibet. As a novice, he wished to learn charm person and disguise self. He tricked his mentor into teaching him these potentially evil spells, but it cost him dearly. Learning the proper methods of conjuration took six months. Afterwards, the Drifter had to learn the knowledges of living forces and folk taking another combined six months. Finally, learning the spells themselves took 29 more months (the skill requirement for charm person is 16 and disguise self is 13). So after costing him 14 possibilities and almost 3-1/2 years, the Drifter finally mastered his desired spells.

Forcing the Issue

"Trying to force a monk to teach you something is about as easy as moving the world — without a lever." That's an axiom taken from the pulp villain Magistro, a man who desperately desired to learn real magic instead of relying entirely on his pulp powers (*teleportation* and *darkness*).

It is fairly accurate.

The monks of Tibet are a different breed of humanity. Torture them, and they will stoically take what you can dish out. Threaten them, and they will stoically ignore you. Attempt to bribe them, and they will stoically look at you like you've lost your mind. Kill them, and they will stoically die.



Get the picture?

Ninety-nine percent of the monks in Tibet will willingly admit that they would much rather be rich than poor, healthy than disabled, happy than sad, alive then dead — but not one of them will betray their beliefs to gain one ounce of compassion, mercy, or profit.

Oh, and the other one percent? They're crazy — they've already decided "it's time to die" and, if you try to kill them, they'll help, because it is "time for them to leave this mortal plane behind."

This does not mean that you can't trick the monks (it's not too hard over the short term) and, often, the monks will teach an evil person in the hopes he or she will reform. More often than not, the character does. But, they do make mistakes. The Drifter was one.

Adventure Hooks

[1] Obviously, the primary adventure for characters in Tibet is to search out a monastery from which to learn miracles and spells. This could be complicated by a number of means. First, the terrain is very unpleasant and the journey itself to Tibet is dangerous. Air passage into Tibet is rough and deadly with the presence of the constant gale winds. The adventurers could be forced into a crash landing anywhere along the Himalayas. From there they will have to forage their way to their destined village.

Their overland journey is then beset by a tribe of vicious nomads that prey on unwary travellers. While crossing a mountain pass, the nomads descend upon the characters dropping boulders and firing stolen British rifles.

Nomads (10–20)

DEXTERITY 9

Beast riding 16, dodge 11, fire combat 12, maneuver 11, melee weapons 12, missile weapons 10, unarmed combat 11

STRENGTH 10

Climbing 14

TOUGHNESS 12

PERCEPTION 8

Find 10, first aid 11, tracking 12, trick 9

MIND 8

Survival (mountain) 13, test 10, willpower 10

CHARISMA 7

Persuasion 9, taunt 11

SPIRIT 8

Faith (varies) 10, reality 10

Possibility Potential: some (40)

Inclination: Evil

Equipment: Horse; sabre (damage value +6/20), rifle (damage value 18; 3-40/250/600; ammo 7), heavy furs and leathers (armor value TOU+3/20)

Description: The Nomads are wandering bandits who prey on the uncommon traveller and the Tibetan villages. Occasionally, they sweep down from the mountains and attack the lowlands. Nomads respond well to bribery (+3 to any persuasion attempt that offers any substantial amount of money and/or weapons; upward for large amounts), but they are untrustworthy. A strong party that pays one Nomad group a bribe is likely to be beset many times by "different" Nomads (the same Nomads exchanging clothes) for more bribes, and a weak party that pays them off will be attacked later for more money. Of course, if you are just outside a large village and you are attacked, a "toll" will get you through — even the Tibetans do come out and fight them occasionally.

[2] Nomads aren't the only problems characters might face in travelling in and out of Tibet. If the characters attempt entry or exit out of Tibet on the China side of the Himalayas, they meet some trouble with the Chinese National Army. Colonel Ch'ing Hai, a leader of the CNA, was cut off from his chain of command by the incursion of the Japanese in the north. Somehow his presence along the Tibetan border was forgotten and he has been forced to deal with any "situations" as he sees fit. Unfortunately, a bit of a paranoid leader, he expects an attack from Tibet. He is also an extremely greedy individual. Any party passing through his region must undergo an intensive search. Those carrying weapons are arrested while oth-

ers are merely stripped of any items of value.

Colonel Ch'ing Hai

DEXTERITY 9

Beast riding 11, dodge 12, fire combat 14, heavy weapons 10, maneuver 13, melee weapons 10, stealth 11, unarmed combat 12

STRENGTH 10

TOUGHNESS 10

PERCEPTION 9

Espionage 11, evidence analysis 11, find 11, language (English) 12, politics/diplomacy 11, tracking 11, trick 13

MIND 10

Survival 11, test 12, willpower 12

CHARISMA 10

Charm 12, persuasion 13, taunt 14

SPIRIT 9

Intimidation 12, reality 11

Possibilities: 15

Inclination: Evil

Equipment: Cold-weather uniform (armor value TOU+2/20), pistol (damage value 15; 3-10/15/25; ammo 6), rifle (19; 3-5/15/40; ammo 7), machine gun (damage value 18; 3-15/25/50; ammo 10), various CNA documents

Description: Colonel Ch'ing Hai is a desperate individual. Cut off from his chain of command, he is quick to anger and hard to soothe. Once angered, little will stop him from ordering firing squads. In addition, he is very considerate about his own personal status. As a border Colonel, he feels that he is a source of ridicule by central leaders who enjoy their wealth in comfort. As a result he often steals from travellers to enhance his own position.

If there is some way the characters can help Ch'ing Hai get back to the main country of China (especially if they can arrange something with China's government to reassign him), however, Ch'ing will become extremely pleasant. If the characters can convince him that they have some "clout" — and the ability to get him through the Japanese lines — he will be their best friend. In fact, it is really only this desperate situation that has made Ch'ing evil — given better circumstances and encouragement,





Malcolm Hee

he might revert to Good Inclination (though it would take some work).

CNA Cavalryman (150)

DEXTERITY 9

Beast riding 14, dodge 12, fire combat 12 maneuver 11, stealth 11, unarmed combat 11

STRENGTH 9

TOUGHNESS 9

PERCEPTION 7

Find 9, first aid 9, tracking 9, trick 9

MIND 7

Survival 9, test 9, willpower 10

CHARISMA 7

Persuasion 8, taunt 10

SPIRIT 9

Intimidation 10

Possibility Potential: some (25)

Inclination: Evil and Good (fifty-fifty)

Equipment: same as Colonel Ch'ing Hai.

Description: Among the finest cavalrymen China has to offer, this detachment was not sent to Tibet as a slight to Colonel Ch'ing — they were sent because the government of China believed the Colonel and these men were the only ones who could deal with the possibility of being cut off for months, perhaps years, at a time. They were, to some extent, wrong. The unit has been demoralized by Ch'ing's attitude, and many of the men are becoming little

more than bandits themselves. There have been no desertions yet, but some of the still-good men are growing dismayed with their comrades' ruthlessness regarding the natives.

The End

Well, that ends our little tour of Terra. Hope you've found this useful and make sure you stop by whenever you're in the Big City and make sure to call me first whenever you've got a news scoop. I can always use the help.

— "Typewriter" Joe Stillwell





Chapter Eleven

Template Section



In Terra, there are many who have never heard of High Lords or the Infiniverse. In fact, with the background that has been outlined, players may find that *Torg* easily extends beyond the Possibility Wars. Given this, we introduce a new set of templates geared towards life on Terra. These characters may or may not ever travel to other realms, but that suits them just fine. There is enough adventure on their own realm.

Note: These characters are not necessarily Storm Knights (though they have the abilities of Storm Knights); they are *adventurers* or *heroes*. They operate under the same rules as *Torg* Storm Knights but, unless they have confronted other realities (as explained in their backgrounds), no character listed here should have more than *one* add in the *reality* skill—disconnection and reality storms are not prevalent on Terra for Terran characters.

However, since Terran characters are governed by world laws similar to those that govern Storm Knights in the Nile Empire, this means they are all, by default, of *Good* Inclination. If gamemasters want to allow their play-

ers to play characters of *Evil* Inclination, they may, but with the following restrictions:

- Evil characters are *evil*. They may, in the manner of pulp villains, act good for short periods of time, but they will always give themselves away eventually.

- Evil characters should not gain possibility awards for completing standard adventures. They only gain awards by performing evil (usually by making certain the rest of the party—which, presumably, have *Good* Inclination—fail). In addition, because of the nature of Terra, only *really* evil characters get normal possibility awards. Others are “minions” and only receive about one-half the normal adventure and Act awards.

- Good characters will not knowingly adventure with evil characters or help them except under certain gamemaster-proscribed circumstances. Usually, a player who wants to play an evil character in Terra does so only for one adventure—or after an existing adventurer undergoes inclination seduction.





CHARACTER RECORD SHEET Adventuring Archaeologist

Player Name: _____

Character Name		Home Terra			Possibilities 10
Age	Wound Level	Shock Damage K O	Magic	Social	
Height	Wound		11	21	
	Hvy Wound		Spiritual	Tech	
Weight	Mortal		9	21	
	Dead				

Skill	Add	Attribute	Value
Dodge		DEX	
Fire Combat		DEX	
Lock picking		DEX	
Maneuver		DEX	
Melee weapons		DEX	
Stealth		DEX	
Unarmed Combat		DEX	
Evidence Analysis		PER	
Find		PER	
Heiroglyphics		PER	
Language		PER	
Research		PER	
Scholar (History)		PER	
Trick		PER	
Science (Archaeology)	3	MIN	
Science (Cartography)		MIN	
Survival		MIN	
Willpower		MIN	
Charm		CHA	
Reality		SPI	

Attributes		Approved Actions	
Dexterity	10	Maneuver	
Strength	8		
Toughness	9		
Perception	11	Trick	
Mind	11	Test	
Charisma	10	Taunt	
Spirit	7	Intimidate	

Weapons & Armor	Value	Axiom Level	Range		
Armor			S	M	L
Armor					
Weapons					
Revolver	16	20	3-10	40	60

Equipment	Axiom Level	Notes	Equipment	Axiom Level	Notes
binoculars	18				
jungle pack	14				
archaeologist's kit	15				
fedora	7				

Bonus Chart	
Die	3 5 7 9 11 13 21 26 31 36 41 46
Roll	1 2 4 6 8 10 12 14 15 16 17 18 19 20 25 30 35 40 45 50 +5
Bonus #	-12 -10 -8 -5 -2 -1 0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 13 +1

Spells				
Name	D	B	E	Ax*

Arcane Knowledges			
Know.	Add	Know.	Add

Miracles				
Name	C	D	E	Ax

Cyberware			
Name	CR	E	

Powers & Gizmos			
Name	Cost	E	Ax

Natural Tools	
Tool	E

Martial Arts	
Style:	Style:
Maneuver:	Maneuver:

Psionics			
Name	D	R	E

Other		
Name	E	Ax

*D: Difficulty B: Backlash E: Effect Ax: Axiom Level C: Community Rating CR: Cyber Rating R: Range



CHARACTER RECORD SHEET

Government Spy

Player Name: _____

Character Name		Home Cosm Terra		Possibilities 10	
Age	Wound Level	Shock Damage K O	Magic 11	Social 21	
Height	Hvy Wound		Spiritual 9	Tech 21	
Weight	Mortal Dead				

Skill	Add	Attribute	Value
Dodge		DEX	
Fire Combat		DEX	
Lock picking		DEX	
Maneuver		DEX	
Melee Weapons		DEX	
Stealth		DEX	
Unarmed Combat		DEX	
Espionage	3	PER	
Evidence Analysis		PER	
Find		PER	
Language		PER	
Photography		PER	
Tracking		PER	
Trick		PER	
Willpower		MIN	
Charm		CHA	
Persuasion		CHA	
Taunt		CHA	
Intimidation		SPI	
Reality		SPI	

Attributes		Approved Actions	
Dexterity	11	Maneuver	
Strength	9		
Toughness	9		
Perception	10	Trick	
Mind	11	Test	
Charisma	9	Taunt	
Spirit	7	Intimidate	

Weapons & Armor	Value	Axiom Level	S	M	L
Armor					
Weapons					
.45 Colt	16	20	3-10	15	40

Equipment	Axiom Level	Notes	Equipment	Axiom Level	Notes
False Identification	11				
Passports	16				
Lock picks	12				
Camera	20				
Attache Case	10				
Wire Cutters	11				
Rope	21				

Bonus Chart																					
Die		3	5	7	9	11	13			21	26	31	36	41	46						
Roll	1	2	4	6	8	10	12	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	25	30	35	40	45	50	+5
Bonus #	-12	-10	-8	-5	-2	-1	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	+1

Spells				
Name	D	B	E	Ax*

Arcane Knowledges			
Know.	Add	Know.	Add

Miracles				
Name	C	D	E	Ax

Cyberware		
Name	CR	E

Powers & Gizmos			
Name	Cost	E	Ax
Stealth booster	2	+3	23
D.V. goggles	2	15	24

Natural Tools	
Tool	E

Martial Arts	
Style:	Style:
Maneuver:	Maneuver:

Psionics			
Name	D	R	E

Other		
Name	E	Ax

*D: Difficulty B: Backlash E: Effect Ax: Axiom Level C: Community Rating CR: Cyber Rating R: Range



CHARACTER RECORD SHEET

Pro Pilot

Player Name: _____

Character Name		Home Cosm Terra			Possibilities 10	
Age	Wound Level	Shock Damage	9	Social	11	
Height	Wound Hvy Wound		Spiritual	Tech	21	
Weight	Mortal Dead		9	21		

Skill	Add	Attribute	Value	Attributes	Approved Actions
Dodge		DEX		Dexterity 10	Maneuver
Fire Combat		DEX		Strength 10	
Heavy Weapons		DEX		Toughness 11	
Maneuver		DEX		Perception 10	Trick
Melee Weapons		DEX		Mind 8	Test
Unarmed Combat		DEX		Charisma 9	Taunt
Air Vehicles	+3	PER		Spirit 8	Intimidate
Find		PER			
First Aid		PER			
Land Vehicles		PER			
Trick		PER			
Science (Cartography)		MIN			
Test		MIN			
Willpower		MIN			
Charm		CHA			
Intimidation		SPI			
Reality		SPI			

Weapons & Armor	Value	Axiom Level	S	M	L
Armor					
Weapons					
.38 Revolver	14	20	3-10	25	50

Equipment	Axiom Level	Notes	Equipment	Axiom Level	Notes
Plane	21				
Tool Kit	17				

Bonus Chart																					
Die		3	5	7	9	11	13		21	26	31	36	41	46							
Roll	1	2	4	6	8	10	12	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	25	30	35	40	45	50	+5
Bonus #	-12	-10	-8	-5	-2	-1	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	+1

Spells				
Name	D	B	E	Ax*

Arcane Knowledges			
Know.	Add	Know.	Add

Miracles				
Name	C	D	E	Ax

Cyberware			
Name	CR	E	

Powers & Gizmos			
Name	Cost	E	Ax

Natural Tools	
Tool	E

Martial Arts	
Style:	Style:
Maneuver:	Maneuver:

Psionics			
Name	D	R	E

Other		
Name	E	Ax

*D: Difficulty B: Backlash E: Effect Ax: Axiom Level C: Community Rating CR: Cyber Rating R: Range



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