

PALLADIUM BOOKS® PRESENTS:

RIFTS® DIMENSION BOOK™ SEVEN:

MEGAVERSE® BUILDER

BY CARL GLEBA

FOR RIFTS® & PHASE WORLD®

EVANS 04

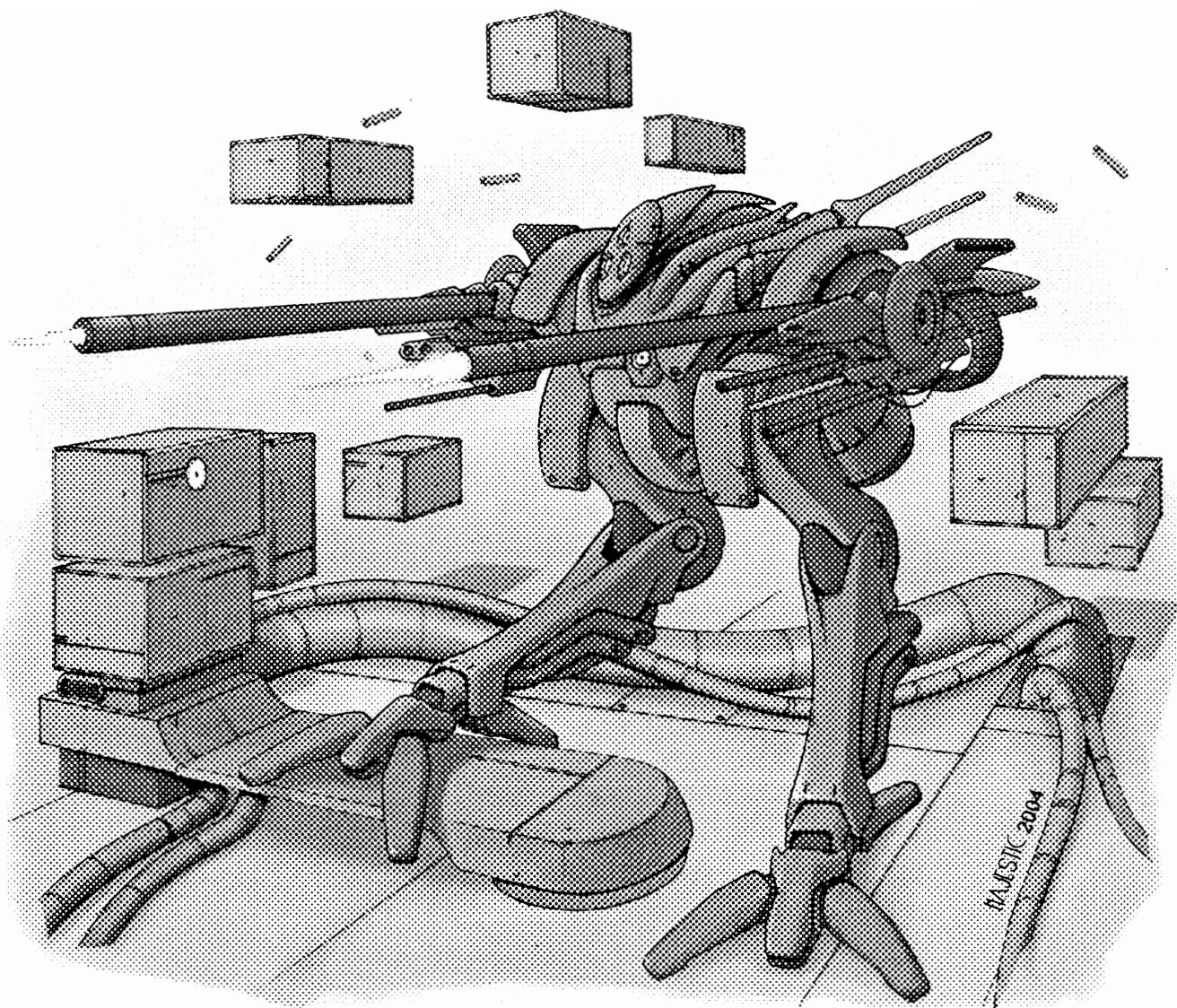
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The fictional world of **Phase World®** is violent, deadly and filled with supernatural monsters. Other-dimensional beings often referred to as “demons,” torment, stalk and prey on humans. Other alien life forms, monsters, gods and demigods, as well as magic, insanity, and war are all elements in this book.

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Dedication

To my gaming group: In order of how long we've played together, Thanh Nguyen, William Maxwell, Patrick Dodge, and Justin Stringer. How many roads have we traveled, how many dungeons have we crawled through, and how much chaos have we wreaked together? Through it all, it was a shared experience and I couldn't have asked for a better group of friends and brothers to share it with. Live long and prosper my friends.

Special Thanks: Thanks to Justin Stringer for bringing Kirsten Kurst alive in our games and helping to develop the Shifters' skills and abilities over the course of our Rifts games. Your playing her and constantly coming up with new ways to expand on the Shifter have been truly inspirational and the Shifter O.C.C. will never be the same because of you!

To Patrick Dodge and Todd Yoho for their diligent job at editing my preliminary manuscript and helping to clarify some of my ideas. Thank you both for your time and dedication.

– Carl J. Gleba - 2004

The cover, by *Mark Evans*, depicts a new dimension in the act of being created.

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Palladium Books® Presents:

Rifts® Dimension Book™ Seven:

Megaverse® Builder

A Rifts® and Phase World® sourcebook

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Special Thanks to Carl Gleba for another idea-packed book. To my artists for doing a great job on a tight deadline, especially Mark Evans, Apollo Okamura and the maniacs at Drunken Style Studios. To Alex and Wayne and all of the dimension-hopping guys at Palladium Books.

– *Kevin Siembieda, 2004*

Contents

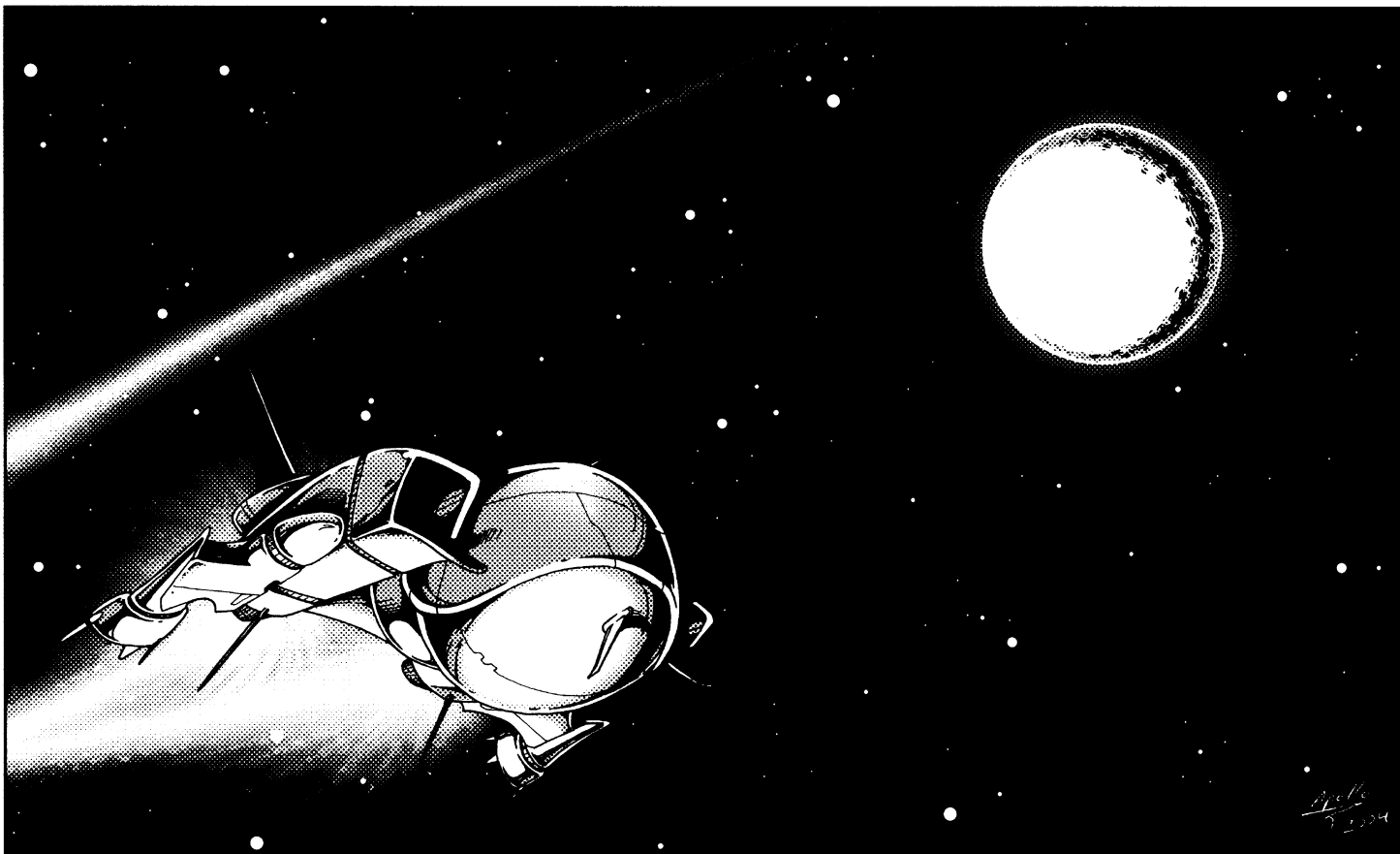
Why Dimensional Travel?	6	Steal Memories and Skills	32
Dimensional Physics	7	Nexus Spiders	33
Pocket Dimensions	7	Webbing	34
Infinite Dimensions	7	Rift Demon	35
Parallel Dimensions	8	Nexus Maw	37
Central Nexus	8	Create Dimensional Hole	38
Dimensional Fabric	9	The Shifter O.C.C. Revisited & Expanded	39
Weak Dimensional Fabric	9	Shifter O.C.C. Abilities	39
Impenetrable Dimensional Fabric	9	Combat Note	41
Dimensional Energy Matrix	9	Communication Rift	41
Creating a Dimension	10	Familiar Link	42
1. Determine the Type of Dimension	10	Summoning	42
Optional: Size of a Pocket Dimension	10	Link to the Supernatural	43
2. Primary Dimensional Medium	10	A pair of new Spell Invocations	47
Types of Energy	11	Tolkien Artifact Hunter O.C.C.	48
Elemental	13	Exotic (Monstrous) Familiars	50
3. Secondary Dimensional Medium	13	Avian Biomech	50
Single Land Mass	14	Cytoplasmic Blob	51
4. Density of Dimensional Fabric	14	Drake	52
5. Magic Level	14	Different Types	53
6. Dimensional Energy Matrix	15	Giant Amazon Spider	54
7. The Flow of Time	15	Saurian Biomech	55
8. Dimensional Quirks	16	Splynn Lizard	56
Fracture Points	17	Summoning Table	57
Warped Laws of Physics	17	The Megaverse	60
Reversed Elements	18	The Dimension Riders	60
Forced Evolution	19	Treatise on Rifts Earth	61
Final Step	19	A Journey to Wormwood	63
Dimension Template	19	Dimensions & Beyond	64
Dimensional Anomalies	20	Phase World & The Three Galaxies	64
Dimensional Maelstrom	20	Palladium World	65
Chance of Encounter	21	Report to the Circle of Twelve	66
Detecting a Dimensional Maelstrom	21	Heroes Earth	66
The Effects of a Dimensional Maelstrom	21	Other Dimensional Plot Ideas	67
Side Effects and Destination Table	22	G.M. Tips on Dimensional Travel	67
Optional Incapacitation Table	23	New Dimensions	68
Off Course Maelstrom Table	23	The Dimension of Spires	68
Table of Dimensions	24	Dimensional Characteristics	69
Displacement Storm	26	The Dangers of Spires	69
Dimensional Vortex	29	The Pillars of Spires	70
Vortex Outcome Table	30	Dimensional Quirks	70
Amount of Time Traveled	30	Dimensional Travelers	71
Dimensional Critters	31	Adventure Ideas for Spires	71
Cerebellus Demon	31	The Great Machine	73
		Dimensional Characteristics	73

Defender Generators	75
Construction of Automaton Defenders	76
Pools of Metal	80
Brain Nodes	80
Adventure Ideas	82
Invaders (The Mechanoids)	82
The Garbage Pit Dimension	84
Dimensional Characteristics	85
Raining Junk	86
Raining Junk Damage Table	86
Junk Storm Duration Table	87
Junk Storm Area of Effect Table	87
Where does it come from?	87
Time in the Garbage Pit	87
Lose Something?	88
Lucky Finds	88
Salvageable Items Table	88
Condition Table	89
Treacherous Travel	89
Living Dangers in the Trash Mounds	90
Junk Beast	91
People in the Garbage Pit	92
Salvage City	92
Scavenger O.C.C.	93
Hook Line & Sinker (adventures for Garbage Pit)	94
Other Palladium Products & Release Schedule	96

Quick Find

Anomalies (see Dimensional Quirks)	16
Anomaly: Dimensional Vortex	29
Anomaly: Displacement Storm	26
Anomaly: Dimensional Maelstrom	20
Anomaly: Warped Physics	17
Artifact Hunter O.C.C.	48
Automaton Construction Tables	76
Battle of Wills (see Shifter Summoning)	42
Central Nexus	8
Creature: To Summon (Tables)	57
Creature: Dimensional Critters	31
Creature: Familiars	50
Creature: Great Machine (alien intelligence)	73
Creature: Junk Beast	91
Demons (link to)	44
Devils/Deevils (link to)	44
Dimension Riders	60

Dimensions: Communication Rift (see Shifter)	41
Dimensions: Creation of	10
Dimensions: Creatures	31
Dimensions: Energy Matrix	9
Dimensions: Fabric of	9
Dimensions: Fracture Points	17
Dimensions: Garbage Pit, The	84
Dimensions: Great Machine, The	73
Dimensions: Heroes Unlimited World	66
Dimensions: Hole (see Nexus Maw)	38
Dimensions: Megaverse Overview	60
Dimensions: Overview	7
Dimensions: Palladium World	65
Dimensions: Phase World	64
Dimensions: Rifts Earth	61
Dimensions: Spires	68
Dimensions: Table of	24
Dimensions: Wormwood	63
Familiar: Avian Biomech	50
Familiar: Cytoplasmic Blob	51
Familiar: Drakes (various)	52
Familiar: Giant Amazon Spider	54
Familiar: Saurian Biomech	55
Familiar: Splynn Lizard	56
Link to the Supernatural (see Shifter)	43
Mechanoids, The	82
O.C.C.: Scavenger	93
O.C.C.: Shifter	39
O.C.C.: Tolkeen Artifact Hunter	48
Oswald Thistledown, Treatise on Rifts Earth	61
Palladium (Fantasy) World (brief overview)	65
Phase World (brief overview)	64
Plato of Lazlo (talk about Palladium World)	65
Scavenger O.C.C. (Garbage Pit Dimension)	93
Shifter O.C.C. (Expanded)	39
Shifter Stats	46
Shifter Summoning Table	57
Shifter: Tolkeen Artifact Hunter O.C.C.	48
Spell: Expel Demons or Deevils (new)	47
Spell: Teleport Self	47
Summoning Tables	57
Three Galaxies (brief overview)	64
Time, Flow of	15
Time Travel (see Dimensional Vortex)	30
Wormwood	63



Why Dimensional Travel?

In the Megaverse® of Rifts®, dimensional travel is readily accessible and something that Game Masters should enjoy exploiting to the fullest. The Rifts are not meant to be just an explanation for why the Earth is filled with monstrous aliens, demons and supernatural beings, but rather they are a valuable plot device for Game Masters to take hold of and use to their advantage and to make anything possible. As Kevin Siembieda so often says, “role-playing is limited only by the imagination,” and Rifts begs for its players and, especially, the Game Masters, to unleash *their* imagination.

While Rifts Earth is far from boring, dimensional travel can take players to places they may have never imagined. New plots should emerge, and new ideas blossom, take root and grow. It’s a chance to go places where no one else has been, and create the adventures of a lifetime.

The point I’m trying to make here is that *dimensional exploration* can be a campaign in its own right and a blast to run.

There are numerous reasons why characters would engage in dimensional travel. The first, and probably the most obvious, is for the pure joy of adventure. Curiosity is a driving force in humans, and most people want to see what’s over the next hill, around the next corner, or in this case, on the other side of that dimensional Rift. It might be something wondrous, unique, bizarre or terrible, but we want to know what’s there. These types of adventurers may be thrill seekers and adrenalin junkies, to bold explorers, scientists or refugees looking to build a new life elsewhere. Dimensional travel is fraught with danger, and true adventurers live for new experiences. The only thing that is certain is that the unknown and the new wait on the other side.

Another reason to traverse the Megaverse may be rooted in necessity. The characters learn on their current adventure that the answers they seek lie in Hades, the Elemental Planes, or some yet unnamed alien or parallel dimension. Unless a Shifter is in the group, the characters will have to find a way to get to these alien dimensions. That could be an adventure in itself.

Yet another reason to travel beyond the veil is because the characters were forced to do so by an enemy or captor. Or maybe they were kidnaped and taken to a different dimension against their will, or tricked into making the journey. Or maybe the lives of friends, loved ones or an entire nation hang in the balance, forcing the hand of the characters. Or perhaps they have to escape the clutches of an enemy like the dimension-spanning Splugorth, or some Demon Lord, and discover they are no longer on Earth, or in an attempt to get home they end up on an alien world. Any of these (and others) are opportunities for some great role-playing.

Last but not least, is the simple accident. Thousands upon thousands of D-Bees have been swept up by unchained dimensional energies or magic and Rifted to Earth by events far beyond their control. Who’s to say similar events can’t happen elsewhere, and displace the player characters to another dimension? Certain areas on Earth, like the Bermuda Triangle, are unstable dimensional gateways, other locations straddle more than one dimension at a time, and the stone pyramids and other places across the planet randomly open to worlds unknown all on their own. To see what’s on the other side all one needs to do is step through the shimmering light. In addition, magic gone wrong, especially on a ley line or nexus, can create an incident

that sucks unwitting participants or spectators through a Rift and to alien domains.

And what lies in the dimension beyond?

What obstacles are there to overcome?

What enemies to battle?

Is the dimension something wondrous to behold or a demonic hell hole filled with demons and monsters just waiting to rend the characters to pieces?

These are some of the questions the G.M. needs to ask and answer to make the adventure a trip worth taking. And this book will help answer them.

So let's face it. If you've bought this book you're probably a fan of dimensional travel, and we hope this book will be your guide to the vast Megaverse® that Palladium has laid before you. The **Rifts® Megaverse® Builder** is your foundation for creating your own worlds. From the dimensional fabric that binds the whole dimension, to the odd quirks that are found in each and every locale, it's all laid out here. Game Masters are encouraged to use as much, or little, of this material as you desire. Remember, this is *your* dimension, so let loose with your imagination and let the **Megaverse® Builder** be your stepping stone to creating your corner of the Megaverse®.

- Carl J. Gleba, 2004

Dimensional Physics

It's difficult for the human mind to comprehend the complexity of alien dimensions, especially those that are infinite in size. In our minds, everything is finite, has a limit. As an example, a person living on a planet realizes, and can comprehend, the fact that beyond their planet is the cold void of space. It's only a few miles up, but because the distance is relatively small it is easy for the mind to understand and quantify. When one expands that thought to include the solar system, it is still comprehensible even though the size is huge by comparison. Even the size of the galaxy can be quantified and measured. However, try measuring the universe. You can't do it, because no known boundaries exist that would allow it to be quantified. Theoretically, the size of the universe would be measured by how far away the furthest galaxy is relative to your position. Add to this the concept of one universe layered after another and another to infinity, and the mind boggles. We can grasp the concept, but the reality is staggering. Fortunately, some things are best left unanswered and mysterious.

Experienced dimensional travelers have come to recognize three distinct types of dimensions that they use to help catalogue their travels and explain the Megaverse® around them. They are *Pocket Dimensions*, *Infinite Dimensions*, and *Parallel Dimensions*.

Pocket Dimensions

Pocket Dimensions are typically small, measuring anywhere from hundreds to even thousands of miles in size. Some can be smaller or larger, but what really identifies a Pocket Dimension is the fact that they are usually found within other dimensions,

and that they have clearly defined boundaries. The barriers can be invisible, or blatantly obvious like walls of fire or wisps of air. The magic binding the Pocket Dimension is stronger externally than that found within, because it is far more focused on keeping the dimension contained. This causes ley lines to be less powerful, and the eruption of random Rifts less frequent. As for permanent Rifts, they are unaffected, and they seem to be the crux of several Pocket Dimensions. Pocket Dimensions also include pocket universes or worlds. A single planet or universe can be contained within a Pocket Dimension. Shifters and certain dimensional travelers are able to open themselves up to a dimension and sense what kind it is. In the case of Pocket Dimensions, they would feel somewhat constrained, like being locked inside a room. The following are examples of Pocket Dimensions: *Hades*, *Dyval*, *Wormwood*, and the *Palladium World*.

Travel to Pocket Dimensions can be somewhat difficult. This is mainly because they are typically within other dimensions, or simply just off the beaten path, making finding them difficult. Random Rifts and dimensional anomalies are less likely to deposit a lost traveler in a Pocket Dimension, especially those with a dense dimensional fabric. These dimensions end up being something of dimensional prisons for anyone unlucky enough to be caught in one. Rumors suggest that the Persian god Ahriman is trapped in one such dimension.

Getting to Pocket Dimensions may be an adventure unto itself. Travel to other dimensions may be required if a direct route is not possible. By direct route, most Shifters can open a Rift right to the destination in question, however, if they do not have intimate knowledge of the dimension, they may have to go to locations where the Pocket Dimension is most accessible. A central nexus as a starting location is where most dimensions can be accessed with relative ease, and since *Rifts Earth* is one such central nexus, getting to any destination, including dimensions within dimensions, is usually not a problem. Starting from a dimension weak in magic, on the other hand, may be a problem, and the Shifter would have to take a less direct route, hopping from one place to another – for example, going from one world to another, say to get to Rifts Earth, and then to his final destination. **Rifts® Note:** The presence and power of the surging ley lines and nexus points on Rifts Earth is a rarity even in the infinite Megaverse, and is what makes Earth a dimensional gateway to just about anywhere. As such a rare and valuable commodity for dimensional travelers, no one power has sought to seize and conquer the planet for themselves, because, 1) it would create a trans-dimensional war the likes of which hasn't been seen in millennia, and 2) no one power, not even a pantheon of gods or the Splugorth, could hold onto it or control it completely. Consequently, Rifts Earth is viewed by the Megaversal community as a sort of free zone with open passage to anywhere. This is also why so many strange, supernatural and magical beings visit the planet, many of whom are only passing through or stopping on their way to some other place and time.

Infinite Dimensions

Infinite Dimensions seem to be the standard as far as dimensions go. They have no definable boundaries, and are truly infinite in the grand scheme of things. No one truly knows how large an Infinite Dimension can be, not even the gods. Well perhaps they do, but they're not discussing it with the likes of hu-

mans. Unlike Pocket Dimensions, where the magic energy is primarily used to contain and sustain the Pocket Dimension itself, magic energy runs through infinite dimensions like a network of arteries and veins. This allows the dimension to have stronger ley lines than Pocket Dimensions, and as a result, they tend to have much more random Rifts.

Infinite Dimensions also seem to have more dimensional quirks than Pocket Dimensions. This is probably because infinite dimensions are stacked against and on top of each other and may intertwine amongst each other, causing unusual dimensional anomalies. Two dimensions can become linked, or even form a sort of symbiosis. The strain on the dimension may cause fractures to form, allowing the dimensions to leak into each other causing a shifting of terrain effect, Ley Line Storms and randomly opening and closing Rifts (i.e., Rifts Earth), as well as other kinds of dimensional anomalies. Dimensions such as *Rifts Earth*, *The Three Galaxies* and the *Heroes Unlimited™* universe are all examples of Infinite Dimensions.

Parallel Dimensions

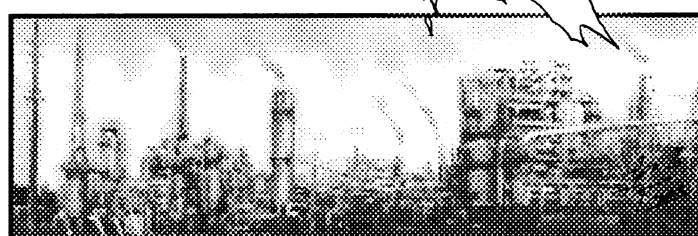
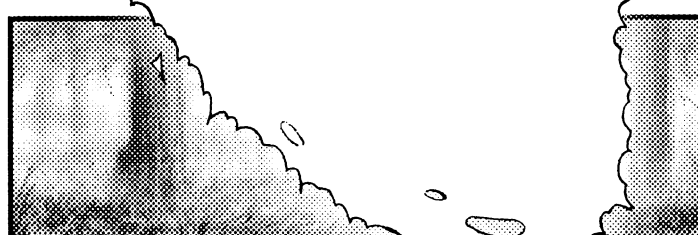
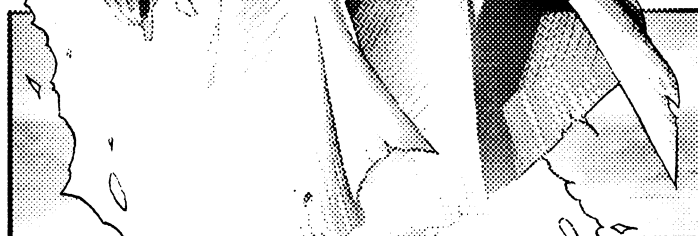
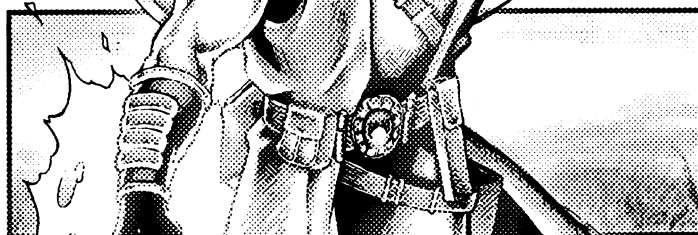
Parallel Dimensions can be Pocket Dimensions, or Infinite Dimensions. It's not known how they are created or why they occur, only that they exist in tandem with the rest of the Megaverse. Parallel Dimensions duplicate just about every detail of the original (or first) dimension, but something is always different, sometimes dramatically different. Historical events and the subsequent consequences of those events seem to be the major changes dimensional explorers find different in a Parallel Dimension, but it can be other things too. For example, the inhabitants may be the exact opposite of their counterparts, or evolution took a different path making for different inhabitants altogether. Having a different history, leaders and culture seems to be the norm for defining parallel dimensions. Examples of Parallel Dimensions are *Heroes Unlimited Earth*, *Ninjas and Superspies Earth*, and *Systems Failure Earth*. Each is its own reality, on similar but different paths. One dimension is comparable to our own modern world, while one is filled with super heroes, and the other Earth was devastated in a crippling invasion by weird alien bugs at the onset of the new millennium (Y2K)! In all three cases, the geography of the world is the same, and much of the planet's early history is the same, but at some point something changed to cause that reality to deviate and spin off into something different and unique. A similar world with its own unique history and distinctly different "present" time-line. Each planet in these parallel worlds is still called Earth, they all have cities like New York with names that we recognize, and even many of the buildings, parks, and people are the same, but something is amiss, different, altered from the reality we know, thus they each parallel the others but are divergent realities unique unto themselves.

Time paradoxes and trips to the past or the future may also be trips to Parallel Dimensions rather than genuine time travel.

Central Nexus

In just about every dimension a traveler can find a single point where all of the dimension's magical energy is centered as if it were the heart of the dimension. This single point can be a

lone Rift, a planet, or even a solar system. Dimensional travelers have labeled such locations as the *Central Nexus*. In most cases it's not a single nexus, but rather an entire planet like the scale of Rifts Earth, where ley lines run rampant along the countryside and their nexus points open and close at random intervals. This is especially true of Infinite Dimensions, while Parallel and Pocket Dimensions may not have a Central Nexus, or have one that is so faint that it is barely detectable. Rifts Earth and Phase World are prime examples of a Central Nexus. Magic energy is so high that ley lines are clearly visible during the day, and at



certain times of the year the ley lines and Nexus points surge with random Rifts opening several times an hour. Dimensional travelers use the various Central Nexus locations as blazing signposts along their travels, helping them to identify their location, plan their next destination and serve as a gateway to anywhere. At one time, Atlanteans had a map that labeled nearly a thousand Central Nexus locations throughout the known Megaverse. This map was instrumental in programming the pyramids for dimensional travel. Alas, that information is no longer in their hands and is most likely possessed by the Splugorth.

Dimensions with high magic activity tend to be the norm for having a Central Nexus, however even dimensions with low levels of magic energy can have one. They just tend to be rarer and less obvious (like the Bermuda Triangle in our own reality before the Coming of the Rifts). Dimensional travelers seek them out because it is easy to use a Central Nexus to get from point A to point B, making dimensional travel safe, exact and trouble free. Some dimensions can even have more than one, although this is a rare phenomenon. A Central Nexus is not essential to the survival of a dimension, it's just a location that Shifters have come to identify in their travels as being a useful avenue and something of a crossroads to everywhere in dimensional travel.

Dimensional Fabric

The dimensional fabric can best be described as a container that holds the universe together. Kind of like a fish bowl, with the water being the universe and the bowl itself as the fabric that holds it together. The fabric of a dimension can be strong or weak, permeable or non-permeable. A **strong dimensional fabric** would make travel to and from a particular dimension more difficult. While not impossible, it makes travel to specific locations more difficult and as a result, dimensional travelers may not arrive exactly where they intend. This is because the dimensional fabric deflects the traveler. The traveler is not usually harmed in any way, they just have the inconvenience of not arriving where (or when) they want to be. This also has an adverse effect on beings who are able to Dimensional Teleport. While these creatures are more in tune with the dimensional nuances, the dimensional fabric affects them as well. In game terms, there can be a bonus or penalty to their Dimensional Teleport percentage.

A **weak dimensional fabric** is just the opposite of the strong, with the dimension being far more porous and accessible to dimensional travelers. The advantage is being able to zero in on a specific location (or time) and perhaps only be off by a few miles as opposed to a few hundred miles in a dimension with a stronger dimensional fabric.

In game play, the dimensional fabric should not be too much of a hindrance, just a challenge for the players to overcome. It also helps to explain why certain supernatural creatures may fail at their Dimensional Teleport roll. They simply weren't strong enough at that particular moment to overcome this natural dimensional barrier. When calculating the bonus or penalty caused by the dimensional fabric you must take into consideration the fabric of the dimension being exited as well as the destination dimension. Both should be added together, providing an end bonus or penalty result, such as exiting a dimension with a weak dimensional fabric (+10%) and arriving in a dimension with a

strong dimensional fabric (-20%) results in a net of -10% on a Dimensional Teleport roll for either a Shifter or creatures who have the ability naturally. The following are the different types of dimensional fabrics and their accompanying bonuses or penalties.

The effects of traveling through different types of dimensional fabrics:

Weak Dimensional Fabric: A weak dimensional fabric allows for very easy travel to and from a dimension. Rifts Earth is a prime example of a dimension with a weak dimensional fabric. Rifts open and close with ease, allowing an untold number of alien beings, monsters and demons in and out, as well as causing numerous dimensional anomalies. When a dimension has a weak dimensional fabric, creatures of magic, Shifters and those who would roll percentile dice to Dimensional Teleport enjoy a +5% to +20% bonus on their Dimensional Teleport rolls. Roll 1D4x5% to determine the bonus at that moment in time.

Permeable Dimensional Fabric: Considered the norm by dimensional travelers, as this type of dimensional barrier is neither particularly weak or strong. It allows for normal passage between dimensions. Random Rift activity and dimensional anomalies are far less frequent and there are no penalties or bonuses for going through a Permeable Dimensional Barrier.

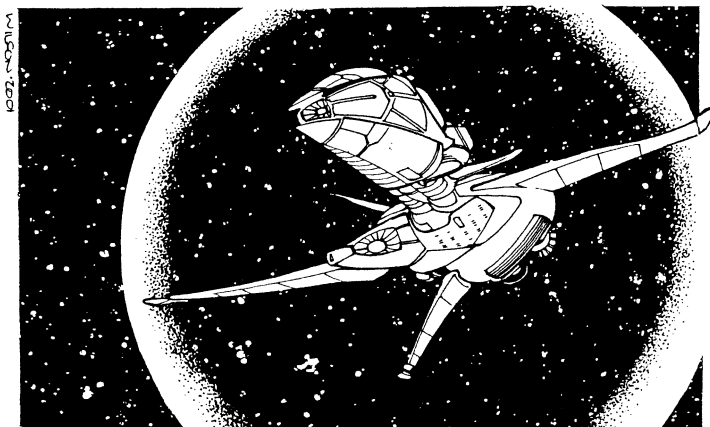
Strong Dimensional Fabric: Dimensions with a strong dimensional fabric are slightly more difficult to penetrate. As such, Shifters and other dimensional travelers are at -5% to -30% on their Dimensional Teleport rolls. Random Rift activity is likely to be far less than is expected even if the dimension is high in magic. Dimensional anomalies do not frequently occur and in some dimensions there are none at all. The Game Master can decide the penalty or roll 1D6x5%.

Impenetrable Dimensional Fabric: Impenetrable dimensional barriers are rare, but not totally unheard of. Some dimensions that have impenetrable barriers are used as dimensional prisons. An example of a dimensional prison is the dimension that holds the evil Persian god, Ahriman.

These barriers are impenetrable unless one knows where the back door is. There are usually 1 to 4 locations around the dimension where the barrier is weak enough to Teleport through. At such a location, the dimensional fabric is considered *strong*, and the usual penalties apply. The key, however, is to find the right location. The entrance is often hidden in another dimension and this can lead to numerous adventures to find the doorway. Sometimes they are located at a particular nexus point, while in other cases, they can be found at certain locations that only a sorcerer, god or someone with Sense Dimensional Anomaly could locate or know about. For example, the dimension of Asgard has only one known entrance, Bi-Frost, the Rainbow Bridge. It seems that the only way to get to Bi-Frost is through the Tree of Darkness in Germany. Certainly this would be no easy task.

Dimensional Energy Matrix

Experienced dimensional travelers with scientific backgrounds have discovered that dimensions resonate at certain frequencies. This frequency determines the dimension's energy



Creating a Dimension

Trying to create a new and unique dimension from scratch can be a daunting task, trust me. In order to create a dimension, we need to break it down into its simplest components. You also don't have to worry about mapping out every square mile of your dimension, just get a broad overview and then focus on the key locations that you plan on having the player characters explore. The rest will just fall into place as you play. Below are some quick percentile tables to help Game Masters whip up dimensions quickly. If you're not in a rush, these tables can serve as a template or guide to creating and fleshing out your own dimensions. Roll percentile for random determinations of the dimension or pick and choose which aspects you want to use. Not everything has to make perfect sense, and oddities help to make the dimension different and unique. Not everything has to be explained, either, and each dimension will have its own physics, so cut loose, have fun and let your imagination run wild.

1. Determine the Type of Dimension:

The first thing to decide is what type of dimension you are creating. Is it infinite in size, a parallel of an already existing dimension, or is it a small Pocket Dimension? You can choose from the list below, or let percentile dice decide the outcome. The type of dimension is going to help determine the shape of the "fish bowl."

01-35% Infinite Dimension

36-70% Parallel Dimension

71-100% Pocket Dimension

1B. (Optional) Size of a Pocket Dimension

Pocket Dimensions can be any size. Feel free to determine the size or roll percentile to get a random size.

01-10% 1D4 miles/km in size.

11-20% 2D6 miles/km in size.

21-30% 2D6x10 miles/km in size.

31-45% 1D4x100 miles/km in size.

46-60% 1D4x100+200 miles/km in size.

61-70% 2D4x1000 miles/km in size.

71-80% 2D6x10,000 miles/km in size.

81-90% 2D6x100,000 miles/km in size.

91-95% 2D4x1,000,000 miles/km in size.

96-99% 3D6x10 billion miles/km (large enough for a small solar system).

100% A micro galaxy, several hundred thousand light-years in size.

2. Primary Dimensional Medium

This determines the overall characteristics of the dimension. Using the fish bowl analogy, the water would be the primary di-

matrix. The energy matrix is simply the ability to transfer energy. Energy is typically transferred through the use of sub-atomic particles called electrons. In dimensions like Rifts Earth, these sub-atomic particles have a negative charge, so the energy matrix is considered negative. This aspect seems to only affect technology, because most electrical systems are highly dependent on the physical laws of their respective universe. As a result, technology brought from one dimension to another may not always work. The theory is that the dimension's *harmonic frequency* cancels out the flow of electrons, making the transfer of energy impossible. A simple example would be taking a laser rifle built on Rifts Earth to a dimension with a positive energy matrix. Since Earth is considered to have a negative energy matrix, the dimension with the positive matrix cancels out the flow of negatively charged electrons, making the weapon useless. The positive and negative cancel each other out. To most travelers, like people traveling in a vehicle, this can be a minor inconvenience. The vehicle would simply stall and not move if it had any form of electrical systems powering it. This includes all kinds of powerful reactors like nuclear, fusion, and antimatter. This would even affect full or partial conversion cyborgs, causing their mechanical bodies to cease to function (or work at a greatly diminished capacity), but since most have organic components it would take 2D6 hours before the cyborgs' life support systems gave out! Other mechanical life forms would also be similarly affected, like the Mechanoids or Machine People from the Three Galaxies. In their case, they would have a number of hours equal to their P.E. attribute before they ceased to function. Major bionics are affected, but cybernetics are not. The more a component is covered in organic tissue, the more insulated it is from the effects. This is why most cybernetics are not affected, especially those that provide life giving functions like a cybernetic heart or lungs.

While the majority of dimensions seem to be either positive or negative, there are a rare few who have a neutral energy matrix or a universal energy matrix. Dimensions with a neutral energy matrix will not allow any kind of outside technology to work. It cancels out all forms of positive and negative energy as well as universal. This can lead to some interesting problems at least for the inhabitants, who will most likely have to develop some sort of organic or magic based technology to compensate, but it is possible to develop technology as we know it. A dimension with a universal energy matrix allows all positive, negative, and neutral energy powered devices to work. Technology developed here can run on either positive, negative, or neutral energy principles, or even combinations of all three.

mensional medium. Depending on what is picked or rolled can result in some unusual combinations especially if combining two or more of these elements. The gravel and little castle in the fish bowl, for example, are the secondary medium and discussed in the next step. Pick from the list below or roll percentile dice.

01-08% None: The dimension is devoid of any type of primary dimensional medium. The secondary medium is all that is there and doubles as both a primary and secondary medium. In cases where there is no secondary medium, then a black void is all that exists. There will also be no atmosphere of any kind, however the magic energy within the dimension will sustain all life in terms of breathing and atmospheric pressure. There's just no food and people only have what they bring with them, kind of like the *Time Hole* spell.

09-19% Space/Vacuum: The dimension consists of a vacuum with lots of, well, space. Unless the inhabitants can survive hard vacuum, any secondary mediums will have to have a limited atmosphere to support life.

20-28% Void: Like the Astral Plane, the dimension is an endless void filled with mist and rolling clouds and has no substance to it. Unlike having no dimensional medium, a void clearly has some type of atmosphere and there is usually an ambient light that fills it.

29-36% Liquid/Fluid: A fluid fills the dimension. Any land masses, islands, planets, or stars that are found in the dimension are found in small, empty pockets. Some force such as gravity or magic would keep the fluid at bay. The fluid can be organic or non-organic. If organic in nature, life might actually be found in the fluid! Regardless of the temperature, the fluid remains in liquid form.

37-44% Gaseous: The primary medium consists of gas. It can be clear or foggy, breathable or not breathable. Roll to determine the type of gas. As with the liquid, secondary mediums are found in small pockets with gravity or magic holding back the gas.

01-35% Clear breathable atmosphere.

36-70% Foggy, with a breathable atmosphere. Visibility is limited to 1D10x100 yards/meters.

71-85% Clear atmosphere, but it is highly toxic and fatal to any humans who breathe it. Environmental body armor or some type of gas mask is needed to survive.

86-00% Foggy, toxic soup atmosphere! Not only can't you see through this soupy atmosphere, but the air is also toxic to any who breathe it. Even beings who do not need to breathe will find this an uncomfortable environment and the air stings even their eyes and smells pretty bad. Visibility is limited to around 1D10x100 yards/meters.

45-52% Energy: Energy makes up the majority of the dimension's primary medium. This may simply appear as some type of barrier surrounding a secondary medium, or it can permeate the entire area. If the secondary medium can support life, then it will have some type of shielding, such as a dense atmosphere, to protect the inhabitants from outlying energy. Passing through these types of mediums is damaging and varies accordingly. Technology may exist that helps to reduce or even negate the damage entirely.

Types of Energy:

01-18% Electrical: Blue bolts of electrical energy make up the primary medium. Passing through this type of medium does 1D6 S.D.C./M.D.C. per minute of exposure. There are usually small pockets where one can find sanctuary for short periods of time within the cascading energy.

19-36% Light: Pure white light makes up the dimension's primary medium. There is no identifiable source. There is no damage, but visible navigation is impossible, even for those with polarized vision. The type of sensors that actually work best in this medium are those based on sound, like sonar and echolocation.

37-56% Plasma: Super-heated plasma, like that found in a star, makes up the primary dimensional medium. Any type of secondary medium found will be located in isolated pockets of open space, otherwise the plasma would destroy all types of matter. Damage is 1D4x10 S.D.C./M.D.C. per minute of exposure to the plasma.

57-74% Sonic: Pure sound energy dominates this dimension. Visibly it may appear as a void, or vacuum, but any being exposed to it will be assaulted by high- and low-pitch sound frequencies like that of a tuning fork. The level of sonic energy is often spread out, minimizing damage, however, there are some locations where sound vibrations are so intense they may shake the very foundations of a ship apart. At these locations damage is 2D4 S.D.C./M.D.C. per hour. There may also be strange side effects, like not being able to hear without some type of protection or sound muffling or filtration system (such as those built into spacecraft and spacesuits). Likewise, equipment that uses sound for sensors (like sonar) may not work unless properly calibrated. On the other hand, there may be some places in the sonic environment where sound is soft and harmless.

75-85% Fire and Heat: Similar to that found in Elemental planes, heat energy dominates the primary dimensional medium. People are assailed by both intense heat and light. As with most other dimensions, any type of secondary medium found will be located in isolated pockets protected from this deadly medium. Damage is 2D6 S.D.C./M.D.C. per minute of exposure to the fire and heat.

86-95% Atomic: One of the more unusual dimensional mediums, people liken it to being in a nuclear reactor. A faint glow dominates the background, while all around fantastic shapes fly out of control. Dimensional travelers theorize that these are giant sub-atomic particles bouncing around in a giant reactor. Most of these particles harmlessly pass through anything they come in contact with, but a few have been known to destroy. This only happens when two or more of these particles collide, causing an explosion that destroys just about everything nearby. Damage from being within a hundred miles (160 km) of one of these explosions is 2D4x100 S.D.C./M.D.C. Moving toward the origin of the explosion, the damage increases by tenfold for every 20 miles (32 km) closer, so it would be 2D4x1000 for 80 miles (128 km), 2D4x10,000 for 60 miles (96 km), et cetera. Essentially, anything caught near one of these collisions is going to have a bad day – read as vaporized! Fortunately, these explosions are rare, with only one or two collisions happening per century. Some Shifters believe these dimensions may be the



source of the antimatter in the *Annihilate* spell. (The particles would be harmless in their own dimension, however, bringing them to another dimension, there is enough raw power to equal an antimatter reaction.) Secondary mediums would be immune to these particles, but not necessarily the damage caused by an explosive collision.

96-100% Magic: The whitish blue energy of magic permeates the dimension. This has no effect on the magic energy level of the dimension, as this is actually what binds the universe together. Mages might think they could tap an inexhaustible supply of magic energy, but they would be wrong. The magic energy is too dispersed and acts more like radiation than a source of mystic power to be drawn upon by mere mortals.

53-60% Metallic: A metal shell contains the dimension. Any secondary medium will be found within the container, like a series of caves and passageways, or an open space perhaps filled with a void, breathable or toxic atmosphere, etc. Any type of metal can make up the primary medium, but only a pure metal like iron, copper or gold; no alloys.

61-68% Elemental: This could be a possible link to one of the Elemental dimensions. The primary medium is composed of one of the four basic elements: Air, Earth, Fire or Water. Roll to determine which.

01-25% Earth: A layer of earth surrounds the dimension as a hollow sphere, making the outer walls a solid dimensional barrier. The earth (dirt, rock, clay, etc.) itself could be habitable, as well as any inner-planets, islands, etc.

26-50% Air: A barrier of air surrounds the universe. The air is most likely breathable to the inhabitants (if not humans), but the air barrier itself is not likely to be a habitable environment as it may be too cold to survive.

51-75% Fire: A barrier of eternal fire burns around the universe like a fire ball. There will either be small pockets within the fiery mass where the fire does not burn and where the pockets of life are found, or the fiery barrier functions as a hollow sphere, and it is inside the sphere where pockets of life are found.

76-100% Water: Pure water fills the void of this dimension. There will be air bubble-like pockets where life exists, or life itself will evolve right in the solid mass of water, or water is the outer wall of a liquid sphere with matter and life existing in the water-less center.

69-76% Semi-Precious Stone: The dimension is actually composed of white quartz, rose quartz, or some sort of semi-precious stone. Traveling within may be difficult as there are few details to help travelers navigate. Roll on the following table to determine what the primary medium is made out of, or pick one. Secondary mediums will be encapsulated and separated from each other like small bubbles, cracks or flaws within a gem. There is the possibility of tunnels and pathways, and if none, then only magic or some sort of teleportation or Rifting can be used to travel between locations within the solid medium.

- 01-14% Emerald
- 15-28% Garnet
- 29-42% Clear Quartz
- 43-57% Rose Quartz
- 58-71% Ruby

72-85% Sapphire

86-100% Topaz

77-85% An Alien Intelligence: A massive Alien Intelligence occupies the whole dimension and its body serves as the medium within which the dimension exists. Travel is actually within the veins, air passages and/or bones of the massive Alien Intelligence. It is powerful enough to create any type of environment within itself and may capture, torture and torment unsuspecting travelers, or it may be unaware (or doesn't care) that an entire universe or Pocket Dimension exists within its body. Secondary mediums will be an extension of the will of the Intelligence. See **Rifts: Dark Conversions** for fundamental details about Alien Intelligences.

86-90% A Millennium Tree: The dimension actually resides within a massive tree-like structure. The interior has the texture of wood and bark and players find themselves walking within massive limbs like termites. While it may not be an actual Millennium Tree, Shifters have compared it to one due to the Universe Tree's size, magical properties and life giving quality.

91-95% Artificial Medium: Artificial in the context that it's not a natural formation but something created and molded from the imagination of some powerful being like a god or Alien Intelligence. Artificial can consist of any of the elements found in this list, but those able to detect dimensional nuances will know that it is not a naturally occurring dimension and all that is found within may have been created as the result of a dream, insanity, an experiment or a deliberate design by a higher power.

96-100% Mixed: Defying normal convention, two or more of the mediums above co-exist, even if they are dynamic opposites. Roll 1D4+1, and roll that many times on this table ignoring none or mixed results.

3. Secondary Dimensional Medium

Sticking with our fish bowl analogy, the secondary dimensional medium would be the gravel on the bottom of the bowl as well as that little ceramic structure (castle, cave, treasure chest, etc.) that the fish swims through or hides in. This is going to be the environment in which our *dimensional travelers* are most likely to be found.

01-08% Galaxies with Billions of Solar Systems: The dimension is filled with a galaxy or several galaxies with trillions of stars and planets, like the Three Galaxies, for example.

09-16% A Single Solar System: Several planets and a sun make up the secondary dimensional medium. Several of the planets or moons could contain life.

17-24% A Planet: A single planet is found in this dimension. It can be any size from truly monstrous to as small as the Earth. It will most likely have an atmosphere and support some type of life.

25-32% Continent Size Land Masses or Slabs: Within the primary element of the overall dimension are two or more (perhaps dozens to thousands) flat, plate-like land masses that stretch onward for several hundred thousand miles each. They can be separated by thousands or millions of miles of space, or whatever the primary element may be, like flat planetoids, or clustered relatively close together like plates or platforms set

adrift in a row or in a staggered pile in space. A unique set of physics keeps inhabitants from falling over the edge (or not). In most cases, only one side (top or bottom) is inhabitable, but in some cases, different terrain and different life forms live on the top and bottom. Different life forms may also rule over different parts of the floating continental plates.

33-40% Multiple Planetary Land Masses or Flat Worlds: These are massive, planetary-sized platforms of land and atmosphere that measure millions of miles in size. They can be separated by thousands or millions of miles of space, or whatever the primary element may be, like flat planets, or clustered relatively close together. A unique set of physics keeps inhabitants from falling over the edge (or not). In most cases, only one side (top or bottom) is inhabitable, but in some cases, different terrain and different life forms live on the top and the bottom. Different life forms may also dominate different parts of the floating planetary plates. Small clusters of island sized land masses may also exist near or away from the flat worlds and, from a distance, may resemble an asteroid belt. Islands may range from 200 to 1200 miles (320 to 1920 km) in size and may have an atmosphere and life forms or be nothing more than lifeless platforms of rock and minerals or ice.

41-47% Single Land Mass: The dimension consists of one humongous, single land mass that stretches onward and outward in all directions. It's like a gargantuan, flat platform adrift in the primary medium, but probably with its own atmosphere, weather and inhabitants just like a planet. If an Infinite Dimension, the land mass will seem to go on *forever*, with locations on its surface including all kinds of different environments (i.e., there may be a million miles of jungle, then frozen wasteland, followed by desert, then mountains, then forest, then marshland or oceans, and on and on). Some regions will be uninhabitable while others may not only be inhabited but dominated by one or more people with high or low technology. Other areas may be habitable but devoid of intelligent life forms. This is the proverbial, "flat earth," except nothing is going to be falling off the edge, perhaps disappearing through a dimensional nexus, but certainly not falling off the face of the land mass (for one thing, an edge or end is never found).

48-56% An Object: This doesn't have to be a land mass, it can be a castle or fortress, or a square planet, or whatever the imagination desires. It could be a lone pyramid, a building, a giant machine, a spaceship, and so on. Game Masters, be creative and have fun!

57-64% Death! The secondary medium is composed of corpses and/or mounds of skulls and bones, as if life has been completely stripped from this dimension, or perhaps the planet is a giant skull. Creatures like Vampires and Necromancers might find their powers increased in this pervasive environment of death and twilight or eternal night. (The sun may never actually rise, ala the *Nightlands* in the *Nightbane® RPG* series.)

65-72% Thought: The dimension is sensitive to the brain waves of people, and creates an environment to suit their needs and/or imaginations and desires, probably even combining multiple aspects for different people among the visiting group. Supernatural beings and creatures of magic, on the other hand, see a void.

73-80% Multiple Pocket Dimensions: Within the primary dimensional medium are 2D4 additional Pocket Dimensions that

may twist and warp the current reality, or exist as independent dimensions within a larger one.

81-88% Mixed: Ignoring none, roll twice on this table and combine the results. For example, some dimensions have multiple galaxies, or galaxies with a massive land mass in the distance as well as conventional solar systems and planets.

89-00% None: The dimension has no secondary medium. In most cases the primary medium acts as both primary and secondary. In cases where there is no primary medium, then all that exists is a black void. There will also be no atmosphere of any kind, however the magic energy will sustain all life in terms of breathing and atmospheric pressure. There's just no food, and people only have what they bring with them, similar to the *Time Hole* spell.

4. Density of Dimensional Fabric

The strength of the dimensional fabric determines how easily one can travel to a given dimension. Roll to determine its density.

01-30% Weak: Roll 1D4x5% to determine the *bonus* to Dimensional Teleport or Rift to it.

31-60% Permeable: No bonuses or penalties.

61-90% Strong: Roll 1D6x5% to determine *penalty* to Dimensional Teleport or Rift to it.

91-100% Impenetrable: Roll 1D4 penetrable locations within the dimension. Each of these locations is the same as a Strong Dimensional Fabric and may be scattered anywhere in the dimension. Once there, at that weak point, the dimensional traveler must find some other means to get to a specific location within that dimension.

5. Magic Level

The magic level is a rough estimation of just how active the magic energy level of the dimension is, such as how frequently random Rifts occur, or how often Ley Line Storms appear. This also primarily affects practitioners of magic and their ability to draw ambient P.P.E. Finally, it determines whether the dimension is a *Mega-Damage* environment or an *S.D.C.* environment. Of course if you're running a purely S.D.C. game then keep it S.D.C.

01-20% No Magic Energy: A dimension with no magic energy has no ley lines, no nexus points, no places of magic and probably no culture surrounding magic, spell casting or the supernatural. There is also no possibility of a Central Nexus, nor the chance of a random Rift appearing. Casting magic spells in these dimensions costs twice the normal amount of P.P.E. to perform and must be drawn entirely from the P.P.E. of the spell caster. In these dimensions the only way to access additional or large amounts of P.P.E. is through the use of *ritual sacrifice*. Otherwise, practitioners of magic will have to rely on their own inner reserve of P.P.E., as noted, and magic recovery of spent P.P.E. takes twice as long (recovers at half the normal rate).

21-55% Low Magic Energy: A dimension with low magic is only a slight step up from dimensions with none. The ebb and flow of magic is at an all-time low. Ambient P.P.E. is only accessible in places of power where a ley line nexus would nor-

mally be located. Ley lines, if found, will not even be accessible to magic users and there is no significant increase in the potency of spells cast in the area of ley lines. Practitioners of magic will have to rely on their own inner reserve of P.P.E. and use it sparingly. It's impossible to accumulate large amounts of P.P.E. without performing a ritual or some type of blood sacrifice. Random Rift activity is also a rarity, occurring only during cosmic events like during a planetary alignment or a solstice. Examples of dimensions with low P.P.E. are Rifts Earth prior to the Great Cataclysm, the *Beyond the Supernatural™* and *Heroes Unlimited™* universes, and the *Systems Failure™* setting.

56-89% Intermediate Magic Energy: A dimension that has a medium magic level is far better than a low magic one, but is still a far cry from dimensions of high magic. Ley lines and nexus points are present but not visible to the naked eye, and offer extra P.P.E. just during those few times of the year were the flow of magic surges, like during an eclipse, planetary alignment, equinox or solstice. Magic is a little more accessible, although only practitioners of magic and those sensitive to the flow of magic are likely to find such locations. Mages will also have a better chance of accumulating magic energy, although most are likely to still prefer a ritual or blood sacrifice to satisfy their demands. Random Rift activity can occur several times during the year, not just during heightened times such as planetary alignments, eclipses and solstices, but is not especially common. Examples of dimensions where the ebb and flow of magic is at a medium intensity are the *Palladium (Fantasy) World* and *Hades*.

90-99% High Magic Energy: Few dimensions can match the raw power of having a high magic level. In these dimensions the ley lines seem to surge with a life of their own and are easily visible during the day and from orbit. Ambient P.P.E. is there for the taking and attracts all kinds of creatures and magic users. High magic energy also affects the inhabitants, making them M.D.C. creatures and/or a people reliant on magic. Random Rift activity is a common occurrence that takes place whenever the ley line energy surges as well as at random intervals 3D6 times a year. Not only can Random Rifts occur any time of the year along each ley line and each nexus point, but there are likely to be dozens if not hundreds of permanently open Rifts found throughout the dimension. Few if any rituals have to be performed due to the abundance of ambient P.P.E., but may be required to work extremely powerful magicks. Blood sacrifices may also be used, though only by those evil enough to commit such atrocities. Example, of dimensions with high magic energy levels are *Wormwood*, *Phase World* and *The Three Galaxies* in general. In the case of *Wormwood*, the ley lines and nexus points are hidden deep beneath the planet's surface. The Elemental Plane and other supernatural realms are also likely to be High Magic Energy dimensions.

100% Super High Magic/Rifts Earth: The level of energy found on Rifts Earth is rare. That's what makes Rift Earth so fascinating to so many Alien Intelligences, deities, dragons, supernatural beings and dimensional travelers. In these places, hundreds if not thousands of ley lines and nexus points surge with energy on a daily basis and Random Rifts can tear open the fabric of space and time at any given moment, and with absolute predictability during eclipses, solstices, and other known mo-

ments when the mystic energy swells. Supernatural beings and creatures of magic are likely to be commonplace and all are Mega-Damage beings fueled by the ambient magic. Dimensional travelers, gods and other inhuman beings are also likely visitors, while indigenous people may be Mega-Damage beings or S.D.C., but magic spells will inflict Mega-Damage.

6. Dimensional Energy Matrix

Each dimension has its own unique signature that can be identified on a quantum level. This signature resonates a certain harmonic that determines how energy is transferred in the dimension. The harmonics resonate at different frequencies, producing four distinct matrices. They are positive, negative, neutral, and universal. What type of energy your technology works with determines whether or not it will function in other dimensions. To determine the dimension's energy matrix, pick from the table below or roll percentile dice.

01-10% None: Advanced technology will not function at all in this dimension. Only organic and simple mechanical properties will work. Better break out the crossbows and swords!

11-45% Negative: Only technology with a universal or negative energy flow will work in this dimension. Technology from either a neutral or positive universe won't function at all.

46-80% Positive: Only technology with a universal or positive energy flow will work. Technology from dimensions with negative or neutral will not work.

81-90% Neutral: No outside technology will function in this dimension, period, end of statement! Only technology developed in this dimension will work at all!

91-97% Universal: Due to low harmonic frequencies, any type of technology works in this dimension. It should be noted that while power systems that use principles from a negative, positive, or neutral dimension will work, they are not compatible. For example, your laser rifle from Rifts Earth will function perfectly, but it will not be able to use E-Clips from technology that is based on any of the other three power types. However, universal technology will be able to accept other power sources, with slight modifications.

98-100% Fluctuating: The dimension's harmonic frequencies are in flux and do not remain consistent for any period of time. They change on a daily basis, jumping between negative, positive, neutral, and universal.

Note: As a rule, magic usually works in most environments regardless of the harmonic frequencies, though the power level may fluctuate from S.D.C. to M.D.

7. The Flow of Time

Time seems to be a constant factor no matter what dimension you're in. Very few dimensions are unaffected by the flow of time. Those dimensions that are, are rare, or have been artificially created. To illustrate the flow of time, Rifts Earth will be used as a template for comparison purposes as it has a flow of time we can relate to and shall be considered as "normal time flow." It should also be noted that everyone will perceive time as flowing normally, even in a dimension where time has no influence. Only *Temporal Raiders* and *Temporal Wizards* (see



Rifts® England) will be aware that the flow of time has changed. Also, characters will continue to age normally, and like Atlanteans who are experienced dimensional travelers, they only *appear* to have extended life spans.

01-50% Normal Time Flow: This comprises the majority of dimensions, with the flow of time being constant, same as Rifts Earth. If a dimensional traveler goes from Rifts Earth to another dimension where the flow of time is normal, they will experience no lag time, meaning if they spend two days in this other dimension, two days will have also passed on Rifts Earth.

51-70% Time Flows Faster: For some reason, time in this dimension is out of sync with the rest of the Megaverse. Travelers going to this dimension will experience a definite time acceleration. For every two days they spend in this dimension only one day will have elapsed on Rifts Earth. So if you were gone for 30 days, only 15 days will have passed on Rifts Earth. Creative Game Masters can increase this lag period, just keep it simple enough for you to keep track of. That's why I prefer the two for one approach, it makes the math easy. This may explain the spell *Time Hole*, as it incorporates a dimension with a faster rate of time.

71-90% Time Flows Slower: This dimension is out of sync with the rest of the Megaverse. Travelers experience a time lag when traveling to and from this dimension. Again, I prefer to keep it relatively simple with every one day that passes in this dimension, two days have passed on Rifts Earth. So being gone for 30 days means that 60 have passed on Rifts Earth. Creative Game Masters can increase this lag period, just keep it simple enough for you to keep track of the passage of time.

91-100% Dimension is Unaffected by Time: Time is meaningless in this dimension. While it appears to flow normally, travelers will discover that if they leave on a Tuesday at 4:40 P.M., they return on the same Tuesday at exactly 4:40 P.M. (or perhaps only a minute later). These dimensions are extremely rare, and it should be noted that people age normally while they are within these dimensions, so if they entered as a young person and they spend 20 years in that dimension, when they return, scant seconds after they left, they appear 20 years older even though no time seemed to pass at home.

8. Dimensional Quirks

Dimensional quirks are what sets one dimension apart from another, and helps to define them, making each unique. Some dimensions may display multiple quirks, but the average is two or three. Roll 1D4 times or select from the list below. Creative Game Masters can feel free to add more than what is presented here, just be sure to think ahead to maintain game balance, and not ruin all the hard work you put into creating your dimension.

01-05% None: The dimension has no definable quirks that can be sensed or noticed.

06-15% Linked: The dimension is closely linked or joined with another dimension. The link would best be described as physical. For example, the dimensions are side by side with a weak dimensional fabric, allowing for easy access between the two. In many cases, the dimensional fabric between connected dimensions can be ignored when traveling between the two linked planes. However, going to a non-linked dimension is when the dimensional fabric comes into play as the fabric actually binds all of the connected dimensions together. Random Rifts in linked dimensions have a 10% to 60% (1D6x10%) chance of opening to the dimension they are connected with. This can happen at any given time, during times of either high or low magic activity. The dimensional Rifts have an almost predictable pattern. It would take weeks or months of study, but the pattern will become apparent.

16-25% Multi-Rift: The complete opposite of linked, the dimension fluctuates between hundreds of different dimensions. Each appears at random and in no particular order. This changes all the time and can be a dimensional traveler's worst nightmare.

26-35% Dimensional Symbiosis: The dimension is dependent on another dimension. An example of this is the central plane of the Elemental planes. If anything should happen in any of the primary planes of Air, Earth, Fire, or Water, the ramifications are felt in the central plane and vice versa. This is a direct cause and effect relationship, and both (or all) dimensions suffer even if only one is affected.

36-45% Dimensional Focal Point: Focal points are most commonly found in dimensions with Strong or Impenetrable Dimensional Fabrics. The focal point should be considered the main point of entrance and exit in and out of the dimension. Any dimensional travelers wishing to go to or from this dimension must travel to and appear at the focal point. This is the only location where dimensional travel can be done without the usual penalties (or bonuses) for a strong or weak dimensional fabric. An example of a focal point is the Rainbow Bridge (Bi-Frost) going to the dimension of Asgard, home to the Norse gods. Any dimensional travelers wishing to go to Asgard cannot simply Di-

mensional Teleport anywhere into the dimension that is Asgard. They must first appear on the Rainbow Bridge (the Dimensional Focal Point) and travel the bridge to enter Asgard. Those leaving Asgard to go elsewhere in the Megaverse must also go to the bridge before Rifting or Teleporting elsewhere. Only the most powerful of the elder gods can bypass the Rainbow Bridge. A dimension can have more than one focal point, but will seldom have more than five (roll 1D4+1 to randomly determine how many Dimensional Focal Points exist).

46-55% Fracture Points: Like a damaged glass bowl, the dimension itself is somewhat broken or fractured. In certain locations other dimensional characteristics will leak through. This is only for short periods of time, however, as the dimension always tries to correct itself by closing any fractures. The most common effect is the swapping of terrain like in the *Yucatan Peninsula* of Rifts Earth, or any of the *Fade Towns* located in the Magic Zone on Rifts Earth. People are not actually dimensionally teleported into another dimension, the other dimension just slips in and out of the present reality at the fracture point, and as a result, the swapping of the dimensional environment occurs. Furthermore, fractures can extend into multiple dimensions resulting in varying effects. Roll for the number of Dimensional Fractures below. The more fractures a dimension has, the more varied and alien the terrain will be. For example, if a dimension has four fractures, the terrain will switch between four different types of terrain/environments. Instead of a desert, it switches between arctic conditions to a swamp, to a lush forest and back to desert.

01-25% One fracture point.

26-50% 1D4 fractures.

51-70% 2D6 fractures.

71-85% 1D10 fractures.

86-94% 1D20 fractures.

95-99% 2D10 (treat like percentiles 1-100) fractures.

100% 3D10 (treat like percentiles 1-1000) fractures.

56-65% Dimensional Triangle: Despite what most dimensional travelers from Rifts Earth might think, a Dimensional Triangle is a rare phenomenon, and is another reason why Rifts Earth is so unique and has attracted so many powerful beings. Dimensional Triangles are as rare as Gantrium in the Megaverse (see *Coalition Wars®: Siege on Tolkeen, Chapter One* for details on Gantrium). Such triangles vary in size and can be as small as a few miles, to light-years in size when located in outer space. Roll to determine the number of Dimensional Triangles a dimension may have. We leave the size of the triangle to the discretion of the Game Master, and it may be governed by the environment in which it is located.

01-40% One

41-60% 1D4

61-80% 1D6

81-90% 2D4

91-95% 2D6

96-99% 2D10 (2-20)

100% 1D20+10

66-75% Warped Laws of Physics: The laws of physics are warped to the point that some of the laws are absent while others work or may work differently. The reason it is termed

“warped” is because several of the laws may be present, but a vital law that governs all the others is not. Pick or roll percentiles on the following table.

01-13% No Gravity: This should present interesting problems to overcome. Vehicles that are dependent on gravity (such as starships with a gravity drive) will not work. A force other than gravity keeps everything from flying apart.

14-25% No Aerodynamics: Anything capable of flying simply cannot do so in this dimension. This includes mechanical high-tech devices, as well as magic items and spells, and even creatures of magic can't fly. Anything and everything falls like a rock.

26-38% No Optical Properties Work: The properties of bending light do not work. This means any light based technology, like cameras, optical enhancements, lasers and some other energy weapons, do not work. The dimension will also have an odd shade of color and/or be somewhat distorted (and disorienting) like a carnival's house of mirrors. The environment may also be without shadows, as light does not reflect or even exist as we understand it. Any device that requires some type of optical properties will not work.

39-50% No Thermodynamics: Thermodynamics deals with the exchange of heat and energy, however in this instance it specifically applies to *fire based* properties such as fire or plasma. Even if fire is part of the primary dimensional medium, dimensional travelers will not be able to create any type of fire or use any fire based weapons or magic. They just fizzle out.

51-63% Warped Laws of Motion and Inertia: Conventional motion and friction is nearly impossible and requires tremendous force to move an object. Characters can walk and move normally, but there is no inertia, so objects do not roll down hills, people do not go flying from explosions (which negates the ability to roll with punch, fall or impact), and vehicles will not be able to coast. This effectively negates kinetic attacks like those used in rail guns or weapons that shoot projectiles (i.e., conventional firearms to thrown spears). Arrows or launched missiles simply fall to the ground, despite the amount of force applied to them.

64-75% Monochromatic: For some reason color does not exist and everything is seen in shades of black, white, and gray tones. There are no real penalties, but when it's dark it's very dark, and exact details may be difficult to make out because of the lack of color. Visual range is effectively cut in half and depth perception is not as acute (at least for humans). This instills a penalty of -1D4 to strike on any ranged attacks by humans and similar humanoids (Elves, Orcs, etc.).

76-88% No Magnetism: The laws of magnetism do not function. Magnetic sensors and compasses are useless. This affects navigational tools, as well as weapons and equipment that requires the use of magnetic forces, like rail guns, magnetic based recording tape and devices (or magnetic bottles that hold anti-matter). All abilities and super powers that give the individual the ability to manipulate magnetism won't work either.

89-100% Null Energy Field: Null Energy Fields are capable of sapping the energy out of everything, including biological organisms. This may affect the dimension as a whole, or there could be pockets where this unusual phenomenon oc-

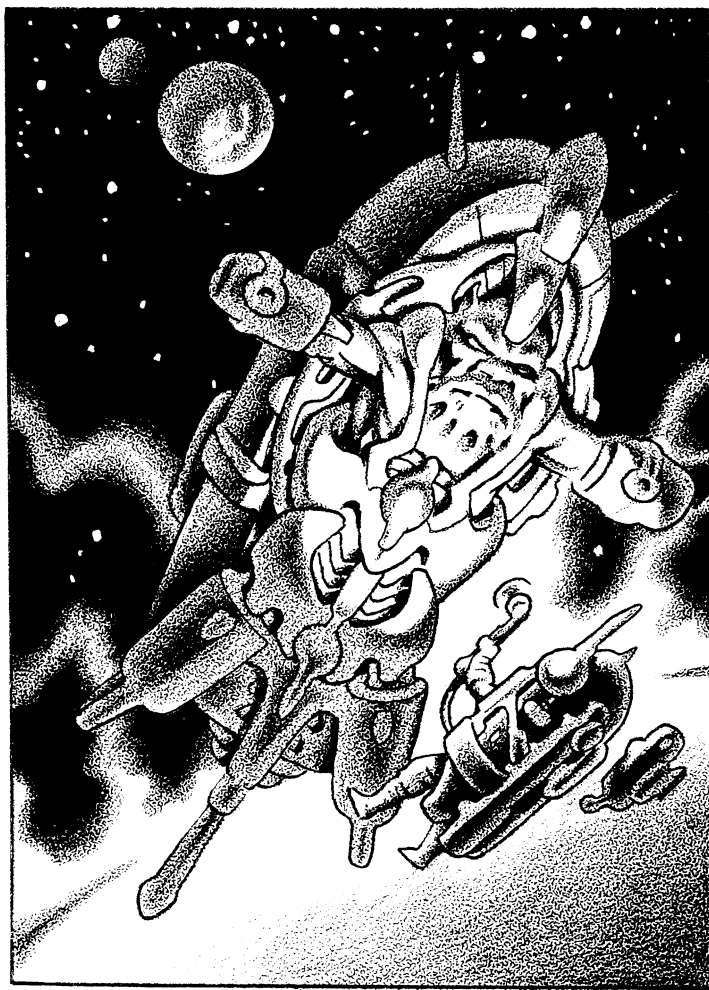
curs. These locations suck in all kinds of energy. Energy Clips drain in fifteen minutes, engines and batteries cease to function in 1D4 hours, and atomic, fusion, and anti-matter reactors will fail in 2D4 days. Living creatures suffer 1D6 points of damage (Hit Points to S.D.C. creatures and M.D.C. to Mega-Damage creatures) per day, and they are unable to recover lost points until they leave the Null Energy Field, if possible.

76-85% Missing Elements: One of the four elements is not present in the dimension. This is not to suggest that there is no air to breathe or earth to stand on, just the mystical representation of the that element, as used in spells and various incantations, is absent/unavailable. This may not even be noticed until a spell caster tries a use a spell that draws on that element. Any spells that relate to a particular missing element can be cast, but cost four times the P.P.E. to cast and all effects, damage, range, durations, etc., are *half*. For example, if the Water element is missing and a Warlock were to cast the Create Water spell, it would cost 60 P.P.E. ($15 \times 4 = 60$), the range would be cut to a mere 5 feet (1.5 m), and assuming the character is level four (able to normally produce 2 gallons of water), he will only be able to create one gallon. Warlocks and Conjurers do not receive their bonus of only costing one half as much P.P.E., and they, like everyone else, must pay 4x the normal P.P.E. cost. Furthermore, Warlocks are able to immediately sense if an Element is missing (even if a different life sign) and feel terribly uncomfortable and out of touch with their life sign if their Element is the one missing. Nor can a Warlock whose element is missing, summon Elementals even with magic spells. Elementals brought to a dimension where their Element is absent immediately begin to resist the link, and can break the Warlock's influence over them half the normal time – most begin pleading with their little brothers to release them the moment they arrive in this alien realm. If forced to stay in, the Elemental has only half of its M.D.C./S.D.C., combat bonuses, and magic, and suffers the same restrictions, penalties and effects as the Warlock. Other creatures related to the Elemental planes, such as Jinns, also find their abilities reduced the same as Warlocks and true Elementals, however, after the initial shock wears off (takes 2D4 days), their hand to hand combat abilities return to normal, though their M.D.C./S.D.C., magic abilities and so on, remain at a diminished (half) capacity, and do not return to normal until they leave the dimension.

Roll to determine how many of the mystic elemental portions are missing, then 1D4 to determine which element is missing: 1) Air, 2) Earth, 3) Fire, or 4) Water.

- 01-50% One element is missing.
- 51-75% Two elements are missing.
- 76-95% Three elements are missing.
- 96-100% All four elements are missing.

86-90% Reversed Elements: Some dimensions have their elements switched around. A prime example of this is the dimension of Hades. The elements of Fire and Water are reversed. Where one would expect to find Water (like a lake), instead they find an endless sea of lava and flame. If you're looking for water, you have to look in places where you'd expect to find fire or lava, like inside a volcano. This will, of course, drastically alter the terrain of the dimension. Roll on the following table.



- 01-25% Earth and . . .
- 01-34% Air are reversed.
- 35-67% Water are reversed.
- 68-100% Fire are reversed.
- 26-50% Air and . . .
- 01-34% Earth are reversed.
- 35-67% Water are reversed.
- 68-100% Fire are reversed.
- 51-75% Fire and . . .
- 01-34% Earth are reversed.
- 35-67% Air are reversed.
- 68-100% Water are reversed.
- 76-100% Water and . . .
- 01-34% Earth are reversed.
- 35-67% Air are reversed.
- 68-100% Fire are reversed.

91-95% Dying Dimension: Despite the level of magic, the dimension is dying. This can be simply from age in which case the forces that hold the dimension together are slowly breaking down, or magic energy is coursing through the dimension at such a high rate that it is burning the dimension out. When a dimension dies, all of the forces that help sustain life begin to fade, causing multiple natural catastrophes. Even if the magic level is medium or high, this is only a temporary spike and it takes some time for a dimension to die; it rarely happens overnight. Infinite and Parallel Dimensions take millions of years to

die, while smaller Pocket Dimensions take far less time, which can be as little as centuries or even decades! What happens when a dimension dies? Who knows? It seems that no one has been willing to hang around to find out. Presumably everything is destroyed, and ceases to exist, or perhaps the dimension is remade into something else.

96-99% Forced Evolution: This is a rare trait in which the dimension has had an influence on how life evolved. As a result, it is closely linked to the predominant life forms of the dimension, and dimensional travelers will find themselves being transformed into a close resemblance of the predominant life forms found in the dimension. The transformation is instantaneous and does not change a character's M.D.C., S.D.C., Hit Points, attributes or combat bonuses. It's just a physical change that adjusts the characters to the physics of that particular dimension while they are visiting. This will even affect full and partial conversion cyborgs. Game Masters, this is a good time to unleash your imagination and have fun with the player characters. Characters like Juicers may find their bio-comp as part of their metabolism, bionics and cybernetics may also change as part of the new life form, although they may look like grafted body parts like Frankenstein, or machine parts may turn into vegetation, and so on. Game Masters can even rule that different races, such as Elf, Dwarf, Human, etc., are transformed into different species in the alien dimension. Forced Evolution will not affect beings like True Atlanteans (who can't be transformed), as well as all creatures of magic. Supernatural creatures (like demons, devils, etc.) can be affected, but can also try to resist, and need to make a saving throw of 16 (only P.E. bonuses are applicable) or higher to succeed. This is where things can be problematic: The forced evolution tends to give certain advantages to surviving in the new environment, like being able to breathe a new atmosphere, surviving stronger gravity, or defensive abilities such as that of a chameleon. These are traits that will help the characters survive in this dimension, but those who are not affected may find themselves at a serious disadvantage. When visitors leave the dimension they return to their normal form and do not retain any traits, powers or bonuses they might have had in their alien bodies.

100% Permanent Rift: Most Rifts occur like the tides. When magic energy is high the chances are good that a Rift will open, and when it is low there is no dimensional portal. A permanent Rift defies these conventions and stays open constantly, around the clock. They may be linked to one other dimension, but the vast majority (98%) constantly flip from dimension to dimension, letting in god only knows what or opening a doorway to god only knows where. The Saint Louis Rift is an example of a permanently open Rift. The exact number of permanent Rifts per dimension varies widely, but the average is 3D6, and they are typically spread across the dimension with a few being in close proximity to the dimension's Central Nexus. Permanent dimensional portals are often found on the most powerful of ley line nexus points, but a few rare cases exist where a permanent Rift has been found without a series of intersecting ley lines at all.

Final Step

From this point on Game Masters, you're on your own. You now have sufficient information to begin to customize your dimension. Use of this information can help you to craft the landscape, determine if there are oceans and seas, mountains or deserts, what color the sky is and possibly even come up with the inhabitants. For rules on creating specific worlds/planets and solar systems, take a peek at pages 139-160 of **Rifts® Dimension Book 5: The Anvil Galaxy™** or the S.D.C. based **Aliens Unlimited™ Galaxy Guide** (which also offers a bunch of alien life forms, spaceship creation rules, weapons, equipment and ready built planets).

The template below can be used as an outline for rolling up quick dimensions on the fly. Just remember to let loose your imagination and the pieces will begin to fall into place. Also, don't forget the other resources at your disposal. Races can be rolled up using the tables found in **Rifts® Dimension Book 2: Phase World®** and Asgardians, Demigods and Godlings can be found in the pages of the, out of print, **Rifts® Pantheons of the Megaverse®**, as well as the upcoming **Rifts® Dragons & Gods**.

Dimension Template

1. Type of Dimension:

A. Size if not infinite:

2. Primary Dimensional Medium:

3. Secondary Dimensional Medium:

4. Density of Dimensional Fabric:

- A. Weak:
- B. Permeable:
- C. Strong:
- D. Impenetrable:

5. Magic Level:

- A. Low:
- B. Medium:
- C. High:

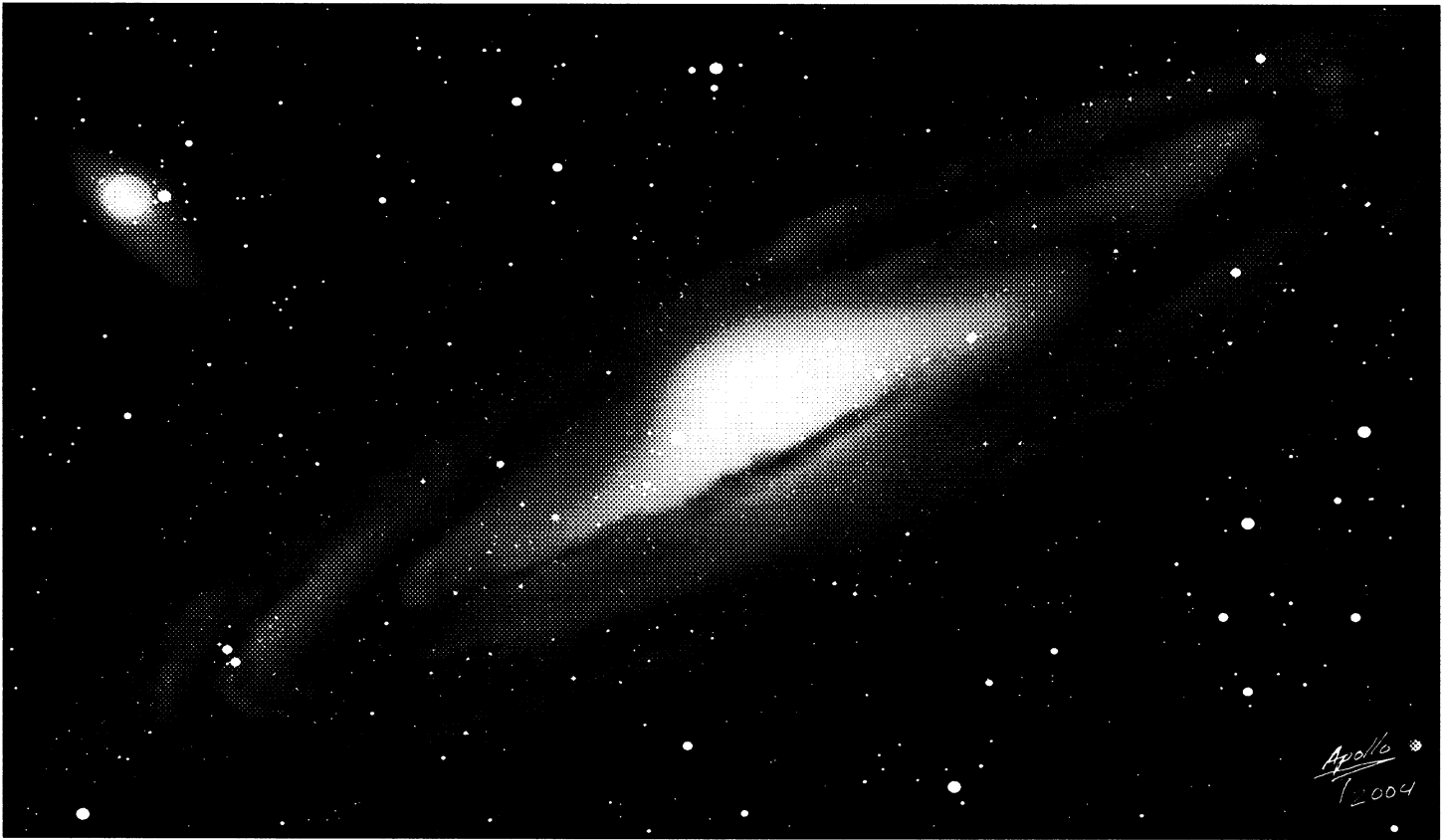
6. Dimensional Energy Matrix:

- A. Positive:
- B. Negative:
- C. Neutral:
- D. Universal:

7. Time Flow:

8. Dimensional Quirks:

Notes:



Dimensional Anomalies

While certain dimensional quirks may be unique to a particular dimension, there are several dimensional anomalies that can be found throughout the Megaverse. These anomalies are those associated with Rifts and dimensional travel in general. Ley lines often play a role in these anomalies because ley lines branch out throughout the Megaverse and into other dimensions like a series of veins. The most common dimensional anomaly is the Ley Line Storm. In dimensions where the magic level is considered high and at its peak, Ley Line Storms appear and roll down connected ley lines with devastating force that disrupts magic and tears up the landscape. They even occur in dimensions where the magic level is much lower, where they are usually dismissed as freak storms, swamp gas, or other unexplained phenomena. Ley Line Storms are also suspected to be the catalyst of numerous dimensional instabilities and are even thought to cross from one dimension to another, particularly Parallel Dimensions. While still unproven, there are several well-documented anomalies that do take place on or near ley line nexus points, including *Dimensional Maelstroms*, *Displacement Storms*, and *Dimensional Vortexes*. All are unique anomalies that are most prevalent on Rifts Earth and similar dimensions where magic levels are extremely high. **Note:** The use of the anomalies described in the pages that follow is left entirely to the Game Master and is entirely optional.

Dimensional Maelstrom

Dimensional travelers who are prepared have little to fear in regards to weather. Most have magic spells that make them resistant to certain environmental conditions like rainstorms or snowstorms, or possess man-made clothes, constructs and vehicles to provide them with warmth and shelter. Ley Line Storms are another matter entirely, and experienced dimensional travelers know better than to try to open a Rift or use magic during such storms. By their very nature, Ley Line Storms seem to attack those who have the highest concentrations of P.P.E., and the majority of spell casters flee at the first signs of the storm. Avoiding ley lines, the use of magic or opening dimensional portals usually keeps travelers safe from the effects of the storm. Those who encounter a Dimensional Maelstrom, however, are not as fortunate. The nature of a Maelstrom makes them very hard to detect in advance and most travelers don't know they've hit one until it's too late.

The Dimensional Maelstrom is an unconventional storm that rages *between* dimensions, totally undetectable. It is only experienced when a person is traveling from one dimension to another, and in the very instant a traveler is between realities the storm strikes. For a few brief seconds (typically 1D4 melees) the character is surrounded by a vortex of wind and blue energy. The crackle of the energy can be heard all around through the howling of the wind. Large blue energy bolts seem to be drawn directly from creatures and practitioners of magic. Victims feel a slight electrical tingle that feels like it's building up and build-

ing up. Then, as quickly as it appears, it's gone! If lucky, the unsuspecting traveler is ejected into the dimension that is his chosen destination, shaken and shaking from cold. Though drenched in sweat, the individual(s) feels frozen to the bone (even beings who are normally impervious to cold) and weak (reduce S.D.C. or M.D.C., as the case may be, as well as P.P.E., by *half*). The unfortunate dimensional traveler finds himself in the same condition, but much worse off because he (and any traveling companions) appears on an alien, probably unknown, world in some other dimension that could be anywhere in the Megaverse! Snatched from their chosen path and flung, by the Maelstrom, to a different place, time and reality.

The chances of encountering a Dimensional Maelstrom vary from location to location, and dimension to dimension. They seem most frequent after and during a Ley Line Storm, and some scholars speculate that the Maelstrom is either a dimensional counterpart to the Ley Line Storm or the continuance of one between dimensions. Others believe the Ley Line Storm is the tip of the trans-dimensional Maelstrom that continually rages as it rolls through infinite realities. The problem most dimensional travelers are faced with are the conditions of the alien environment in which they are deposited. Do they have the appropriate clothing and gear? Is there a ley line network or place of magic energy where they can open a new dimensional portal to return home to get to their original destination? Heck, is the air even breathable? (Game Masters should be kind enough to make the environment liveable and provide some means of getting home even though it may require an adventure in and of itself to do so.)

The likelihood of encountering a Dimensional Maelstrom hinges on how long it's been since the last Ley Line Storm. Optimal travel conditions are a month or two after one has passed. However, some people don't have that luxury of waiting a month or more. Furthermore, while local conditions may have been clear of Ley Line Storms for months, the same may not be true of the destination dimension or world, and if a Ley Line Storm is raging at the destination point, or recently passed, then the dimensional traveler is still likely to fall victim to a Dimensional Maelstrom. Meanwhile, Rifting and dimensional travel originating in places like the *Magic Zone*, *England* and the *Bermuda Triangle* is always high risk because Ley Line Storms are a regular weekly, if not daily, occurrence along one line or another.

Listed below are the chances of encountering a Dimensional Maelstrom when on or near a given ley line. It should be noted that the effects of a Dimensional Maelstrom only occur after a Rift has been opened and someone tries to step through it.

- No Ley Line Storm in the last five months or longer: 100% chance for a safe trip.
- No Ley Line Storm in the last four months: 01-99% chance of a safe trip.
- No Ley Line Storm in the last two to three months: 01-90% chance of a safe trip.
- No Ley Line Storm in the last month: 01-85% chance of a safe trip.
- No Ley Line Storm in the last two to three weeks: 01-75% chance of a safe trip.
- No Ley Line Storm for a week: 01-60% chance of a safe trip.
- No Ley Line Storm for at least three days: 01-40% chance of a safe trip.

- No Ley Line Storm in the last day: 01-30% chance of a safe trip.
- No Ley Line Storm for at least six hours: 01-10% chance of a safe trip.
- During a Ley Line Storm, or within one hour of one: 01-05% chance of a safe trip.

When percentile dice are rolled within the chances given, there is *no* Dimensional Maelstrom, and the only danger the characters face is whatever may be waiting for them at their final destination. If the percentile dice roll is above the margin for a *safe trip*, the characters are subject to the loss of S.D.C./M.D.C. and P.P.E. as well as the following effects presented on the table below. The Game Master should also consider (that's if they want to be devious) that Ley Line Storms may also be occurring at the destination point and may opt to roll twice on the Effects Table. Fortunately for players, if a Ley Line Storm is raging on both sides, they only suffer the effects once, unless they try to open a new portal home. **Note:** A Dimensional Maelstrom need not be rolled every time players do some dimension hopping. These considerations are presented just to add some spice to dimensional travel, and as a plot device for G.M.s to send player characters in new and unexpected directions, literally!

Detecting Dimensional Maelstroms: Dimensional Maelstroms are perhaps the most difficult of dimensional phenomena to detect. First, there are no obvious signs that one is about to occur, other than a possible Ley Line Storm in the area. Second, they only occur when people are between dimensions for those few precious seconds it takes to cross the precipice of a Rift or the few moments of a Dimensional Teleport spell. Third, the Rift has to be open or the Teleport spell activated and travel begun, in order for the Maelstrom to hit, and then only those who know what they're looking for will even have a marginal chance to recognize what's coming before it strikes. Shifters have the best chance of detecting Dimensional Maelstroms, however the Rift must be open for at least several minutes and they must open themselves up to read the Rift. This requires 1D6+1 minutes of concentration and meditation before actually entering the dimensional portal, but many dimensional travelers don't have the time for such luxuries. If the Shifter has the time to "read a Rift" and is successful in their Dimension Sense skill, they will be able to feel the nuances of a Dimensional Maelstrom and know they should wait till it passes (try again in 6D6 minutes), or that they are at the mercy of the storm if they press forward and attempt to cross dimensions at that moment.

The Effects of a Dimensional Maelstrom

The effects of a Dimensional Maelstrom are immediate, and once they begin all one can do is ride out the storm. First, the dimensional travelers find themselves in a black void, which is not what they should be experiencing. This is the *calm before the storm*, which lasts one melee (15 seconds) before they are assailed by the vortex of wind and crackling blue energy, followed by blue lightning bolts being drawn *from* them and into the swirling energy around them. This is the characters' very P.P.E. helping to fuel the storm. Experienced dimensional travelers



will know what this is all about and that it will soon pass, but inexperienced ones may be panic stricken and believe they are on the verge of destruction. Seconds before the storm ends, the characters are violently shocked and struck with a blinding flash of energy. A few moments later the characters should realize they are once again on solid ground. However, it takes 1D4 melee rounds for their vision to clear completely (first blinded and then seeing spots in front of their eyes from the blinding flash). Everyone, including Mega-Damage beings, is shaken and weakened by the Dimensional Maelstrom. One of the side effects is being drenched in a cold sweat, feeling cold to the bone, with muscles tight from the ordeal and S.D.C. and P.P.E. reduced by half. **Note:** Mega-Damage creatures will find half of their M.D.C. and P.P.E. are gone, and even those characters with bio-regeneration cannot begin to heal themselves or cast magic until 4D6 minutes have passed. Dragons and other creatures of magic, as well as supernatural beings, feel especially helpless after a Maelstrom. (A note about magic items: Techno-Wizard devices and most magic items containing a re-fuelable P.P.E. supply are also drained, only Rune weapons, ancient artifacts and items containing the life essence of other beings are not depleted, but even they function at half their normal capacity (half damage, range, etc.) for the next 1D6 hours. P.P.E. talismans and amulets become completely drained, all active spells immediately end.)

The final effect of a Dimensional Maelstrom is the worst, and that's the *possibility* of being swept anywhere in the Megaverse and deposited on an alien world with no knowledge about it, its inhabitants, other life forms, level of magic or how to get back home!

Dimensional Maelstrom

Side Effects & Destination Table

As if the physical dangers of a Dimensional Maelstrom weren't bad enough, there's still one more danger to fear. Since the storm happens *between* dimensions, unlucky travelers can end up in a different dimension entirely. The storm has all kinds of warping effects that have been known to separate large parties of travelers. Roll on the following table to determine the characters' final destination and any other random effects that might occur.

01-15% No Additional Side Effects and the Right Spot: Lucked out! No additional random effects have occurred and the characters have arrived exactly where they expected.

16-25% A Calm Ending: Instead of being forcefully ejected from the Dimensional Maelstrom, the storm simply vanishes without the usual fireworks and the characters suddenly find themselves on solid ground. They each have lost half of their S.D.C./M.D.C. and P.P.E., but don't feel drained or weak, and have arrived at their intended destination world or dimension. Unfortunately, they are off course – roll on the corresponding *Off Course Tables*.

26-35% Made It, but Face a Ley Line Storm: The characters suffer all the usual effects and thankfully arrive at their intended destination, but the Dimensional Maelstrom has deposited them in the middle of a raging Ley Line Storm! The characters suffer the usual penalties, damage and consequences of a Ley Line Storm.

36-45% Extra Damage: The characters suffer an additional 4D6 S.D.C./Hit Points of damage (or 1D4x10 M.D.C. for Mega-Damage beings) from an especially forceful ejection from the Maelstrom. When their vision clears, they find themselves at their intended destination.

46-55% P.P.E. Drain: The storm strips the characters of more than half their P.P.E., 1D4x10% more (that's 60-90%). P.P.E. will return at the normal rate through meditation or rest. Let's hope the characters aren't faced with serious trouble before then.

56-65% Right Dimension, Wrong Location: The characters arrive on the world or dimension they intended with all the usual side effects of riding out a Dimensional Maelstrom. When their vision clears they find they are on the right world, but not at the right location. Roll on the *Off Course Tables*. Not applicable if a random Rift (roll on the *Table of Dimensions* for a random appearance almost anywhere).

66-75% Bad Luck and the Wrong Dimension: The usual side effects plus they all glow with a faint green light (lasts for 4D6 hours), and the travelers are totally off course. They end up in a different dimension entirely. Roll on, or pick a location from, the *Table of Dimensions*. **Note:** The consequences of the faint green light could be just about anything the G.M. wants, but here are a few ideas. 1) The inhabitants of this world know the light marks them as visitors just arrived from another world or dimension. 2) While the light remains around them, the characters breathe and function normally, but when it fades, they are affected by any environmental effects this realm may impose on outsiders (i.e., they have difficulty breathing the thin or polluted air and see their speed and combat bonuses reduced by half, etc.). 3) While the light remains around them they cannot heal

nor use magic to heal themselves; psionic healing works but at half the usual level. 4) While the light remains around them the use of magic costs 50% more P.P.E. than usual. 5) While the light remains around them the use of psionics costs 50% more I.S.P. than usual. 6) While the light remains around them the characters cannot easily Prowl or turn invisible, use the Chameleon spell, Camouflage or any form of hiding/concealment – the light gives them away (-50% when applicable). 7) While the light remains around them the characters cannot shape change/alter their physical structure by any means. 8) While the light remains around them the characters have no sense of direction and walk around in circles, or they move at half their normal speed or are attacked by animal predators, and so on.

76-85% Displacement Storm: From bad to worse! The characters are hurled into a *Displacement Storm*. Damage is only one half from being ejected out of the Dimensional Maelstrom early, but now they must face the effects of a Displacement Storm as well. See Displacement Storms in the pages that follow.

86-90% Incapacitating Damage: The characters arrive at their intended destination, but off course (roll on the Off Course Tables) and one or more of them (may be an NPC or two) suffers incapacitating damage from a savage Dimensional Maelstrom. See the Incapacitation Table for consequences.

91-95% Incapacitating Damage and Worse: This is the worst-case scenario. Not only does one or more of the characters suffer Incapacitating Damage, but they also end up in a completely random dimension. Roll on the Optional Incapacitation Table and the Table of Dimensions.

96-100% Dimensional Fracture: The point of the storm causes a dimensional fracture. For an individual this is no problem, however for a large group this is a nightmare. For each person caught in the Dimensional Maelstrom, roll on this table again, ignoring 96-100%. Each person faces something different about the storm and the group may be torn apart and separated, worlds apart! (G.M. Note: Opt for separating the members of the group worlds apart only if such a scenario works for you. Otherwise, put them on the same world within a few hundred miles of one another, but at different locations and facing different situations. It may be fun to let them *think* they are thousands of miles apart or even worlds apart, at least for a little while.)

Optional Incapacitation Table

Resulting from a Dimensional Maelstrom

Characters who suffer from incapacitating damage did not fare well during the Maelstrom. In addition to the damage already taken, the characters take an additional 2D6+3 points of S.D.C. damage and/or lose at least one vital piece of equipment (not a favorite item, though this is a chance for G.M.s to get rid of any magic item or tech device that has been unbalancing the campaign). For creatures of magic and supernatural creatures, they suffer an additional 4D6 M.D.C.

01-20% Lucked Out! The injuries look a lot worse than they really were, no additional damage, losses or side effects other than the damage noted above.

21-30% Unconscious: In addition to being battered and bruised, the character is knocked unconscious for 2D6 minutes. While this is hardly a terrible fate, there could be extenuating

circumstances. The unconscious character could be in great peril if he landed somewhere dangerous, like a short distance from a hostile enemy force, hungry animal (scavenger or predator), frightened natives, or in deadly environmental conditions. Unless his comrades can help him, the knocked out character could drown because he landed face down in a shallow pond, let alone something more threatening.

31-40% Serious Head Trauma: The character has a serious head injury, is knocked out for 1D6 hours, and may possibly suffer from a concussion (01-50% chance). See the effects for concussions in the **Rifts RPG**. Being unconscious for such a long period makes the character vulnerable to outside elements and reliant on the help of comrades.

41-50% Permanent P.P.E. Loss: The Dimensional Maelstrom permanently drained the character of 1D6 P.P.E. points. This loss is permanent and cannot be regained. **Note:** This is a one-time loss and the character will regain all other P.P.E. lost in the storm as normal.

51-60% Permanent I.S.P. Loss: The Dimensional Maelstrom permanently drained the character of 1D6 I.S.P. This is a one time loss and the character will gain additional I.S.P. with level advancement, but these points are gone forever.

61-70% Minor Physical Trauma: The injuries suffered could have been worse. Roll on the first optional damage table in the **Rifts® RPG**. Apply all penalties accordingly.

71-80% Major Physical Trauma: The character has suffered severe injuries. Roll percentiles on the second table in the **Rifts® RPG**. Apply those penalties accordingly.

81-90% Insanity: The storm was too intense and terrifying for the character to handle (he thought he was a goner). Unless a successful save vs insanity is made (16 or higher), the character must roll on the Random Insanity Table or the Phobia Table presented in the **Rifts® RPG**. If the character saves vs insanity there is no lasting mental trauma, but for the next 1D6 days the character is stressed out, jumpy, paranoid and has trouble sleeping (-15% on skill performance due to lack of focus and ability to concentrate).

91-100% Phobia: The mental stress of the storm was too much for the character to handle. Roll to save vs insanity (17 or higher). If the save is unsuccessful, the character develops a Phobia concerning any of the following: storms, the dark, lightning/electricity, magic, ley lines, dimensional teleporting/travel, dimensional portals, or similar fear that seems reasonable from the traumatic experience. A successful save indicates no permanent Phobia, but the character suffers from one for the next 1D6 days before he overcomes the fear.

Off Course Maelstrom Tables

Things could be worse. The characters have reached the world that was their intended destination, but are way off course. As indicated by the effects of a Dimensional Maelstrom, the group has arrived at the destination dimension in question. However, they are completely off course from where they intended to be. This may not be a bad thing for those who did not have a preplanned destination; still one could end up over a large ocean or trapped on an island. First roll to determine the characters' heading then roll for the distance. Game Masters may have to consult a map of the dimension to determine the

exact location, or simply pick the most logical point for the group to land at, ignoring this table completely.

Table 1: Heading: Game Masters can either roll percentile dice or pick the location (starting point) they deem appropriate.

- 01-13% North
- 14-25% Northeast
- 26-38% Northwest
- 39-50% East
- 51-63% Southeast
- 64-75% South
- 76-88% Southwest
- 89-100% West

Table 2: Distance Off Course: Roll percentile dice to determine the distance from the point of origin to where the characters want to be. To determine kilometers, multiply the miles result by 1.6. If the destination in question is smaller/closer than the indicated roll, then the travelers are at the farthest point possible from where they want to be.

- 01-10% 1D6 miles (1.6 to 9.6 km).
- 11-20% 2D6 miles (3.2 to 19.2 km).
- 21-30% 3D6 miles (4.8 to 28.8 km).
- 31-40% 1D4x10 miles (16 to 64 km).
- 41-50% 2D4x10 miles (32 to 128 km).
- 51-60% 3D6x10 miles (48 to 288 km).
- 61-70% 1D4x100 miles (160 to 640 km).
- 71-80% 2D6x100 miles (320 to 1920 km).
- 81-90% 2D4x1000 miles (3200 to 12,800 km).
- 91-100% 1D6x10,000 miles (16,000 to 96,000 km).

Table of Dimensions

The Table of Dimensions is designed to help Game Masters to “relocate” characters who are caught in a dimensional anomaly that sends them to a different, random location/world or dimension than they intended to go. If the destination rolled is the same as the starting point the Game Master has two options, roll again, or it can be a different location on that same world. It should also be noted that this percentile table utilizes the many game worlds/settings found in other Palladium role-playing games, some in print, some out of print, and some slated for a future release. G.M.s should feel free to either re-roll or pick someplace of their choosing, if they don’t have the book indicated or don’t like the resulting destination. In the alternative, a G.M. may come up with their own alien environment.

01-03% Rifts Earth: Roll again on the Rifts Earth table or pick one.

- 01-10% North America (may be anywhere in the USA, Canada or Mexico).
- 11-20% Central America or the Yucatan Peninsula.
- 21-30% South America.
- 31-40% Atlantis, Domain of the Splugorth.
- 41-50% England, or Scotland, or Ireland, or France.
- 51-60% Germany, the NGR or the Gargoyle Empire.
- 61-70% Russia or Poland or other European country.

71-80% Japan or China.

81-90% Australia, or India, or Southeast Asia.

91-100% Africa or any Mediterranean country.

04-05% The Astral Plane or the Dreamstream: See **Nightbane Sourcebook One: Between the Shadows™** for an in-depth description of both dimensional realms (easy to adapt for use in Rifts and dimensional travel).

06-08% The Central Plane in the Elemental Planes: An idyllic paradise that is the culmination of the four Elemental dimensions. This is a beautiful Earth-like dimension where Elementals roam free. Unfortunately, alien invaders threaten this paradise and Warlocks fight the Eco War to protect their Elemental brothers.

09-10% The Elemental Plane of Earth or a desolate world of rock, or desert or mountains and valleys, or ravines and so on.

11-13% The Elemental Plane of Air or a world battered by strong winds, sudden storms, flash floods, toxic gas clouds and similar.

14-15% The Elemental Plane of Water or a world that is mostly oceans and seas, dotted with only the occasional islands. Any intelligent life (Elementals or otherwise) lives under the waves – may be a vast underwater civilization or the world may be primitive with tribal people or no sentient life forms at all. See **World Book Seven: Rifts® Underseas** for ideas on how to handle an underwater environment.

16-18% The Elemental Plane of Fire or a volcanic world with rivers of lava, sulfur and smoke belching volcanoes, hot springs, sulfur beds, etc. The air may be breathable, but defi-



nately polluted and grimy. Temperatures are 90-120 degrees Fahrenheit and dehydration will be a problem. May or may not be inhabited by sentient life forms.

19-20% Wormwood: Roll again on the Wormwood table, here, or pick one.

01-25% Landed in a location dominated by the forces of Light.

26-50% Landed in a location dominated by the forces of the Unholy.

51-75% Arrived in a neutral location.

76-00% Arrived at World Gate.

21-23% Phase World® in the Three Galaxies™: Roll again on the Phase World table, here, or pick one.

01-25% Arrived at Gateland in Center on Phase World.

26-50% Some other location on or near Phase World.

51-60% A random planet in the Thundercloud Galaxy.

61-70% A random planet in the Anvil Galaxy.

71-80% A random planet in the Corkscrew Galaxy.

81-90% A random planet among the United Worlds of Warlock.

91-00% Somewhere else in the Three Galaxies, perhaps having to do with the Cosmic Forge or the Transgalactic Empire (Kreeghor space).

24-25% After The Bomb® Earth: Roll again on the table, here, or pick one.

01-10% Cardania.

11-20% Empire of Humanity.

21-30% New Kennel.

31-40% N'Yak.

41-50% Filly.

51-60% Gatorland.

61-70% MesozoicLand.

71-80% The Arctic.

81-90% Ganesh.

91-00% Zambiziland.

26-28% Heroes Unlimited™ Earth: Roll again on the HU table, below, or pick one.

01-20% Century Station, USA, North America.

21-40% USA, North America.

41-50% Canada, North America.

51-60% South America or Mexico.

61-70% Europe (anywhere).

71-80% China or Japan.

81-90% Asia or Southeast Asia (anywhere).

91-00% Australia or one of the worlds in Aliens Unlimited™ or the Galaxy Guide™.

29-30% Palladium (Fantasy) World: Roll again on the Palladium Table, or pick one.

01-09% The Eastern Territory.

10-17% The Timiro Kingdom.

18-27% The Land of the South Winds.

28-35% The Western Empire.

36-44% The Great Northern Wilderness.

45-53% The Northern Hinterlands.

54-61% The Yin-Sloth Jungles.

62-70% The Land of the Damned.

71-79% The Great Rift in the Land of the Damned (a dimensional nexus, itself).

80-88% The Baalgor Wastelands.

89-95% The Old Kingdom or Phi or Lopan.

96-00% The Island Kingdom of Bizantium or Island of the Cyclops.

31-33% The Shadow Dimension.

34-35% The Garbage Pit (described elsewhere in this book) or **Hellworld** or **The Sargasso** (the latter two are found in the **Anvil Galaxy Dimension Book**).

36-38% The Great Machine (described elsewhere in this book) or **The Core** (the latter is found in the **Anvil Galaxy Dimension Book**).

39-40% Chaos Earth. May be at or near Chicago and NEMA's last stronghold, or absolutely anywhere on the planet.

41-43% Chaotic Space: A dying dimension, whose own inhabitants are responsible for its destruction. Now in a desperate bid to save it, they have invaded the Central Plane of the Elemental Planes, stealing the life force of Elementals as well as plundering the abundance of natural resources that they now lack.

44-45% Mechanoid Space®.

46-48% Systems Failure™ Earth or Ninjas & Superspies™ Earth.

49-50% Earth, from Beyond the Supernatural™ or Nightbane® and/or the Nightlands.

51-53% The Dimension of Spires (described elsewhere in this book).

54-55% The Dimension of Arsenal: A small pocket dimension that lies within the Three Galaxies. Here, numerous dimensional arms dealers (all who were effectively put out of business by Naruni) hide and are able to conduct their business of selling a variety of technology throughout the Megaverse without having to look over their shoulders for the ever present Naruni Repo-Bots.

56-58% Hades: Home to the hordes of demons and Gargoyle sub-demons.

59-60% Dyval: Home dimension to other types of demons, Deevils, and the Deevil Lords.

61-63% The Solar System of Skraypers (Rifts® Dimension Book 4): Roll again on the Skraypers table, here, or pick one.

01-25% Landed in a location dominated by the evil Tarlok.

26-50% Landed in a location dominated by freedom fighting heroes.

51-60% Arrived in a neutral location (anywhere in the Charizolon solar system).

61-70% Arrived on the planet Talavera.

71-80% Arrived at a Blhaze alien stronghold (good guys).

81-00% Arrived on the planet Seeron – Tarlok will presume outsiders to be part of the rebellion.

64-65% The Dimension of Axion: A dimension closely linked to the Elemental Plane of Air. It has continents that float on currents of air and where the inhabitants must travel using primitive flying devices or on the backs of exotic animals. The human alliances are at war with the Elves who rule with an iron fist. Unbeknownst to all, the dimension is dying!

66-68% Alternate Palladium (Fantasy) World where the Elves lost the Elf-Dwarf War and are considered a dying slave race to the Dwarves. Humans are allies to the Dwarves, and free and runaway Elves are allied to the rising power of the Wolfen Empire that threatens to engulf the Dwarven Old Kingdom and all of the Palladium World. This will be a repeat of the Elf-Dwarf War unless something happens to change it.

69-70% Alternate Palladium (Fantasy) World where the Dwarves lost the Elf-Dwarf War and are a dying slave race that serves the Elves. Humanity is on the rise as well as the Wolfen Empire, and both are harboring Dwarves who possess the forbidden secrets of Rune Magic. Should the Elves learn of such treachery, war is sure to be declared against both the human and Wolfen kingdoms, perhaps uniting them against the Elves, their common enemy. Once again war may erupt on a global scale, and though the Elves and their Titan and dragon allies are the lords of magic and masters of combat, there are others who will join the fight against the despotic Elves. (The Western Empire is still the Empire of Sin, but it is Elves who rule it, the Old Kingdom and the Baalgor Paradise – capital of the Elven Empire.)

71-73% Alternate Rifts Earth. The CS has control of all of what was once the USA and Canada, and most of Mexico (with the fallen Vampire Kingdoms on the run). The Coalition States plan to attack and invade Europe. They are currently negotiating a treaty with the NGR to help defeat the Gargoyle Empire, but once the Gargoyles are defeated, they will turn on the NGR and invade them as the first step in their plan to conquer the world. Western Europe and the British Isles will be next, followed by Eastern Europe and Russia.

74-75% Alternate Rifts Earth: The Mechanoids came through in stronger force. They not only seized Archie Three, but disposed of Hagan. With no choice, Archie has helped the Mechanoids and was slowly twisted to see and accept their ways. Now the Mechanoids control more than half of North America. The once warring factions like the CS and the Magic Zone have united out of necessity to stop the alien threat. CS forces accept magic as a necessary and valuable resource and the Federation of Magic accepts the CS as valuable military allies. Could the Mechanoids unite the factions of North America permanently, or will a Mechanoid defeat bring a return to the status quo?

76-78% Zarkonia (Palladium Fantasy): A Pocket Dimension hidden in the Old Kingdom Mountains in the Palladium dimension that is ruled by a malevolent Alien Intelligence. It has trapped several thousand Elves and Dwarves during the Elf-Dwarf War. Peace was only weeks away when the two races were imprisoned and manipulated by the Intelligence to continue the war for the creature's own amusement. Each race has been brought to extinction numerous times only to have the Alien Intelligence intervene and start the process over and over again. Each side is tired of the constant warfare and is ready for peace, but the Alien Intelligence's avatars keep the hatred and warfare going, using other races and outsiders as its pawns.

79-80% The Ash Lands (Rifts® and Phase World®): A dying infinite dimension not unlike the Three Galaxies. It is the latest to fall victim to the onslaught of the Four Horsemen of the Apocalypse. Civilizations lie in ruins and death and destruction are everywhere. Unless the Horsemen are defeated, the people of this and the next solar system already targeted by the demons are doomed. The defeated Horsemen may be here after their defeat on Rifts Earth.

81-83% The Infinity Labyrinth: One of the few dimensional prisons hidden and not easily accessed. If the rumors are true, this is where the Persian god Ahriman and his dark minions reside, waiting to escape and wreak havoc upon the Megaverse.

84-85% Asgard: Home to the Norse gods. Few dimensional travelers go to Asgard without an invitation and those that do drop by arrive upon Bi-Frost, the Rainbow Bridge. See the out of print **Pantheons of the Megaverse®** for details.

86-88% Deific Realms: Home dimension to any one of the gods and pantheons listed in **Pantheons of the Megaverse®**.

89-90% Chaos Earth™, prior to the cataclysm and during the Golden Age of man, or some other idyllic futuristic world.

91-93% Phantasmal Dimension: A Pocket Dimension created as a prison for a once very evil wizard. To keep himself amused and from getting lonely, he created elaborate illusions to entertain himself. Over time he gave them human-like emotions to the point where the illusion seemed to come to life with minds of their own. Through the course of several hundred years, a whole society was created. The magic energy that created them then took on a whole life of its own to the point that the illusions are no longer illusions, but people. They could speak their mind and even began to breed/replicate on their own. (Or is it the wizard's subconscious mind at work since?) The wizard has long died yet the society of illusions lives on. Visitors find that while they may interact with the inhabitants, they can not touch them or anything else in the dimension as it is all merely an elaborate illusion.

94-95% Necropolon: A dark dimension filled with death and vampires. A single Vampire Intelligence rules this dimension with its millions of vampires. The vampires are especially powerful here as the dimension lacks any sunlight to keep the creatures at bay for any period of time. Hundreds of millions of humanoids are kept as slave stock and are nothing more than cattle.

96-98% Eylor: One of the Splugorth dominated dimensions that is the source of a major Bio-Wizard component, the Eyes of Eylor. Or this can be any world from *Phase World®* and *The Three Galaxies™*, or from outside the Palladium scope of role-playing games, perhaps one inspired by literature, television or film.

99-00% Your Own Creation. Have fun and let your imagination run wild.

Displacement Storm

The energy between dimensions is usually stable, except for brief periods that cause strain and instability, like planetary alignments and seasonal peaks. The result, especially at ley lines and nexus points, is the opening of a random dimensional portal.

Most seasoned dimensional travelers know that while it is usually only a step or two to get to the other side of a Rift, this distance can stretch from a few yards to almost a mile (1.6 km) during these high peak periods of magic energy and dimensional instability. Shifters and those who understand the ebb and flow of the ley lines or study astronomy and planetary alignments also know about Displacement Storms and other dimensional anomalies. The casual adventurer, however, knows nothing of them and doesn't have a chance at detecting dimensional disturbances in the hope of avoiding them. Fortunately this is a rare occurrence that only happens a few times a year.

Stepping through a dimensional portal during a Displacement Storm is like entering a long, dark tunnel. All one can usually see is the light at the end, which is typically the exit portal. Lucky travelers just have a long jaunt ahead of them to reach the exit before it closes. The odd thing is, once they've stepped into a dimensional Rift during a Displacement Storm, there's no going back. The entrance portal is a one-way door and seems to vanish the moment one steps through it. Once inside the blackness, all that is visible is the exit. Only Shifters and dimension spanning beings (Temporal Raiders, gods, demon lords, etc.) have a chance of exiting by some means other than the opposite end of the portal, and that's typically Teleporting directly to their home dimension. For anyone else, they have to face the dangers that lie ahead.

The distance created during a Displacement Storm can vary from as little as 10 feet (3 m) to nearly a mile (1.6 km) long. For some reason the storm elongates the distance between dimensions, forming a tunnel to the exit portal. Ironically, the "storm"

is not what one expects, but rather an unnatural quiet, calm and darkness – at least until it all erupts into a storm of movement and monsters. All kinds of trouble can be found within the long, inky blackness of a Displacement Storm tunnel, from bolts of magic energy raining down from out of nowhere and creatures trapped between the dimensions that attack on sight, to a black void filled with water or nests of Nexus Spiders.

The tunnel, or funnel, as some refer to it, appears as a long, black, elongated tunnel. It's typically very dark, but the occasional bolt of magic and energy wisps overhead provide some ambient light. Most travelers fear when the tunnel is flooded with water. This is rare unto itself, but can be very dangerous when encountered, especially if one can't swim! The water is a black murky color that is very calm until something from the depths attacks!

(G.M. Note: Unbeknownst to the characters, time stands still while they are inside. So the exit portal is not going to suddenly close up on the characters trapping them inside as it may seem. G.M.s can build a little bit of suspense and keep the players sweating by occasionally describing the portal and how it *appears* to fade or contract and shimmer, as if it's going to close. Typically, the portal remains open until the last person is through, at which point it closes, however, a Rifts does not stay open for long, and characters between dimensions have about 10-15 minutes to get to the exit before it does close and trap them inside until the next time it opens. No one really knows why this is, but that's how it works.)



When encountering a Displacement Storm, first determine the length of the tunnel. G.M.'s can roll on the following table, or determine the size ahead of time.

01-10% 1D4x10 feet (3 to 12.2 m).

11-20% 2D4x10 feet (6.1 to 24.4 m).

21-30% 2D6x10 feet (6.1 to 36.6 m).

31-40% 3D6x10 feet (9.1 to 54.8 m).

41-50% 1D4x100 feet (30.5 to 122 m).

51-60% 2D4x100 feet (61 to 244 m).

61-70% 2D6x100 feet (61 to 366 m).

71-80% 3D6x100 feet (91 to 548.6 m).

81-90% 4D6x100 feet (122 to 731.5 m).

91-95% 6D6x100 feet (183 to 1097.2 m).

96-98% 1D4x1000 feet (350 to 1219.2 m).

99-100% 2D4x1000 feet (610 to 2438.4 m).

Now that the length has been determined, roll to determine what's *inside* the tunnel with the player characters. G.M.s should feel free to substitute whatever kind of beasts they want to appear in the black tunnel, roll on the following table, or even design some of your own dangers. Just remember to give the players a fair chance to escape alive and whole.

01-25% Nothing! Or is there? The wisps of magic energy overhead move and undulate as if something has just rushed by and disturbed them. And what was that, that just brushed against your cheek? The wind? Is there wind in this frightening black calm? Is it your imagination or something real? Quit asking questions and get the blazes out of there!!! Phew! That wasn't so bad.

26-33% A Nest of Nexus Spiders: These creatures can actually create Displacement Storms, and they more likely than not, created this one. There are 3D4 of the spiders lying in ambush. Their magic webbing blocks the path of exit, so not only do the characters have to fight the Spiders, they have to hack through the webbing as well. Nexus Spiders are described elsewhere in this book.

34-40% Bolts of Magical Lightning: Like giant pillars of light, bolts of magical energy crash down. Each bolt does 1D6 M.D.C. to whatever it hits, and there is a 01-30% chance per melee round of being hit by 1D4 of them. Characters can attempt to dodge, but, like dodging lightning, they either need a natural 20, or a modified roll of 21 or higher with bonuses.

41-45% Torrential Downpour: The tunnel is relatively clear, except for the barrage of rain that is pelting the characters as they move through the tunnel. The sound of thunder and wind can also be heard, but not felt. The rain hampers visibility, gets people soaking wet (may damage paper products and other items vulnerable to water and not packed away), and slows movement by 20%. Travelers may also slip and fall and when they do, they'll think they heard or caught a glimpse of something in the darkness close by. However, other than the wet and the cold, there is no real danger present.

46-50% A Pool of Water: The characters suddenly find themselves being pelted by rain, and a few feet later falling into a pool of water. They will have to swim from this point on to exit the portal. In most cases (01-90%) there are no monsters present, but sometimes man-sized squid or octopus-like beings (or 1D6 Nexus Spiders suspended above the water or 1D4 lesser

demons) are present and attack. Thankfully, they give up after 1D4+2 rounds of resistance. The depth of the water is 1D4x10 feet (3 to 12.2 m). Characters in armor, or carrying excessive weight, may have to leave the heaviest gear/belongings behind or move at a snail's pace, making them vulnerable to any lurking monsters.

51-55% Walk the Plank: A narrow, black beam or plank-like structure crosses over a pool of ominous black water. The plank is wet from water sloshing over it and characters may find that they will need to make a Sense of Balance roll every 10-20 feet (3-6 m) to cross without falling in, especially if trying to go faster than one third their normal running speed. Otherwise, the pool of water is the same as the previous description, #46-50%, and monsters only attack those who fall in.

56-60% Trapped Demon/Devil/Monster: The tunnel is relatively clear except for that monster ahead! It seems that one to four lesser demons or monsters (or one greater one) have been trapped inside the darkness and are eager to exit. The trick is, they need to get out before the player characters, otherwise the exit portal will close and lock them inside again. They will go through the characters to escape, and kill anyone who tries to stop them. (Good characters might want to stop them from entering their home world or some other place where innocent people might be harmed.) Game Masters, select just about any supernatural being or monster that seems appropriate for the situation and power level of the player characters. It doesn't have to overmatch them. There may also be 1D6 Nexus Spiders lurking in the wings.

61-65% A Pool of Dangerous Water: This is just like the pool above except the water is filled with 1D6 lesser demons or lowly monsters of some sort. It can be a trapped Aquatic demon or killer piranha or big ol' python or even a Naga (or more of those darn Nexus Spiders). Game Masters, get creative and see what kind of beast is preventing the characters from escaping.

66-70% Golf Ball Size Fireballs: Fireballs the size of golf balls rain down from above. Characters can attempt to dodge, but are -3 to do so and suffer 1D4 M.D.C. from every one that hits. Each character must dodge 1D4 per melee round for at least half the distance to the exit.

71-75% Fog and Monsters: The entire tunnel is covered in a thick, dense fog, making the exit portal barely visible. Worse, there's something evil lurking in the mist and blackness. This can be 1D4 lesser demons or any low level supernatural being (or one greater). Unlike those sometimes trapped in a Displacement Storm, these monsters live in the blackness, waiting to attack those who happen to fall into their clutches. Most will fight until they've lost 75% of their M.D.C. before giving up. **Note:** If a solitary monster, it could be a Shadow Beast as per the Summon Shadow Beast spell – that's nasty, let's hope there is only one. Another wicked creature would be a Cerebellus or Rift Demon.

76-80% A Second Portal: This portal can appear anywhere within the tunnel. Where does it go? Your guess is a good as anybody's, but it is NOT the desired destination. It's a random Rift that opened up as a result of the storm. Game Masters can predetermine where it goes or roll for random determination on the Table of Dimensions presented earlier in this section. Whether the preferred exit is blocked by something nasty (more Nexus Spiders?) or whether the characters can't tell which exit is the one they should use is left up to the G.M.

81-85% Dimensional Clones: The various magic energies coalesce into exact copies of all the party members. To make matters worse, the clones are controlled by Possessing Entities and have no guidance or direction, so like savages they attack the people they look like. Each clone has 1D6x10+22 M.D.C., four attacks per melee, and is +4 to strike, parry and dodge. If they can slay the original character inside the black calm of the storm, the clone can go out the exit portal and take his place as a real flesh and blood person, but of evil alignment and foul intention.

86-90% Vacuum: For some reason all the air is being sucked out. The characters have 1D6+1 melee rounds to prepare before all the air is gone! They will either have to run to the exit portal, be wearing environmental body armor, use a spell that will allow them to breathe or simply hold their breath or find some other way to survive.

91-95% Dimensional Flux: One minute the players are in a black tunnel, the next minute the terrain changes to a weird version of the real world. They are still in a tunnel but now have terrain to deal with. Terrain that could be a rocky surface, snow and ice, desert, forest, or just about anything. Also, the location of the exit portal can change. Instead of being straight ahead it can be ahead and up in a tree, on a rocky ledge or down in a snowy ravine. Wherever the portal is, the characters should still be able to see it as well as get to its location. The problem is traversing the difficult terrain (and dealing with one or two nasties to boot? G.M.'s call).

96-100% A Dimensional Maelstrom: A Ley Line Storm somewhere has created a Dimensional Maelstrom within the tunnel of the Displacement Storm and it's rolling toward the travelers. Can they exit the portal before it hits and pops them someplace they may not want to be? The Dimensional Maelstrom cannot exit the portal, so the characters are safe if they can get out in time (a standard black tunnel with the exit so many feet away).

Note: For Game Masters who may prefer running an S.D.C. game, simply change all the M.D.C. values to S.D.C. *Nexus Spiders*, *Rift Demons*, *Cerebellus* and other monsters are described later in this book.

Dimensional Vortex

An anomaly found at ley line nexus points is the Dimensional Vortex. The D-Vortex is best compared to a whirlpool at sea that's ten times worse and is made of magic and trans-dimensional energy. Everything within a certain radius of the D-Vortex is sucked in! It's a vacuum that is incredibly strong and few things can escape its pull. When the phenomenon was first studied by Shifters and Temporal Raiders, the popular theory was that the other end of the Dimensional Vortex must end in a Rift/dimensional portal that opens up into the vacuum of space, or some similar dimension where the air pressure was far lower than that of Rifts Earth. They were wrong. It's an odd anomaly that's not limited to dimensions with vacuums or the realm of outer space. This is fortunate for anyone who might get sucked into and shot out of a Dimensional Vortex. Instead of appearing in a vacuum where they would most likely die, victims of a D-Vortex can appear in any number of dimensions. Which may explain the displacement of so many D-Bees on Rifts Earth

torn from their native home worlds and brought to Earth (randomly) during the Great Cataclysm and perhaps for decades thereafter during the Dark Age that followed. This may also explain alien vegetation on Earth, and Earthly vegetation found on distant worlds and alien dimensions, as well as certain monsters and supernatural beings.

There are few signs to forewarn the birth of a Dimensional Vortex, which is, in effect, a violent Rift Storm that draws things from one dimension and deposits them (roughly) into another. Like the appearance of most random Rifts, the appearance of the dimensional portal is unexpected and appears out of the blue, or close to it. One minute there is absolute calm, the next a sudden swirl of wind begins sucking everything into the maw of the swirling Dimensional Vortex as if it were a cosmic vacuum cleaner. *Shifters*, *Temporal Raiders* or *psychic sensitives* who happen to be "reading" a dimensional portal or sensing for magic or dimensional activity along a ley line or near a nexus are the only ones likely to sense the Vortex's approach more than a minute or two before it appears, enabling them to prepare or escape. These unique individuals can sense the D-Vortex building 1D6 minutes +1 minute per level of their experience *before* the monstrous thing appears. Likewise, *Ley Line Walkers* on the ley line where the D-Vortex is about to appear, will "feel" its approach like an icy wind or a disturbance on the line, but only 3D4x10 seconds before the D-Vortex erupts.

When a Dimensional Vortex first appears everything in a 500 foot (152 m) radius of the devouring Rift is drawn into it. Only creatures that make a roll to save of 17 or higher (no usual bonuses apply; straight die roll only) manage to avoid being drawn into it. Those that are successful managed to either grab a tree, something solid that did not get sucked in, got out of range in time or simply had a miraculous bit of good luck.



A **failed roll to save** means getting sucked in! Only objects weighing two tons or more (or who luck out with a roll of 17+ on a D20) are not automatically pulled into the Dimensional Vortex. Beings with a Supernatural P.S. of 30 or higher can try to hold on, dig in, or resist the pulling force and get a +1 to save vs D-Vortex for every five points above a Supernatural P.S. of 25 (i.e., +1 to save at a P.S. of 30, +2 at 35, +3 at 40, +4 at 45 and so on). In these cases, it becomes a tug of war for the duration of the Dimensional Vortex (which is usually short). The pull of the D-Vortex is equal to roughly a supernatural P.S. of 30, so it becomes a roll off between the D-Vortex and creatures with Supernatural Strength. The high roll wins, with the tie always going to the defender. Roll once per melee round that the D-Vortex exists, and if at any point the Dimensional Vortex wins, the supernaturally strong being is lifted off their feet and sucked into the Rift like a bullet, even those who can fly. Three rolls are needed to get beyond the range of the D-Vortex. No other actions are possible while resisting its pull, because that requires all of the character's energy, strength and focus.

Duration: Varies, typically 2D4 melee rounds (30 seconds to two minutes), sometimes 3D4, seldom longer. It disappears as suddenly as it appeared.

Place of Appearance: 90% of the time a D-Vortex appears at a ley line nexus point where two or more ley lines intersect. However, when three or more ley lines cross and when the lines form a ley line triangle, the Dimensional Vortex can appear anywhere on the linked ley lines (though usually within one mile/1.6 km of the nexus point) or anywhere within the triangle.

Dimensional Vortex Outcome Table

If sucked into a Dimensional Vortex roll on the following table to determine what happens. Creative Game Masters should feel free to ad-lib your own ideas as anything can happen. This could be just the hook you needed to start a dimensional campaign.

01-20% Soft Landing: After being sucked through the D-Vortex the character has a relatively soft landing. Damage is 1D6 S.D.C. Make a random roll on the Table of Dimensions to see where they have landed.

21-40% Hard Landing: The D-Vortex was strong and violent and the characters have a hard landing. Damage is 6D6 S.D.C. Roll on the Table of Dimensions to see where they are.

41-60% Temporal Void: The Dimensional Vortex connects into a temporal void, a small Pocket Dimension that is totally out of sync with time, like a Time Hole. Anyone caught in the temporal void only feels as if they are stuck for 1D4 minutes, however time passes much faster in the outside world. Roll on the following table to determine the amount of time that actually elapses before the character(s) reappear at the location the D-Vortex had appeared when it devoured them. The passage of time has been . . .

- 01-10% 1D4 melee rounds.
- 11-20% 1D6 minutes.
- 21-30% 2D6 minutes.
- 31-40% 1D4x10 minutes.
- 41-50% 2D4x10 minutes.
- 51-60% 1D6 hours.

61-70% 3D6 hours.

71-80% 6D6 hours.

81-90% 3D6 days.

91-00% 2D6x10 days.

61-70% Displacement Storm: Anyone caught in this D-Vortex is hurled into a Displacement Storm, described earlier in this section. One unusual aspect that occurs is returning to the point of origin. There is a 01-35% chance of returning to where they were snatched. A roll of 36-100% means being deposited in a random dimension; roll on the Table of Dimensions.

71-80% Dimensional Maelstrom: The D-Vortex was actually a prelude to a Dimensional Maelstrom. Roll on the effects of a Dimensional Maelstrom, described earlier in this section.

81-99% Reversal: At the last second, the D-Vortex reverses direction and spits anyone caught by it back into their own dimension and world. Damage is only 4D6 S.D.C. for being tossed around.

100% Time Travel: This is a unique and rare phenomenon causing the D-Vortex to Rift the characters somewhere in time rather than a place (may really be a Parallel Dimension). Roll on the following table to determine where the characters ended up. **G.M. Note:** If you're uncomfortable with the concept of time travel, simply ignore results of 100% and re-roll. If your concern is changing history, you can use one of the following options. 1) The players are just observers and are unable to participate in historical events. They're like ghosts, where people are unable to see or interact with them but they can see what's going on. Only psionics or magic *may* detect the time travelers' presence, but contact and interaction remains impossible except through a true Psychic Medium. 2) The player characters do go back or forward in time and manifest as flesh and blood beings, but no matter what they say or do, history has already been written and the characters can't do anything to change events; they are simply participants and their actions are already part of history. This can be difficult for a G.M. to handle, so keep the players' involvement minimal. Of course this can make a great plot hook to get players involved in a scenario involving time travel, and if you're comfortable with it, then go for it!

1-50% Time travel is to the future. Roll to determine how far into the future.

51-00% Time travel is to the past. Roll to determine how far into the past.

Amount of Time Traveled

01-20% 2D6 hours.

21-30% 4D6+24 hours.

31-40% 1D6 days.

41-50% 2D6 weeks.

51-60% 2D6 months.

61-70% 1D6 years.

71-80% 6D6 years.

81-90% 2D6x10 years.

91-94% 6D6x10 years.

95-97% 2D4x100 years.

98-99% 1D4x1000 years.

100% G.M.'s option as to how far traveled.

Dimensional Critters



Cerebellus Demon

The Cerebellus is a hideous, demonic supernatural creature. It derives its name from the fact that it looks like a large head with the brain exposed sitting on a set of spider legs. These demons are absolutely cold-blooded and self-serving master manipulators. They crave power above all else and often end up ruling several kingdoms, worlds or even an entire solar system or one or more small dimensions. These demons hold themselves above all others, dare to trick and defy gods, and seek to rule over all other life forms. After conquering one kingdom, the Cerebellus will soon look to his neighbors as his next targets for conquest. Cunning and patient, the horrid fiends often bide their time and manipulate people and events toward their own goals. Never content with what they have, the Cerebellus are always seeking to acquire more, and are constantly causing chaos and turmoil someplace as they maneuver and leverage themselves into better positions of power or acquisition. At the cornerstone of their power base are numerous agents and a few puppets whom they control through *Brain Bugs*. Cerebellus are imaginative, resourceful, brilliant tacticians and masters of manipulation and subterfuge. The demon's greatest flaw is their insatiable lust to acquire more, which also makes them demons of vengeance and retribution against those who topple them from power or

dare to challenge their authority. These demons rarely form lasting alliances and when they do, it's only an alliance of convenience that comes to an abrupt end the moment the creature gets the upper hand. Rarely do they confront foes toe to toe, however, preferring to trick or entice mortal pawns and other supernatural beings to do their dirty work for them, as well as pitting rivals against rivals so they may pick up the pieces.

Also known as Brain Eaters. Considered a Greater Demon or Demon Lord.

Alignment: Any selfish or evil, but typically Miscreant (50%) or Diabolic (40%).

Attributes: I.Q. 4D6+16, M.E. 5D6+10, M.A. 4D6+5, P.S. 2D6+10 (Supernatural), P.P. 3D6+5, P.E. 3D6+6, P.B. 1D4, Spd 4D6+6.

M.D.C.: 1D6x1000. (On S.D.C. worlds the Cerebellus Demon has 1D6x100 Hit Points, 1D4x100+99 S.D.C., and an A.R. 14.)

Horror Factor: 16

Size: 15 to 20 feet (4.6 to 6.1 m) tall.

Weight: 2 to 4 tons.

Average Life Span: Immortal demon of chaos.

P.P.E.: 6D6x100 +P.E. attribute number.

I.S.P.: 5D6x10 +M.E. attribute number.

Natural Abilities: The Cerebellus has Supernatural Strength and Endurance, has night vision range 2000 feet (610 m), can see the invisible, exceptional balance 98%, able to walk on all but the slickest, polished smooth surfaces like an insect (climbing walls and across ceilings at half its normal running Spd), as well as Teleport Self at 90% at no P.P.E. cost as often as once per minute (maximum range of 5 miles/8 km and requires first-hand knowledge of, and familiarity with, the location, or line of sight), and Dimensional Teleport 35%. There is a bonus to Teleport and Dimensional Teleport of +10% when on a ley line and +20% when on a nexus point.

Steal Memories and Skills (special): The Cerebellus demon is one of the most intelligent creatures in the Megaverse and their ability to siphon memories and skills from other sentient beings only adds to their knowledge and capabilities. Stealing another person's skills and memories is a gruesome task, but one the sadistic Cerebellus enjoys immensely. First, it must capture or corner its victim, then crack open the skull while the victim is still alive and consume the brain. This, of course, kills their victim in the process, but the self-serving Cerebellus doesn't care, and takes lives as casually as you or I might kill a fly. Ultimately, life, especially human life, has no meaning or value to these demons except as commodities, like cattle, and as slaves and minions. Even greater is the tragedy when one realizes the stolen knowledge is only temporary and fades in a matter of days. The higher level the victim, the longer the Cerebellus demon is able to retain the stolen knowledge, retaining it for *one week* per level of the deceased. Consequently, high level and experienced beings are often sought after.

The purpose of stealing knowledge in this fashion may be to possess a particular skill that is needed at the moment or to learn everything that individual knows, capturing the victim's memories right up to the moment of their death. This is especially useful for interrogation purposes, uncovering plots against it, identifying spies, assassins and other enemies, as well as a morbid enjoyment of their victim's emotions, not to mention exacting revenge on the victim's associates, family members and loved ones.

Limitations: The Cerebellus cannot steal P.P.E. or I.S.P. nor can they remember the exact invocations for spell magic and rituals, though they will know how to read magic, mystic symbols, identify magic circles and wards, and have a good understanding of magic, its form and function, ancient artifacts, and so on, provided their victim knew of such things. The demon may not acquire special O.C.C. or R.C.C. abilities either, only skills and memories. After absorbing memories and skills from its victim, the demon can use that knowledge as it deems fit (usually for revenge and evil), and stolen skills are performed at the victim's level of expertise and experience, including any bonuses the deceased may have had from I.Q., formal education and practical experience. After the time period for recollection elapses, the skills and memories fade completely away forever. **Note:** The Cerebellus can only hold the memories of one individual per level of its own experience at a time. So a fifth level demon can hold the memories of five different individuals. If a sixth victim's brain is eaten, the Cerebellus loses the knowledge from one of its previous victims, but it can pick which one that is.

Possess Others (special): The Cerebellus can also possess other creatures, but only mortals, not creatures of magic or other supernatural beings. This is done by implanting a Brain Bug in their head. The Cerebellus has small creatures that live in the crevices and folds of skin on its underbelly. They are small, no bigger than a firefly or carpenter ant, and look like little brains with larva-like bodies. Intended victims must be subdued in order to have a Brain Bug implanted by burrowing into the base of the skull, a process that takes 1D6+6 melee rounds to complete, and is quite painful. While on the outside of the skull, the Brain Bugs are easily plucked off and killed, squished by a single M.D.C. point of damage or 100 S.D.C. points. Once inside the skull, it burrows to the center of the brain where it joins the mind of its victim. Everything the possessed character sees, hears and experiences the larva transmits to the Cerebellus demon, making him or her the ultimate unwitting spy. Unwitting, because once the Brain Bug is in place, it erases the memory of being infected by a Brain Bug, and the entry wound is so small, and usually concealed by hair on the back of the head, that it is never noticed (it's just a tiny scar). Victims with a Brain Bug in place are not actually controlled or possessed by the Cerebellus and cannot be made to act out of character, but as noted earlier, everything that character experiences is known to the Cerebellus regardless of distance, even if the possessed person is whisked away to another dimension. **Note:** The Brain Bug is only detectable by a Psychic Diagnosis and only when the head is part of the examination. The character's aura may also have some peculiarities, but nothing obvious or clear cut unless the psychic has seen the signature marks of a Brain Bug in the past. The Brain Bug does not register on normal brain scans, though actual brain surgery will uncover it, and it can be removed (though not killed) via brain surgery (including Psychic Surgery). Once removed the Bug becomes animated and seeks a new (or the same) victim to possess unless it is squished. A magic or psionic Exorcism can also make a Brain Bug leave, though this is a painful process requiring it to burrow its way back out the way it came in. The Cerebellus has a number of Brain Bugs and can possess a number of beings equal to their I.Q. attribute number x2.

True Possession (special): Pretty much as above, using the Brain Bug, only in this case the demon seizes full control of the Bugged individual by transmitting a fragment of its life essence into the Brain Bug. This reduces the Cerebellus by 10% and the creature never creates more than five such hidden avatars, reducing itself by no more than 50%. Beings who are possessed and controlled by the Cerebellus have 10% of the demon's M.D.C., have superhuman P.S. (+10 to the attribute, but it is *not* Supernatural), +1 on all combat moves, +1 to save vs psionic attacks and are impervious to possession by a third party (the Cerebellus is already in control). If slain the Cerebellus cannot recover its M.D.C. or make a new avatar for 1D6 months. When done with the possessed victim, the demon can recall its Brain Bug imbued with its life essence and let that character recover his senses, but remembering nothing of when the Cerebellus was in command, or kills him by having the Brain Bug eat the brain (a process that puts the victim in a coma and takes 2D4 weeks to accomplish).

Attacks Per Melee: Six by hand to hand or psionic attacks, or two by spell magic.

Damage: Punches, kicks and stomp attacks as per Supernatural P.S., typically 3D6 S.D.C. on a restrained punch, 1D6 M.D. on a full strength punch, 2D6 M.D. on a power punch, but a claw strike does an extra 2D6 M.D. to the punch damage (3D6 M.D. total). Bite attack does 4D6 M.D.

Bonuses (in addition to attribute bonuses): +2 on initiative, +1 to strike and parry, +2 to pull punch, +1 to save vs mind control, +2 to save vs illusions, +7 to save vs Horror Factor and is impervious to possession.

Penalties: -4 to dodge due to its massive bulk.

R.C.C. Skills: Knows all Lore, Math and Navigation skills at 98%, and 1D6+2 skills of choice from any category at +20% +I.Q. bonus. Any other skills require the memory stealing process.

Average Level of Experience: 1D6+7

Magic: Every Cerebellus studied magic extensively and is effectively a 7+1D6 level Ley Line Walker or Shifter (minus the supernatural link and familiar). The demonic creature knows all spells up to Level Six, all Ley Line and dimension related spell invocations regardless of level, and 2D4+1 Temporal Magic spells.

Psionics: Considered a Master psionic equal to a Mind Melter, but at half the creature's level of experience (e.g., an 8th level Cerebellus uses psionics at 4th level proficiency). Psionic powers vary, like those of a Mind Melter, with a focus on the Sensitive (select 1D6+6) and Physical (select 1D4+4) psionic power categories, but also 1D4+2 Super Psionic powers. Most psionics lean towards sensing the world around it, mind control and subterfuge.

Habitat: Typically sets itself up as a ruler of one or more kingdoms, continents, a planet or small Pocket Dimension. With its dimensional knowledge it can be found pretty much anywhere in the Megaverse, including the Three Galaxies and Phase World, though very few are known to exist on Rifts Earth. Why this may be is unknown.

Enemies: Cerebellus demons don't trust anyone, especially other demons, and try their best to remain concealed, hiding behind the scenes usually by having one or more puppets in a position of power. Hated and hunted by Cosmo-Knights and other champions of light.

Allies: The Cerebellus demons trust nobody, not even (especially) other Cerebellus. That having been said, these notorious tricksters and manipulators may hire, entice, trick and coerce numerous pawns and puppets to do as they command, and may associate with mortals, creatures of magic, supernatural beings, gods and Alien Intelligences and whoever they deem necessary to get what they want, sometimes even pretending to serve a greater power. Most frequently work with Chaos Demons, Hades Demons, and Deevils, but any alliance tends to be short-lived as the Cerebellus has no regard for anyone, and sees most other beings as expendable cannon fodder or pawns in its own agenda.

Vulnerabilities/Penalties: Magic weapons, including Techno-Wizard weapons, do double damage. Holy and Rune weapons do triple damage. The Cerebellus is extremely vulnerable to silver, and normal S.D.C. weapons and rounds do their S.D.C. equivalent in Mega-Damage x4! Also in order to maintain its impressive I.Q. it must consume at least three

brains from sentient creatures (minimum I.Q. of 10) a month. If it goes longer than a month without feeding, its I.Q. drops by 5 points a week. When the I.Q. drops to 10 points or less, the demon loses its spell casting and Teleportation abilities. If it drops to 5 or less, the Cerebellus goes into a frenzy (+2 to strike and parry and plus one attack) and does not stop feeding until its I.Q. is fully restored, each freshly devoured brain restoring five I.Q. points. After dropping to an I.Q. of five or less, if for some reason it cannot feed on the brains of mortal sentient beings, it dies 1D6 days later as a drooling idiot.

Physical Appearance: The Cerebellus has a large conical head that looks like a massive brain with a diamond shaped bone ridge covering the front or what would be the creature's forehead. At the base of the head is a large tooth-filled maw, a large beak-like nose and two large yellow eyes. The head sits on six, large spider-like legs and coming out of the sides of the head are two long, spindly arms that end in six claw-like fingers. Whenever the demon speaks, casts a spell, or uses a psionic power, some type of energy can be seen pulsing around their brain.

Nexus Spiders

These aren't your garden variety brown spiders and these bad boys can be a dimensional traveler's nightmare! These giant arachnids live between dimensions, similar to the phenomena known as Dimensional Maelstroms and Displacement Storms. In fact these creatures can even create Displacement Storms.

Nexus Spiders don't stand any taller than a large dog, and aren't all that tough. What makes them so deadly is the fact that they are in a constant state of flux, appearing to fade in and out, making attacking them extremely difficult. One moment they are physical, the next some sort of ethereal specter. They also attack in small packs, making them all the more deadly. Nexus Spiders reside between dimensions, inside Displacement Storms and at nexus points.

The creatures need to feed on P.P.E. from a living being, so they stake out areas at and around nexus points as well as inside Displacement Storms. More than one practitioner of magic has disappeared at a nexus or inside a Rift where a nest of Nexus Spiders laid in wait. The spiders typically swarm their target trying to paralyze it so they can kill it and drink in their victim's P.P.E. at the moment of death, or by bleeding them 1D4 P.P.E. at a time, per bite. They can also syphon off 1D6 P.P.E. from living beings every time a magic spell is cast. Since living beings renew their source of P.P.E., it's not uncommon for Nexus Spiders to keep one or more victims wrapped up in webbing for weeks at a time, feeding off of them till their victim(s) starve to death. Victims are wrapped up in magically reinforced webbing. Cutting loose is impossible unless one has a Vibro-Blade or other M.D. weapon. However, *fire* also destroys the webbing, you'll just have to be careful not to burn the victim entangled inside in the process.

Alignment: Effectively Miscreant supernatural predators.

Attributes: I.Q. 3 (low animal intelligence), M.E. 1D4+5, M.A. 1D6, P.S. 1D6+17 (Supernatural), P.P. 2D6+14, P.E. 1D6+12, P.B. 1D4, Spd 2D6+34.



M.D.C.: 1D6x10+18. (On S.D.C. worlds, Nexus Spiders have 4D6+6 Hit Points, 1D4x10+10 S.D.C., and an A.R. 15.)

Horror Factor: 10 for a lone spider and 14 for a pack of five or more.

Size: 3-4 feet (.9 to 1.2 m) tall and twice as long.

Weight: 50-100 pounds (22.5 to 45 kg) when not phased out, otherwise weightless when “phased”/ethereal.

Average Life Span: Unknown, most likely only a few hundred years.

P.P.E.: 2D6 plus that which they steal.

Natural Abilities: Nightvision 1000 feet (305 m), see the invisible, see infrared and ultraviolet light, bio-regenerate 1D6 M.D.C. per minute (every four melees), leap 10 feet (3 m) high and 12 feet (3.6 m) across, and they stick and walk on walls, ceilings and most surfaces (including the inside of a Displacement Storm), except those which are smooth as glass; move at full speed without fear of falling.

Create Displacement Storm (special): One of their most feared powers is the ability to create dimensional displacement fields. Nexus Spiders live inside Displacement Storms where they attack and feed upon those passing through them; 90% of all Nexus Spiders are found inside such storms. They can also sense an open dimensional portal at a range of 20 miles (32 km), which draws them to swarm and feed on those beings exiting or entering the Rift.

Ghosting/Intangible (special): Nexus Spiders are in a constant state of dimensional flux, making them harder to hit and kill. As a result, for every attack leveled at them there is a

01-50% chance that they are phased and intangible at that moment and the attack goes right through them without harm. This not something the Nexus Spiders do intentionally, though it may seem like it sometimes, it’s just part of their natural being. Only psionic and magic attacks can be leveled at the creatures when they are intangible. **Combat Note:** The Nexus Spiders must be solid in order to attack, and a character could forfeit his parry or dodge to engage in a simultaneous attack to hit it while the thing is solid.

Invisibility (special): While in a dimensional portal or on a ley line, the Nexus Spider can turn invisible and blend into the background energy at will, but must turn visible to attack. Their webbing is the color of the ley line energy and nearly invisible itself, even when one is looking for it.

M.D.C. Webbing (special): Nexus Spiders can spin a reinforced web that takes a Supernatural P.S. of 25 to break out of, or 10 M.D.C. to cut a single strand. Ordinary fire also burns and dissolves the webbing with ease, but must be used with care when trying to free a captive cocooned in webbing. Webbing is released from a housing in the monster’s buttock and can be used as a towline, climbing rope and so on. To wrap victims up in a cocoon, the webbing is pulled to the mouth and several web lines are spun around the victim to bind him in such a way that he is snugly secured and can’t move. A typical web cocoon has 1D6x10+20 M.D.C. and lasts for 3D6 weeks before needing to be redone.

Paralysis Bite (special): One attack per melee round the Spider can release a paralysis venom. Victims save vs non-lethal poisons/toxins (16 or higher) at -1. There’s no effect if

the save is successful, otherwise the paralysis takes effect in 1D4 melees and lasts for 1D4x10 minutes.

Sense P.P.E. (special): Nexus Spiders sense magic and high P.P.E. (18 points or more) in living creatures at a range of 3000 feet (914 m), double on a ley line or at a nexus, and can sense the general direction and close in on the source as if it were a homing beacon. Fortunately, Nexus Spiders don't care that the P.P.E. doubles at the moment of death, and they prefer to keep their victims around and feed on their P.P.E. reserve as long as possible.

Equivalent R.C.C. Skills: Swim 50%, Climb 98%/90%, Prowl 55%, Land Navigation 80%, Track Humanoids 70%, Camouflage 55%, Detect Ambush 45%, and Detect Concealment 40%. These skills do not improve with experience.

Attacks per Melee: Four by physical attacks; each P.P.E. draining bite or action counts as one melee attack.

Bonuses (in addition to attribute bonuses): +1 to strike and dodge, +3 to pull punch, +4 to save vs magic, +2 to save vs psionic attack, +4 to save vs Horror Factor, and is impervious to the effects of and damage from Ley Line Storms, Displacement Storms and Dimensional Storms.

Damage: Bite does 1D6 to 3D6 S.D.C. when restrained, 1D6 M.D. at full strength, but even a nip allows the Nexus Spider to drain P.P.E. A restrained leg strike, butt attack or leap attack does 3D6 S.D.C., while a full strength attack does 1D6 M.D.; a power punch/kick is not possible. However, in order to keep their victims *alive*, the creatures often subdue and restrain their victims in a web cocoon so they can bleed them of P.P.E. for weeks at a time. Captives typically die from blood loss, starvation, or the elements (the Nexus Spiders have learned to provide drinkable water to keep them alive).

Magic: None, other than natural abilities.

Psionics: None.

Habitat: They prefer to live *between* dimensions inside Displacement Storms, but are also found at ley line nexus points and sometimes along ley lines and other places where "food" (i.e., intelligent life forms) in good supply, but not an actual community; Nexus Spiders won't live where they are outnumbered by their prey. They are known to set up webs within Ley Lines and Displacement Storms where they lie in wait to ambush unsuspecting victims.

Enemies: No natural enemies, but see most intelligent, mortal life forms as prey.

Allies: None per se, though they often gather in packs of 1D6 to 1D6+6 other Nexus Spiders and will tolerate the presence of other predators, creatures of magic and supernatural beings who are more powerful than they. Typically prey only on mortals, but may attack small, weak and injured supernatural beings and magical creatures.

Physical Appearance: Their bodies are a uniform light blue, like that of ley line energy, and appear to be made from glass or ice. They have large, bulbous bodies, eight legs, mandibles and eight black orbs for eyes.

Value: 6,000 to 10,000 credits in Splugorth markets (sometimes used as guard animals, but don't domesticate well and often turn on their masters) and are sometimes used in the arena, otherwise they have no value at all.

Rift Demon

Rift Demons are so named because they use ley line energy to hide and ambush unsuspecting prey (particularly practitioners of magic) along ley lines and especially at ley line nexus points. They use their formidable Ley Line Magic to wreak chaos and mayhem for no other reason than to cause pain and suffering.

No one seems to know exactly where these enigmatic demons come from, only that lone individuals and pairs travel the Megaverse looking for areas of high magic where dimensional portals are opened. The demons find human flesh particularly appealing, but will pass up mere mortals for mages, dragons, Faerie Folk and other creatures of magic. It seems beings who have higher than normal mystic energy are like fabulous dessert treats to these demons and preferred above all others. Rift Demons have learned that creatures of magic are frequently found on and near ley lines and nexus points, so these locations are their primary hunting grounds. In addition, Rift Demons can use a Rift, even a random portal, to travel to other realms in search of more plentiful hunting grounds or easier prey. Their savagery and natural abilities to fade into the ley line and lie undetected for hours, make them formidable foes even for creatures of magic and experienced sorcerers.

Also known as a Phase Demon.

Alignment: Miscreant (50%) or Diabolic (50%).

Attributes: I.Q. 1D6+11, M.E. 2D4+10, M.A. 1D6+6, P.S. 2D6+20, P.P. 2D6+12, P.E. 2D4+20, P.B. 1D4+2, Spd 2D6+20.

M.D.C.: P.E. number x10, however their strength and abilities are diminished when not on a ley line or near a nexus. When more than one mile (1.6 km) away, M.D.C. and P.S. are reduced by half and bio-regeneration is not possible. (On S.D.C. worlds, the Rift Demon has their P.E. attribute plus 1D6x10 for Hit Points, and 2D6x10 S.D.C., A.R. 12.)

Horror Factor: 14

Size: 10-12 feet tall (3 to 3.7 m).

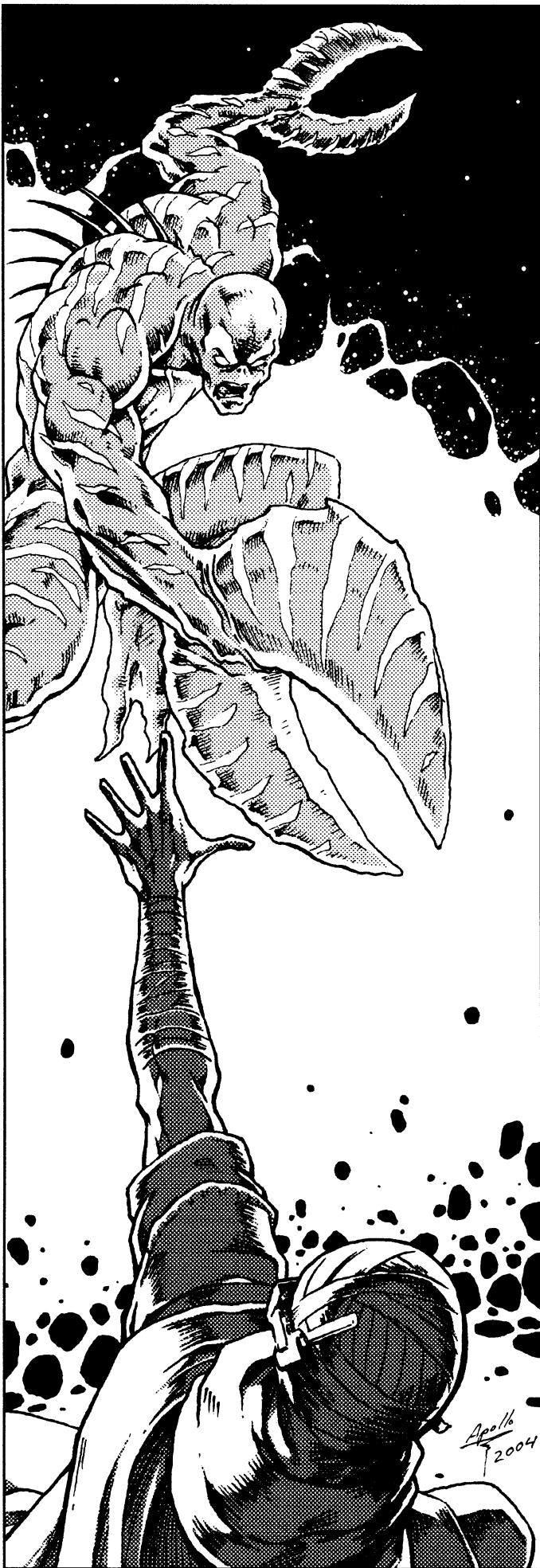
Weight: 600-1,000 pounds (270 to 450 kg).

Average Life Span: Uncertain, hundreds of years, if not immortal.

P.P.E.: 2D6x10, but able to draw an additional 50 points per melee round when on a ley line or at a nexus. In addition, the Rift Demon may use some of the P.P.E. it steals from its opponents and victims (half of any stolen P.P.E. points are available for 24 hours before they are completely digested).

Natural Abilities: Rift Demons have a natural light bluish coloration that helps them to blend in to the ley line. They also have superior day vision (like a hawk) and nightvision (1000 feet/305 m), can magically understand and speak all languages and bio-regenerate 2D6 M.D.C. per melee round, but bio-regeneration only works when on a ley line, at a nexus or inside a dimensional storm.

Impervious to Dimensional Storms (special): The Rift Demon takes no damage and suffers no penalties from dimensional storms and most dimensional anomalies, including Ley Line Storms, Displacement Storms, Dimensional Maelstroms and Dimensional Vortexes. Often uses these storms to randomly get from one place or another, and sometimes follows Nexus Spiders when they create a Displace-



ment Storm. May also dive through a Rift to see what's on the other side; they are Chaos Demons after all.

Natural Magic Abilities (special): When on a ley line or within a dimensional storm of any kind, the Rift Demon is able to perform the following spells four times per day without an actual expenditure of P.P.E.; all are equal to 7th level strength: *Ley Line Fade*, *Ley Line Ghost*, *Ley Line Phantom*, *Ley Line Tendril Bolts*, and *Rift to Limbo*. When the demon is more than a mile (1.6 km) from a ley line or nexus point, it can still use these natural magic abilities, but must spend the appropriate P.P.E. to cast the spell.

Turn P.P.E. into M.D.C. (special): P.P.E. stolen from other living beings (not ambient ley line energy or its own P.P.E. reserve) can be turned into M.D.C. for the Rift Demon at a five to one ratio (5 P.P.E. = 1 M.D.C.) to rejuvenate lost M.D.C. or to increase existing M.D.C. Ideal when facing a more powerful opponent.

Attacks per Melee: Six when on a ley line or nexus, four when more than a mile (1.6 km) away, and eight when inside a ley line triangle or when on a ley line during a planetary alignment or eclipse.

Bonuses (in addition to attribute bonuses): +4 on initiative, +4 to strike, +2 to parry and dodge, +2 to disarm, +4 to pull punch, +6 to save vs Horror Factor, +2 to Spell Strength and +3 to save vs magic.

R.C.C. Skills: Magically understands all languages but cannot read any, Basic Math 50%, Land Navigation 78%, Climb 55%/45%, Prowl 50%, Swim 60%, Lore: Geomancy 85%, Lore: Ley Lines 85%, Lore: Demons and Monsters 70%, Track Humanoids 50% (+15% to follow a blood scent), and W.P. Blunt. These skills do not improve with experience.

Damage: As per Supernatural Strength, which is typically 5D6 S.D.C. on a restrained punch, 3D6 M.D. on a full strength punch and 6D6 M.D. on a power punch. In addition, when they make physical contact there is a spark of ley line energy that does an extra 1D6 M.D. The demon can also attempt to drain P.P.E. directly with each attack, but must make physical contact. The amount of P.P.E. it can drain is 2D6+6 unless a saving throw vs magic (13 or higher) is made by the defender. A successful save means no P.P.E. is drained away. If the mage or a creature of magic fails to save and is casting a spell, not only does the demon drain the spell caster of 2D6+6 P.P.E., the creature also steals the P.P.E. pumped into the spell being cast. Rift Demons use this attack sparingly as the fiends prefer the satisfaction of a kill and gorging on the doubled P.P.E. at the moment of death (as well as on the victim's magic rich flesh). **Note:** Each draining attack counts as two physical attacks, and half the P.P.E. is immediately eaten (gone) and half stored in their P.P.E. reserve.

Magic: All Rift Demons can cast the following spells assuming they have sufficient P.P.E.: *Blinding Flash* (1), *See the Invisible* (4), *Sense Magic* (4), *Befuddle* (6), *Chameleon* (6), *Call Lightning* (15), *Electric Arc* (8), *Lightning Arc* (30), *Energy Bolt* (5), *Mystic Portal* (60), and *Armor Bizarre* (15).

Psionics: None.

Habitat: The Rift Demon is commonly found on worlds and dimensions with high levels of magic or where they can find men of magic and/or creatures of magic. The Magic Zone, England, Ireland, Newfoundland and China, for example, are

all places on Rifts Earth where ley lines are strong and Faerie Folk and practitioners of magic are numerous, making them places where Rift Demons are known to appear, as are the Calgary Rift, the Yucatan Peninsula, and other places around the world.

Enemies: Mortals, especially those that practice magic, and creatures of magic (Faerie Folk, dragons, Lynn-Srial, etc.). Rift Demons are envious of just about every other kind of demon, and dislike them because their own powers are so reliant on ley lines or stolen P.P.E.

Allies: The Rift Demons tend to stick with their own kind as they often become subjugated by Greater Demons and beings who are more powerful than they. They don't have any sort of society, not even a tribal or clannish one, seldom associate with other evil beings, and typically keep to themselves. Encountered as a lone hunter or in a pair, occasionally in a small group of three or four Rift Demons. They may also follow and inhabit the same area as Nexus Spiders, but don't associate with the spiders nor come to their aid.

Physical Appearance: The Rift Demon is light blue with white tiger stripes. The eyes are pure white with ice blue pupils. They have no body hair, the prehensile feet are clawed, and a row of curved spikes run along the spine. The hands are a pair of oversized lobster claws. Lastly, when they step away from a ley line they have a bright blue aura that makes sneaking up on anyone rather difficult, and ley line energy seems to flow around their bodies.

Note: The Rift Demon feeds on both P.P.E. and the flesh and blood of living creatures.

Nexus Maw

The Nexus Maw is an evil and malignant being that rarely sets foot on solid ground, but may appear in the sky or outer space. The malevolent creatures feed on intense emotions and relish the hot emotions of fear, anger, hate, jealousy and similar, intense negative emotions. Of course, intense emotions are temporary and fleeting at best and while delectable, the Nexus Maw also feeds on the flesh and blood of living beings. It's not very picky, and anything from cattle and wildlife to people and dragons will do. However, it usually bides its time, waiting for large prey to pull into its dimensional hole and feed upon at its leisure.

The Nexus Maw is not native to any known dimension. It lives in its own little Pocket Dimension and, like a Trap-Door Spider, it opens a Rift and lashes out with its enormous tentacles to strike at prey and pull them in to their deaths. For years, scientists were perplexed at how the Nexus Maw knew when and where to strike, as it always seemed to be done with impeccable timing and precision. The popular belief for years was that the creature would strike after a Ley Line Storm or after an instance of strange weather or some other dimensional anomaly. At these times a Rift would tear open (and not on a ley line but pretty much out of thin air) to launch an attack. Stranger still was the fact that when the Rift was opened, it was always positioned to give the Nexus Maw a direct line of attack. These dimensional portals may appear 50 feet (15 m) in the air above the ground to pull prey up from the surface, horizontal above the ground to

snatch low flying prey from the sky, or vertically in the air at any height to snag high flyers (not to mention appear in the vacuum of outer space and in the middle of dimensional storms). Anything within reach of its massive tentacles is immediately grabbed and pulled into the Pocket Dimension where the body and devouring mouth of the thing is safely located. Entire villages of people could be picked off and consumed in a matter of minutes, while dragons and large flying creatures (including power armor and small aircraft) could be plucked out of the air in mid-flight.

The answer as to how the Nexus Maw could appear at the right place and moment to snare its prey remained a mystery for centuries until a brotherhood of Shifters figured it out. Dimensional and magic spawned storms serve as a window for the Nexus Maw, who can see everywhere the storm is at. In addition, storms where small, squishy, alien creatures fall with the rain include worm- or larva-like squishies that are disgorged by one or more Nexus Maws. Most of these alien "squishies" are completely harmless and a few are even edible, but those generated by the Nexus Maw serve as its eyes and ears. Thousands are disgorged over a large area (wherever the storm goes) and the little creatures send back crystal clear visual images and audio signals of what they see around them to help the Nexus Maw find food. These creatures can also See Auras and have Presence Sense, so if they detect any living beings in a given area, they are able to mentally pinpoint and map the location of each and every one, and transmit the information back to the Nexus Maw. The Maw then selects the most desirable target or target area, appears and attacks. **Note:** The sensory larva are expendable and only survive for 48 hours, but send information to the Nexus Maw to the very end. Each has only one Hit Point and can be killed with the heel of a boot, however, 99.5% of all people don't know these wormy things are linked to the Nexus Maw or that they telegraph a Maw's appearance, so they are ignored as nothing to worry about.

Though Nexus Maws can think, exhibit cunning, understand and speak all languages and exhibit some degree of understanding of humans and other sentient life forms, they don't care about them, society, or concepts like good and evil. All in all, Nexus Maws are dimension spanning predators, and humanoids, dragons (mainly hatchlings) and other beings are little more than food to them.

Also known as Sky Tentacles and Sky Beast.

Alignment: The majority are Diabolic evil (75%) with the remaining being Miscreant (20%) or Aberrant (5%).

Attributes: I.Q. 2D6+3, M.E. 2D6+10, M.A. 2D6, P.S. 3D6+30, P.P. 3D6+12, P.E. 2D6+18, P.B. 1D4, Spd 2D6.

M.D.C.: 1D4x500 +1000. (On S.D.C. worlds, the Nexus Maw has 1D6x100+100 for Hit Points, and 1D4x100 S.D.C., and A.R. 10.) An individual tentacle has 1D6x10+60 M.D.C. (or 5D6+40 S.D.C.).

Horror Factor: 15 anytime, but when it appears out of nowhere within reach of a character(s) or in the midst of a heated battle as a new component, H.F. is 17.

Size: 100 to 200 feet (30 to 61 m) long including tentacles, which make up half of the length of its body. **Note:** Only the tentacles are seen writhing and grabbing from within a wall of shimmering dimensional light (its Rift). To see the body means going into the Rift or getting pulled inside by the tentacles.



Weight: 1D4x10+12 tons.

P.P.E.: 1D6x1000+1000.

Average Life Span: Immortal creature of chaos.

Natural Abilities: Resistant to psionic and magic attacks (reflected in bonuses), paired tentacles (able to attack with each pair at once), extensive magical knowledge, create 1D6x100 squishies per melee round (as needed), magically understands and speaks all languages, but cannot read. It is also resistant to cold and heat (only Mega-Damage cold, heat and fire do half damage), is impervious to disease, does not need to breathe air and can survive in a vacuum. Bio-regenerates 1D4x10 M.D.C. per melee round and regrows tentacles in 12 hours.

Wide Visual Spectrum (special): Each eye can see the invisible, function as a multi-optics system (nightvision, see all spectrums of light, thermal-imaging, etc., for 3000 feet/914 m) and can move and dodge attacks independent of the tentacles (+3 to dodge and does not use up a melee attack/action).

Create Dimensional Hole (special): The Nexus Maw lives in a mini-Pocket Dimension of its own creation. This costs 3000 P.P.E. and lasts for 100 years at a time. The Pocket Dimension has a 1000 foot (305 m) radius per level of the Maw. Inside, the Nexus Maw can craft its own environment, and most seem to like alien landscapes. While it can create its own Pocket Dimension, it must use magic spells to open a portal and access the world or dimension in which it plans to hunt.

Attacks per Melee: Two per pair of tentacles; typically three pair for six attacks per melee round, but four and five pair (8 and 10 attacks per melee) are not uncommon.

Bonuses (in addition to attribute bonuses): +2 on initiative, +2 to parry, +6 to entangle, +4 on all saving throws and is impervious to disease, vacuums and possession.

Vulnerabilities/Penalties: Vulnerable to magic and energy based attacks. S.D.C. energy blasts do their equivalent damage as Mega-Damage, while M.D. energy blasts (lasers, electricity, particle beams, etc.) do double damage. Most magic weapons do their normal damage, magical energy blasts do 20% additional damage and holy weapons, demon slaying weapons, and rune weapons do double damage.

Damage: As per Supernatural Strength which is typically 1D6x10 S.D.C. on a restrained attack, 6D6 M.D. on a full strength strike, and 2D4x10 on a power punch. The Nexus Maw's typical tactic, however, is to entangle prey with its numerous tentacles rather than deliver a fusillade of physical blows, and pull it into the dimensional hole and into its mouth. Damage from being entangled with the giant tentacles is 3D6 M.D. Slap with the tentacles is 6D6 M.D., a power slap does 2D4x10 M.D.C., crush with the tentacles does 2D6x10 M.D. per melee. Once anything is grappled within the tentacles it is brought to within range of its giant maw which does 1D4x10 M.D. per bite.

Typical Level of Experience: 1D4+8.

Magic: Knows all spells levels 1-6, plus all Ley Line Magic and dimension related spells (and can perform dimensional spells at half their usual P.P.E. cost). It's the dimension spells, like Dimensional Portal, that it uses to ambush prey.

Psionics: Empathy (4), Telepathy (4), Levitation (varies), Presence Sense (4), Read Dimensional Portal (6), Remote Viewing (10), See Aura (6), Telekinetic Push (4), Mind Block Auto-Defense, Mentally Possess Others (30), Mind Bond (10) and Psychic Omni-Sight (15). I.S.P.: M.E. attribute number x4 plus 10 I.S.P. per level of experience.

Alliances and Allies: Rarely has any. It is too impatient, self-absorbed, and simple-minded to work with others or

through a third party, and reluctant to bestow any of its power through a supernatural link. Oftentimes it lures unsuspecting people who are desperate for power to their deaths (yum).

Enemies: The Nexus Maw is a threat to all mortal life forms and beings who are weaker than it is. Otherwise, too obsessed with hunting and feeding to get involved in any elaborate plots, power plays or alliances.

Physical Appearance: The Nexus Maw has 2D6+4 tentacles, each the length of its body (50-100 feet/15.2 to 30.5 m). These tentacles are spaced around a huge mouth, the size of a van or pickup truck, full of razor-sharp teeth placed in several rows like a shark. The remainder of the body is a mound of flesh that has a hundred eyes mounted on eye stalks that are constantly wriggling around the body. Conventional wisdom is that this creature is a minor Alien Intelligence, or a subspecies of them.

Note: In order for the Nexus Maw to anchor itself to its Pocket Dimension, at least one quarter of its tentacles must remain inside to keep it from slipping or being pulled out. For large creatures that weigh several tons, half of its tentacles must be used to prevent the demonic creature from being dragged out of its dimensional hole.

The Shifter – Revisited & Expanded

By Carl Gleba and Kevin Siembieda

While Temporal Raiders and Temporal Wizards are, arguably, the masters of dimensional travel and time magic, *Shifters* are the true masters of the Rifts. They are one of the few unique classes that actually embrace the idea of dimensional travel, but they also exert influence over dimensional beings/travelers, and supernatural creatures who traverse the Megaverse using dimensional portals and bridges. This expands the range of power and influence of the Shifter beyond that of the Temporal Raider through the addition of inhuman minions and servants who make their range of knowledge and experience available to their Shifter master (assuming they are loyal and can be trusted). No group of dimensional travelers should be without at least one Shifter, because they can read and control the very Rifts to take them to specific worlds and places unknown. Shifters are so in tune with dimensional portals and alien dimensions that if they meditate and open themselves up to the dimension they are visiting, they get a wealth of knowledge, from the type of the dimension to its various quirks. A Shifter's knowledge is also unsurpassed when it comes to dimension lore and knowledge of dimensional travelers, monsters and anomalies.

Shifter O.C.C. Abilities:

1. Initial Spell Knowledge: The Shifter's focus of mystic knowledge is on spells to summon and control supernatural creatures from the Rifts, as well as control over the Rifts. Thus a Shifter starts with the following spells: *Calling* (8),

Call Lightning (15), *Compulsion* (20), *Constrain Being* (20), *Dimensional Portal* (1000), *Energy Bolt* (5), *Energy Field* (10), *Exorcism* (30), *Repel Animals* (7), *Re-Open Gateway* (180), *Sense Evil* (2), *Sense Magic* (4), *Trance* (10), *Shadow Meld* (10), *Summon and Control Canines* (50), *Summon and Control Rodents* (70), *Sustain* (12), *Time Slip* (20), *Turn Dead* (6), and *Tongues* (10).

2. Learning New Spells: The Shifter's focus is on dimensional travel, the energies that create Rifts and the creatures who travel from one dimension to another. As a result, the Shifter's spell knowledge leans towards spells that summon, control and influence others, deal with channeling and controlling energy, and dimensional travel.

Starting at level two, the Shifter can choose one spell from the following list plus one Summoning or Protection spell also in this list: Banishment (65), Charm (12), Close Rift (200), Commune with Spirits (25), Compulsion (20), Control and Enslave Entity (80), D-Step (50), Dessicate the Supernatural (50), Dimensional Teleport (800), Dispel Magic Barriers (20), Distant Voice (10), Domination (10), Energy Disruption (12), Energy Sphere (120), Expel Demons (35), Expel Demons or Deevils (120), Force Bonds (25), Influence the Beast (12), Ley Line Transmission (30), Locate (30), Magic Pigeon (20), Mystic Portal (60), Phantom Mount (45), Plane Skip (65), Power Bolt (20), Protection Circle: Simple (45), Protection Circle: Superior (300; must know the Simple Circle before this one can be selected), Reality Flux (75), Rift to Limbo (160), Rift Teleportation (200), Sheltering Force (20), Summon and Control Entity (250), Summon Greater Familiar (80), Summon Lesser Being (425), Summon Shadow Beast (140), Tame Beast (60), Teleport: Lesser (15), Teleport Self (120), Teleport: Superior (600), Time Hole (210), and any Summoning spell that may be desired, excluding weather summoning.

In addition, the Shifter can select one non-dimension related or control based spell, but they are limited to spells equal to or less than the Shifter's current level. For example, at third level the Shifter is limited to spell invocations from levels one through three.

Of course the Shifter can still purchase and learn spells in the same manner as other magic users though they rarely do and tend to spend their spare time studying dimensions and monsters.

3. Dimension Sense: Shifters are innately attuned to dimensions and dimensional energies. After only a few minutes of concentration (typically 1D6+2 minutes), a Shifter is able to tell the type of dimension (whether it's an Infinite, Parallel, or a Pocket Dimension), how dense the dimensional fabric is (weak, permeable, strong or impenetrable), if the dimension or world can support human life, whether it is rich or poor in magic, artificially created (like a Pocket Dimension of a dragon or god), and any type of unusual characteristics of the dimension that might be evident, all just by "reading" a connecting Rift/dimensional portal linked to that dimension or by meditating shortly after arriving to a new world. **Base Skill:** 35% +5% per level of experience. If the Shifter is not initially successful on either type of reading, he can try again 24 hours later or after he sets foot in the place.



Furthermore, when reading a dimensional portal, the Shifter will get a sense if the Rift will soon close, if it was opened deliberately or is a random occurrence, and if random, how frequently it opens to this particular world (often, seldom, rarely), as well as sense any dimensional anomalies that may be attached to the portal and if any dimension spanning monsters or demons are presently in or near the portal. This information, however, is rolled separately under the Dimension Sense skill, the player must indicate that his character is doing this aspect of the reading, and the Shifter's success ratio is -10% from the base skill percentage.

Combat Note: Shifters can also use their *Dimension Sense* to detect when dimension type spells are cast. This can be a big edge in combat especially when confronting another Shifter. First, a Dimension Sense must be rolled at the Shifter's normal skill level during combat. This uses up one melee attack as the mage momentarily opens himself up to the dimensional energies. A successful roll under the current Base Skill level means the Shifter will detect any dimension based magic (including Teleports, opening of portals, etc.) that occurs during that melee round, and if he sacrifices one melee attack per round, subsequent melee rounds as well for up to one minute per level of the Shifter. If dimension magic is detected, the Shifter who senses it can try to alter the course of the spell. For example: If another Shifter is trying to escape by creating a Dimensional Portal or Re-Open Gateway spell, the Shifter senses it and can try to redirect the magic by overriding it himself. This requires both mages to roll 1D20, high roll wins, defender wins ties. If the Shifter's roll is greater in this magical duel, he wins, and can alter it to close or lead someplace else or to remain open so he too can go through it, but to do any of that he must also spend the same P.P.E. to override the dimensional magic and for the spell to do as he commands. In the case of a Teleport spell, he can have the person or object appear right in front of him, or to some other specific location (inside a vehicle, a prison cell, etc.), but not into solid matter or anything that could kill the other mage. The Shifter can NEVER stop or cancel the dimensional magic, only change/redirect it. Each use of magical redirection is the equivalent of casting a spell and uses up two melee attacks (and P.P.E.). **Note:** If the Shifter rolls low and fails to override the dimension magic, he spends half the P.P.E. required to cast that spell and fails to change the outcome. Once the spell has been altered, it cannot be changed back. Remember, this overriding and control of magic spells only works on dimension based spells – spells that alter/warp space and/or time, or which open dimensional portals/provide dimensional travel – not any other types of spells or magic.

A note about the appearance of a Dimensional Vortex: This innate ability is also what enables the Shifter to sense a Dimensional Vortex building 1D6 minutes +1 minute per level of their experience *before* the monstrous storm appears. In this case, the sensation is automatic (the skill does not have to be in use) and unmistakable.

4. **Open Rifts:** The Shifter's most powerful ability is to open a dimensional portal to practically anywhere. This is done using one of their starting, dimension-based magic spells, *Dimensional Portal* (1000 P.P.E.) or *Re-Open Gateway* (180

P.P.E., but can only re-open a portal to wherever the Rift went to last). However, their sensitivity to dimensional energies, frequencies and vibrations is such that the character can perform these magic spells at *half* the usual P.P.E. cost via a special ritual of meditation and focus known only to Shifters. The ritual takes 1D6x10+15 minutes to perform, but also means a Shifter can open a dimensional portal almost anywhere provided he has sufficient P.P.E. In addition, the ritual enables the Shifter to hold the Rift open for one minute per level of his experience, close it in a heartbeat at will, and manipulate the size of the portal to whatever he wants, from that of a man-sized doorway to 10 feet (3 m) tall and 10 feet (3 m) wide per level of experience.

5. **Communication Rift:** A Shifter is able to open a micro-Rift, just small enough to send a message or a small familiar through. This is typically how a Shifter contacts an Alien Intelligence. The Rift is pretty stable and unless opened on a nexus point, it is no larger than a grapefruit. On a nexus the Shifter is gambling that 1) an Alien Intelligence will not gain control and open the Rift further, and 2) that natural events such as the ebb and flow of the ley lines do not force the micro-Rift open any further than desired or create a full blown dimensional gateway between the two locations.

The cost to open a Communication Rift is as follows. On or within a half mile (0.8 km) of a *nexus point* only costs the Shifter 50 P.P.E. On or within a half mile (0.8 km) of a *ley line* costs the Shifter 100 P.P.E., and anywhere else away from ley lines costs 200 P.P.E.

The duration of the Communication Rift is one minute (4 melee rounds/60 seconds) per level of the Shifter's experience, and only he can close the connection, though people at the other end can walk away.

Success ratio is 20% +5% per level of experience for opening the Rift at the exact location desired. If done as a ritual (which takes 1D6x10+15 minutes longer) a +20% bonus is added to the success ratio. The time to open a Communication Rift without a ritual is 1D4 melees of meditation and concentration, and the expenditure of the requisite P.P.E. **Note:** If the Communication Rift is a complete success (rolls percentile under the success ratio), the Rift transcends space and time to open an unlimited number of miles away, to a specific location on a different world or another dimension, and the Shifter can speak into the opening at his end and be heard at the other as if he were standing there. Likewise, people on the other end can respond with the same clarity and be heard by the Shifter in two-way conversation. If a failure, but the roll was within 20% of the ratio for success, the Shifter has connected to the right continent, world or dimension, but not the right person, and must dispatch his familiar or a magic message (Magic Pigeon or Distant Voice) through the Rift to deliver his message. Of course the familiar must return before the micro-Rift closes or it will become trapped in some other place or time. If that happens the Shifter must get a new Communication Rift or true dimensional portal open and connect his and the familiar's location within 48 hours or that familiar is lost to him and he suffers the usual consequences for losing a familiar.

6. **Dimensional Teleport Home:** For a cost of 125 P.P.E. the Shifter can Dimensional Teleport himself, his familiar and

whatever gear he can carry to his home world (and typically, to his home, a secret lair or his place of birth). Sorry, no passengers. If the P.P.E. is available, the Shifter can activate this ability and be gone in one melee action.

7. **Sense Rifts:** The Shifter is very sensitive to the rips and tears in the dimensional fabric and senses when a Rift is opening within 50 miles (80 km) +20 miles (32 km) per additional level of experience. The Shifter is also able to sense other types of dimensional disturbances such as Teleports and dimensional anomalies that occur within his sensing range. The latter is limited to one half the Shifter's usual range.
8. **Familiar Link:** Like the spell, a Shifter can link himself to a small animal. The animal of choice is typically a small creature like a fox, dog, cat or weasel so it can be used for spying or scouting. Larger animals can also be used such as lions or bears. Insects, mutant animals, and supernatural creatures *cannot* be used as familiars.

Once the link is established the animal obeys every command of the Shifter no matter how wild it once was. The two have now become one, and the familiar is an extension of the Shifter's own senses. What one senses, so does the other. It's a very tight-knit relationship that makes the familiar a great friend and spy. **Note:** Although the animal understands and obeys its master, it cannot actually speak to him. They communicate via an empathic and telepathic link. Shifters can concentrate and see through their familiar's eyes, but while doing so cannot take any other actions.

Special Endurance: Both the Shifter and the familiar gain an additional six Hit Points as a result of their mystic connection, and both man and animal are +1 to save vs poison and +1 to save vs mind control and possession. However, if the familiar is hurt the Shifter feels *its* pain as if it were his own, and vice versa. If the animal is killed, the Shifter permanently loses 10 Hit Points (the six from the link and four additional). There is also a 01-50% chance that the Shifter will suffer shock from the ordeal and lapse into a coma for 1D6 hours. The character cannot link to another familiar for at least one year, due to the shock and trauma.

See the description for *Dimensional Familiars* in the section right after this one.

9. **Summoning:** The Shifter can summon supernatural beings similar to the spell Summon Greater Familiar. This is accomplished through the use of the *Communication Rift* in which the mage probes dimensions until he makes contact with a lesser supernatural being. Once contact is made, the Shifter can attempt to initiate a battle of the wills. To save versus submission, the summoned being must *roll above the Shifter's M.A. attribute (Mental Affinity) three out of five tries*. Rolls are made on a 20 sided die (1D20) and M.E. attribute bonuses and bonuses to save vs mind control are added to the creature's roll to save. The higher the Shifter's M.A., the more difficult it is to save. Characters with an M.A. of 20 or higher will usually have an easy time winning the battle of wills when the supernatural being is *initially* summoned. However, there are additional tests of dominance in which an extremely high M.A. may not help a great deal. **Note:** A natural, unmodified roll of 20 will always be a winning roll even if the Shifter has an M.A. of 20 or higher. If it fails to save, the creature will be totally subservient to the

Shifter, obeying all commands except to reveal its true name or to commit suicide.

If the creature does not become subservient it will be agitated and hostile, and, thanks to the Communication Rift, able to use the tiny portal to Dimensional Teleport to the Shifter's location, even if the creature does not possess that ability. The only way to stop this from happening is to close the Rift before the creature uses it as a one way portal to the Shifter. As a rule, the foul being will indicate its anger which should tip off the Shifter to end the conversation and close the Rift before the creature realizes it. If the creature makes its move first, it appears in his lap, otherwise roll initiative if both decide to act to about the same time; high roll wins. If that's the demon, then the creature appears a split second before the Rift is closed.

What happens next will depend on the creature and the Shifter. Most other dimensional beings are glad to be in the "world of man" and will make a dash for the first door or window, especially if they think the Shifter could be a dangerous opponent. In this case, the goal is to get away and have fun in the world outside.

Round Two: If the creature thinks it is stronger than the Shifter it is likely to attack. Aggression and violence may be born from anger toward the Shifter for trying to enslave it, or because it wants to take what belongs to the Shifter (money, magic, etc.) before moving on, or because it doesn't want a witness to its arrival (typically true of the more deceitful, cunning and powerful beings, especially if a greater supernatural being is accidentally contacted) or just because it's hungry. Again, if the Shifter proves to be too tough for it, the monster is likely to flee into the world, *however*, a physical battle offers another chance to seize control of the creature.

If the Shifter overpowers the monster, beating it in combat with magic, cunning, trickery or physically, the mage is in a position *to bargain* – offering to spare its life if it agrees to serve as his servant/henchman for a period of time. The time period can be days, weeks, months, years, or until a particular task is accomplished or some event happens. These last two are the best for two reasons: 1) this doesn't sound like a long time to the alien being (10 weeks or 5 years is a long time; "until the Sword of Eternity is delivered to me," is what . . . an afternoon, a week, no problem), and 2) most supernatural beings are cocky and assume they can accomplish whatever is the task or condition quickly, only to find themselves stuck in servitude for years, even decades. Similarly, the Shifter may request a difficult or deadly favor of the monster (i.e., the demon agrees to get or do something for the Shifter, kill someone, etc.) in exchange for its own life. Demons and most supernatural beings are used to being bullied, so the Shifter demanding a quick answer or else he'll deliver the death blow by the count of three, is pretty much what these violent creatures are used to, and so the monster will make a quick decision. As you might guess, life is preferable to death, so the demon or monster usually agrees to the Shifter's terms. To seal the deal requires a *simple pact*, which requires the supernatural being to sign its mark in its own blood. A simple "X" or "yes" drawn in its blood will suffice, and it can be written on paper, on the floor, a wall, or table or the Shifter's own skin. Once the deal is "signed" the mark can be

kept, washed away or destroyed, but the creature is still obligated to satisfy the conditions of the deal. **Note:** Many Shifters deliberately let a supernatural being or lesser creature of magic come through the Rift and then pretend to be afraid or weak so that *it attacks him* – the creature must be the attacker/the aggressor for the *simple pact* to apply, otherwise it is a victim of a big, bad sorcerer and any deal it makes as a “victim” doesn’t count – as the aggressor, the creature is the one in the wrong and if defeated and given a choice of life or a deal, a simple pact *can* be made. Also note that this applies only to the circumstances as described here. Besting a demon or monster under different conditions and offering a deal is *not* a binding pact. A duel or challenge of combat and the implication that the demon fears a mere human will also have the same effect, provided the Shifter lets the demon strike first and, ideally, draw first blood before he turns the tables and defeats it.

Suggested Limitations & Conditions: A) The general rule of thumb is, the shorter the time the monster must serve the Shifter, the better, i.e., under a year, under six months even better. This way the creature doesn’t have time to get bored or, worse, learn to despise its Shifter “master.” On the other hand, a Shifter who caters to his monster’s base desires and instincts *might* make a lasting friendship, especially if the two have the same alignment, and when it is time to let the creature go, it may stay at his side as a *willing* henchman, second-in-command or partner.

B) Keep the number of demonic minions under five, two or three is better still. Demons and most supernatural beings are mean, vindictive, aggressive and competitive by nature. Furthermore, they are used to a hierarchy that is maintained by brute force and intimidation. Thus, if there are more than one there is friction between them. This can be minimized by giving them titles or ranks, and specific jobs. For example, Gronk the Gallu Bull is designated the Shifter’s “right-hand man” or “servant number one,” and the others are told they are to obey him or else. The Shedim is told he is the team’s scout and enforcer and that it is his special job to seek out the Shifter’s enemies and slay them, as well as defend him and the hideout at all costs. The importance and prestige of this job are impressed upon the demon. Likewise, the Lasae is explained his role and how important he is to the Shifter, while the Ghoul is beaten and told to do as he’s told or suffer the wrath of the others – most bands of demons and monsters need a whipping boy to push around because he is beneath them. As good as this may sound, over time, favoritism and jealousy will appear and one of the lower ranked demons or a new addition to the team will try to usurp a higher position for himself, usually through treachery and murder. Furthermore, discontent may lead one or more of the underlings to betray or at least cheat their Shifter master and at the first sign of weakness on his part, flee or attack him and/or his “number one demon.” That having been said, powerful and arrogant (and foolish) Shifters frequently keep pressing their luck by keeping 6-12 monster. When something goes wrong, they seem as surprised as anyone else, but only the lucky and fast thinking Shifters survive their mistake.

C) The new guy should always be at the bottom of the hierarchy, otherwise the others will feel slighted and betrayed, which can only lead to mischief, betrayal and violence.

D) Never mix natural enemies or rivals like Demons and Deevils, it can only lead to constant strife and bloodshed.

E) Other creatures like the Black Faerie, Witchlings, Brodkil, and many others may be enticed to work for or serve a Shifter for the promise of revenge, power, wealth or a coveted magic item. They are also vulnerable to blackmail, intimidation, trickery, flattery and power (most of these creatures are impressed by power and willing to serve the powerful as long as their master, and they by their association with him, is able to retain that power), any of which may convince them to serve, work for, or partner up with a Shifter. However, unlike supernatural beings bound by a simple pact, they can break their promise or agreement at any time, for any reason, and may also be a disruptive force among those bound by a pact.

F) Never show weakness, or else . . .

10. Magic Bonuses: +2 to save vs Horror Factor at levels 2, 5, 9, 11 and 15. +1 to save vs magic at levels 3, 7, 10 and 13. +1 to Spell Strength (the number others must save against when you cast a spell) at levels 4, 7, 10, and 13. +3 to save vs possession at level one, +1 to save at levels 5, 10, and 15.

11. P.P.E.: The Shifter is a living battery of mystic energy that he can draw on to perform his magic. Permanent Base P.P.E.: 2D6x10+10 plus P.E. attribute number. Add 3D6 P.P.E. per additional level of experience. Of course the Shifter can draw P.P.E. from ley lines, nexus points, and other people.

12. Link to the Supernatural (optional): Shifters seeking the fast path to power often desire to link themselves to a supernatural force to get it. This is especially true of Anarchist and evil Shifters, and but many good aligned Shifters skip this part of their O.C.C.’s legacy. The supernatural being is often a Demon Lord, god or Alien Intelligence seeking to establish a foothold in the reality where the Shifter exists. They can gain that foothold by joining a fraction of their own life essence to that of the Shifter. To make this happen, the Shifter opens a small Rift and seeks out a supernatural ally. After a period of negotiation, the Shifter makes a deal and opens himself to the being to establish a link. Most times the Shifter must perform one or two tasks for his newfound patron to cement the deal. This can be anything from sacrificing a life to recruiting new members for the being to establish additional links and stronger ties to that world. Most Shifters are impatient and rush to find such an inhuman ally, blindly accepting the first or second one they find. More often than not, it’s an evil force with designs for power that brings chaos and mayhem to the world of the Shifter. If the character is lucky, he will contact a benevolent being who is not bent on world domination or destruction. These creatures of goodness and light seek to help humanity and see the Shifter as an ally rather than a pawn, not only providing a supernatural link, but providing guidance and wisdom as well. Below is a list of beings, both good and evil, and the benefits they provide from a link with the supernatural. Note, though this union of mortal and immortal is similar to that of the Witch, the powers bestowed are not as great nor the link as strong as those born through the dark magic of Witchery. (See **Rifts® Conversions Book Three: Dark Conversion** for information on Witchery and Witches.)

Demons: Only Demon Lords or their equivalent can create a link with a Shifter. They always have evil designs and try to convince the Shifter to actually make a pact, rather than just a simple link. Still, with the decline of worshipers, most demons will accept the link, knowing over the course of time that they can influence the Shifter to execute their own diabolical plans. **Note:** See *Rifts® Chaos Earth: Creatures of Chaos™* for a host of additional demons suitable for **Rifts®**.

Only an Anarchist or evil character will knowingly accept a link with a Demon Lord. Some Demon Lords, however, disguise themselves and only reveal themselves after the link is established and it's too late. Demons always demand some type of blood sacrifice from the Shifter to prove himself and don't care if the individual is innocent or evil (the latter is usually the justification the Shifter uses for killing). The agenda of most Demon Lords is to create chaos and discord in the Shifter's world, but may also include thwarting a (good) rival or establishing worshipers.

Bonuses & Minion: +1D6x10 to P.P.E., +1D4x10 S.D.C., +3 to save vs Horror Factor, +1 to Spell Strength, and +1 to save vs magic.

Once per 24 hours the Shifter can also summon a Lesser Demon, such as an Alu, Lasae, or Shedim. The demon will obey the commands of the Shifter and stay by his side for one hour per level of the sorcerer's experience. An alternative is the demon can be sent on a simple mission lasting no longer than one day per level of the Shifter's experience. During this time the Shifter can summon no other demons until the initial one returns or is reported dead by the Demon Lord (which is not a good thing). If the Lesser Demon is slain while in the service of the Shifter, the Demon Lord will complain (even though he or she could care less), and forbid any new Lesser Demons from assisting him for at least 1D6 weeks. The only exception is if the Shifter's escapades further the Demon Lord's own, or the Demon Lord finds the Shifter's scheme to be amusing or helping to corrupt him and bring him into the demon's fold of pawns and minions.

Penalty: Once the link has been established for a year, the Demon Lord gains sufficient power over the Shifter that it can punish him/her at will once a week as per the Agony spell. This is used sparingly and only when the Shifter purposely tries to openly defy the will of his supernatural benefactor.

Devils/Deevils: Basically the same as the link with demons, only with a different breed of evil. Deevil Lords are rivals of demons and often work to undermine the other and steal away potential worshipers and minions. Ultimately a pact is desired, but just establishing a presence on Rifts Earth (and elsewhere) is enough for most Deevil Lords. Between competition with demons and other established pantheons, the Deevils are pressed for worshipers, but also crave revenge against their rivals (demons included) and enemies (champions of light and goodness).

Bonuses and Minions: +1D4x10 to P.P.E., +1D6x10 to S.D.C., +2 to save vs magic and Horror Factor.

Once per 24 hours, the Shifter can summon a Deevil, Devilkin, or Fenry for two hours per level of experience, or can send it on short missions that last no longer than two days per level of the Shifter's experience. If the Shifter is able to cre-

ate a cult, he will be rewarded with an extra Deevil servant (one of the lesser ones) or receive an additional 1D4x10 P.P.E.

Penalties: Unknown to the Shifter, when the link is created he is marked by the Deevil Lord. Typically this mark is invisible, but appears as part of the character's aura, and if the character betrays his Deevil patron in any way, the mark becomes a warning sign for other Deevils that this person is an enemy to their kind, and a beacon to demons that this foul mortal once associated with their hated rival and should be treated with disdain and cruelty.

Gods of Light: While the pantheon of light is well established in the Palladium World, it is less established elsewhere and may, as a general rule, include any deity who is of good alignment and/or champions good causes. Shifters choosing to form a link with a god of light will be expected to cease any association with demons and other evil beings, to avoid engaging in acts of slavery, and to follow the path of light, goodness and order. If the Shifter complies and proves to have a solid moral foundation (read as Unprincipled or any good alignment), he will be rewarded.

Bonuses: The initial link provides the following: +4D6 to S.D.C., +5D6 to P.P.E. and the ability to Turn Dead as per the spell three times per day.

Should the Shifter *prove* his or her good intentions and honorable behavior, at third level the Shifter is granted a total of six new spells selected from levels 6 through 12, and the ability of *Healing Touch*. Since the Shifter is not a priest, the character does not have unlimited access to the god's divine power and has to draw on his own P.P.E. reserve. At a cost of 5 P.P.E., the Shifter can heal 1D6 S.D.C. or Hit Points (or one M.D.C.), for 20 P.P.E. he can heal 5D6 S.D.C. or Hit Points (1D6 M.D.C.). A good Shifter who has proven himself is also granted an additional +3D6 S.D.C., +1 to Spell Strength, +1 to save vs Necromancy magic, and +2 to save vs Horror Factor and possession.

Penalties: Any allied Shifter who turns to evil will be stripped of the second tier of bonuses, but retains the first batch, and is haunted by feelings of guilt and remorse for his evil ways.

Gods of Darkness: Another pantheon well established in the Palladium dimension is the Pantheon of Taut, but this may include any god of Anarchist or evil alignment and/or known for duplicity and treachery. Shifters choosing to form a link with a god of darkness will be expected to cease any close association with angels and supernatural beings of light and goodness unless it is to use, trick, deceive, enslave and destroy them, and to engage in acts of selfishness and evil and chaos. If the Shifter complies and proves to be morally ambiguous or outright evil (read as Anarchist and any evil alignment), he will be rewarded.

Bonuses: +1D4x10 S.D.C., +1D6x10 P.P.E., the ability to Animate and Control Dead as per the spell, three times per day, +2 to save vs magic and Horror Factor.

Once the Shifter has proven himself to be a suitable agent of evil or chaos (usually by level three), he is granted the following: +6 to P.S. or P.P. (if P.S. is selected, it becomes Supernatural), +2 to all saving throws, and most importantly, the Shifter is given one demonic or monstrous minion/slave

to serve him for the rest of his life! This servant may be one of the dark god's personal minions or a Lesser Demon, Deevil, or other some evil supernatural being or monster. Whatever it is, it will always be the equivalent of a Lesser Demon in power and stature, never a Greater Demon and never one of the undead. (See **Rifts® Conversion Book Three: Dark Conversions** for a host of different supernatural and evil creatures, also see **Rifts® Chaos Earth™ Sourcebook: Creatures of Chaos™** for a range of new demons suitable for use in **Rifts®**, as well as **Rifts® Atlantis**, **Rifts® China One** and **Mystic Russia**.)

Penalties & Negatives: Evil Gods of Darkness will want to send "their" Shifter on errands that serve their own agendas. This may be something as simple as delivering a message or an item, to retrieving an ancient artifact and delivering it to one of their other henchmen, as well as killing or undermining rivals and enemies, but many are content if the Shifter is just a bad guy and gives the dark god(s) who have helped empower and inspire him their due (i.e., talks about them in a positive and appreciative light).

Vampire Intelligence: Few Vampire Intelligences create links with Shifters, preferring to have a Master Vampire under their influence. The few that do have either been banished from the Shifter's home world or are looking to establish a presence in it. Ultimately the Vampire Intelligence will try and make its way to the Shifter's home world or dimension. Unless the Shifter is actively looking for a Vampire Intelligence, they will not reveal themselves as such. Only when it's too late will the Shifter realize what he has helped to unleash.

Bonuses: +6D6 S.D.C., +3D6 to P.P.E., and the ability to bio-regenerate 3D6 S.D.C. or Hit Points per minute. The Shifter is also granted the ability to transform into a bat or wolf three times per day, for an hour per level of experience, and has nightvision with a range of 200 feet (61 m) when in animal form.

Penalties & Negative Features: Several months after the link is established, the Shifter starts becoming a night owl. The character feels tired and sleepy during the day, and sunlight seems to bother his eyes more than it used to. He feels more comfortable in the evening, and positively energized and raring to go by 11:00 pm till dawn. The Shifter will also find he's developed a taste for meat prepared rare and juicy with blood. With time, the character will want meat that is practically raw. This is a side effect of a union to the undead. The Shifter is not becoming a vampire, but is slowly being seduced by his patron. Some eventually yield to the darkness that craves blood and agree to become a Master Vampire and build a legion of undead to infest the world.

Elementals: Elementals are a primal force of nature and few Shifters are able to convince a Greater Elemental to form a link with them. More likely, an Elemental based union will be with a deity that has strong ties to one or more elemental forces. Still, Elementals are curious beings and a few have been known to form links with mortals other than Warlocks. The Elementals seem to have no goals or agenda, and may merely be curious about the Shifter's world.

Bonuses: +2D4x10 S.D.C., +6D6 P.P.E., +1 on all saving throws, resistant to fire and cold (takes half damage), and ac-

cess to Elemental magic. The Shifter can select a single Elemental spell per level of experience equal to his level or lower. The type of Elemental spell depends on the type of Elemental (Air, Earth, Fire or Water) with whom he has formed a link. A Greater Air Elemental, for example, would give the Shifter access to Air Elemental spells, a Greater Earth Elemental would provide access to Earth Elemental spells, and so on.

Penalties: If the character engages in wanton destruction of nature or he engages in destroying or abusing Elementals or Nature Spirits, his bonuses are reduced by half and all Elemental spells are lost, even those he's already selected are gone, unavailable.

Nature Spirits/Deities: Many cultures, from Native Americans to Druids and the Chinese, worship or acknowledge Nature Spirits or gods of nature. These are deities who hold sway over animal life or various aspects of nature and the elements. Some are good, others Anarchist, and some are evil. Ones who link with a Shifter may expect him to further their agenda or do favors, or let the Shifter live as he will, provided the Shifter always honors and respects wildlife and nature, and never engages in the destruction of either for sport or pleasure (killing for food is another story, and quite acceptable).

Bonuses: +4D6 to P.P.E., his choice of a total of 1D4+1 new spells selected from levels One thru four, and the ability to transform into an animal. Animal types are limited to one of the following: wolf, coyote, mountain lion/puma, deer/antelope, or horse. He can transform four times per day for as long as one hour per level of experience. The Shifter retains his knowledge, memories and ability to speak when in animal form, as well as possessing all of the animal's natural abilities. Plus he gets a bonus of +6D6+12 to S.D.C., +1 on initiative, +1 to strike, +2 to dodge, and +4 to save vs mind control and possession, but only while in *animal form*.

Bonus Skills in Human and Animal Form: Dowsing, Land Navigation, Swimming and Track Animals, all at 75%.

Penalty: Cannot cast spells in animal form. Over time, the character develops an appreciation for animals and the outdoors, and grows to prefer it to city life. May develop a slight aversion to technology, preferring magic and natural things over bionics, machines, guns and synthetics.

Warrior God: Includes the Aztec, Norse, Celtic, Greek, and Roman pantheons, among others. These gods usually only link to Shifters who are in good physical condition, aggressive, combative and have a warrior's spirit. Warrior pantheons may test the Shifter in combat to see if he is worthy, looking to see if the character displays endurance, courage, honor, and cunning. The Shifter does not necessarily have to win or succeed at the test, just display these traits. Of course it also depends on the god, some just might want to see cunning and trickery.

Bonuses: +1D6x10+30 S.D.C., +5D6 P.P.E., +2 on all saving throws and 1D4+1 new spells selected from levels 2-5. The Shifter also instinctively knows one additional ancient W.P. skill, and will find he has the Hand to Hand: Expert skill (may improve an existing skill).

Penalties: Warrior Gods expect the Shifter to be bold and aggressive, frequently challenging himself in contests against

other opponents, be they mortal or monsters. In the alternative, he can be a conqueror in business, magic or something else, or someone who champions causes. If he is not this, the Warrior God will revoke all bonuses.

Gods of Magic: These are deities and pantheons that focus on magic, learning, logic and intellect, including the Egyptians and Babylonians, among others. Some may pose riddles, or complex problems for a Shifter to overcome before agreeing to a link and bestowing him with power. It all depends on the god. Most elect to test the Shifter in some way or hold back until he proves himself worthy.

Bonuses: +2D6 S.D.C., +1D6x10+40 to P.P.E., +1 to save vs magic, +3 to save vs possession, and the choice of eight spells selected from levels 3-13, or at the Game Master's discretion it can be eight spells from a less common branch of magic, such as Bone Magic, or Temporal Magic, Nature Magic, Ocean Magic, etc. If the Shifter proves worthy, at levels four and eight he will be granted a +1 to Spell Strength in addition to his own O.C.C. bonuses.

Penalty: The enemies of these gods will view the Shifter as one of their minions, even if the character has said or done nothing on their behalf, and may send their own henchmen and trouble to torment them.

Attribute Requirements: I.Q. and M.E. of 12 or higher.

Alignment Restrictions: Typically Shifters start out as Unprincipled or Anarchist, but can be any alignment. Shifters who link with the supernatural will find that over time, however, their alignments slip to evil, sometimes becoming evil very rapidly.

O.C.C. Skills:

Astronomy (+20%)

Mathematics: Basic (+15%)

Lore: Demon and Monsters (+20%)

Lore: Faerie (+15%)

Lore: Dimensions (+20%; New): The study of various dimensions. Those knowledgeable in this skill will have studied several different dimensions and will know such things as Hades is the home to demons and what demons live there, Wormwood is referred to as the Living Planet, and Phase World resides in the Three Galaxies where the Naruni and Splugorth are known to trade, among other odd tidbits as they relate to various dimensions. Extremely alien dimensions may impose anywhere from a -15% to -50% skill penalty, while places the character has personally visited on three or more occasion provide a +15% skill bonus. **Base Skill:** 15% plus 5% per level of experience.

Lore: Geomancy and Ley Lines (+15%)

Language (select two additional languages; both at +15%)

Land Navigation (+10%)

Wilderness Survival (+5%)

Hand to Hand Combat must be selected as an "O.C.C. Related Skill" with Hand to Hand: Basic costing one skill selection, Expert counting as two, and Martial Arts or Assassin (if evil) counting as three skill selections.

O.C.C. Related Skills: Select six other skills, plus select two additional at levels 3 and 6, and one additional at levels 9 and 12. All new skills start at level one proficiency.



Communications: Radio: Basic, Surveillance Systems, and TV/Video only.

Cowboy: None.

Domestic: Any (+5%).

Electrical: Basic only.

Espionage: Intelligence only (+5%).

Mechanical: None.

Medical: First Aid, Holistic Medicine, or Paramedic only (+5%).

Military: None.

Physical: Any, except Acrobatics, Boxing, Gymnastics, or Wrestling.

Pilot: Any except Robots, Tanks, or Jets.

Pilot Related: Any.

Rogue: Any (+2%).

Science: Any (+5%).

Technical: Any (+5%, and +10% on Languages).

W.P.: Any.

Wilderness: Any.

Secondary Skills: The character also gets to select six Secondary Skills from the previous list. These are additional areas of knowledge that do not get the advantages of the bonus listed in the parentheses. All Secondary Skills start at level one proficiency. Skills are limited (any, only, none) as previously indicated in the list.

Standard Equipment: A set or two of clothing, a set of traveling clothes, light M.D.C. body armor, one weapon per weapon proficiency and 1D4 E-Clips for each, knapsack, backpack, 1D4 small sacks, pocket mirror, silver holy symbol, 2D4 cloves of garlic, six wooden stakes and mallet, salt, canteen, binoculars, tinted goggles, or sunglasses, air filter and gas mask, pocket laser distancer, pocket digital disc recorder/player, and a handheld computer if proficient. Shifters tend to wear dark clothing such as robes or leather outfits.

Money: The Shifter starts with 1D6x1000 in credits and 2D6x1000 in Black Market items. Clever Shifters can make considerably more money quickly, especially if they are clever about using the abilities of their inhuman servants.

Cybernetics: Starts with none and will avoid getting them like the plague. With the exception of Bio-Systems, cybernetics and bionics interfere with magic, and in the case of the Shifter, make him appear weak to his demonic henchmen, most of whom insist the machines of men are for weaklings.

Note: The mystic art of Shifting is generally considered one of the *dark magicks* and is outlawed in some places, and feared and shunned, but accepted at many others. In fairness to the profession, many Shifters are good people and great explorers or adventurers. On the other hand, many of the most notorious are evil masterminds, manipulators and power mongers. Good and evil in this magic discipline seems to be divided pretty much down the middle, 50/50. Shifters played an instrumental role in the defense of Tolkeen and the Sorcerers' Revenge. Their involvement has done little to improve the reputation of either group (good and evil), except to convince the Coalition States that they and Necromancers are horrific monsters to be feared and destroyed on sight.

A pair of new Spell Invocations available to the Shifter O.C.C.

Note: Actually, they are old spells. These and a few other "lost magicks" are presented in *The Rifter*® #25. These spells are also available to the Temporal Magic O.C.C.s.

Expel Demons or Deevils

Level: 8

Range: 10 feet (3 m) per level of experience.

Duration: Immediate, 1D6 hours.

Saving Throw: Special.

P.P.E.: 35

The spell caster is able to repel all Lesser Demons and other lesser supernatural beings, forcing them to leave the area and not return for at least one hour (roll 1D6 hours). The spell may also expel Greater Demons with less efficiency and for a shorter period (1D6x10 minutes). **Note:** Lesser supernatural beings must roll an 18 or higher to save vs spell magic. Greater Demons and other powerful supernatural beings need only a 12 or higher to save, and usually have significant bonuses that apply. Demon Lords, Elementals (any), Spirit beings and gods are impervious to this spell.

See *Rifts*® **Conversion Book One** or the *Rifts*® **Book of Magic** for the original conversion of the Expel Demons spell. This description is actually an amalgam of two First Edition Palladium Fantasy spells, Expel Demons and Expel Devils.

Teleport Self

Level: 10

Range: 5 miles (8 km) per level of experience or line of sight.

Duration: Instant.

Saving Throw: None.

P.P.E.: 120

This spell functions exactly like the spell Teleport: Superior except that the mage can only take himself plus 50 lbs (22.5 kg), and another 5 lbs (2.25 kg) per level of experience in additional weight. The chances of success are the same as those listed under *Teleport: Superior*.

This spell saw conversion in the *Heroes Unlimited*™ **G.M.'s Guide** where it saw print under the spell Teleport. It was omitted by error and sorely missed by Kevin Siembieda who loved this spell and had characters who used it often.



Tolkeen Artifact Hunter O.C.C.

The Tolkeen Artifact Hunters are a select group of specially trained Shifters whose job it was to track down and retrieve magical artifacts for the Kingdom of Tolkeen. Tolkeen created this group shortly after the death of King Gravander Henchu, as was one of King Robert Creed's first official acts. Tolkeen's Artifact Hunters were much more than just treasure hunters. They gathered intelligence on new dimensions and potential dimensional threats and allies, explored new worlds and realities, uncovered leads on rare and powerful magic items (alien, ancient and lost), kept an eye out for new technologies, and sought new sources of mystic energy. They became an elite force in Tolkeen and instant legendary figures among practitioners of magic and free people in North America.

With the destruction of their beloved nation, hundreds are continuing to search the Megaverse for a safe haven for the thousands of refugees that fled the kingdom of magic in its last hours. Hundreds of others have gone on to become independent explorers and treasure hunters, and others work as freelance agents for Lazlo, the Federation of Magic, and others who can afford to hire them. A surprisingly small number are bent on revenge and are scouring the Megaverse for a doomsday weapon that would annihilate the Coalition States as well as less powerful but formidable artifacts, relics and alien magic items for Retribution Squads and resistance fighters who continue to battle the Coalition Occupation Force or vow revenge of other kinds. In fact, rumor has it that it was a cadre of vengeful Tolkeen Artifact Hunters who convinced a faction of the Naruni the war has created a new and more viable market for the alien weapons dealer than ever before. After all, there are more people who fear and hate the CS than ever. (See the **Adventure Sourcebook: Naruni Wave Two** for details on the return of the Naruni to Rifts Earth.) Meanwhile, other Artifact Hunters seek to relocate some of the famous artifacts that had been brought to Tolkeen but have disappeared since its fall (see **Coalition Wars Chapter One: Sedition** for descriptions of these magic items). Some do so for their own profit, others on behalf of other magic nations, and others for revenge on the CS.

The Tolkeen Artifact Hunter is ultimately a variation on the Shifter O.C.C., but an interesting one. They are less oriented toward the acquisition of power and magic, and geared almost entirely to the exploration of alien worlds and the discovery of new supernatural life forms, magicks, and dimensions. Many are daring explorers and swashbuckling maniacs who love a challenge.

Tolkeen Artifact Hunter O.C.C. Abilities:

1. **Initial Spell Knowledge:** Same as the Shifter.
2. **Learning New Spells:** Same as the Shifter. If the Artifact Hunter stays in the employ of a freedom fighting faction of Tolkeen, especially if in the service of King Creed, Warlord Scard, or one of the other leaders from the toppled kingdom, the character may be given a new spell (or magic item) as a reward for his duty, service and loyalty. The level of the spell, however, will not exceed more than one level higher than the Artifact Hunter's own current level.



3. **Dimension Sense:** Same as the Shifter.
4. **Open Rifts:** Same as the Shifter.
5. **Communication Rift:** Same as the Shifter.
6. **Dimensional Teleport Home:** The Artifact Hunter is far more attuned to their native dimension than any other, even the Shifter, and can teleport home or to any one of a dozen secret lairs or safe houses scattered across the Megaverse at a cost of 125 P.P.E. The Dimensional Teleport Home is limited to the Hunter himself, his familiar, and whatever he can carry.
7. **Sense Rifts:** Same as the Shifter, except the Artifact Hunter's sensing range is +50 miles (80 km) per level of experience, not 20 miles (32 km).
8. **Familiar Link:** Same as the Shifter. See the description for *Dimensional Familiars* in the section right after this one.
9. **Summoning:** Same as the Shifter, except the Artifact Hunter seldom enlists more than two demonic servants at a time, and some avoid using them entirely.
10. **Magic Bonuses:** Same as the Shifter.
11. **P.P.E.:** The Artifact Hunter is a living battery of mystic energy that he can draw on to perform his magic. Permanent Base P.P.E.: 1D6x10+20 plus P.E. attribute number. Add 3D6 P.P.E. per additional level of experience. Of course the character can draw P.P.E. from ley lines, nexus points, other people and his familiar.
12. **Link to the Supernatural:** Due to the Artifact Hunter's orientation, training and focus, only the most evil of them will consider establishing a link to a supernatural being like their Shifter brethren. And even the evils ones often avoid it for fear that the supernatural being may covet the valuable artifacts they uncover for themselves or one of their causes.

Artifact Hunter O.C.C.

Attribute Requirements: I.Q., M.E., P.S., and P.E. of 13 or higher.

Alignment Restrictions: None, although most tend to be fiercely loyal to Tolkeen and other magic communities regardless of their alignment. As a rule, approximately 40% are a good alignment, 40% are a selfish alignment, and the rest are evil.

O.C.C. Skills:

Intelligence (+10%)
 Detect Ambush (+5%)
 Lore: Dimensions (+10%)
 Lore: Demons and Monsters (+10%)
 Lore: Magic (+5%)
 Language (select two additional languages; both at +15%)
 Prowl (+10%)
 Land Navigation (+10%)
 Wilderness Survival (+10%)
 W.P.: One ancient of choice.
 W.P.: One modern of choice.
 Hand to Hand: Expert.

O.C.C. Related Skills: Select eight other skills, plus select two additional skills at level three, and one at levels 6, 9, 11 and 14. All new skills start at level one proficiency.

Communications: Any (+10%).

Domestic: Any.

Electrical: Basic Electronics only.

Espionage: Any (+5%).

Mechanical: Basic Mechanics only.

Medical: First Aid or Paramedic (but Paramedic counts as two skills) (+5%).

Military: None.

Physical: Any, but Acrobatics, Boxing, Gymnastics, and Wrestling count as two skill selections each.

Pilot: Any except Robot, Power Armor, Tanks, APCs and any military vehicles.

Pilot Related: Any (+10%).

Rogue: Any (+4%).

Science: Any (+5%).

Technical: Any (+10%).

W.P.: Any.

Wilderness: Any (+5%).

Secondary Skills: The character also gets to select six Secondary Skills from the previous list. These are additional areas of knowledge that do not get the advantages of the bonus listed in the parentheses. All Secondary Skills start at the base skill level and are limited (any, only, none) as previously indicated in the list.

Standard Equipment: A set or two of clothing, set of traveling clothes, light M.D.C. body armor, knapsack, NG-S2 survival pack, 1D4 small sacks, pocket mirror, silver holy symbol, 2D4 cloves of garlic, six wooden stakes and mallet, salt, canteen, binoculars, tinted goggles, or sunglasses, air filter and gas mask, pocket laser distancer, pocket digital disc recorder/player, and a handheld computer if proficient. They are also given a weapon for each of the Weapon Proficiencies and 1D4+1 clips. Specialty equipment such as magic gear and Techno-Wizard equipment is typically acquired through actual exploration and adventuring and is left to the discretion of the Game Master. However, Artifact Hunters usually acquire a number of magic items and magic weapons, though they are very discriminating, seeking the rarest, best or most helpful of items (in their exploration) for themselves and giving away (to whatever cause they support) or selling all others.

Money: The Artifact Hunter starts with 2D6x1000 in credits and 4D6x1000 in Black Market or minor magic items. The Artifact Hunter who serves a government, nation, freedom fighters or employer typically receives a modest 1000-2000 credits a month, plus room and board. It is assumed by the Tolkeen resistance commanders that Artifact Hunters are taking a small cut of any booty they collect. That's fine so long as they follow orders and turn over the good stuff to them and their cause.

Cybernetics: Starts with none and will avoid getting any at all costs for the usual reasons.

Exotic (Monstrous) Familiars

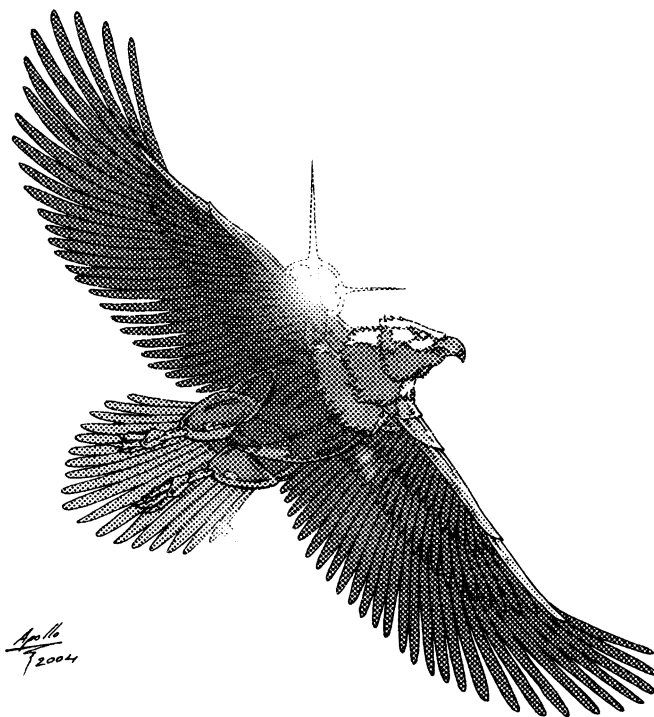
The Shifter and Artifact Hunter are able to link with a small selection of exotic, alien Mega-Damage animals that others might consider to be *monsters*. Ultimately, their inclusion and use is left to the discretion of the Game Master and he or she has the final say. A small offering of such exotic creatures from other dimensions are presented in the pages that follow. Their intelligence never exceeds that of a highly clever *animal*, and if the G.M. or player should come up with a creature or their own creation, it should follow the same parameters as presented in these pages and requires the G.M.'s stamp of approval. For example, an intelligence equal to a young child would make the creature unavailable as a familiar for any practitioner of magic. Good examples of creatures available to the characters outside of this book include the *Dragonsaurus* and *Demonrunner*, and from the **Rifts® Chaos Earth™ Sourcebook: Creatures of Chaos**, the *Hang-Jaw Demon Rat*, a lesser, animal-like Chaos Demon. In the case of these exotic, alien, Mega-Damage familiars, the animal must be acquired and linked with while it is still a baby (less than 12 weeks old in most cases). Trying to capture an adult is not only dangerous, but there is only a 01-06% chance that an adult animal will bond to a humanoid despite the magic involved. Finding the baby animal could be a grand adventure all in itself.

It should be noted that these exotic familiars, though monstrous in appearance, tend to be very loyal and close to the *ones* they are linked to as a familiar, and do not like to be separated from their master. As a result, most Artifact Hunters, more than Shifters, have a difficult time with social gatherings such as going to an inn or a restaurant due to the monstrous or exotic nature of their familiar. Furthermore, the exotic familiar will not be content waiting outside and will go to great lengths to be at its master's side. Tolkeen was one of the few cities where the sorcerers with exotic familiars could walk the street without causing a commotion. Lazlo, New Lazlo, the City of Brass and Dweomer are a few others. And since war with Tolkeen, there are many communities, especially those where magic may be accepted but is not commonplace, where Shifters (as well as Necromancers and Witches) are regarded with a certain amount of fear and more than an element of danger. (Artifact Hunters not so much, perhaps because they don't usually associate with greater supernatural beings or have a host of monsters at their side. Or perhaps, people just don't think of them as a being a type of "Shifter." Whatever the case, the AH are much more acceptable than the traditional Shifter.)

The creatures listed below are among the more popular alien and monstrous familiars, at least among Shifters and Tolkeen Artifact Hunters.

Avian Biomech

The Avian Biomech hails from an alien dimension populated by biomechanical life forms. They have a high animal intelligence and are very loyal to their master. This biomechanical bird is metallic with silicon chips and hydraulic fluid. They make great "eyes in the sky" and are a tremendous help to Shift-



ers and Artifact Hunters who are more prone to combat than other men of magic. Like its cousin, the Saurian Biomech, the Avian is capable of adding cybernetic enhancements to itself.

Alignment: Familiars are typically considered Scrupulous (50%) or Unprincipled (50%), while those found in the wild tend to be Anarchist.

Attributes: I.Q. 2D4 (animal), M.E. 2D6+1, M.A. 2D6+8, P.S. 1D6+7, P.P. 2D6+12, P.E. 2D6+8, P.B. 2D6+6, Spd 3D6 on the ground, but Flying: 2D6+78, approx. 60 mph (96 kph).

M.D.C.: P.E. attribute number +26. (On S.D.C. worlds, the Avian Biomech has their P.E. number +2D6 for Hit Points and their P.E. x2 for S.D.C. with a Natural A.R. of 13.)

Horror Factor: 9

Size: Around one foot (0.3 m) tall, but they can have a six foot (1.8 m) wingspan.

Weight: 15-25 pounds (6.75 to 11.25 kg).

Average Life Span: Typically 20 to 30 years in the wild, but familiars tend to live three times as long.

P.P.E.: 4D6.

Natural Abilities: Telescopic vision, can see a dime clearly up to two miles (3.2 km) away. Natural radar with a range of 2000 feet (610 m), but is completely fouled up by rain, snow, and dust storms. Strength is equal to Robotic, and they have natural weapons described under damage. Burst of speed: Three times per day the Avian Biomech can triple its speed for a duration equal to its P.E. in minutes. It is also able to integrate additional mechanical and bionic items to its body, but they cannot exceed four items total. These additions can be anything from weapons, like an ion or laser rod, to optics and sensory enhancements like those found in the **Rifts® Bionics Sourcebook**. The Biomech can integrate cybernetics within 1D4 days and does not require surgery. Recovers lost M.D.C. at a rate of 3D6 per every 12 hours, twice that if it has metal scraps to absorb and incorporate into its body. It

may feed on small metal scraps, bionic parts, metal shavings and iron dust particles, but its primary food in its natural environment is other small Biomech animals.

Attacks per Melee: Four.

Bonuses (in addition to attribute bonuses): +4 on initiative, +3 to strike and disarm, +1 to parry with its feet, +2 to dodge, though when they are at maximum speed they are +5 to dodge, +2 to roll with punch, fall or impact, and +3 to save vs Horror Factor. Impervious to diseases that afflict flesh and blood animals.

R.C.C. Skills: Track by sight: 52% (+10% to track animals), Land Navigation 75%, Prowl 55% and Tailing (from Surveillance Systems) 77% (+10% if the Avian actually has sensors and/or optics or surveillance systems built into it). Skills do not improve with experience.

Damage: Claws do 1D4 M.D. in addition to Robotic Strength; beak or bite does 5D6 S.D.C./Hit Points damage. They are also able to whip four of their metallic feathers at a time (or individually) as hurled daggers. Damage is 1D6 M.D. per feather dagger. The Avian has 12 of these feather daggers and regenerates spent ones at a rate of 1D6+2 per 24 hours. Feather daggers have an effective range of 2000 feet (609 m) and are +1 to strike.

Magic: None.

Psionics: None, however due to the alien nature of their minds they save as if they were Minor Psychics (12 or higher saves). And don't forget about the link that all familiars share with their human partners.

Habitat: Primarily found in their native dimension only, on a half dozen worlds.

Languages: None. They have a synthesized high-pitched chirp, but it's only used when they engage in combat, to sound a warning and when seeking to attract a mate. Familiars understand their mortal partners completely and clearly, and respond when spoken to.

Enemies: None known, presumably none as it is the dominant predator on its own world.

Physical Appearance: The Avian Biomech looks like a mechanical bald eagle. It has a metallic sheen around the head and claws, with metallic feathers the color of aluminum and bronze. The metallic color is offset with an emerald green pattern of fiber optic bands that adorn the metallic bird.

Value: None. Cannot be domesticated under normal circumstances. However, a baby may be sold for the purpose of becoming a Shifter's familiar for as much as 50,000 to 100,000 credits.

Note: All Biomechs sustain themselves with a diet of other inorganic matter, preferably something with a high iron or nickel content. The Avian Biomech typically hunts for small Biomech animals in its own world, so a good substitute is a spent E-Clip, scraps of armor and tin cans.

Cytoplasmic Blob Familiar

Cyto-Blobs, as they are called for short, are believed to be from the dimension of Primorder (See **The Rifter**® #3). These small, little balls of Cytoplasm appear as a giant version of an animal cell with a dark nucleus tucked inside a jelly-like fluid

called Cytoplasm. As a familiar, these little blobs (typically about the size of a grapefruit or pineapple, but can get as large as a basketball) are extremely attached to the person with whom they bond. Cyto-Blob familiars are always somewhere near or on their masters, like in a pocket, sitting on a shoulder, hanging out of a backpack, or draped around the neck like a scarf. They've been compared to puppies because they seem to have an abundance of boundless energy, are very affectionate and are constantly exploring their surroundings.

Cyto-Blobs are best known for their ability to hold and conceal small objects. Like a regular animal cell, the creature creates small pockets called *vacuoles* within its body. These vacuoles are perfect for holding credit cards, coins, keys, gems, a computer disk, pen, magic amulet, a small dagger, or any small object the Shifter would like concealed.

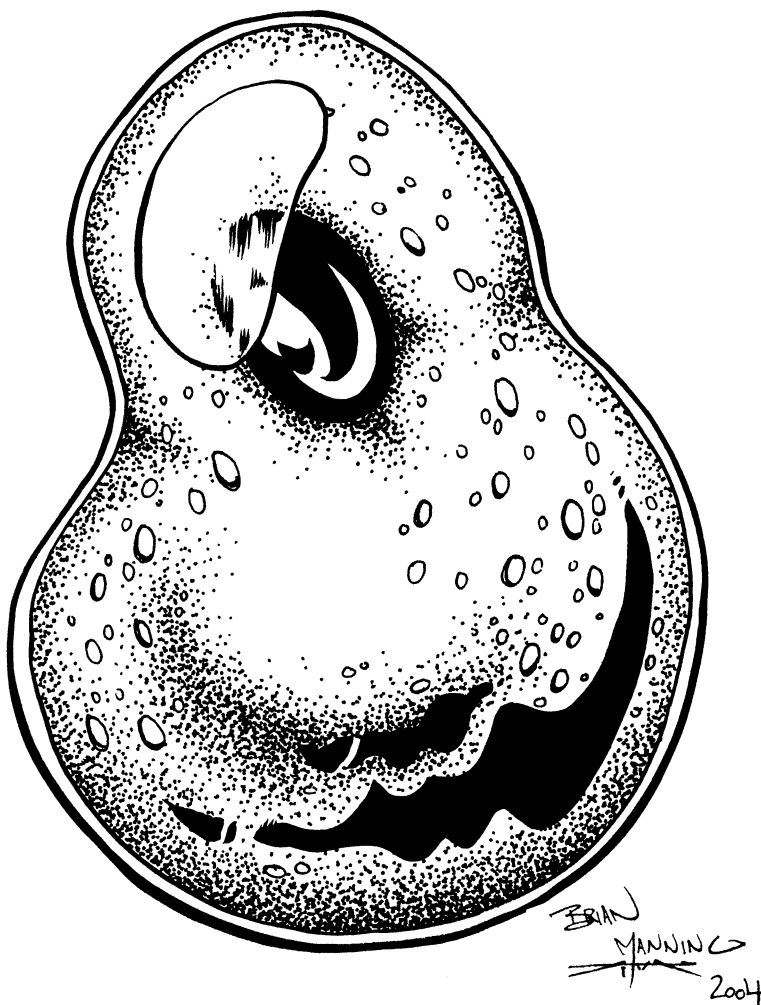
Alignment: Considered to be Unprincipled or Anarchist in the wild, but they quickly adopt their master's ethics and alignment when used as a familiar.

Attributes: I.Q. 1D4+1 (animal), M.E. 1D6+5, M.A. 1D6+14, P.S. 1D6+6, P.P. 1D6+13, P.E. 1D6+13, P.B. 1D6, Spd 1D6+8, undulating as it moves.

S.D.C.: P.E. attribute number +3D6. (In S.D.C. worlds they have 4D6 Hit Points, 1D6x5 S.D.C. and a Natural A.R. of 10.)

Horror Factor: 8

Size: No more than 2 feet (.61 m) in diameter, but due to their unique, malleable nature they can alter their shape, size, and width. See abilities for details.



Weight: 10-30 pounds (4.5 to 13.5 kg).

Average Life Span: Typically lives 50 to 80 years.

P.P.E.: 5D6

Natural Abilities: Despite appearing as a single celled organism, the Cyto-Blob has some very acute senses. It can see, hear, feel, touch, and taste, just like any other flesh and blood creature. In addition, it also has a natural Empathy which is why it can relate to other beings and how it can adopt its master's alignment. It can also create up to a dozen small vacuoles (pockets) inside its body to store small items. Accessing them takes a melee round (15 seconds), as the little blob pushes the vacuole to the surface. The creature survives by drawing water and nutrients from the air, and likes to munch on organic substances like wood, plants, and dog food. Can hold its breath, so to speak, for 60 minutes when necessary.

Shape Modification/Malleability (special): Due to their unique, malleable nature, Cyto-Blobs can alter their general shape, size, and width with the speed of thought. They cannot imitate another living animal or inanimate object, but can assume any basic shape. They can flatten themselves as small as one inch (though very round or long and flat, like a puddle or slab of Jell-O), or stretch long and narrow like a snake to reach higher or to squeeze through a tube or pipe, and so forth. The elliptical, circular and bowling pin shapes are the "blob's" normal configurations. Furthermore, because the blobs are rather like living Jell-O, they can squeeze through narrow or small openings such as metal bars, under doors, through cracks and keyholes, and easily work their way out of any conventional bonds like handcuffs, chains, and rope. To contain one of these little buggers one needs a solid container with a tight lid – they can squeeze through openings as small as an inch.

Acid Defensive Spray (special): To protect itself, the Cyto-Blob can spray a thin stream of acid that is composed of digestive enzymes. Damage: 2D6 M.D. per initial spray, plus the acid continues to burn for 1D4 melees (doing 1D6 M.D. per melee) unless it is quickly washed away with water or any solution. Range: 8 feet (2.4 m).

Attacks/Actions per Melee: Three.

Bonuses (in addition to attribute bonuses): +3 to strike with acid stream, +3 to save vs poison, +6 to save vs disease, and +2 on all other saving throws.

Damage: By acid spray only (see Natural Abilities, above). The Cyto-Blob is unable to do any other type of damage other than possibly trying to suffocate a person by covering their face. This type of attack is not very effective unless the victim is incapacitated or already unconscious. A smothering attack typically takes 1D4+1 minutes (sometimes longer) and the Cyto-Blob is easily pulled from the face (a combined P.S. of 18 usually does the job) and vulnerable to attacks from others. More importantly, unless linked to an evil mage, the playful and nonaggressive Cyto-Blob would never have any reason to kill anyone like this.

Magic: None.

Psionics: Empathy, both receive and send at no I.S.P. cost. Other psionic abilities: Mind Block (4), Sense Time (2), and Mask I.S.P. and Psionics (self only, 7). I.S.P.: M.E. attribute number x2.

Habitat: Believed to be found in a dimension known as Primorder.

Enemies: Cyto-Blobs do have natural predators in their home dimension, but few on Rifts Earth or other environments. They don't have a scent that attracts most animal predators and eating one is like eating a jelly donut full of acid.

Languages: Does not speak, but understands most languages at a 50% proficiency, understands its master completely, and communicates through Empathy.

Physical Appearance: A small blue-green blob composed of a jelly-like substance with a black nucleus at its heart.

Value: As a unique familiar they can be sold for 60,000-80,000 credits. In markets like Splynn, they can sell for half that much, depending on demand and availability (rare). Only mages who want a familiar that acts like a puppy would probably want one.



Drake Familiars

Drakes are large lizards about 5-8 feet (1.5 to 2.4 m) long, but stand no taller than 2 ½ to 3 feet (0.76 to 0.9 m) tall, and look just like miniature dragons. They have the long neck, clawed feet and hands, snaking tail and even wings. The different types of Drakes are found in hot, fiery environments, arctic conditions, jungles, deserts, and mountains, each with their own coloring and special abilities to fit their environment. Drakes have a high animal intelligence and may look impressive, but they do not possess the magic or other abilities of real dragons. Even their power of flight is limited with wings that can get

them airborne, but are really designed more for gliding and riding on air currents than full-form flying (birds can outmaneuver a Drake with ease and stay airborne for much longer periods). For most Drakes, flight is simply an alternative means of transportation and a way to escape larger, land based predators.

Drakes are predators themselves, feeding on smaller animals, but like some Earth felines, they have been known to torment their prey for hours, playing cat and mouse games and hunting and even killing for fun, not just for nourishment. Drakes mate once a year and produce a clutch of 1-6 eggs. The eggs hatch in 6 weeks. Typically only half of the young survive their first year, devoured by adult male Drakes who are very territorial and don't like the competition, as well as other, larger predators.

Alignment: Animal predator considered to be Anarchist or Miscreant. However, tame Drakes are as well behaved as a dog, smarter than most breeds of dogs, and fiercely loyal to a good master. Familiars owned by characters who are of good or selfish alignments tend to be Scrupulous, Unprincipled or Anarchist.

Attributes: I.Q. 1D6+2 (high animal intelligence), M.E. 2D6+4, M.A. 2D6+9, P.S. 1D6+15, P.P. 1D6+14, P.E. 1D6+14, P.B. 2D6+11, Spd 2D6+9 on the ground, and flying: 4D6x10+30 (typically around 25-30 mph/40 to 48 km).

M.D.C.: P.E. attribute number x2+22 for the main body, 2D6+7 per wing and 2D6+11 for the tail. (On S.D.C. worlds, the Drake has its P.E. number +20 for Hit Points and 6D6+6 S.D.C., 2D6+10 for the tail and each wing, and a Natural A.R. of 12.)

Horror Factor: 10

Size: 5-8 feet (1.5 to 2.4 m) long from the tip of its nose to the end of its tail, with a 7-9 foot (2.1 to 2.7 m) wingspan and 2-3 feet (0.6 to 0.9 m) at the shoulders.

Weight: 45-100 pounds (20.3 to 45 kg).

Average Life Span: 90-120 years.

P.P.E.: 1D6x10+7

Natural Abilities: The following abilities are common to all Drake species: Winged flight and gliding, hawk-like vision and can see a creature as small as a rabbit up to 2 miles (3.2 km) away. Keen sense of smell with a Tracking skill equal to 45% (+20% to follow a blood scent; humans and animals), Prowl 55%, Climb 50%/40%, and Swim 40%, nightvision 3000 feet (914 m), and P.S. and P.E. are Supernatural. Bio-regenerates 1D6 M.D.C. every 30 minutes and can regrow a tail or wing in 1D4+6 weeks. **Note:** Skills do not improve with experience.

The flowing abilities are unique to each specific species of Drake:

Fire Drakes: +10% to Tracking skill, gets the skills Dowsing 60% and Camouflage 70% (hides under the sand, dirt, ash, rocks, and pieces of wood and debris), is resistant to heat and fire (half damage), and can withstand temperatures as great as 150 degrees Fahrenheit, but M.D. cold attacks do 50% greater damage. Enjoys taking baths in sulfur, hot sand and volcanic ash. Special Attack: Breathe Mini-Fireballs: Damage: 2D6 M.D. Range: 90 feet (27.4 m). Payload: Unlimited, but each fireball counts as one of the creature's melee attacks. Fire Drakes range in color from a ruby red to various shades of scarlet and reddish brown.

Ice Drakes: Impervious to normal cold up to -60 degrees Fahrenheit below zero. M.D. cold and cold based magic attacks do half damage. Special Attack: Ice Breath: Damage: 2D6 M.D. Range: 60 feet (18.3 m) and the cone of icy breath is 4 feet (1.22 m) wide. Ice Drakes vary in shades of white to gray. More often they are white with a few patches of gray under their wings and a grey belly.

Green Drakes: This is the jungle Drake and is +20% to Climb (+12 to ground Spd when swinging, leaping and gliding through the treetops), and gets the skills Land Navigation 90%, Acrobatics 80%, Detect Concealment 50%, and Camouflage 60%. The Green Drake is also impervious to poisonous clouds and +5 to save vs all other types of poisons, drugs and toxins, including magic poisons and venoms. Special Attack: Breathe a poisonous vapor. Victims need to save vs lethal poison (13 or higher); no damage if the saving throw is successful. Damage for a failed save is 5D6 Hit Points/S.D.C. (Or 1D4 M.D. to Mega-Damage creatures). Holding one's breath or being inside environmental body armor protects the victim, but the noxious cloud lasts for 1D6 melee rounds, and after the initial 5D6 damage it inflicts an additional 2D6 damage every melee round it is breathed in. Range: Area effect of six foot (1.8 m) radius around the lizard. As the name suggests, this Drake ranges in color from jade and emerald green to very dark shades (almost black) of green, with a copper underbelly.

Blue Drakes: The Drakes of the temperate forests are +20% to Swim and get the skills Land Navigation 70%, Detect Ambush 50% and Fishing (without the use of tools) 60%. They are also resistant to electrical attacks (M.D. electricity/lightning does half damage, and S.D.C. jolts do nothing more than deliver a stinging shock). Special Attack: Electrical Discharge: Damage: 4D6 M.D. Range: 100 feet (30.5 m). Fired by opening the mouth and letting loose a short blast. The Forest Drake varies in color from shades of dark blue like a sapphire to cobalt blue with a light, pastel green belly.

Black Drakes: Mountain Drakes are +15% to Climb and Tracking skills, and get the skills Land Navigation 60%, Escape 60% and Pick Locks 45%, the latter two enabling the clever creature to wiggle out of a tight grip, leash or rope, figure ways out of cages, open lids and actually pick locks (it may take hours of persistent work at it but, sooner or later . . .). Special Attack: Acid Breath: Damage: 3D6 Hit Points/S.D.C. (or one M.D. point) per melee round for 1D4 melees or until it is washed off, whichever comes first. Range: Can be sprayed 40 feet (12.2 m) to a 4 foot area (1.2 m). This Drake ranges in color from dark, almost black, brown and charcoal grey with a black underbelly to completely jet black.

Gold Drakes: This lizard is found in grassy plains and mountain lowlands. It is +10 to running Spd, +10% to Prowl and Swim skills, and gets the skills Land Navigation 75%, Track Animals 60%, and Herd Cattle 70% (likes to chase herds of wild animals). Special Attack: Psionics. The animal has the psychic abilities of Bio-Manipulation (10), Remote Viewing (10), See the Invisible (4), Telekinetic Leap (8), Telekinetic Punch (6), Impervious to Cold (2), and Impervious to Poison (4). I.S.P. is M.E. attribute x3. The Plains Drake is a rich golden color with a silver (males) or pale green (females) underbelly.

Attacks per Melee: Five.

Bonuses (in addition to attribute bonuses): +3 on initiative, +2 to strike, parry, dodge, and all saving throws.

Damage: Punch, swat, head butt and tail strike all do damage as per Supernatural P.S.; Claws add 1D6 to damage.

Magic: None, except for abilities described above.

Psionics: Gold drake only and considered a master psionic.

Habitat: It's unknown what dimension the drake is native to. However, it is most commonly found in the dimensions of Axion, Hades and Palladium.

Languages: The drakes communicate among themselves through a series of low growls and barks as well as body language. They are not capable of speaking any language, but are smart enough to learn basic commands in up to four different languages.

Enemies: None, other than those who would try and catch them for gladiatorial arenas, to sell as pets and trained guards.

Allies: None really. In the wild, Drakes rarely associate with their own kind except to mate. Like most predatory animals, Drakes are very territorial and can patrol a range with a 50 mile (80 km) radius.

Physical Appearance: A winged lizard that looks like a miniature dragon; a long tail and neck, powerful rear legs and smaller front claws that have three fingers and an opposable thumb. Color varies per type of Drake (see each individual type above).

Value: None for alchemical components. For gladiatorial arenas or as watchdogs and pets, they sell for 3000 to 6000 gold pieces, or 30,000 to 50,000 credits. They are smart and, if trained as babies, make as good a pet as a dog. Adults are impossible to domesticate and get more belligerent and aggressive with age. As familiars they can go for six times that amount, with Gold Drakes commanding 10 times more money.

Notes for Other Men of Magic: Drakes are highly intelligent and can be easily trained at a young age. Use the Breed Dogs or Falconry skills at -15%. Despite the Drake's size and weight, they make excellent familiars, however, the magical link and training must be done while the Drake is still in the egg or under eight weeks old. The P.P.E. cost is also double, as are the effects on its master when the familiar dies. The mage permanently loses 20 Hit Points, lapses into a coma for 2D6 hours and cannot have another familiar for 2D4 years. The last benefit from having a Drake as a familiar is being able to draw upon up to 70% of the Drake's base P.P.E. when needed.

Giant Amazon Spider

These giant arachnids were first discovered by people in North America, by a group of explorers from Lazlo in 64 P.A. The spiders are native to an alien world in some alien dimension, but have successfully relocated to the Amazon rain forests of Rifts South America decades earlier via the Rifts. With the large amount of wildlife in the Amazon, these cunning predators have thrived. Unlike conventional spiders that spin their webs to catch prey, the Giant Amazon Spider actually hunts and stalks its prey like a cat.

Though the creatures look like giant Tarantula spiders, they exhibit some very different physiology. First, they are warm blooded, and second, they bear live young (a hundred at a time). What people find most disturbing is that, in the wild, they hunt in packs, like wolves, and are so smart that they employ rudimentary tactics, including ambushes, surprise attacks, feints, and decoys. When the prey falls, they share the kill, eating in an established pecking order, also similar to wolves.

Professor Bains, a Ley Line Walker and amateur scientist on the Lazlo team, helped to capture a few live specimens and bring them home for further study. The professor was also the first to experiment on them, seeing if they could indeed become familiars. Originally, Professor Bains had a small shop in Tolkeen where he sold these creatures to an elite clientele. However, since the siege on Tolkeen began, the Professor moved his operation to New Lazlo. He does not advertise openly and only a select few who have an interest in obtaining such an unusual familiar are invited to purchase one.

Alignment: In the wild they would be considered Anarchist or Miscreant, and they remain Anarchist after a familiar link is established. They strive to mimic the alignment of their master, however, and at the G.M.'s discretion, their alignment can slowly change one step closer after time.

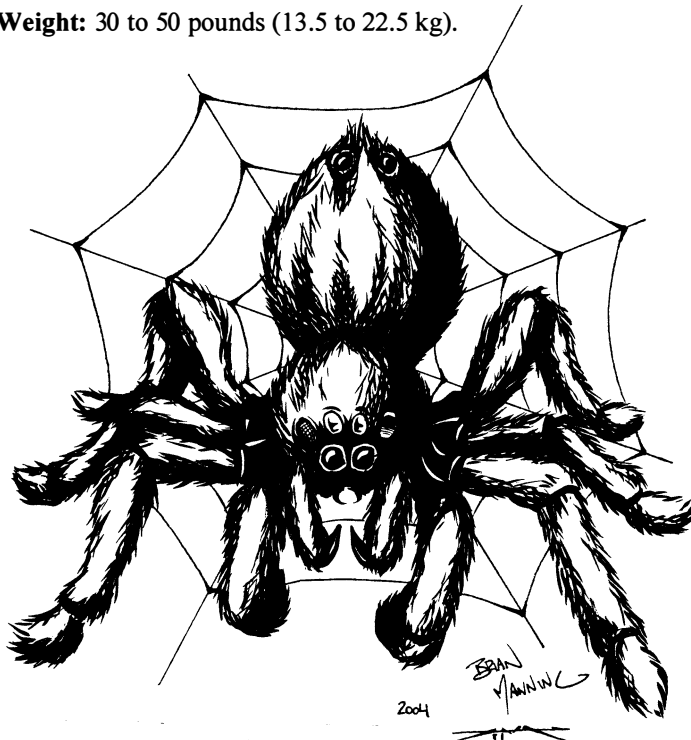
Attributes: I.Q. 1D4+4 in the wild (high animal) +4 after a Familiar Link is established. M.E. 1D6+12, M.A. 1D6+4, P.S. 2D6+14, P.P. 1D6+14, P.E. 1D6+14, P.B. 1D6+2, Spd 4D6+12.

M.D.C.: P.E. attribute number +6. (On S.D.C. worlds, the spider has its P.E. number +10 for Hit Points, 4D6+6 S.D.C., and a Natural A.R. of 10.)

Horror Factor: 12, even after it becomes a familiar. Some mages like to have the Amazon Spiders crawl up them and ride on their back or shoulder. This invokes a Horror Factor of 13.

Size: Three feet (0.9 m) long and two feet (0.6 m) wide. They also stand about a foot (0.3 m) off the ground.

Weight: 30 to 50 pounds (13.5 to 22.5 kg).



Average Life Span: In the wild they live 8-12 years. As a familiar they can live as long as 30 years.

P.P.E.: P.E. attribute +1D4x10.

Natural Abilities: Like all spiders they have the ability of adhesion and can climb most rough surfaces, but not smooth metal, glass, ceramics, ice or other polished surfaces unless using a sticky web-line. Leap an amazing 20 feet (6.1 m) across and 15 feet (4.6 m) high from a standing position, double the distance with a running start. **Note:** While the Giant Amazon Spider has a wicked set of mandibles, it has no poison sacks and is not venomous. This is possibly why they hunt in packs as it typically takes more than one to bring down larger prey.

Webbing (special): The spider produces silk webbing with a tensile strength of 500 pounds (225 kg) and can choose to make the silk sticky or not. Webbing is used for climbing, binding opponents and prey, laying traps and making the classic spider's web home. It takes a P.S. of 30 or greater to pull free from it when sticky, or one M.D. point (or 100 S.D.C.) to cut a single strand.

Optics (special): The Giant Amazon Spider has eight eyes, six of which are around what would be its head and the remaining two are on its abdomen next to its spinnerets. Two eyes in the front and the two in the rear can see in normal light as well as have nightvision of 1000 feet (305 m). The four remaining eyes each can see in a different spectrum of light. One sees in the infrared spectrum out to 400 feet (122 m), another can see the invisible, another eye sees ultraviolet light and is polarized to see in the glare of the sun, and the final eye can see auras (as per the psionic power).

Speech (special): They are smart creatures and learn quickly; roughly on par with a chimpanzee. When they have been with their master for more than two years they gain the ability to verbally communicate. Their speech is very limited, mostly one syllable words used individually or in pairs – “no,” “no go,” “no stay,” “I wait,” “bad,” “good,” “yes,” “food,” “drink,” “come,” “climb,” “up,” “down,” “few” (less than five), “many” (more than five), “not man” (meaning a monster or the supernatural), and so on. Multi-syllable words are abbreviated and slurred. For example, Coalition is pronounced “Co-ish,” Dead Boy is “Deh-buh,” Glitter Boy is “glitgoy,” “hovercycle” is “car,” demon may be “deem,” and so on. The sound of the creature's voice is like a sheet of sandpaper on concrete and only the character who is linked to it can understand it clearly, all others only have a 01-40% chance of recognizing the word being spoken. Cannot read though it may recognize insignias, emblems and reoccurring costume designs such as the Coalition Dead Boy armor and the CS death's head motif.

R.C.C. Instincts and Equivalent Skills: Camouflage 65%, Climb 95%/90%, Detect Ambush 70%, Detect Concealment 75%, Fishing 70%, Prowl 65%, Swim 30%, Land Navigation 75%, Track Prey (animals and humanoids) 60% (+5% to track blood scent or strong smells), Fishing 65%, Spelunking 80%, and Lore: Cattle and Animals 50%. Highly intelligent, it can learn and understand two languages at 50%. Skills do not improve with experience. Also see Natural Abilities.

Attacks per Melee: Five.

Bonuses (in addition to attribute bonuses): +4 on initiative, +2 to strike and parry, +3 to dodge, +1 to disarm, +3 to entangle, +2 to roll with impact, +5 to save vs Horror Factor and have a critical strike (double damage) on a roll of a Natural 19 or 20.

Damage: Punch/swat with front legs do es1D6 S.D.C./Hit Point damage +P.S. damage bonuses. P.S. is *not* Supernatural, but is on par with *Bionic/Augmented P.S.* and can inflict Mega-Damage, but only when a power punch is used. Their only other form of attack is with their mandibles which inflicts 3D6 S.D.C. damage, P.S. bonuses not applicable.

Magic: None.

Psionics: None.

Habitat: Found in an alien dimension and the Amazon basin. They are not known to exist anywhere else, though rumor has it that a pack of them roam the forests of Ohio and southern Michigan. If that is true, they must have originated from a pair of study specimens that escaped captivity. However, Professor Bains insists he can account for all of the ones he has brought into the country, all of whom have since been turned into exotic familiars or remain in his possession.

Enemies: They have been known to be hunted by larger predators, however, because they have a pack mentality, they have few enemies and none known in the Amazon.

Physical Appearance: A really large, hairy spider! They have black and brown colored fur and each eye has a different color. The normal sight eyes are jet black, the infrared eye is red, the see invisible eye is a violet color, the polarized eye is a shiny black, and the see aura eye is green in appearance.

Value: They only have value as familiars and since they are for a select few they can go for as much as 50,000 credits. This is what Dr. Bains typically charges, however, he has been known to negotiate lower fees in exchange for rare knowledge or the occasional magic spell.

Saurian Biomech

The Saurian Biomech is a small iguana-like lizard that is a living mechanical organism from an alien dimension populated by a number of different bio-mechanical life forms. They have a high animal intelligence and the ability to integrate mechanical devices into their bodies. The Saurian Biomech is usually chosen as a familiar for those who are looking for a familiar that can function as a spy or scout.

Alignment: Familiars are typically Unprincipled, while those found in the wild are Anarchist.

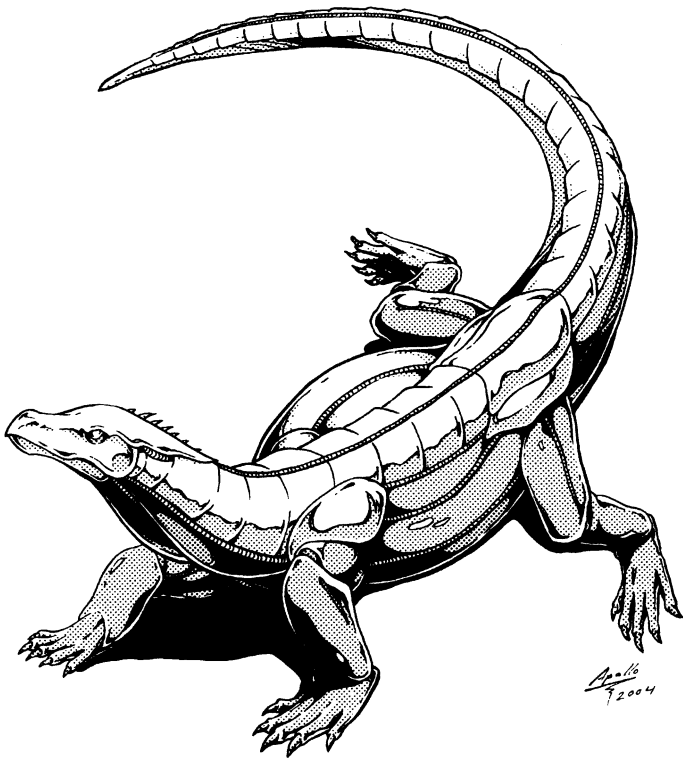
Attributes: I.Q. 1D4+3, M.E. 1D6+8, M.A. 1D6+7, P.S. 2D6+13, P.P. 1D6+13, P.E. 1D6+12, P.B. 1D6+2, Spd 2D6+36.

M.D.C.: P.E.x3. (In S.D.C. worlds, the Saurian Biomech has its P.E. attribute x2 for Hit Points and 1D4x10+4 for S.D.C., and an A.R. of 14.)

Horror Factor: 9

Size: One foot (0.3 m) tall at the shoulder, and 3-5 feet (0.9 to 1.5 m) long from the tip of the nose to the end of its tail (half of that length being the tail).

Weight: 30 to 40 pounds (13.5 to 18 kg).



Average Life Span: 40-60 years in the wild, but as a familiar they can live twice as long.

P.P.E.: 6D6

Natural Abilities: Excellent normal vision and sees in the infra-red spectrum with a range of 100 feet (30.5 m), natural radar with a range of 1000 feet (305 m), but is completely fouled up by rain, snow, and dust storms. Strength is equal to Robotic, and they have natural weapons described below under damage. The Saurian Biomech is also able to integrate additional mechanical items as part of its body, but they can not exceed four items total. These additions can be anything from weapons, like an ion or laser rod, to optics and sensory enhancements like those found in the **Rifts® Bionics Sourcebook**. The Biomech can integrate cybernetic within 1D4 days and does not require surgery. The Saurians also have one, small built-in storage compartment that can hold small items like credits and gems. The container is only 6 inches long, by two inches wide and one inch deep. The Saurian's tail is prehensile and its clawed fingers allow the Biomech to pick up and handle items with the same articulation as a squirrel or raccoon. Recovers lost M.D.C. at a rate of 3D6 per every 12 hours, twice that if it has metal scraps to absorb and incorporate into its body. It may feed on small metal scraps, bionic parts, metal shavings and iron dust particles, but its primary food in its natural environment is other small Biomech animals.

Attacks per melee: Four.

Bonuses (in addition to attribute bonuses): +3 on initiative, +2 to strike, parry and dodge, +2 to save vs Horror Factor, resistant to heat and cold (half damage) and is impervious to diseases that afflict flesh and blood animals.

R.C.C. Skill Equivalents: Acrobatics (all) 55%, Climb 65%/55%, Land Navigation 60%, Palm 50%, Prowl 50%, Swim 70%, and Track by smell 45%. Skills do not improve with experience.

Damage: Claws do 1D6 M.D. +P.S. damage bonuses for Robotic Strength, a tail whip does 2D6 +P.S. damage bonuses as per Robotic Strength and the bite does 1D4 M.D.

Magic: None.

Psionics: None, however due to the alien nature of their minds they save as if they were Minor Psychics (12 or higher saves). And don't forget about the link that all familiars share with their human partners.

Habitat: Found in their native dimension only, on a half dozen worlds.

Languages: None. They have a synthesized growl, purr and a high-pitched chirp, but it's only used when they engage in combat, as a warning, or when seeking to attract a mate. Familiars tend to be vocal and respond to their master when spoken to.

Enemies: The Saurian Biomech is a small predator in its native dimension, so it only has to fear larger Biomech predators.

Physical Appearance: The Saurian looks like a small Komodo lizard or an iguana with a set of tiny sharp teeth, clawed toes, and lashing tail. They have silver or chrome colored metallic skin, with streaks of black or dark blue that look like fiber optic cables running over their bodies.

Value: None, cannot be domesticated. However, as a familiar they garner as much as 50,000-70,000 credits.

Note: All Biomechs sustain themselves with a diet of other inorganic matter, preferably something with a high iron or nickel content.

Splynn Lizard

The Splynn Lizard has become somewhat of a pest in Atlantis, especially in the Dimensional Market of Splynn. About a hundred years ago, one of the temporary merchants set up shop with several hundred little lizards he hoped to sell as pets or even as a light snack to the supernatural and serpentine races. The merchant was not even set up for a day when he came under siege, caught in the crossfire between Dimensional Raiders and the Splynn authorities. In all the commotion the entire shipment of Splynn Lizards was let loose and they escaped into the streets, alleys and sewers of the Dimensional Market. They have since infested Splynn and are the equivalent of pigeons or rats. Actually, these scavenging omnivores eat rats, mice, hamsters, food scraps, garbage and just about any food they can get their little claws on. Strangely enough, the reptilian pests make good familiars because they are small, fast, nimble and pretty fearless. A Splynn Lizard is pictured in **Rifts World Book 21: Splynn Dimensional Market** on page 67 and is the familiar of the Shifter called Skippy.

Alignment: Anarchist in the wild, definitely Anarchist, but familiars are typically considered Unprincipled.

Attributes: I.Q. 1D4+5 (high animal), M.E. 1D6+6, M.A. 2D6+8, P.S. 1D6+6, P.P. 1D6+14, P.E. 1D6+12, P.B. 1D6+1, Spd 2D6+40.

M.D.C.: 4D4+6. (In S.D.C. worlds, the Splynn Lizard has 2D4+6 for Hit Points and 2D6+4 for S.D.C., and a Natural A.R. of 8.)

Horror Factor: 10, but only if surprised. They're not very intimidating.

Size: 12-14 inches (0.3 m) tall, about the size of the original G.I. Joe or Barbie doll, plus a tail that's half as long as it is tall (6-7 inches).

Weight: 1-2 pounds (0.45 to 0.9 kg).

Average Life Span: In the wild they only live 5-9 years, but that is primarily due to being hunted by predators and people who hate them, as a familiar they live for 18-26 years.

P.P.E.: 3D6+10

Natural Abilities: Good vision, keen hearing and sense of smell (for food and garbage, anyway), lightning reflexes and good speed for something that small. Skill-like abilities include the equivalent of Acrobatics 75%, Climb 90%/70%, Prowl 60%, Land Navigation 50%, Palming (using its tongue) and Pick Pockets 55% (using its tongue, teeth or claws; skills do not improve with age or experience). The lizard can also leap a surprising four feet (1.2 m) high and six feet (1.8 m) lengthwise.

Adhesion (special): The lizard can stick to and run across any surface when on all fours and can dangle from a ceiling, branch or wall on just its hind legs to get at food.

Chameleon Ability (special): They have a natural chameleon ability that functions like the Chameleon spell with the same limitations, only duration is indefinite. The Splynn Lizard also has an elongated tongue that is sticky at the end. This is how it usually catches food – insects, rats and mice, when food scraps and garbage aren't available, but it can also use the tongue to snag berries, nuts, and people food like candy, popcorn, potato chips, and half eaten sandwiches, sometimes right out of their hand, lunch box or pocket! Familiars can use that tongue to grab small items such as a credit card, coin, amulet, pen, etc. The tongue can stretch a length equal to the lizard's height (about 12 inches/0.3 m) and pull in items that weigh as much as two pounds (0.9 kg); can carry items with its front arms or mouth weighing three times that, and drag weights up to 10 pounds (4.5 kg).

Attacks per Melee: Three.

Bonuses (in addition to attribute bonuses): +4 on initiative, +1 to strike (+2 to strike with tongue), +6 to dodge and +3 to roll with punch, fall or impact. The creature also seems to be without fear of humans and most other beings, supremely confident it can escape any predator or enemy using its speed, climbing abilities and small size.

Damage: It can scratch for 1D4 S.D.C. damage or bite for 1D4 S.D.C. damage.

Magic: None.

Psionics: None.

Habitat: Native to some alien dimension. Ironically, nobody knows where, because the merchant who brought them to Atlantis was slain in the firefight that freed his lizard stock. On Rifts Earth they are currently found only on Atlantis and Horune Pirate ships where they take the place of rats. They are so numerous in and around Splynn that they have become pests and infest garbage dumps. It's a miracle that these reptiles haven't made it to North America yet, or especially China and the South Pacific where Horune Pirates do a lot of trade.

Languages: None, though, like a dog, the lizard can learn a handful of words and commands in three different languages.

Familiars understand everything the person they are linked with says.

Enemies: Who knows? Dogs and cats would be, except the darn lizards are Mega-Damage creatures. Thankfully, Splynn Lizards never attack animals larger than themselves, even S.D.C. ones, preferring to raid garbage cans and storerooms for food rather than hunt animals, other than rodents, their favorite food.

Physical Appearance: A small lizard that rather resembles a tiny Tyrannosaurus Rex! Its front arms/legs are short but longer than a T-Rex with articulated front claws similar to hands. Their color ranges from rusty browns to tan with red belly and highlights to greyish brown with tan highlights.

Value: None, except as hamster style pets for 2-6 credits (double when sold by Horune Pirates to outsiders). The Splugorth would ban them as pets if they thought it would help reduce the population.

Summoning Table

This table is provided as a tool for the Game Master. It can serve several functions, including a random summoning table for Shifters or for characters casting summoning spells, or even as a *random encounter table* for creatures coming through a Rift or found on Atlantis or demon plagued China or a Horune Pirate ship or the vessel of a dimensional raider or slaver, and so on.

Roll on the first table to determine the kind of creature, then roll under that category of creature to determine the specific type. Or just select the type of creature and then roll on the specific table. For the purposes of summoning these creatures, some are more powerful and able to resist a Shifter's battle of wills. In these cases they have been marked, in parentheses, with a minus to the M.A. attribute of the Shifter/Summoner to gain control of the beast. In the instance where they are having a battle of the wills with a Gargoyle Mage, for example, the Shifter's M.A. should be considered at -3 while rolling the battle of wills. This represents the creature's ability to resist such a summoning and domination.

For information on the variety of creatures presented below, please consult the following Palladium book titles. In **Rifts® Dark Conversions** you can find *Entities*, *Demons*, *Deevils*, *Gargoyles*, *Elementals*, *various monsters*, a host of *Undead* creatures, and *Alien Intelligences*. For a variety of other races, as well as additional monsters, consult **Rifts® Conversion Book One, Revised**. For the *Daemonix* refer to the **Coalition Wars®: Siege on Tolkeen Book 2** and for *Chaos Demons* check out **Creatures of Chaos™** from the *Rifts® Chaos Earth* series. Finally, the Lesser Elemental Fragments can be found under the Elemental spells in the **Rifts® Book of Magic**, the *Oni demons* can be found in **Rifts® World Book 8: Japan**, and other oriental demons are found in **Rifts® World Book 24: China One** and *Russian Demons* in **Rifts® World Book 18: Mystic Russia**.

01-02% Angels

03-09% Entities

10-16% Lesser Demons

17-23% Greater Demons

24-28% Deevils
29-31% Greater Deevils
32-36% Gargoyles
37-43% Elemental Fragments
44-50% Minor Elementals
51-57% Major Elementals
58-64% Monsters
65-71% Oni One Hundred or Chinese Demons
72-78% Undead
79-85% Daemonix
86-90% Lesser Chaos Demons or Lesser Russian Demons
91-94% Greater Chaos Demons or Greater Russian Demons/ Spirits
95-99% World Slayers or Chinese Demons (any)
100% Alien Intelligence

01-02% Angels

01-25% Cheruu (-3 M.A.)
 26-50% Seraph (-3 M.A.)
 51-75% Ariel (-3 M.A.)
 76-100% Tharsis (-3 M.A.)

03-09% Entities

01-20% Poltergeist
 21-40% Syphon Entity
 41-60% Haunting Entity
 61-80% Tectonic Entity
 81-100% Possessing Entity (-1 M.A.)

10-16% Lesser Demons

01-25% Alu
 26-35% Aquatics
 36-45% Banshee
 46-55% Dar'ota 1-30%, Succubus 31-70%, or Incubus 71-100%.
 56-65% Lasae
 66-75% Mares
 76-100% Shedim

Lesser Chinese Demons (optional)

Note: All are found in **Rifts® World Book 23: Rifts® China One**.

01-05% Ghost (pick one; excluding Vampire)
 06-10% Ghost Goblin
 11-15% Mountain Goblin
 16-20% One-Horned Goblin
 21-25% Shadow Goblin
 26-30% Tall Man Goblin
 31-35% Ch'uan Ti, Earth Hound
 36-40% Falcon Demon
 41-45% Fox Faerie (-2 M.A.)
 46-55% Fox Spirit (Goblin; -1 M.A.)

56-60% Headless One
 61-65% Long-Armed Giant
 66-70% Ma T-ou, the Horse
 71-75% Monkey-Wolf
 76-80% Ox-Head Demon
 81-85% Pig Demon
 86-90% Were-Beasts
 91-95% Yang Ching, the Goat Demon
 96-100% Ch'iang Shih – Chinese Vampire

Lesser Russian Demons (optional)

Note: All are found in **Rifts® World Book 18: Mystic Russia**.

01-10% Demon Claw
 11-20% Hell Horse
 21-30% The Unclean
 31-40% Il'ya Demons
 41-50% Kaluga Hag
 51-60% Kladovik Guardian Demon
 61-70% Nalet (-2 M.A.)
 71-80% Serpent Hound (-2 M.A.)
 81-90% Wood Demon (-2 M.A.)
 91-95% Water Demon (-2 M.A.)
 96-100% Stone Demon (-2 M.A.)

17-23% Greater Demons

01-30% Baal-Rog (-1 M.A.)
 31-40% Demon Locust (-2 M.A.)
 41-60% Gallu Demon Bull (-1 M.A.)
 61-70% Jinn (-1 M.A.)
 71-80% Night Owl (-1 M.A.)
 81-90% Magot (-1 M.A.)
 91-100% Raksasha (-2 M.A.)

Greater Chinese Demons (optional)

Note: All are found in **Rifts® World Book 23: Rifts® China One**.

01-05% Asuras (see Mo-lo)
 06-15% Kinnaras (or Chin-na-lo)
 16-20% Kou Ching the Dog (-3 M.A.)
 21-30% Mahoragas the Serpent (-1 M.A.)
 31-40% Monkey Spirit (-5 M.A.)
 41-50% Naga (-3 M.A.)
 51-60% Red Child (-2 M.A.)
 61-70% Shen Wu, Wise Warrior
 71-80% White Monkey
 81-90% Yaksha, the Tiger (-2 M.A.)
 91-100% Ying Hsuan Shang (-3 M.A.)

Greater Russian Demons & Woodland Spirits (optional)

Note: All are found in **Rifts® World Book 18: Mystic Russia**.

- 01-10% Khitaka Abductors (-3 M.A.)
- 11-20% Koshchei the Deathless Ones (-4 M.A.)
- 21-30% Midnight Demon (Polunochnitsa) (-2 M.A.)
- 31-40% Morozko Frost Demons (-2 M.A.)
- 41-50% Nightfeeder (-1 M.A.)
- 51-60% Whirlwind (-3 M.A.)
- 61-70% Wolf-Serpent (-2 M.A.)
- 71-73% Domovoi (Spirit)
- 74-78% Polevoi (Spirit)
- 79-83% Leshii (Spirit)
- 84-87% Vodiano (Spirit)
- 88-91% Rusalka (Spirit)
- 91-93% Firebird (Spirit)
- 94-96% Spirit Wolf (Spirit)
- 97-98% Werewolf (Spirit)
- 99-100% Vampire (Spirit)

24-28% Devils/Deevils

- 01-20% Deevil
- 21-40% Devilkins
- 41-50% Dire Harpies
- 51-60% Imps
- 61-75% Fenry
- 76-85% Fiends
- 86-95% Arch Fiends
- 96-100% Gorgon

29-31% Greater Deevils

- 01-15% Arch Fiends
- 16-40% The Beast
- 41-55% Horror
- 56-70% Pandemonium
- 71-85% Serpents
- 86-100% Deevil Wraiths

32-36% Gargoyles

- 01-10% Gargoylite
- 11-40% Gargoyle
- 41-70% Gurgoyle
- 71-80% Gargoyle Mage (-3 M.A.)
- 81-100% Gargoyle Lord (-2 M.A.)

37-43% Elemental Fragments

- | | |
|-------------------------|----------------------------|
| 01-16% Leaf Rustler | 59-72% Flame Fiend |
| 17-30% Phantom Footman | 73-86% Water Wisp |
| 31-44% Phantom | 87-100% Little Ice Monster |
| 45-58% Little Mud Mound | |

44-50% Minor Elementals

- 01-25% Minor Earth Elemental (-2 M.A.)
- 26-50% Minor Air Elemental (-2 M.A.)
- 51-75% Minor Water Elemental (-2 M.A.)
- 76-100% Minor Fire Elemental (-2 M.A.)

51-57% Major Elementals

- 01-25% Major Earth Elemental (-4 M.A.)
- 26-50% Major Air Elemental (-4 M.A.)
- 51-75% Major Fire Elemental (-4 M.A.)
- 76-100% Major Water Elemental (-4 M.A.)

58-64% Monsters

- 01-07% Black Faerie
- 08-14% Boschala
- 15-22% Brodkil
- 23-29% Gremlins
- 30-36% Goqua (-2 M.A.)
- 37-43% Hell Hounds
- 44-50% Malignous
- 51-57% Mindolar (-2 M.A.)
- 58-64% Neuron Beast (-2 M.A.)
- 75-71% Sowki
- 72-78% Spider Demon (-1 M.A.)
- 79-85% Thornhead Demon (-2 M.A.)
- 86-92% Werebeast
- 93-100% Witchling

65-71% Oni One Hundred (Demons of Japan)

- 01-20% Sura-Kappa
- 21-40% Goblin
- 41-60% Goblin Spider
- 61-70% Japanese Imps
- 71-80% Hannya Demon
- 81-90% Oni Master (-2 M.A.)
- 91-100% Oni Mystic (-2 M.A.)

72-78% Undead

Note: All are found in **Rifts® Dark Conversions** and **Rifts® Vampire Kingdoms**.

- | | |
|--------------------------|-------------------------------|
| 01-06% Dybbuk | |
| 07-12% Dimensional Ghoul | |
| 13-18% Gravel Ghoul | 60-64% Jaliquette |
| 19-24% Aberration | 65-69% Mortoi |
| 25-29% Blighter | 70-74% Rawhead |
| 30-34% Blood Wraith | 75-79% Revenant |
| 35-39% Bone Fiend | 80-84% Sladka |
| 40-44% Evisceral | 85-89% Sleepwalker |
| 45-49% Festulent | 90-94% Wild Vampire |
| 50-54% Gravedigger | 95-99% Secondary Vampire |
| 55-59% Harbinger | 100% Master Vampire (-3 M.A.) |

79-85% Daemonix – Archaic Demons

Note: From the *Coalition Wars®: Siege on Tolkeen* series.

- 01-30% Feculence
- 31-50% Manslayer
- 51-60% Immolator
- 61-90% Hang Dog
- 91-100% Basal (-2 M.A.)

86-90% Lesser Chaos Demons

Note: From *Rifts® Chaos Earth™ Sourcebook: Creatures of Chaos™*.

- 01-08% Firethorn
- 09-16% Hang-Jaw Demon Rats
- 17-24% Razoredged Prowler
- 25-32% Savage Fury
- 33-40% Spiked Strangler
- 41-48% Bumble Ball
- 49-56% Grave Treader
- 57-64% Grim Hunter
- 65-72% Heckler
- 73-79% Hell's Wrath
- 80-87% Nightwind
- 88-95% Raging Doom
- 96-100% Shimmering Slayer

91-94% Greater Chaos Demons

Note: From the *Rifts® Chaos Earth™ Sourcebook: Creatures of Chaos™*.

- 01-20% Skull Stealer (-1 M.A.)
- 21-40% Slithering Screamer (-1 M.A.)
- 41-60% Ravenous (-1 M.A.)
- 61-80% The Corruptor (-1 M.A.)
- 81-100% The Grotesk (-1 M.A.)

95-99% World Slayer Demons

Note: From *Rifts® Chaos Earth™ Sourcebook: Creatures of Chaos™*.

- 01-25% The Desecrator (-3 M.A.)
- 26-50% Desolator (-3 M.A.)
- 51-75% Strife (-3 M.A.)
- 76-100% The Subjugator (-3 M.A.)

100% Alien Intelligences

Note: See *Rifts® Conversion Book Three: Dark Conversions™* for details about these beings.

The Megaverse®

A brief overview

Author's Note: It is generally assumed that most of your dimensional exploits will begin on Rifts Earth. For those Game Masters who wish to have a perspective on the rest of the Megaverse, here's what's been learned. This knowledge is easily available in any of the magic cities, such as *Dweomer*, *City of Brass*, *Lazlo*, *New Lazlo*, *the Colorado Baronies*, *Atlantis*, *New Camelot*, and what used to be the center for dimensional knowledge in North America, *Tolkeen*, as well as other places scattered around the world. The following data is common knowledge and word on the street. It should *not* be considered gospel and absolute fact, since as times change, sometimes the data doesn't change with it and things are not exactly as people heard they were. That also gives Game Masters the flexibility to change and modify what they deem fit to best work within their individual campaigns.

The Dimension Riders

Perhaps one of the more famous groups to come out of Tolkeen is the Dimension Riders. They are one of the oldest adventure groups around, and their expertise in dimensional travel is highly sought after. The group has lasted for several decades, but rather than settle down, their legacy was passed on to the next generation of apprentices. Various members have contributed numerous works, journals, and essays on their exploits and dimensional travels. Below are several excerpts from their travels. The current whereabouts of the Dimension Riders are unknown. Just after General Holmes' attack on the City of Tolkeen, the group disappeared, supposedly in an effort to get additional support to rescue Tolkeen. The Coalition propaganda machine has branded them cowards who ran before the onslaught of the Coalition Army. However, many others believe that the dimensional anomalies that surrounded Tolkeen at the time may very well have killed the Riders or sent them hurling across the cosmos to a place or places (separating the group members) unknown. Dimensional travel is dangerous enough, and under the circumstances of their departure, and the wildly fluctuating energy of the Tolkeen triangle, they could have suffered any fate imaginable. All that's known for certain is that they vanished through a Rift never to be seen again.

The first generation members of the Dimension Riders included: Oswald Thistledown, an 11th level Elven Shifter and founding member, Beth Wingate, a 10th level Demigod and officer in Special Forces, Conan Schmidt, a 13th level Demigod, Kirsten Kurst, 10th level Elven Artifact Hunter, and Chronicle, a 12th level Great Horned Dragon Hatchling.

The second generation includes: Zepher, a 7th level Ogre Shifter, Fire Fly, a 6th level Fire Dragon Hatchling, Khan, an 8th level Mutant Cat and Lord Magus, and Urdi-Mbre, a 7th level Shifter Mutant Pterosaur.

An excerpt from the Treatise on Rifts Earth, by Oswald Thistledown

"During my dimensional travels I must say that no other world has fascinated me more than my home, Earth. My earliest recollections go back to the Dark Age before the birth of the Post Apocalyptic calendar and the rise of the Coalition States. My parents were among countless thousands torn from their home world and brought here by accident. The Great Cataclysm and surging Rifts tore through the dimensional fabric, creating dimensional storms and portals that dislodged many people from their place of birth and brought them to Earth. While their culture was far more primitive than our Earth, they possessed knowledge of magic. My mother in particular, was skilled in the ways of magic and told me that from the time I was in the womb, she felt I would one day work magic in a way that would link worlds. Turns out she was right, just not quite the way she had anticipated.

"As a young child we were constantly on the run from every danger imaginable. I was six when I saw my first dimensional Rift. I remember it vividly as it pulsed and churned with mystic energy. My mother was attempting to take us home, 'by folding the fabric of space and time,' she said. But her knowledge of the Rifts was not what it should have been, and instead of conjuring a way home, she opened a portal to some hellish alien dimension. She tried to close the portal, but not before several creatures came through it. She did what any good mother would do, she sought to protect me by hiding me and then drawing the creatures to chase her, leading them away. As fate would have it, we would both survive that day, but she had unleashed demonic forces that laid waste to our village. We were banished by the survivors not because my mother had inadvertently brought them harm and sorrow, but because they feared her power to open the invisible doors to other worlds. They hadn't known she was capable of it, and they feared what other horrors she might unleash the next time she attempted to bridge the void between worlds. I too marveled at what my mother had done, not out fear, but in wonder. It was from that point on that I found myself wanting to see more of these Rifts, and learn how I too might make them obey my commands. Though I was terrified that some evil might be set loose or devour me where I stood, I couldn't stop thinking about what lay beyond the Rifts. My curiosity kept me awake at night and I vowed to become a master of the Rifts to take my family home before I went to explore the Megaverse. My poor, sweet mother, wracked with guilt over the lives her attempt had taken and the damage it had caused, gave up on dimensional travel and forbade me from pursuing it, but I could not be dissuaded. After wandering the land for some time, I came across a person who would eventually become my mentor. Against my mother's wishes I learned the ways of the Shifter. She was fearful and rightly so, for we had both heard stories of how Shifters could be easily corrupted by dark and sinister forces from beyond the Rifts. She vowed if I continued my studies that I would no longer be considered her son. At the time I was a brash young man full of ideas, arrogance, and willfulness. I could not be deterred. I promised my mother that someday I would take her home, but she turned away, refusing to speak to me. To this day, she has kept her vow and we have not spoken.

"My studies of various dimensions started as soon as I began traveling what I learned was the infinite Megaverse. My travels have shown me many wonders and more than a fair share of horror, yet each time I returned to Earth I found that my adopted home world held the greatest mysteries of all. Nowhere that I have gone compares with the raw power and potential of this little blue planet. The more I

learned about the Earth and her place in the Megaverse, the more I felt humbled. Despite my knowledge, the Earth is a lady that holds her secrets close, and though I study and observe and talk to others with greater experience than myself, I know she still holds secrets that no one has yet unraveled. For example, I know the Earth exists in an infinite universe that has spawned countless parallel dimensions. Yet I know not if she is a parallel dimension, or the world prime in this reality. It seems the latter and yet I don't truly know this. In my mind, Earth – what many call, Rifts Earth – is the original and to me, she will always be so. Of course, some say this is a belief born of willful arrogance or misplaced romance for the world that has been my home since as long as I can remember. Maybe so, but no one can prove otherwise. I have seen the shadows of Rifts Earth's brothers and sisters, parallel dimensions where things are not as they are in the reality we know, and the more I see of them and the rest of the Megaverse, the more I am convinced that Rifts Earth is the originator. The prime reality from which all parallels are born.

"Each dimension has its own properties and characteristics. I believe the primary dimensional medium of our reality, that of Rifts Earth, to be space and vacuum. Contained within are hundreds of thousands of galaxies with stars and planets, which are, of course, the secondary dimensional medium from which life would spring. It is from these secondary mediums that human existence unfolds. I've even visited some of these distant planets and galaxies, but while that is for another time, they are proof enough to substantiate my statement here. Of course, my origins being from another world myself, I know not if my heritage has its roots on one of these other worlds, or whether my people heralded from a different realm of existence and reality entirely.

"Shifters cannot feel the dimensional fabric of the cosmos until they attempt to cross the dimensional barrier for the first time. After that your world view is never the same. Expanded to a point where even your place of origin seems insignificant and a bit alien. Everything you know is dwarfed by the acceptance of the infinite. Infinite worlds. Infinite realities. Infinite possibilities. It is more than our mortal minds can fully imagine or understand, and I think even the many deities have little better understanding than we mere mortals can manage. This I do know: Rifts Earth is like a train station to the Megaverse. The magic that courses through the planet and ripples across her face as the blue light of the ley lines connects her, and us, to at least a fragment of the infinity that is the Megaverse. I believe this is due to the catastrophe that brought about the Coming of the Rifts. A catastrophe that weakened the natural dimensional barrier that once enveloped the world of humans, and shattered it wide open.

"Today, the dimensional fabric of Rifts Earth is very weak and easy to penetrate. (**Game Note:** +20% bonus to Dimensional Teleport to connecting dimensions and at nexus points.) In fact, I am of the belief that during the Time of Chaos that destroyed the Age of Humankind and brought forth the new Dark Age, the dimensional barrier was almost completely destroyed. Had this happened, the dimension that contains Rifts Earth may not have survived and the universe that surrounds the Earth would have been obliterated as this reality ceased to exist. What impact this might have had on the rest of the Megaverse I can't even begin to imagine. Would this universe die but leave the parallels, or would a thousand universes blink out as if they never existed? Could this be the Big Bang books of the past sometimes speak of? Or would a million realities have melted into one another, creating chaos the likes of which our own Rifts Earth only hints at?

"As fate would have it, our dimensional barrier was flexible enough to survive and hold our reality together, at least for the most part. The devastation on our own little world was tremendous as places on Earth tore themselves apart. Though the dimensional fabric held as a whole, tears in the fabric appeared to create even more havoc, allowing other realities to leak into our own and to open and close thousands of doors through a space and time like machine gone haywire. I find it a miracle that the planet Earth survived at all. It has been speculated that during the Great Cataclysm and the Time of Chaos (read as *Chaos Earth*), the dimensional fabric may have been even weaker (**Game Note:** +50% chance to Dimensional Teleport), and ordinary people could actually have randomly teleported to different worlds, parallels and realities without a deliberate magic (01-33% chance). That means millions of humans may have been scattered across the dimensional divide, through time and into other dimensions. Ironically, it was probably the multitude of dimensional storms and other anomalies sweeping the planet that kept these numbers from rising any higher and helped to hold the dimensional fabric together. These dimensional storms may also be why it seems impossible for travelers to find their way back in time to this period of Earth's history or before, with the storms that still rage on Earth and between dimensions in that time effectively deflecting D-Travelers away, into the future, to parallel Earths and to other worlds.

"Few beings familiar with dimensional travel will even try to dispute that Rifts Earth has one of these highest (if not the single highest) concentrated amounts of free magic energy in the Megaverse. Ley lines run unchecked throughout most of our planet and surrounding universe. The magic energy permeates into the very air, allowing for unusual transformations, transitions, folding of reality, and the creation of paths across space and time. The supernatural and creatures of magic who visit Rifts Earth instantly feel their hides become harder than diamond, and their own magic abilities surge with power. (**Design Note:** In game terms, the majority of supernatural beings and creatures of magic become Mega-Damage creatures and invulnerable to most mundane, S.D.C./Hit Point weapons. On a relatively simple scale, Rifts Earth is considered to be high in magic and should provide an excellent example when other dimensions are described with high magic. They may be similar to or reflect the magic energy that Rifts Earth displays.) Such transformations are a direct result of the mystic energy and thin dimensional fabric that contains our world and its universe.

"It is my understanding that Earth's electric principles are based on electrons, which have a negative charge. It is logical to conclude, therefore, that Rifts Earth has what we label as a negative energy matrix. This theory was tested numerous times with samples of alien technology that was gleaned from other dimensions. (**Design Note:** This is a great plot device that Game Masters should use liberally.) So those that do not function along the universal or negative matrix will not work in the reality that is Rifts Earth.

"Time is another matter entirely, and it is not, as some would believe, simply a state of mind. Time, it seems, passes faster when busy and slower when bored. Well, that's an illusion. Your mind playing a trick on you. Time moves at a constant rate, or so such experts as Temporal Wizards have told me. (**Author's Note:** For the sake of game continuity we are going to consider the flow of time on Rifts Earth to be *normal*. One might assume that with all the strange anomalies and dimensional disturbances on Rifts Earth that time would have to be distorted in some fashion. While there are isolated locations, like the Bermuda Triangle, where

there are temporal anomalies, most of Rifts Earth is going to be the background of our perception, and has a normal time flow.)

"My fellow Shifters and I have identified locations throughout the Megaverse that are unparalleled when it comes to the amount of magic energy found in a single location. The Central Nexus, in some respects, is the heart of any dimension. It is where magic energy is at its highest concentration. Rifts Earth is, by far, the most powerful Central Nexus known in the Megaverse. While the dimension as a whole is now surging with magic energy, no place can be found that compares to Rifts Earth. Ley lines crisscross the lands converging on hundreds of nexus points all over the landscape. The very fabric of space and time is disturbed, opening gateways to a thousand different worlds. In all my travels, no one single location or planet can compare.

"The apocalypse was not kind to Earth. The planet is riddled with several dimensional anomalies that will last for thousands of years to come. The most noticeable of these anomalies are the dimensional fractures. The dimension as a whole has millions of them and Rifts Earth has hundreds of them alone. The size of the fracture varies from as small as a campsite to the largest, which is believed to be the Yucatan Peninsula. The average is only a few acres in size; just large enough to create hundreds of Fade Towns, which are scattered in regions like the Magic Zone and the New West.

"The next most common anomaly on the planet is the multi-Rift phenomenon. Few, if any, worlds or dimensions have a direct connection with Earth. The majority of the Rifts open to random dimensions at completely random times, except during periods of heightened magic activity. During these peak times, hundreds of nexus points flare up and open to hundreds of dimensions simultaneously. Even some of the permanently open Rifts (Saint Louis and Calgary) change from dimension to dimension at odd intervals. The rise of the Shifter may be nature's way of counterbalancing the chaos of the Rifts. By the Shifter gaining a measure of control over the dimensional portals, order can be brought to a chaotic world.

"The last quirk that Rifts Earth seems to have in abundance is magic triangles. There are no less than a dozen – and those are the ones that are known, I suspect there are others. By comparison, I've yet to encounter more than three on any other world. It's my belief that the dimension as a whole may have the highest concentration of dimensional triangles in the Megaverse. Of course, while magic triangles may be a boon to some magic-faring cultures, it can also be a curse. Without the control provided by a pyramid, places like the Bermuda Triangle are bombshells waiting to explode and release dimensional storms, monsters and worse. Dimensional anomalies are commonplace at these locations and most ordinary travelers avoid them whenever possible. Those of us familiar with dimensional travel avoid triangles even more than the indigenous population, for we know the dangers these places represent and seldom want any part of it unless great measures have been taken to tame them, as once existed in the Kingdom of Tolkeen."

G.M. Note: The writings of Oswald Thistledown are popular among practitioners of magic, especially Shifters (Temporal Raiders find them to be amusing, amateur fare). The work is said to contain observations and notes on many places around the world as they apply to ley lines, Rifts, and dimensional travel. Consequently, feel free to work up your own pages of material from the writings of Thistledown for your own games and adventures.

A Journey to Wormwood

Contributed by an anonymous author

Note: This journal was found by an adventuring group in Wormwood among the remains of a dead body they presume to be the Shifter who wrote it.

The dimension known as Wormwood is truly a unique place to visit, because few dimensions can boast having a living planet for a Central Nexus! Unfortunately, the people are fighting invaders from another dimension, who they call the Unholy. The war there has raged for generations and no end seems to be in sight. Still, many a dimensional traveler has visited Wormwood, especially through the city of World Gate. This city controls numerous dimensional portals and for a price, you can go almost anywhere.

The dimension of Wormwood is reported to be a micro-universe in a Pocket Dimension. I and my fellow Shifters have been unable to verify this, mostly because the Living Planet of Wormwood distorts our senses. Whether this is caused deliberately or not is unknown, so we have no solid foundation for this theory. The fact that a spacecraft has crash-landed in the Unholy Desert leads most people to believe it is a Pocket Dimension. Working on this premise then, the Primary Dimensional Medium is most likely space, and the secondary would be the planets themselves. It's not known if all the planets in the Wormwood dimension are living, or if Wormwood is unique unto itself. Most believe the latter to be true.

What has been confirmed is that the dimensional fabric is very stable and considered permeable. It is strong enough to form a stable barrier, yet dimensional travel is not directly hindered as confirmed by studies we conducted in World Gate. (**Author's Note:** In game terms there is no penalty or bonus for those with the Dimensional Teleport ability, and they are at their base percentage to D-Teleport to Wormwood.)

Without question the magic level of the Wormwood dimension is strong. While it does not rival our Earth, it is still strong in the grand scheme of things. All indigenous people born on Wormwood are minor supernatural (read: Mega-Damage) creatures, but that seems to be the only benefit from the high magic. Ley Line Walkers, Shifters and other wielders of magic can feel the presence of ley lines and nexus points, but they are deep within the planet and seem to run through it like a network of veins and arteries. Likewise, nexus points can only be found in underground caves and are not easily accessible.

We've discovered that Wormwood has an odd mix of high and low technology. On one hand, warriors wear primitive plate and chain armor made from a naturally occurring resin found on the living planet. Yet, at the same time these warriors may wield high-tech laser rifles or Vibro-Blade weapons, or some sort of magic item. Thanks to the city of World Gate, various technologies from motorcycles to energy weapons are shipped in on a daily basis; everything from Wilk's laser rifles to Naruni plasma weapons. The city has become a small hub of dimensional trade, although nothing on par with the Splynn Dimensional Market on Atlantis. The dimension is a boon for all kinds of dimensional arms dealers as the dimension's energy matrix is universal. The frequencies are low

enough that any type of extra-dimensional technology will function in Wormwood. This is a good thing, especially for the inhabitants, who have come to rely on the influx of off-world technology and weapons to help even the odds against the demonic Unholy.

The dimension of Wormwood has somehow been knocked out of the normal time flow, however. Our initial journey was only for three months, yet when we returned to Earth nine months had passed at home. The infamous Erin Tarn has confirmed this during her initial visit to this strange dimension, where she recounts how she spent only two months on the living planet, yet six had passed on Rifts Earth. Time passes at a slower rate on Wormwood, making for a 1 to 3 ratio, i.e., every day spent on Wormwood, three days pass on Earth. This makes Wormwood a haven for dimensional travelers who are wanted by certain authorities. They can hide out on Wormwood for a few months, allowing time to pass faster in the other dimension and hope that the authorities have short memories. Shifters are only faintly aware of the time difference and that's only when they open themselves up to the dimension. Only beings like Temporal Raiders, and their cohorts, Temporal Wizards and Temporal Warriors, are consciously aware of the time difference. For all other travelers it may be a surprise, unless they were warned ahead of time. It was sure a surprise for us.

As for strange, visiting a planet that is a living being, like Wormwood, is a strange experience. While the planet has all the outward signs of being like any other planet, it is truly a living, breathing creature in and of itself. Some have speculated it is some sort of Alien Intelligence. Whatever it is, the living planetary being distorts our senses, making it more difficult to obtain an accurate reading on the dimension. This is also true for sensing the dimension's Central Nexus, making our readings and impressions of the dimension unreliable at best. My fellow Shifters feel that Wormwood is the Central Nexus of its dimension, while others who have traveled to the Living Planet dispute this claim saying that a living being cannot be a Central Nexus. It is a heated debate among Shifters and all students of dimensional travel and will continue to be so, at least until someone can come up with conclusive evidence one way or the other. One theory holds that the heart of the living planet is the Central Nexus, but to confirm that would entail a trek deep into the bowels of the living planet, and those who have attempted that undertaking have never been seen again.

Every dimension has its own unique traits that help define it and though much of Wormwood is an enigma, other aspects are well known. Wormwood is a very stable dimension with few, if any, anomalies. It does, however, have one unique quirk, the planet is clearly a dimensional focal point for the dimension as a whole. Any dimensional travelers coming to the dimension appear somewhere on the Living Planet, even when traveling via a Random Rift or using a Dimensional Teleport. This works out well for the city of World Gate, which picks up the majority of the stray travelers. Still, appearing at World Gate is a hit or miss proposition unless one knows its specific location or has been there before; a D-traveler could appear anywhere on the planet's surface or even in one of its underground caves close to the surface. As for any remaining

dimensional quirks, none have yet been discovered. Wormwood may have one or more ley line triangles, but so far no one has discovered any, at least not on the surface. We've come to the conclusion that the lack of any other dimensional anomalies is a fluke attributed to the dimension's stability. Then again, a Living Planet is a unique find all in its own and with so many unanswered questions about, there's no telling if the planet plays a distinct role in the stability or not. Our investigations into the mysteries of Wormwood continue.

An excerpt from the book, *Dimensions & Beyond* – by Chronicle

Phase World® & The Three Galaxies™

Phase World is an inter-dimensional terminal of activity located in the Three Galaxies. It not only caters to the multitudes who use the planet as a major space trading port, but to dimensional travelers as well. The city known as Center is at the heart and nerve center of the planet and easily deserves a book of its own to discuss all this amazing place has to offer. The Prometheans who administer the planet control the 'gates' to numerous worlds scattered across the Three Galaxies and beyond. Dimensional travelers and space-faring travelers come and go in droves on a daily basis. At first sight of the busy space port, my companions and I quickly concluded that the Primary Dimensional Medium was a vacuum, with galaxies, stars, and planets being the Secondary Dimensional Medium.

Despite the numerous travelers that come and go through the D-gates, the dimensional fabric of the Three Galaxies is not as weak as one would suspect. Rather, the fabric of the dimension is just permeable enough not to hinder dimensional travel. Our lead Shifter indicated as much when we made the trip, only to appear at Gate Land in Center. (**Design Note:** This means that there is no bonus or penalty to D-Teleport into the Phase World dimension.)

I'm pleased to report that magic levels in the Three Galaxies are at an all time high. While not every planet has an abundance of ley lines, the magic energy is still considered high and there are several places, especially in the Anvil Galaxy, where magic energy permeates a world, altering its inhabitants. Phase World is one such planet, and it's not surprising that our senior Shifter has labeled it as the Central Nexus for at least the Thundercloud Galaxy if not the entire dimension. It seems, however, that each of the Three Galaxies has its own Central Nexus. While Shifters have a sense for this sort of thing, they have been unable to locate the other two Central Nexuses, and some suspect they may be more towards the core of the galaxy, where space travel is extremely dangerous and impossible in some places. Others speculate that they may be on one of a thousand worlds within the Three Galaxies, and perhaps disguised or concealed by a powerful Alien Intelligence or even the legendary Cosmic Forge. The debate continues until new evidence can be found.

Technology dominates the cultures of the Three Galaxies and it is what brings them together. The invention of faster than light travel has made the Phase World dimension just

a little smaller as people from all corners of the Three Galaxies cross the vastness of space in a matter of weeks or months. The principles of technology work in a negative energy matrix, at least the majority do. Technology has progressed to the point that converters to the various energy matrices could easily be invented in the Three Galaxies, however, there is not a demand for them, and the right people would have to be sought out to even begin work on such a lofty project. Some dimensional travelers suspect that the Naruni may have such technology, but this doesn't come as surprise. After all, the Naruni specialize as trans-dimensional arms dealers and it is assumed that they cater to every possible market, including dimensions with different energy matrices. The Naruni neither admit or deny it, and ignore all speculation.

Dimensional travel has its dangers, especially with temporal anomalies that can make it seem like travelers were gone for years at a time, when in reality, they were only gone for a few weeks or months. The Three Galaxies has its share of temporal anomalies, but they seem to be few and far between at irregular intervals. As far as the overall time flow, it seems to be relatively normal and consistent with that of Rifts Earth.

The Three Galaxies is not without its dimensional anomalies, however. The most obvious quirk that we have found concerns dimensional fractures. Most were small, only affecting various land masses on certain planets and even a few places in deep space. A big surprise was revealed with the discovery of the Ghost Planet (see **Rifts® Dimension Book Three: Phase World® Sourcebook**). A whole world that up and disappears at random intervals, making it one of the largest fractures ever found. Several other large dimensional fractures have also been discovered, but nothing on this magnitude.

The dimension of Phase World also seems prone to the multi-Rift phenomenon. This is one of the more common traits found in dimensions so it comes as no surprise that the Three Galaxies has it as well. The Prometheans have somehow been able to manipulate them to their advantage by creating the numerous dimensional gates in the city of Center as well as the space gates in orbit that allow ships to travel from any point in the Three Galaxies to Phase World in a matter of seconds. It would seem that the Prometheans know how to turn disadvantage into an advantage, and profit. Of course, it also helps to have a monopoly on Phase technology as well.

The last of the Three Galaxies' anomalies lie in space. Several ley line triangles are found throughout the Three Galaxies. One of the largest found is light years in size! Travel within it is far more hazardous than the dreaded Bermuda Triangle on Rifts Earth. Still, several of the magic using communities use these triangles to their advantage, especially the handful of Earthbound triangles. Given the size and history of the Three Galaxies, there are bound to be more dimensional anomalies that have yet to be discovered, but for now they remain elusive.

An excerpt from an essay written by Plato of Lazlo on his travels to the Palladium World

The Palladium World is a medieval land of knights and wizards plagued by monster races and an assortment of supernatural creatures. The world is primitive and not fully developed technologically speaking, but their people are rich in history and culture. The debate rages on about Palladium as to its exact dimensional nature. This is directly attributed to the dreaded Old Ones, who have a long and lingering presence on the world. The presence of these immensely powerful Alien Intelligences distorts the dimensional nuances that Shifters rely on to obtain an accurate reading about the dimension. As a result, some Shifters adamantly insist the dimension is artificial and not a natural creation of the Megaverse, but rather the creation of the Old Ones! There is no debate about the power of the Old Ones, just whether they are the creators of the dimension and the Palladium World, or if they just set up shop within it to play their twisted games on humanity and the multitudes of races lost because of these evil machinations. Whatever the case may be, the following is the most comprehensive study done on the Palladium World and I was privileged to be included on this fact-finding mission.

The world of Palladium is believed to exist within a Pocket Dimension. From observations, Palladium appears to be a planet possibly within a micro-universe, though historical records suggest it is a free floating land mass or plate. The secondary dimensional medium is clearly the planet or mass of Palladium, but there is still a debate over the primary medium. One faction believes it to be a vacuum, the other a simple void, but neither can sustain life. The points of light in the Palladium night sky are stars and some suspect a few planets, lending credence to the micro-universe theory, but travel to any of these planets has yet to happen, at least to my knowledge.

Dimensional travel to and from the Palladium World is relatively limited, at least by the inhabitants. Perhaps the occasional adventuring group may travel off world, but as a whole it's not common at all. As for off-worlders, on many occasions the planet has been visited by people known or claiming to be from other worlds. Splugorth Slavers have been known to make raids for exotic and inhuman slaves and combatants for the arena. Rumors even suggest that early Atlanteans may have built the pyramid of Osiris, but that's only a rumor and none have yet confirmed it. As for the dimensional fabric, it is considered permeable and allow outsiders to entry to the dimension without resistance. (There is no bonus or penalty to D-teleport into the Palladium dimension.)

The medieval society of Palladium has accepted magic as its technology and, to one degree or another, magic plays a large role in many aspects of society, economics and technology. Wizards and their ilk are generally highly revered as men of learning and even science. Sorcerers serve as town magistrates, guild leaders, scholars, protectors, adventurers and as advisors to kings and countries. Such a strong and widespread presence of magic in this culture is surprising to us, considering how low the magic level is on the Palladium World, which suggests the planet, in an earlier age, may have been considerably more powerful. In fact, the human, Elven, and Dwarven cultures in

the Palladium World have long and distinguished histories that speak of rune weapons, great wars and even an Age of Chaos and a Time of a Thousand Magicks. Each of these three cultures has well documented histories going back thousands of years, with only the humans being short-lived of the three.

Ley lines do exist on Palladium and magic users are able to tap them for magical energy, but they are comparatively few and are not visible to the naked eye. The overall magic level is considered medium, for while ley lines and nexus points can be found on Palladium, only trained magic users are able to see and locate them. One of our main goals upon arriving was to locate one such place of power to facilitate our return home. I'm glad to say our guide was quite knowledgeable and proved to be an asset to us learning as much as possible and finding our way back home, and safely.

The most advanced technology in Palladium is its ship building. They incorporate the collective knowledge of the various peoples found in their world to make a variety of stout, strong ocean vessels. However, our study of the Palladium culture suggested that technology is currently stagnating. The people are making few strides to develop new and different technologies such as the printing press, black powder weapons or similar technological developments made in Earth history. There has been no industrial revolution and one is not on the horizon. This may be due to the feudal society which limits the education of the lower classes, and the frequent wars transpiring between nations. While the feudal way of life may contribute to the slow pace of advancement, we concluded that magic is the real culprit. It is so widely accepted and used that it diminishes the need to develop technology, at least at this point in time. The majority of my dimension traveling companions, however, feel that it's the Neutral Dimensional Matrix that is causing the creative and industrial stagnation. Traditionally, societies that develop where there is a neutral energy matrix take far longer to develop than other societies found within the other matrices. The neutral energy matrix also means that technology brought from Rifts Earth will not function. (Author's Note: I originally did this to prevent my players from marching into Palladium with Mega-Damage weapons. It was a helpful plot device for them to overcome, and in the end worked out to be a challenging scenario – Carl Gleba. On the other hand, Kevin Siembieda simply has M.D.C. and M.D. weapons and energy converted into S.D.C. and Hit Points, which also works nicely.)

Time seems relatively consistent and Palladium is considered to have a normal time flow, meaning time passes at the same rate as Rifts Earth. This came as quite a relief to my adventuring companions who had far shorter life spans than I. As a dragon, I am long-lived and less affected by dimensional and temporal anomalies. Still, I was glad to know my friends would be home waiting for me, and that I wouldn't have to acquaint myself with their children.

Our observations on the Palladium World were limited, because those of us conducting this study didn't want to accidentally contaminate the rich cultures found on this medieval world. Consequently, few observations were made with respect to dimensional quirks that may exist on the planet. The most apparent dimensional anomaly was the connection Palladium shares with Hades. This may be because Hades is a parallel dimension to Palladium or that, for whatever reason, the dimen-

sional wall between these two realms of existence is thin. Whatever the case may be, careful observation of some of Palladium's Rifts, especially in the Land of the Damned, shown that the two dimensions are connected. Roughly 40% of the time a random Rift will open to somewhere in Hades, and vice versa. For the most part, the demons seem primarily interested in the Land of the Damned, but then again that's where the major ley lines and Rifts are found. Demons from Hades are also the most common supernatural menace to be found elsewhere in the world, with the denizens of Dyval being a poor man's second. There is also a dimensional portal near, but outside the Land of the Damned known as the Devil's Mark and it connects to the Dyvalian Hell. We heard numerous legends about a place called the Palladium of Desires and even some tales that suggest the leader of the Cyber-Knights, Lord Coake, is a native of the Palladium World transplanted to our Earth. That, at least for me, calls for further investigation. Tales of the great battle between the Old Ones and the Gods of Light during that planet's Age of Chaos also suggest the Palladium World may have once flowed with magic on a level approaching what we know on Rifts Earth. However, it is said that the battle, which almost destroyed all life on the planet, sucked all but a stream of magic away. I've heard of similar stories, so it may be possible, but it's impossible to say. Even more interesting, some scholars and practitioners of magic insist that the Old Ones, who, were defeated but not slain, draw on the remaining energy of the planet to sustain themselves while locked in mystic slumber, and that is the reason magic energy is low. Indeed, this planet offers many interesting clues about its past, and its diverse and many races suggest that it may have, indeed, had a past similar to the one we are enjoying in our present time-line on Rifts Earth. All of this begs for a return visit and further study.

In closing, I should note the presence of dimensional fractures that also existed on the Palladium World, though they are few and far between. They may not even be a natural part of the dimension, as evidence suggests that some kind of Rift-type weapon may have been used on a city called Baalgor, during a tragic genocidal conflict the natives call the Elf-Dwarf War. Dimensional fractures are most likely the result of this deadly weapon that destroyed an entire city and laid waist to several thousand square miles, leaving only desert behind. Unfortunately, we were not able to go that far south and see this place for ourselves. Our time on Palladium was short, but memorable.

From a report to the Circle of Twelve just after the start of the Coalition War

Subject: Dimensional travel to Heroes Unlimited Earth.

Purpose: Recruitment of possible allies in our war against the Coalition.

Respected Council Members and the Esteemed King Creed,

Our goals were simple: find powerful allies who would rally to our cause against the Coalition invasion force. While traveling to the dimension we made note of the dimensional nuances so if the need became necessary, there would be sufficient knowledge to return to this dimension. Please let this report serve that purpose. We begin by providing the details of the dimension.

The Megaverse seems infinite, and with that comes an infinite number of dimensions and possibilities. Perhaps that explains why Earth seems to have so many parallel dimensions. One such dimension is a realm full of superhumans who the people call "super-heroes" and "super-villains." The names are rather self-explanatory, and this parallel Earth was in no short supply of amazing superbeings. It is difficult to say whether the Great Cataclysm will not happen (which is our impression) or whether it is yet to come in this reality's future. If the latter, it will be interesting to see if the multitude of self-proclaimed "heroes" will be able to avoid or prevent it from happening, and if one of the "super-villains" may be the reason it happens at all. Only time will tell.

Like Rifts Earth, the Heroes Unlimited dimension is infinite in size, but is considered a Parallel Dimension to our Rifts Earth, an alternate reality. The Primary Dimensional Medium is a vacuum, with thousands of galaxies filling the void.

We were surprised to learn that Heroes Unlimited Earth has a far stronger dimensional fabric than that of Rifts Earth. The fabric is dense and considered to be strong. It is not ironclad, just stronger than those dimensions that have a permeable barrier. (G.M. Note: Supernatural beings wishing to Dimensional Teleport do so at -5%.)

Magic is a thing of myth and legend in this environment, this despite the fact that a small percentage of the superbeings possess magic, cast spells and wield magic weapons. The belief in magic is simply just not there. This strange denial is fueled by the culture's obsession with science and technology and the fact that magic energy is so low even we could barely find traces of ley lines and places of power ourselves. Magic energy is at an all time low in this reality, and shows no signs of increasing any time soon.

The initial assessment of the Dimensional Energy Matrix is that it is negative, like that of our Rifts Earth, and presumably, sister dimensions. Our team had to reassess this evaluation when alien technology was found that used positive technology principles. This is one of the reasons we had to extend our stay by six months. After further tests and observations, we found Heroes Unlimited Earth has a universal energy matrix. The inhabitants seem unaware of this, but with a universal energy matrix numerous low-tech discoveries have been possible and will lead to more complex devices used by both heroes and villains in the dimension. With a universal energy matrix, all kinds of technology can be used on Heroes Unlimited Earth, whether it's created by a mad genius, or brought from another dimension.

Our team assessing Heroes Earth returned nine months after the initial arrival. Our biggest fear was finding that scores of months or even years had passed. To our relief the exact same amount of time had passed on Rifts Earth. This was the final piece of data the team needed, concluding that Heroes Earth had a normal time flow.

Perhaps the biggest mystery we had to solve was if this dimension possessed a Central Nexus. The various Shifters on our team had to meditate for several weeks, due to the near non-existence of magic, before they could open themselves up to the dimension itself. No valid conclusions could be made. A few weeks before we departed, we happened upon a dimensional traveler who claimed to be familiar with this environment. If he can be trusted, this dimension does have a Central Nexus, it's

just not accessible, because it is located on a planet on the far edge of the Milky Way galaxy away from Earth. Given the distance and the low magic level on Earth, it was no wonder that it was undetectable to us by conventional means.

As far as dimensions go, Heroes Earth is relatively tame due in large part to the low magic levels of this parallel Earth. Few if any dimensional anomalies could be found. The first one we identified was artificial and the result of some super-villain's scheme to take over the planet. In the end, the anomaly was short-lived and the villain responsible was apprehended. The only true quirks found were Dimensional Triangles. As faint as it was, there was a slight flare in the Bermuda Triangle during the summer solstice. The team sensed the slight tremors that were caused by several others on the planet as well. Our team seems to believe there are six notable ley line triangles on the planet. No other dimensional anomalies could be found, and it's believed that none exist. Still the team's time in the dimension was limited and independent findings should be considered.

Assessment: During our stay we managed to contact several beings that were willing to rally to our cause. We are pleased to report that a handful have agreed to come to Rifts Earth, and perhaps they can make a difference. However, overall, we believe our cultures, societies and worlds are so dramatically different that the culture shock would be more than the super-heroes could handle. Moreover, while we theorize that the superhuman nature of these super beings and their basis in the universal energy matrix will transform them from ordinary humans into supernatural beings, we have no way of being certain until the first few are brought to our Earth.

A further area of concern is the background and nature of these people. The humans of this parallel Earth are very different from us. I fear our Earth will seem like an alien landscape, but more than that, I fear these super-heroes will be unpredictable and uncontrollable. They seem, by their very nature, to be fiercely independent. They defy convention, bend the law and live by their own vigilante code of justice. If they should, for some reason, object to Tolkeen's methods or reasons, they could turn on us. It is something to be seriously considered.

Author's Note: This is an opportunity to introduce elements from Heroes Unlimited into Rifts Earth if you so desire. How will the heroes react to seeing legions of dragons, demons, Elementals, and other supernatural beings under the control of the Tolkeen forces? Will this cause them to question those who have asked for their help? Will further questions arise when it is known that they are fighting an army of human beings? Sure, they're human supremacists, but can they be blamed when Tolkeen controls demons from the abyss? This should pose some interesting quandaries and make for some great role-playing. In the alternative, superbeings could be recruited from other worlds like Skraypers (see *Rifts® Dimension Book 4: Skraypers*) or any of the places described in the *Aliens Unlimited™* sourcebook for HU2 and *Aliens Unlimited™ Galaxy Guide*. These nonhuman superbeings may have a different outlook than the heroes of Earth. Assuming, of course, that the dimensional travelers can even find these dimensions.

Other Dimensional Plot Ideas

Over the years, independent adventurers, Shifters, Atlanteans, and government sponsored teams of dimensional explorers have been dispatched to various dimensions throughout the Megaverse. Beings like True Atlanteans and Temporal Raiders, not to mention the Splugorth and Naruni, among others, consider the Megaverse, not any one place or planet, to be their home. Their travels can lead to events and consequences that might draw our heroes to worlds other than Rifts Earth, or bring trouble to their doorstep.

The Kingdom of Tolkeen had become especially involved in dimensional travel in the decade before the Coalition War. This information, like so many secrets and magic items, has been lost with the collapse of that nation under the heel of the CS. However, bits and pieces of data (sometimes a lot) remain, and it is only a matter of finding where it was lost, hidden or taken for safe keeping. For example, a Tolkeen team had discovered the Earth of **Systems Failure™** Earth just before the fall of the Kingdom. And with Tolkeen gone, no one seems to remember that a team was sent to investigate and study the Mechanoids, or that the team has failed to report in. In all likelihood they were slain by the mechanical monsters, but what if something worse is unfolding? What if the Mechanoids somehow find their way back to Rifts Earth?

G.M. Tips on Dimensional Travel

Dimensional travel may not be for all Game Masters, but fear not, the tips below should help alleviate any tension you might have in running a scenario or campaign that spans the Megaverse.

1. Relax and have fun. Sure, you've gone through a lot of trouble to create this huge dimension and you want the players to marvel at your genius by exploring every part of it. But don't stress if they don't. For unforeseen reasons the group may have taken a detour, or had to return home to re-supply. Don't let this be a problem, because you can always bring the players back, be it by accident or design. You also don't necessarily have to start them at the same location. Be creative and find ways to work what you've created into your game without forcing it down the throats of the players.

2. Be flexible. This seems to be a common theme found in all tips for Game Masters and it's probably one of the most important aspects to being a good G.M. Just because the players turned left when they should have turned right doesn't mean a failure on your part. Do your best to get them and keep them on track, but if not, use that creative imagination of yours to roll with them and improvise. Flesh out that new dimension you created as you go. Think modular and drop in cool ideas, people and places wherever they seem to fit. Some people are at their best when things are done on the fly, and it can be challenging and fun, too. Build on what you already have, and let that imagination loose. Even if those ideas are not written down or fully fleshed out in your own mind. The players don't know that. Just be sure to take notes during the game or remember what you've done so you can get it all down later. Your players are an invaluable resource and can help you spawn new ideas.

3. M.D.C. vs S.D.C. This depends on your game and whether you run it entirely in M.D.C. values or S.D.C. values. S.D.C. values should not be a problem, just modify M.D.C. critters, armor and weapons down to S.D.C. using **Rifts® Conversion Book One**. If you're running a game with M.D.C. and you find it easier to turn the monsters into M.D.C. equivalents then go for it. However, if you want to go from, say, Rifts Earth (a Mega-Damage environment) to Palladium (definitely an S.D.C. environment), you might want to scale down your Rifts group so they don't wreak havoc. And if they do, remember there will be consequences for their actions, and the next thing they know, they're facing an entire army or some of that world's most powerful beings.

The magic energy is much lower than that of Rifts Earth, so the characters, even magical ones, will be weaker. You can go through the process of *temporarily* converting the players to S.D.C. with a simple formula. I recommend taking the total M.D.C. value and use that value as the combined S.D.C. and Hit Points of characters while in this S.D.C. world. Then determine S.D.C. and Hit Points. I like to use 60% and 40%, 60% for Hit Points and 40% for S.D.C., since Hit Points usually end up being higher than S.D.C. values at later levels. For example, a character with 400 M.D.C. would have 240 Hit Points and 160 S.D.C. The final step is to assign an Armor Rating (A.R.), if applicable.

M.D.C. armor and vehicles need to be treated a little differently. The quality of the armor and how much it covers will determine its Armor Rating and S.D.C. Full environmental body armor should have an Armor Rating from 15 to 19. This simply reflects how tough it is and how completely protected the body is. The S.D.C. conversion should be 2 or 3 times the M.D.C. value. For example, a suit of Gladiator or CS Dead Boy armor from **Rifts®** is full environmental body armor and made for combat, but it's not as tough as power armor, so I'd grant an A.R. of 16 or 17. Since the armor is generally of good quality, three times the M.D.C. value would be 240 S.D.C. for the Gladiator and 300 for a suit of CS armor that had 100 M.D.C. Or you could make the latter 200 S.D.C. by going with only two times more. I'd do the same three to one conversion for power armor, bumping the A.R. up to 17, 18, or even 19, depending on what it is (for example, a Glitter Boy or Ulti-Max are both definitely A.R. 19, while a SAMAS or Predator would be 17 or 18). Yes, these are powerful suits of armor, but it makes sense and works considering they are superior to comparable existing Palladium technology, which may make some opponents mistake them for magic armor. That's okay too. Just remember, this high-tech armor has to last for the character, because repairs in the Palladium World will be *impossible*. Once the armor is used up and down to zero S.D.C., it's shot and the tech-visitor will have to resort to "local" body armor. Oh, and don't worry about justifying why an S.D.C. weapon can damage an M.D.C. alloy, it just does – the dimensional nuances have changed the armor to comply with that reality. And, yes, the laws of physics can change from dimension to dimension.

4. Dimensional Details. In the creation of dimensions it's not necessary to define every aspect if you don't want to. After all, mysteries are good for role-playing. Don't let your players beat it to death, just explain to them that there are some things that simply cannot be explained or discovered at this moment.

New Dimensions

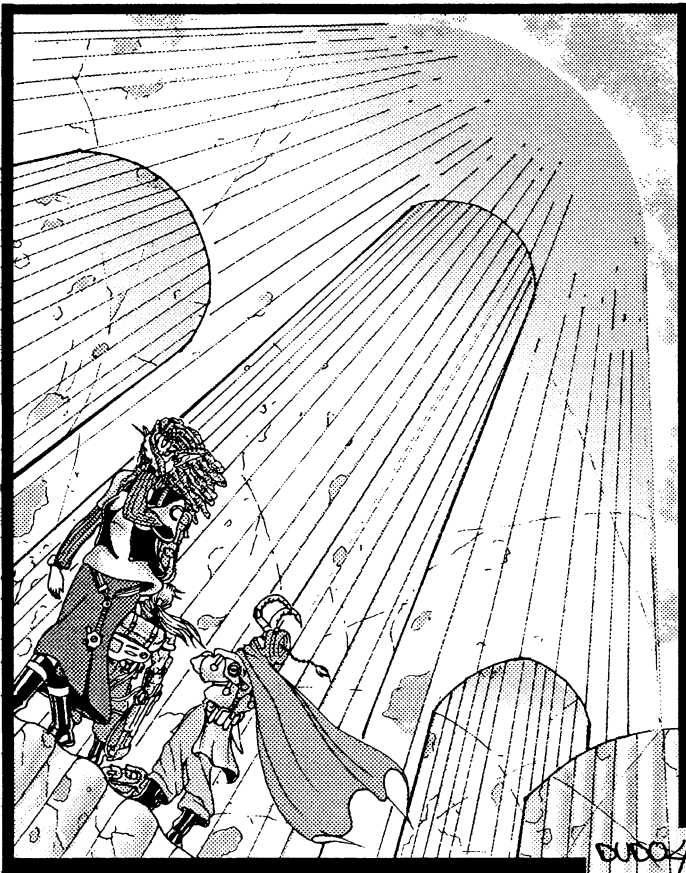
To demonstrate the Megaverse Builder in action, the three dimensions presented below were built using the rules and suggestions presented earlier in this book. They vary in complexity to show Game Masters either how much or how little detail they can include in their own games. To go along with each dimension are several *Hook, Line and Sinker™* adventure ideas. Just by rolling on the various tables it all starts to come together, but you have to determine how it all works, and with that, adventure plots begin to form.

The Dimension of Spires

The Dimension of Spires is a Pocket Dimension that has a close relationship with Rifts Earth. The dimension is small, only measuring 1,400 miles (2,240 km) at its longest point. Spires has an irregular shape that seems to shift from time to time, so calculating its exact size is impossible. Dimensional travelers have discovered that this dimension can be used as a shortcut to cross vast distances on Rifts Earth in a relatively short time. Entering the dimension is very easy (+20%) with its weak dimensional fabric. However, the dimension is not without its dangers.

At first glimpse the place looks like thousands of Roman style columns rising out of a gray mist. Some rise to heights that go beyond the veil of the dimension, but most are at ground level. In fact, they make up the ground! They come in all sizes, from gargantuan (measuring at the largest a half mile/0.8 km in diameter) to as tiny as 6 inches (0.15 m) in diameter. The columns also vary in height, and rarely are there more than a half dozen that are level at any given location. The only exception seems to lie at the center of the dimension where a pillar that's 16 miles (25.6 km) in diameter and 3 miles (4.8 km) high dominates the landscape. This is where the Central Nexus is located. At the top of the gigantic spire is a permanently open Rift that fluctuates between various dimensions. A dozen small spires laid out in a similar fashion to Stonehenge surround it, though the configuration is five times the diameter of Stonehenge. The Rift is monstrous, stretching 500 feet (152 m) into the air and over a 1,000 feet (305 m) across. Numerous ley lines intersect here as well as in various locations around the Central Nexus spire. These multiple nexus points around the spire are usually found somewhere on the perimeter and almost look like bluish colored doors going into the spire itself. The surrounding pillars form jagged steps slowly rising to each of the various Rifts.

There is no sky to speak of, just a gray fog that covers the dimension and can be seen as far as the horizon with the occasional lightning bolt jetting across the sky. The gaps between the columns also have a misty gray fog filling in the space. Some columns do go beyond this gray veil (about four miles/6.4 km up), but most are found at what's effectively ground level. There is no visible light source, and it always seems like an overcast day. This never changes, making it difficult for dimensional visitors to keep track of time.



Dimensional Characteristics of Spires

Shifters who arrive at this dimension for the first time will quickly realize that the Primary Dimensional Medium is simply a void. A gray mist surrounds the dimension's Secondary Medium, which is hundreds of thousands of pillars. What supports these pillars is anyone's guess, and as crazy as it might sound, some people have speculated that this location is actually the basement for the dimension of Rifts Earth and the pillars are what supports the dimension. Others believe this is where the legendary Greek Titan, Atlas, resides, or perhaps it was created by one of the other Greek or Roman gods and forgotten. Whatever it is and whoever made it, the place is another dimension closely linked to Earth.

Magic is equivalent to that of Rifts Earth, with several ley lines and nexus points found throughout the dimension. The numerous ley lines converge at the gigantic pillar at what is considered to be the exact center of the dimension and the dimension's Central Nexus. This nexus point consists of eight intersecting ley lines and is a hotbed of Rift and dimensional activity that is off the scale. While random Rifts are always opening and closing to other dimensions, several times throughout the year the nexus specifically opens to the Saint Louis Rift. The times coincide with the annual equinoxes and solstices on Rifts Earth. Because the magic level is so high, Ley Line Storms run rampant around this tiny dimension. Some Shifters believe being connected to the St. Louis Rift causes this dimension to receive a lot of magical feedback from the permanently open Rift back on Earth, and, as a result, the excess magic energy is dissipated in the storms that surge unchecked through the dimension.

The dimension's Energy Matrix is compatible with Rifts Earth, making it a negative matrix. All technology brought from Rifts Earth will function as normal, giving travelers a chance to defend themselves against any troublesome supernatural travelers who may be present.

The last of the dimensional characteristics is the flow of time. While telling time without a watch in this dimension is nearly impossible, the flow of time is normal and in sync with Rifts Earth. So however long is spent in Spires, the same amount of time passes on Rifts Earth.

The Dangers of Spires

The dimension has no known native inhabitants nor relics of its past, so there is little fear of trespassing or angering the locals. The real problem stems from the constant flow of travelers who have discovered this little dimensional shortcut. Some travelers are benign and will not help nor hinder any other visitors. However, the majority of the travelers using Spires are supernatural beings, like Temporal Raiders, Minions of Splugorth, dragons, demons, Deevils, Oni, and a host of other creatures that can Dimensional Teleport. These creatures will frequently attack without provocation. Some are just evil and aggressive by nature and try to intimidate, rob or slay anyone they encounter. Others challenge mortals and those they consider to be lesser beings compared to themselves for "sport" and "fun," or out of spite and meanness.

Other danger comes from the treacherous terrain of the dimension. Rarely will a traveler have more than half a mile (.8 km) of level ground and that's only when on top of large pillars. Visitors will find that they are constantly climbing and jumping from one uneven pillar to another. Should a traveler fall into the swirling mist at the bottom of the pillars where one might expect to find ground, they are lost forever, or if they are lucky, merely teleported back to where they started on Rifts Earth, or to a different dimension that is also linked to Earth and one they may have visited in the past. However, in most locations, the pillars are the ground, and it is their staggered height and size, whether it is by a few inches, feet or miles, that creates the rugged up and down terrain. Furthermore, the landscape sometimes changes around the visitors without warning. One set of pillars rises, another set lowers, as if moving in some predetermined pattern. The dimension is least stable and the pillars set most widely apart along its boundaries, so traveling through the center is pretty safe and solid.

A more common, though pedestrian danger is people slipping on one of the smooth marble pillars and falling several feet to land on a very narrow pillar and impaling themselves on it as if it were a spear or pole. All in all, the terrain is manageable for mortal beings who are careful, and an easy trek for beings who can use line of sight Teleportation or are Mega-Damage creatures. **Note:** Damage from a fall is 1D6 S.D.C./Hit Points of damage per every ten feet (3 m) fallen. Getting stabbed or impaled does 2D6+3 points of damage. Supernatural beings and other M.D.C. creatures can take this sort of stumbling and bumps all day long without damage.

Severe *Ley Line Storms*, on the other hand, are a danger to every visitor, especially to creatures of magic, sorcerers and the supernatural. In fact, Ley Line Storms are the norm for this di-

mension, and all effects are doubled and last twice as long as on Rifts Earth. There is a single Ley Line Storm that constantly flows up and down the various ley lines in the dimension. This Mega-Storm, as it has been referred to, is massive in size and all the effects and durations of a Ley Line Storm are tripled for it. Spells to resist such storms are half as effective or don't work at all. Fortunately, most travelers will have plenty of warning because this storm, with its eerie glow and crackling lightning, lights up the dreary dimension and can be seen coming from miles away. The lightning activity in the distance increases dramatically and the very air feels charged, 15 minutes before it hits. Along the ley line, the storm rolls in like a slow moving thundercloud low to the ground (the pillars). Those caught high up on a pillar that places them right in the storm as it passes over will feel as if they've been swallowed by the storm, but if they hug the pillar and don't move, they are actually less likely to feel the storm's fury, and it will pass them by without incident or serious damage.

The Pillars of Spires

The pillars range in size from as small as six inches (0.15 m) in diameter to as large as a half mile (0.8 km or roughly 795 m). The pillars are Mega-Damage structures with the average pillar having hundreds to thousands of M.D.C. The pillars can be destroyed and have no type of special resistance. It is not uncommon to see the occasional blasted pillar or a pillar that looks like it might collapse under your feet. Depleting the M.D.C. of a pillar will destroy any structure that is above the surface. To completely destroy a pillar, it would need to be targeted below the veil of fog where it has double the usual M.D.C. Average pillars range in size from 100 feet (30.5 m) to 1,000 feet (305 m) in diameter. Smaller pillars are basically anything under a hundred feet (30.5 m). The M.D.C. of a typical pillar: Tiny (spear-like poles): 1D4x100 M.D.C. Small: 2D6x100. Medium-Sized: 3D6x1000 M.D.C. Large: 1D6x10,000 M.D.C. Gigantic: 3D6x10,000 M.D.C.

The consistency of the pillars is that of white or gray colored marble, but the texture is that of polished steel. Blasting the pillars produces rock fragments, and it's not uncommon to see rubble and shattered stone spread around various locations in the dimension. No one has been able to identify the actual material that makes up the pillars. Those that have tried to build using this material find that it is hard to work with, splinters and cracks easily and is difficult to bond using conventional mortar or glue. Furthermore, after all that work, any marble removed from the dimension of Spires crumbles to dust in 1D4+2 days. It should also be noted that even a Stone Master cannot use any of their abilities to work with this stone, nor can they manipulate, move or influence the pillars in their native dimension, further suggesting that the pillars are *not* actually made of marble or stone.

One other unusual property of the pillars is their ability to regenerate damage. This is not noticeable when just passing through because they only recover 10 M.D.C. per day, but over time a damaged pillar is completely restored, returning to its normal size and height. People who can see and sense magic energy will note a hint of magic coursing through the pillars. Whether this is because of the make-up of the dimension, or the

constant ley line activity or something inherent in the stone itself is unknown.

Dimensional Quirks

Aside from the uncommon landscape and Mega-Storm, the dimension of Spires also has a few other unusual characteristics. *First*, the air is breathable by human standards, and the temperature is a constant 70 degrees.

Second, the laws of aerodynamics do not apply. This means that nothing can fly in the dimension, not even creatures of magic or supernatural creatures who have wings or even those who fly via magic. It is unknown why this is, so all creatures and vehicles will find themselves forced to walk. Anything flying into the dimension, via a dimensional portal, will crash as soon as it enters the dimension. (This might be one of the dimensions linked to the Bermuda Triangle and helps to explain where so many missing aircraft have gone, stranding the pilots in a realm they could never comprehend, especially before the Coming of the Rifts.)

Third, the dimension shares a unique bond with Rifts Earth and seems to have Rifts opening to every continent on the planet. That's why experienced dimensional travelers use the Dimension of Spires as a shortcut to travel great distances in a comparatively short period of time or to avoid obstacles like oceans, war zones, etc. Shifters who are familiar with the Dimension of Spires think of it as a "backdoor" to any content on Rifts Earth, and use it to travel to specific destinations. It is a fairly recent discovery for Shifters and Artifact Hunters, and they typically keep it a closely guarded secret, not even sharing the information with other Shifters or their demonic minions. Rifts scattered around the Dimension of Spires seem to roughly correspond to general locations on Rifts Earth. For example, the center spire's numerous Rifts go to various locations all over North America. Traveling in the direction that is effectively south of the Central Spire, one will find Rifts going to South America and Australia. Likewise, traveling east will lead to Rifts going to Atlantis, Europe, and Africa, while traveling west will find Rifts going to Russia and Asia. Finding the right Rift is the key. The advantages to using the Dimension of Spires are two-fold, especially if traveling from Rifts Earth to a different location on Earth. One, the distance is drastically reduced with the whole dimension being less than 10% of the Earth's diameter. Two, even if a traveler gets lost, there are so many Rifts that lead back to Earth, it is difficult not to be able to return home. Of course, one could end up on the wrong side of the planet if not careful, but that's no much of a risk for Shifters who stop to "read" a dimensional portal before stepping through it. Knowing where a Rift exits on Earth also helps to provide an idea where one might be in the dimension itself (i.e., if this is South America, then Canada must be in the opposite direction). Since even random Rifts open and close at regular intervals (and are likely to lead back to Earth somewhere), all a lost traveler has to do is wait till one opens up and step through the Rift when it shifts to Earth. Travelers don't even have to spend any of their own P.P.E., they simply have to wait (typically 1D4 hours).

Despite the obstacles, changing landscape, inability to fly and being stuck in a dimension where there is no naturally occurring water or food (i.e., fruit bearing and edible plants or wildlife),



most supernatural creatures find Spires to be an inviting dimensional crossroads, and don't mind the walk. Few dimensional visitors linger for more than an hour or two, and come to the Dimension of Spires specifically to access one of its many portals to Rifts Earth and other places. Those who do linger for days or weeks at a time are typically lesser beings who stalk the forest of pillars, preying upon weaker dimensional travelers and first time visitors.

While Spires has a strong connection to Rifts Earth, the random Rifts do open to several *other dimensions* rather consistently. Two of those dimensions are the Hell dimensions known as *Hades* and *Dyval*. Numerous other dimensions also appear from time to time, but Hades and Dyval are the next most common after Rifts Earth. All random Rifts that appear for various locations in other dimensions are completely random without any set pattern. Only the portals to Rifts Earth are consistent and they cycle by at intervals of 1D4 hours.

An Assortment of Dimensional Travelers

The dimension sees the most use from a group of demons called the *Oni*. Their native dimension has a Rift that opens into Spires at regular intervals. This location in Spires happens to correspond to the Rift going to *Rifts Japan* and is most likely the source of the demon problems that country faces. It's not uncommon to see Oni prowling around the dimension and disappearing through the various random Rifts, most likely depositing them on Rifts Earth, especially in Japan and Southeast Asia.

Demons and devils also make frequent use of this dimension. For demons, Spires is connected to Demons' Gate in Hades. A random Rift opens several times a day and any curious demon can just step through. Most demons just go on little hunting expeditions looking for the occasional dimensional traveler to snack on. Others that are part of the Minion Wars (See *The Palladium Fantasy RPG® World Book: The Land of the Damned™ Book One, Chaos Lands* for details on the Minion Wars) purposely go through the Rifts either hoping to ambush their enemies, or looking for an escape route. Their number one enemy is Deevils, with humans and other intelligent, mortal life forms regarded as much as prey and playthings as potential enemies.

Devi/Deevils seem to use the dimension as a means of transportation to the Palladium World and to Earth, but are most common around the Rifts that go to the Magic Zone and Asia. Why this occurs is unknown, but it can't be good. Since most of the Devil Lords are trying to gather more worshipers, their minions are probably on missions carrying messages to and from their masters and various priests and witches around the Megaverse and on Rifts Earth.

Not just demons and Deevils are found in the Dimension of Spires, but a host of other beings as well. The Dragon Lords from Freehold knew of this dimension, and probably used it as an escape route. Many Shifters from Tolkeen also knew of Spires and may have fled there as well. This was, of course, very risky, but at the time the Coalition Forces were the bigger threat. Game Masters should feel free to stock the dimension with any type of creatures they wish as this dimension is one giant dimensional crossroads or thoroughfare.

Adventure Ideas for Spires

Note: Hook, Line & Sinkers™ are the original concept of Jolly Blackburn. The name is a trademark of Palladium Books.

Tolkeen Escape

Hook: The war took a turn for the worse for the Tolkeen defense force. As the last of their positions were overrun, one intrepid commander decided that rather than fight to the bitter end, it would be better to preserve some of Tolkeen's secret weapons, especially some of the Iron Juggernauts.

Line: Fighting a vicious battle with the Coalition Army closing in fast, a Shifter opens a quick portal for the last of Tolkeen's forces to make good their escape. If the player characters are part of this retreating group they'll be instrumental in holding off as many Coalition troops as possible while a squad of Iron Juggernauts and ranking officers goes through the Rift.

Sinker: As the last of the Tolkeen defenders make their way through the Rift, one of the characters spies a group of innocent Tolkeen citizens. The Rift is starting to become unstable and if the characters leave now they will definitely make it through. However, if they try and fight their way through the CS forces to help the refugees they may not make it back to the escape portal in time. What do the characters do?

If they help the refugees and the portal closes, another one opens up in the nick of time and they see a stranded Iron Juggernaut leap through it. The CS will not pursue the enemy through

a Rift, so it seems their bacon is saved. However, what they won't realize is that this is not a portal to Spires, but a random Rift that opened as a result of all the craziness transpiring along Tolkeen's triangle of ley lines. Where does it take them? Rifts China? Russia? The New West? An alien world? Into a Dimensional Storm? We leave that decision to the G.M.

Tolkeen Escape, Part Two (optional)

Hook: Having just made it through the portal (using the HLS above), the characters realize that the Tolkeen defenders who entered before them are locked in a heated battle.

Line: Taking stock of the situation, hordes of demons (it could be Deevils, Oni, or any other monsters that the G.M. desires) are attacking the already weakened Tolkeen defenders.

Sinker: One of the player characters quickly notices a flaw in the monsters' attack. They have left their flank wide open. The characters can easily make a difference and break up this group of attacking monsters, however, to do so they have to leave any refugees unguarded or protected by only one or two warriors.

An Unexpected Detour

Hook: While traveling through a particularly unstable region of the Magic Zone, called the Dimension Zone, the player characters are forced through a random Rift. It can be the result of a Dimensional Vortex, an unusual effect from a Ley Line Storm, or else it was the only escape route from an attacking demon or monster (or maybe it was a dimensional trap not meant for them).

Line: The player group arrives relatively unscathed in the Dimension of Spires. Taking stock of the new dimension reveals its unusual terrain and features. One of the characters or an NPC will suggest doing a little exploring. There is no apparent or imminent danger, so why not?

Sinker: Getting back to Rifts Earth should not be too difficult. A Shifter can easily return the group home, or after a few hours one of the random dimensional portals will open to a location on Rifts Earth close to where they want to be (or not). If the G.M. wants to make life interesting, he might consider one of the following: 1) The group overhears demons or dimensional travelers (from Tolkeen, or the Federation of Magic, or Atlantis or elsewhere) planning something that will put thousands of innocent people at risk unless someone does something to stop them back on Rifts Earth, or they learn of some other terrible plot. 2) The group has picked the wrong Rifts and appear several hundred miles away from where they were or want to be. And maybe it's someplace where some new trouble is brewing, like Arzno, Arizona, or near the Calgary Rift, or Xiticix hivelands, or Rifts China, or anywhere the G.M. might want. 3) They arrive safely on Earth, only it's a parallel Earth (G.M.s, have fun).

Shanghai Shifter

Hook: The characters are either hired or are on some type of quest or adventure that will take them across one of the oceans on Rifts Earth.

Line: Rather than taking a ship and risking travel on the high seas, they learn of a local Shifter who is willing to transport people via a dimensional Rift from here to their destination point in a matter of minutes and at an amazing cut-rate price!

Sinker: The Shifter is an unscrupulous rogue who takes people to the Dimension of Spires and leaves them there unless they pay a steep price. He'll tell the group that, oops, a minor flux in the space-time continuum has caused a miss-jump through the Rift. He can lead the players through the Dimension of Spires to the correct exit Rift, but he must demand a considerably higher price. Easily ten times his original asking price, i.e., several thousand credits or magic items in trade per each character in the group. If the player characters refuse and try to attack him, he'll simply Dimensional Teleport *home*, or use his familiar to buy time so he can fast talk them into accepting the deal before giving up and vanishing. Either way the players are left with the choice of going on by themselves and trying to find a way home, or paying the villain's price.

The Beautiful Lady

Hook: The player characters are either trapped or have arrived unexpectedly in the Dimension of Spires.

Line: The adventurer group is hopelessly lost and wandering aimlessly through the dimension trying to find a way out when they come across someone. Game Masters, you should improvise to suit your group. Here's an example, a beautiful woman (P.B. 23) waves to the group enticing them to come over. She is willing to help the group and lead them out of the dimension.

Sinker: The beautiful woman is really a Succubus Demon or a hunted refugee (who is a beauty or a shape changing creature), and the hunters aren't nice or human. If she's a villain, she leads them into a trap where the group may get sold into slavery to demons, Deevils, Splugorth or other inhuman slavers, or beaten and robbed. If she is a fugitive on the run, she's helping them so if her hunters should catch up to her (and they do), she can implore the group to help protect her. Whether she's good or evil, and where this may all lead, we leave to the G.M.

A Damsel in Distress

Hook: While traveling through the dimension the characters come across a typical damsel in distress.

Line: A pole has been driven into the ground and she is chained up and gagged. She is scantily clad and clearly in distress. Any Shifter in the group familiar with the Dimension of Spires (even stories) will know that humans, Elves and other mortals are sometimes captured, chained and used in blood sacrifices for rituals involving dimensional travel and summoning. A Shifter will also know it may be a trap.

Sinker: The maiden is real all right, however, she has been left there as bait by some type of monster or villain. The bad guy (or guys) hides nearby, invisible or using Chameleon or some type of concealment until he's ready to make his move. When the characters try to free the maiden, the trap, whatever it is, is sprung.

The Helpful Shifter

Hook: Either by necessity or for adventure, the player characters have to use dimensional travel.

Line: Hearing about the adventurers' situation, a Shifter volunteers to help the characters free of charge. He or she seems sincere, and is very eager to help.

Sinker: Regardless of what dimension the players "think" they're going to, they end up in Spires. The Shifter covers up this turn of events with some excuse, but promises the group that if they are patient, all will be fine and they will make it to their destination shortly. Of course, the Shifter has alternate plans for the characters. What could they be? Perhaps a Demon Lord is waiting to receive his sacrifices and the Shifter is delivering them to his clutches. Or perhaps the characters have enemies and the Shifter is the instrument of their destruction. On the other hand, the Shifter may be a good guy! There are good guys and heroes even among Shifters, despite their reputation for villainy and association with supernatural evil. The Shifter might have learned about a plot against them and has whisked them away to the Dimension of Spires so he or she may warn them and perhaps change their plans. Or the Shifter may have good intentions, only to have been tricked into taking them to Spires and smack dab into an ambush. The possibilities are endless.

The Great Machine

Few dimensions can compare to the Great Machine. When first arriving at this dimension it appears to be the guts of a massive mechanical machine. The walls are lined with printed circuit boards, wires, pipes and conduit. All sorts of mechanical devices are everywhere. The light produced is artificial, and even the air smells recycled, like that found in a sealed submarine or spacecraft. There is no exit to speak of, just endless corridors that can stretch for miles at a time, that connect to small rooms and massive chambers, most of them seemingly empty and devoid of inhabitants. There is always a mechanical hum, or the sound of heavy machinery behind the walls or in the distance. Despite all of this, no one has yet to deduce the purpose of the Great Machine or who may have built it. Is it meant to produce a certain product, perform some sort of function, or is it a generator or giant space station? Or could it be a doomsday machine counting down the minutes until it goes off and decimates an entire galaxy or maybe a hundred realities? No one knows these answers and most searches for the answers into the Great Machine only lead to more questions or death! Shifters who have visited the Great Machine and searched its corridors, and survived to tell the tale, report that there is some sort of consciousness within the Great Machine. Those with the ability to sense evil say that the very walls radiate it, and psychics are haunted with horrible dreams when inside this machine dimension. Few ever willingly go back to this dreaded dimension, even if they encountered no danger while present. Even those whose visit was short and uneventful compare it to a mechanical hell. Meanwhile, of the many who vow to unravel the mystery of the Great Machine, less than a handful are ever seen again, and those who are willing to talk speak of mechanical legions who defend the alien machine realm.

Dimensional Characteristics of the Great Machine

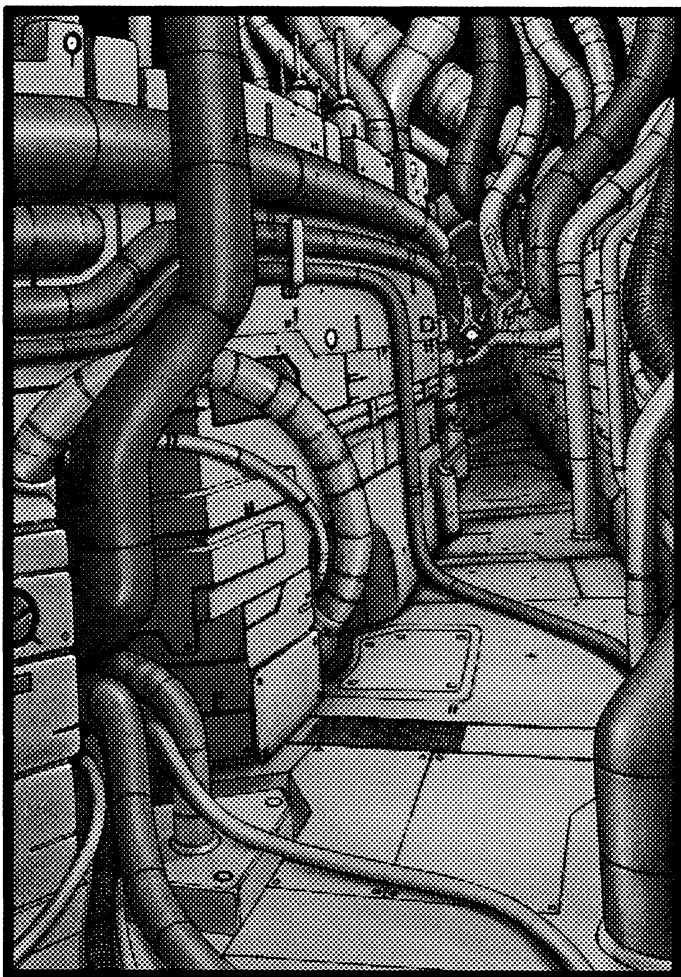
When the Great Machine was first discovered, Shifters were surprised to learn that it resided within a small Pocket Dimension tucked away in the Astral Plane. The few Shifters who had time to open themselves up to the dimension believe it to be no more than 60,000 miles (96,000 km) in diameter. The Primary Medium is the machine itself. There is no Secondary Medium, and the hallways and rooms are simply large spaces between the massive amounts of machinery that make up the guts of the Great Machine.

Getting to the dimension by way of Dimensional Teleporting is not a difficult task. The dimensional fabric is considered permeable, allowing for relatively easy passage to the dimension, it's finding it initially that is difficult. The dimension is tucked away in a remote corner of the Astral Plane. It can be found if one is traveling through the white emptiness of that plane by seeking an area that has dark storm clouds swirling around a massive horizontal vortex. Getting to the dimension is possible, surviving within the dimension, however, is another task entirely.

If the Great Machine has any saving graces it's that despite the amount of metal and artificial surfaces, the magic level is surprisingly high. While nowhere near the level of Rifts Earth, ley lines and a few nexus points are clearly present, and the few who have survived the perils of this dimension often report their escape was made possible only by tapping into the extra mystic energy of a ley line or nexus to escape, and that without it, they would have surely been trapped. Finding these places of magic and accessing them, however, can be extremely difficult. Ley Line Walkers who have visited the Great Machine sensed the lines of power at various locations, and could tell they were less than a mile (1.6 km) away, but not exactly where. The Great Machine is a physical construct with many levels like an office building, and the mystic energy is often located on a different floor or locked away inside a shielded corridor. Thus, a ley line or nexus could be several levels above or below a visitor, or the most direct path blocked by machinery or rivers of liquid metal, or barred by the robot defenders of the machine dimension. The place is a twisted maze of machinery with many floors, levels and tunnels, making finding one's way inside of it a difficult task. Nexus points are even less common than ley lines and more difficult to find. When they are located, they are guarded by machine defenders. **Note:** Nexus points are under constant surveillance by the Great Machine and typically protected by 2-5 defender generators (1D4+1 of them, discussed later) ready to create mechanical defenders as needed. Moreover, anything or anyone arriving through one of these nexus points (or trying to access one to leave) is instantly attacked.

Bringing alien technology to the Great Machine is not an issue. All kinds of energy weapons and machines function in this dimension thanks to its universal energy matrix. In fact, each defender generator has a universal energy compensator built in to allow it to manufacture numerous types of energy sources. It typically builds whatever is needed, but this can be limited to the amount of resources available.

Some Pocket Dimensions seem to fall to the side when it comes to time, especially those that have an association with the



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Astral Plane. They are either slower or faster, depending on how out of sync they are with the time flow. Well that is not the case with the Great Machine. Time flows at a normal rate here, despite its link to the Astral Plane.

The dimension has no Central Nexus to speak of. While magic energy is very high within the Great Machine, it is not concentrated in any one location. This is why the death count may be so high for visiting practitioners of magic. Shifters, in particular, are drawn to locations where the magic energy is at its highest. When visitors discover that there is no Central Nexus, they panic and make mistakes that often lead to their deaths.

Like other dimensions, the Great Machine has its unusual quirks. Something that most Warlocks will notice almost immediately upon arrival is the absence of the four Elements, well at least the mystic portion. Why this is, remains a mystery. It could be because of all the artificial materials found in the dimension, or they simply could never have existed to begin with. Whatever the case may be, practitioners of magic will find that any spells related in any way to the mystic aspect of the four Elements will have a hefty cost to cast; Elemental spells cost four times the normal P.P.E. Also, the duration is half what it would normally be. This applies to normal wizard spells that have an elemental aspect to them as well (fire, lightning, etc.).

Another unusual characteristic of this machine dimension is that it is connected to another dimension. Random Rifts have a 01-40% chance of opening up to the *Garbage Pit dimension*. Why this is, is anyone's guess, but more robotic defenders, as

well as garbage, end up in the Garbage Pit than any other dimension. This also identifies one of the major sources of garbage for the Garbage Pit because the Great Machine disposes of anything that it can't use or recycle through the Rifts to that dimension. When a Rift opens, garbage is typically dumped via a non-combat automaton. Also, while the Great Machine's dimension is found within the Astral Plane, it is not associated with it in anyway. The Astral Plane can best be described as a way station on a road to finding the dimension of the Great Machine.

Two locations in the Great Machine are under the heaviest surveillance and protection: Uni-Nexus One and Uni-Nexus Two. In each of these locations is a permanently open Rift. One location seems like a deliberate construction: A massive octagonal piece of metal with all kinds of mechanical monitors around it and a permanently open Rift within it. What's odd is the amount of machinery connected to the portal. It would seem, at one time, the Great Machine experimented with dimensional travel. Whatever caused the Rift to remain open permanently is a mystery, but computer records indicate a massive P.P.E. spike around 300 years ago that was off the scale. Could this possibly be one of the aftershocks caused by the erupting of the Rifts on Earth? The Great Machine initially isolated the Rift and destroyed whatever came through. Then during one particular battle, the power supply for the defender generators was cut off. The Great Machine initially thought that section would be overrun by some new type of mechanical invaders. To its surprise, one of its repair automatons inadvertently bypassed a few non-essential systems and was able to draw power directly from the Rift itself. The tide of the battle was turned and the area cleansed of all the cybernetic invaders. The Great Machine discovered by sheer coincidence that it could tap power from the Rift. A new power supply that proved to be unlimited, no matter how much energy was drawn from it. Effectively, a P.P.E. converter had been created by accident. It's a one of a kind device that even the Great Machine cannot replicate, because the original plan resided within the area computer node which was damaged during the battle, and that data is lost. Plus the Great Machine is hesitant to play with a dimensional phenomenon it doesn't understand, so for now the Great Machine just feeds off of the unlimited power it provides and defends it to the hilt. Since the device is unique, the Great Machine goes to great lengths to protect it.

The second permanently opened Rift lies within the only ley line triangle found in the machine dimension. The triangle is only two miles (3.2 km) in area, however a Rift consumes the entire triangle during peak times and is located in the center the rest of the time. Magic energy constantly sparks and crackles in the triangle, causing numerous Ley Line Storms every week. Over the years, these storms have severely damaged the mechanical devices in and around the area. Most of the walls look like black and gray candle wax that has melted. The Great Machine has ceased trying to contain the Rift or make repairs to this portion of its being. The closest defender generators are a mile (1.6 km) away, and they help to patrol the area to destroy and contain any intruders who might enter via the triangle's Rift. The problem, however, is the sheer size of the Rift which extends several floors above and below the main chamber. This allows intruders to pop in anywhere unannounced. From time to time, the Rift fluctuates, increasing and decreasing its size by as much as 50%. It is during the periods of decreased activity that

the Great Machine quickly sends in scores of defenders to eliminate any invaders.

Dimensional Raiders who know about the Great Machine have dreams of acquiring the treasure trove of technology found within the dimension. The matter/energy converter is one of the most coveted prizes, as well as the P.P.E. converter at Uni-Nexus One, but there are other devices, weapons and secrets to be had. Even the makeshift robot defenders would make good prizes, as most of the robots utilize a unique metal that bends and twists with only a slight electrical charge, eliminating the necessity for vulnerable joints. The most coveted prize, at least to weapons engineers, are the Universal Energy Matrix Converters. Attaching these to a weapon allows it to work in any type of Dimensional Energy Matrix, even a Neutral Energy Matrix. Dimensional Raiders would never have to be without weapons again if they could attain this valuable prize. The Converters are proportional to the size of the power source they have to convert. Small ones that could be attached to rifles would be around 6 inches long. They get bigger with the more power they have to channel. Duplicating them is nearly impossible as they are built on a molecular level by the Great Machine. Consequently, Dimensional Raiders typically try and steal as many as they can.

Defender Generators

The Great Machine is only a single consciousness. While it can perform millions of tasks a second, it cannot be everywhere at once. Even with its millions of sensors scattered throughout the dimension it must consciously look or sense through them. Otherwise the information is stored for later review. The dimension is less like a body and more like a vessel that someone or something lives inside.

In order to defend itself, the Great Machine has hundreds of thousands of what are called *defender generators* placed at strategic locations throughout its machine body. These generators vary in size, with the smallest being the size of a one family house and the largest the size of an aircraft hangar. They are actually factories that create an assortment of robot-like defenders called *automatons*. These automatons are relatively simple-minded killing machines that can hardly recognize each other, let alone an invading enemy. All they have are simple transponders somewhere on their mechanical bodies that identify friend or foe. More than one enemy who has learned about this limitation has used it to their tactical advantage, but as simple as the automatons are as an expendable combat force, they get the job done.

The defender generators mass-produce the Great Machine's protectors and guardians using ultra high-tech production tools that work at lightning speed. In addition to the tools, the Great Machine also has access to matter/energy converters that can quickly reorganize raw materials into sophisticated parts and mechanisms. The final piece of advanced technology that the Great Machine possesses is called a Universal Energy Converter which can be attached to any power source and convert the energy to whatever Dimensional Energy Matrix the technology needs to function. This has allowed the Great Machine to adapt any technology that comes to it from the outside to suit its needs. It regularly "assimilates" alien technology, making it its

own. This practice is due, in part, to the Great Machine's lack of imagination or ability to evolve beyond its current programming or line of thinking.

The defender generators produce automatons at breakneck speeds on demand. Top of the line units can produce up to four per minute. This seems to be the generators' sole function. In theory, they could be reprogrammed to produce just about anything, but only if the Great Machine entity that controls the dimension was destroyed or rendered unconscious. Truth be told, either of those events might trigger the immediate collapse of the machine dimension, nobody knows.

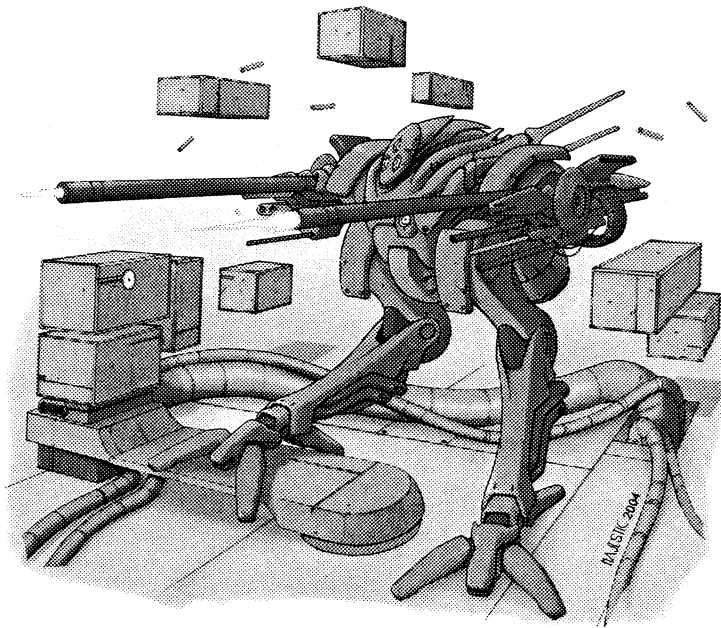
The Great Machine lacks any type of imagination, so it only makes the simplest of defenders and repair automatons. Rarely does it keep the same model in production, however. As flaws are found the automatons are recycled and updated versions produced as needed. Also, as mentioned before, the Great Machine cannot be in every location at once, so it has a basic defense program for each generator/factory. The threat level determines what kind of defender is generated. However, the defender generators have no basis for comparisons on threats, nor are the generators connected to compare notes, so the level of power these automatons wield may vary from location to location. Thus, if a group of adventurers in power armor were to encounter two different defender generators, the threat level would most likely be determined differently. In game terms, each generator produces a random defender within a basic range of power, but different from others located elsewhere in the Great Machine.

Defender generators in action. Each defender generator can produce between one and four constructs per minute, with the best making one per melee round (every 15 seconds). The generators suffer wear and tear so they are not always functioning up to spec. Each generator has 2D6x100 M.D.C. For every 25% of damage done, the time to produce an automaton takes an additional melee round. The generators use a combination of assembly line mass production and matter/energy conversion and are able to convert energy into various types of solid matter as well as retool themselves when needed.

First roll 1D4 to determine how many automatons the defender generator can produce per minute. This will not change and reflects the age and condition of the generator. A roll of one means the generator is old, worn down, and at the G.M.'s discretion, already damaged. A roll of four, however, indicates a top of the line defender generator with maximum M.D.C. (1200) and top flight production capabilities. It could be new or recently upgraded. It may take additional construction time when more complicated automatons are produced, see Step 10: Special Equipment, for more details.

The generators also have the ability to repair themselves. This is usually accomplished via a repair automaton. Repair automatons can be produced at the same rate as the defenders. Repairs done to the generator will restore 1D4x10 M.D.C. per minute. After determining the information for the generators, proceed with the construction phase of the defenders. It should be noted that at the Game Master's discretion unique defenders could be produced every time the generator pops out a defender. For simplicity, assume multiple copies of the same defender will be produced. This is most likely the case, as the generator would have to retool itself for each new defender type.

Some generators also produce simple repair units and materials needed for repairs to the Great Machine. These units are, however, in the minority and only make up about 20% of all the generators found in the dimension.



Construction of Automaton Defenders

Creative Game Masters can use the robot construction rules presented in **Rifts® Source Book Number One** or you can use these quick construction rules.

Step One: General Body Type

The automatons produced from a particular generator can all be the same type so only one needs to be rolled up. The generator scans the area and produces an automaton to defend the Great Machine. The automatons are not standard because of the variety of materials available and the odd quirk of programming for each generator. The Great Machine does not win any decisive victories because one design was particularly successful, it wins because it can produce them in such mass quantities that any intruders are eventually overwhelmed and destroyed or forced into retreat. It should be noted that these are general body shapes and do not necessarily reflect the automatons' combat capabilities.

01-20% Basic Humanoid Shape: The automaton has a general humanoid shape.

21-40% Animal: The automaton has a shape like some type of animal that will be suitable to the general terrain.

01-25% Mammal (probably a predatory animal).

26-50% Reptile.

51-75% Avian/Bird.

76-00% Aquatic.

41-60% Vehicle: The automaton is shaped like a vehicle of some sort.

01-50% Ground vehicle.

51-75% Air vehicle.

76-00% Water vehicle; may be amphibious.

61-80% Weapon: The automaton looks like some type of walking weapon. Meaning it usually has the shape of a cannon, rifle or other recognizable modern weapon appearance.

81-100% Mixed: The automaton is a haphazard mix of any of the above. Roll percentiles twice, ignoring duplication.

Step Two: Locomotion

Roll percentile dice to determine how the automaton gets around.

01-20% Legs: Roll percentile dice again to determine type.

01-25% Bipedal/humanoid – two legs and feet. Spd is 1D4x10+22 (typically 20-40 mph/32 to 64 km).

26-50% More than one pair of legs; 1D4 pairs. Spd is 2D4x10+30 (typically 35-50 mph/56 to 80 km).

51-75% Animal – It can have 1D4+2 legs of some type. Spd is 2D6x10+44 (typically 42-90 mph/67 to 144 km).

76-00% Insect, with 1D4+4 legs. Spd is 2D6x10+44 (typically 42-90 mph/67 to 144 km).

21-40% Wheels: Roll 3D6x10 miles per hour to determine Spd (30-180 mph/48 to 288 km).

41-60% Tank Treads: 1D6x10+60 miles per hour (70-120 mph/112 to 192 km).

61-80% Hover System: 2D6x10+75 miles per hour (95-195 mph/152 to 312 km).

81-100% Anti-Gravity: 3D6x10+100 miles per hour (130-280 mph/208 to 448 km).

Note: One mile equals 1.6 kilometers (km).

Step Three: Number of Appendages

These can be arms, mechanical tentacles or just about anything that qualifies as an arm-like appendage. Roll for the number of appendages. Each extra two pairs of limbs (that's four extra arms) beyond the first two provides one extra melee attack per round and a bonus of +1 to entangle.

01-20% 1D4

21-40% 1D6

41-60% 2D4

61-80% 2D6

81-100% 4D6

Step Four: Appendage Type

Game Master's choice. They can either roll for each individual limb or make one general roll. Weapons are limited to the amount of appendages of the automaton. If it has no weapon limbs, the automaton can have 1D4 fixed spots for weapons to be housed.

01-30% Arms & Hands (humanoid): No built-in weapon, but can use rifles, pistols or ancient style weapons. The appendage is meant for superior articulation and use of tools. +1 to parry.

31-45% Tentacles: No weapons present. They are used primarily to grapple or in hand to hand combat; +1 to disarm and entangle.

46-60% Weapon Tentacles: The appendage ends in a weapon, roll below or give each tentacle a short-range energy blaster or a Vibro-Blade type weapon.

61-90% Weapon Limb: The appendage ends in a weapon, roll under Step Five to determine the type, or pick one or two different types. Must be a mobile limb.

91-100% Tool: The appendage ends in a multi-tool used in the repair and maintenance of the Great Machine, but the tool can be used as a blunt S.D.C. weapon, and if it has an energy cutting or drilling capability (laser, torch, etc.) it can inflict M.D. in hand to hand combat.

Step Five: Weapons

Weapons can be mounted on appendages or fixed in a variety of positions on the body. All weapon damage listed is Mega-Damage. For Game Masters who are running an S.D.C. game, reduce all energy weapon damage by half and make it S.D.C. For example, if a laser does 4D6 M.D.C., reduce the damage to 2D6 S.D.C. For melee weapons, simply turn the M.D.C. to S.D.C. Imaginative Game Masters should feel free to add additional weapons of their own design. On the other hand, if you want more powerful weaponry, simply convert M.D.C. to S.D.C. point for point. The Great Machine rarely uses missiles or explosive ordnance, as they tend to damage itself. Roll for each weapon limb or pick the one(s) desired. At the option of the Game Master, the automaton can have 1D4 additional "fixed" weapons. Fixed weapons are mounted in a stationary position on the body and only fire in the direction they are facing.

01-20% Ancient Weapon (sword, axe, etc.).

21-50% Light Energy (lasers).

51-80% Medium Energy (other energy beams and blasts).

81-100% Heavy Energy (high damage energy like particle beams).

Ancient Weapon: These weapons either deliver damage by being charged such as a Vibro-weapons, or just delivering blunt damage.

01-30% Vibro-Knife: 1D6 M.D.

31-50% Vibro-Sword: 2D6 M.D.

51-70% Blunt: Energy Mace: 4D6 M.D. when charged, 3D6 S.D.C. when not charged with energy.

71-90% Chain Energy Weapon: 3D6 M.D. when charged, 2D6 S.D.C. when not.

91-100% Pole Arm: 4D6 M.D.

Light Energy Weapon: These weapons will have 10% of the M.D.C. of the main body. Payload for all is unlimited, except the rail gun, which can fire 100 bursts before needing to be reloaded. Reloading can be done at any of the defender generator stations and takes one minute. Each blast or burst counts as one melee attack.

01-25% Laser: 3D6 M.D.; range: 1500 feet (457 m).

26-50% Plasma: 5D6 M.D.; range 1200 feet (366 m).

51-75% Ion: 4D6 M.D.; range: 800 feet (244 m).

76-100% Rail Gun: 6D6 M.D.; range 3000 feet (914 m).

Medium Energy Weapon: The medium weapons are slightly heavier than the light. They have 20% of the M.D.C. of the main body. These weapons look larger and tend to have longer barrels. Payload for all is unlimited, except the rail gun, which can fire 75 bursts before needing to be reloaded. Reloading can be done at any of the generator stations and takes one minute. Each blast or burst counts as one melee attack.

01-25% Laser: 4D6 M.D.; range: 2000 feet (610 m).

26-50% Plasma: 1D4x10 M.D.; range: 1600 (488 m).

51-75% Ion: 6D6 M.D.; range: 1000 feet (305 m).

76-100% Rail Gun: 1D6x10 M.D.; range: 4000 feet (1219 m).

Heavy Energy Weapon: These are the largest weapons that the automatons wield. They look like heavy weapons with elongated and multiple barrels per weapon. These weapons have 30% of the M.D.C. of the main body of the automaton. Payload for all is unlimited, except the rail gun, which can fire 40 bursts before needing to be reloaded. Reloading can be done at any of the generator stations and takes two minutes. Each blast counts as two melee attacks/actions.

01-25% Laser: 6D6+8 M.D.; range: 2400 feet (731.5 m).

26-50% Plasma: 2D6x10 M.D.; range: 2000 feet (610 m).

51-75% Ion: 3D6x10 M.D.; range: 1600 (488 m).

76-100% Rail Gun: 3D6x10+20 M.D.; range: 6000 feet (1829 m).

Step Six: Main Body M.D.C.

Surprisingly, the strongest and most agile of the automatons can have the weakest armor and vice versa. It all depends on the quality of materials available as well as the overall energy output of the defender generator. Some generators are hundreds of thousands of years old and don't operate as efficiently as they used to. This is why the M.D.C. varies from area to area. The M.D.C. below is the overall M.D.C. of the main body. When determining the M.D.C. of appendages, round down.

01-10% 4D6

11-20% 1D4x10

21-30% 1D6x10

31-40% 2D4x10+10

41-50% 1D6x10+30

51-60% 1D6x10+60

61-70% 2D6x10+40

71-80% 2D6x10+80

81-90% 1D4x100

91-100% 1D6x100+50

Step Seven: Physical Prowess

This is the vehicle's overall agility combined with the mobility of its mechanical limbs. The Physical Prowess bonuses apply for hand to hand combat bonuses to strike, parry and dodge.

01-20% 1D4+8

21-40% 1D6+10

41-60% 1D6+13

61-80% 1D6+16

81-100% 2D4+18

Step Eight: Targeting Features

These bonuses are for the long-range weapon systems such as laser, plasma or ion cannons, rail guns, etc.

01-40% None: Simple optics. Unmodified rolls to strike only.

41-70% Basic laser targeting: +1 to strike.

71-90% Basic targeting laser with simple radar: +1D4+1 to strike.

91-100% Advanced radar, optics, and targeting equipment: +1D6+2 to strike!

Step Nine:

Combat Programming & Attacks per Melee

When the generator creates an automaton it is assigned a threat level based on the number of attackers in the area as well as how sensitive the location is, or if there are any resources in the area that need to be protected.

01-10% Basic program: Three attacks per melee with no other bonuses.

11-19% Basic program plus: Three attacks per melee with an improved combat computer giving a bonus of +1 on initiative, and +1 to strike and parry.

20-29% Expert program: Four attacks per melee with no other bonuses.

30-39% Expert program quick: Four attacks per melee with a fast combat computer giving a bonus of +1D4+1 to initiative, +2 to strike, +3 to parry and dodge, and +1 to disarm.

40-49% Expert program advanced: Five attacks per melee with a precision combat computer that gives a bonus of +3 on initiative, +3 to strike and parry, +1 to dodge, +4 M.D. to damage, and a critical strike on a roll of a Natural 19 or 20.

50-59% Martial program: Five attacks with no other bonuses.

60-69% Martial program quick: Six attacks per melee with a fast combat computer that provides a bonus of +1D4+2 to initiative, +3 to strike, parry and dodge, +2 to disarm, and +3 to entangle.

70-79% Martial program advanced: Seven attacks per melee, combat computer and program designed to cripple and destroy, +1D4 on initiative, +3 to strike, parry and dodge, +1D6 M.D. from punches, +2D6 M.D. from kicks and ramming attacks, and a critical strike on a roll of a Natural 18, 19, or 20.

80-89% Assassin program: Five attacks per melee. No other bonuses.

90-95% Assassin program quick: Six attacks per melee. Super fast combat computer with +1D6 to initiative, +2 to strike and parry, and knockout on a Natural 20.

96-99% Assassin program advanced: Seven attacks per melee. Super fast combat computer with +1D6 on initiative, +4 to strike and parry, +1 to dodge, +2 to entangle, +6 M.D. to damage, knockout on a Natural 20, and critical strike on a Natural 19 or 20.

100% Roll again: Add one additional attack per melee round and roll again.

Step Ten: Special Equipment (optional)

From time to time, special equipment is created for automata. That may be because it is assigned for a special task or simply given a new piece of technology or an upgrade. It should be noted that special equipment adds to the construction time of automata. So if great quantities of automata are needed, special equipment is *not* added. For each piece of special equipment, increase the production time of an automaton by two melee rounds. In general, an automaton will have only one piece of special equipment. Game Masters should use their own discretion when adding more than one piece of special equipment as this may lead to super powerful foes and is contrary to how the Great Machine functions. Also, the Great Machine does not have unlimited resources to be equipping every automaton with something special.

01-10% Nothing Much: No obvious additional features are built into the automaton, but its method of locomotion is souped up so it can go 20% faster than normal.

11-20% Capture Net: From time to time, the Great Machine may capture intruders to study and analyze them for awhile, before dissecting them (alive), killing them and tossing them into the garbage. (This usually happens within 72 hours of capture, and cyborgs and robots are the most fascinating to the machine entity.) Automata assigned to this task are equipped with a capture net. The net can snare 1D6 humanoid size prey. The net is concealed in an elongated cylinder that will most likely be attached to one of the limbs, or positioned on a fixed point on the automaton. The net gun has a payload of four shots. The automaton must return to the defender generator in order to reload more nets, which takes one minute. The capture net is made out of the same super-strong cable that is used in the grappler. So it can only be cut with a Mega-Damage weapon like a Vibro-Blade or ripped by beings with a Supernatural Strength of 35 (or Robotic Strength of 45), freeing captives in 1D4 melees. Anyone attempting to cut their way out will require 1D6+2 melee rounds or must inflict at least 50 M.D. in damage. Striking with the net uses the automaton's P.P. bonus if any, and the targeting features combined.

21-30% Light Force Field: The automaton has a built-in force field with 60 M.D.C. It regenerates at a rate of 1D6 M.D.C. per melee, but if all the M.D.C. is depleted it requires six hours for the unit to be fully recharged. **Game Note:** These force fields (light, medium, and heavy) function the same as the Naruni force fields as described in **Rifts® Mercenaries One** and **Naruni Wave 2**.

31-40% Medium Force Field: A medium force field is built into the automaton. It has 120 M.D.C. and regenerates at a rate of 1D6 M.D.C. per melee, but if all the M.D.C. is depleted the unit is temporarily off line for six hours.

41-50% Heavy Force Field: The strongest force field available for automata has 200 M.D.C. It regenerates at a rate of 1D6+2 M.D.C. per melee, but if all the M.D.C. is depleted the unit is off line for six hours before it can be reactivated.

51-60% Regeneration Components: Using matter/energy converter technology, the automaton is able to repair itself. This is simply the ability to turn energy into matter, creating the exact components needed in order to effect necessary repairs (not improvements). In order to accomplish this, the automaton has

to divert power from one of its primary weapon systems. This reduces the robot's total number of attacks by half and makes that one primary weapon system unavailable until the repairs are finished. Repairs are performed at a rate of 4D6 M.D.C. per melee round, but add 1D6 M.D.C. for each additional weapon system that is shut down and its energy directed to self-repair.

61-70% Grappler: The automaton has a built-in towing system. The grappler can replace one of the weapon limbs or it can be built into the body. It looks very much like a gun, but has a limited range of only 300 feet (91.5 m), and fires a grappling system. Upon impact it secretes a super strong adhesive that sticks to just about any surface. The only way to break free is to have a Supernatural Strength of 30+, or a Robotic Strength of 40, however, ripping it down does 4D6 M.D. to the surface it was stuck to. The grappler and the attached cable can support up to 2000 pounds (900 kg) without fear of it snapping or pulling free.

71-75% Sensor Link: This item is similar to a bionic Universal Head or Finger Jack. The automaton is able to jack in directly to the Great Machine. It can exchange information when necessary, but the real purpose of the sensor link is for the automaton to access the many sensor clusters scattered throughout the machine dimension. Once plugged in, the automaton can access and scan, or "see" through, all the sensors the Great Machine has within a four mile (6.4 km) radius. This is used to locate and track intruders who have managed to escape the robot legions. While the automaton is plugged in, it can take no other action whatsoever, and it takes approximately one minute (four melee rounds) to gain full access to the local sensor grid. It can stop and detach itself in one melee action when it is done.

76-80% Wireless Sensor Link: The same as the sensor link, but the automaton has a special built-in mobile link with the area's local sensor grid that allows it to access and retrieve sensor information instantaneously via data transmissions. These mobile links have 15% of the M.D.C. of the automaton's main body and are usually located as part of the robot's communications cluster.

81-85% Cloaking Technology: The automaton has the ability to cloak itself in an electronic shroud that can actually bend light and make it virtually undetectable (instills a Prowl skill at 90%). It is primarily used to track intruders unseen, and to set up ambushes and surprise attacks. The automaton's cloaking system also temporarily knocks out the combat computers and laser targeting systems (people lose the bonuses they provide) as well as jams radar systems of opponents within a 2000 foot (610 m) radius of it. This means the pilots of power armor and small vehicles have to rely on their own senses when fighting a cloaked automaton.

86-90% Holographic Masking System: This technology was integrated from some intruders several decades ago. After studying the technology for some time, the Great Machine determined that this could help create the perfect disguise for the automatons for setting traps and intelligence gathering. The holographic system uses a combination of the matter/energy conversion and holographic technology that enables the automaton to disguise its true nature and assume the appearance of just about anything. The automaton is still limited to its own built-in abilities, so if it cannot fly and tries to simulate a flying creature, it does not gain the ability to fly. The holographic system does

not imbue any special or extra abilities, it just creates a false outward appearance and is good for laying traps and ambushes. The power drain of the holo-system is significant, and while it is engaged, the automaton can't use any built-in weapon systems. Thus, to attack with anything other than a handheld gun or its own hands, it must disengage the holo-disguise and reveal its true appearance and nature. It takes one full melee round (15 seconds) for all weapons and force fields to be online for combat, however, one primary gun and one secondary weapon will be available immediately.

91-95% Depleted Uranium or Uranium Rounds: Only applicable for automatons with rail guns. This type of ammo is used for certain creatures resistant to various types of damage such as energy. Damage is increased by an additional die, so if the damage is 2D6, increase to 3D6, 1D4x10, increase to 1D6x10, etc. Creatures of magic and supernatural beings will not be able to regenerate until the U-rounds are removed.

96-99% Artificial Intelligence: Instead of a mindless drone, this automaton can think and act on its own. The automaton remains loyal to the Great Machine, however it can act on its own and uses advanced strategies and tactics when dealing with humanoid intruders. I.Q. is the equivalent of 1D6+12.

100% Sentience: The automaton not only has an increased artificial intelligence (1D6+16), but it is self-aware. This ability is a rarity as over the millennia the Great Machine has lost numerous automatons with the ability to think on their own. The Great Machine considers them a potential threat and keeps them to a minimum.

Step Eleven: Power Source

Each type of automaton requires some type of power supply. Again, the age of each individual defender generator and the resources available will dictate what that power supply will be. In cases where a fuel based power supply is selected, the area would be rich in or have a large supply of a fuel-based component. It should also be noted that power sources vary for a reason, the Great Machine fears a revolt from within and purposely limits the power bestowed to its defenders.

01-25% Fuel Based: This is typically a combustion type of engine that uses a liquid fuel. The engine is super efficient and gets great mileage for the small quantity of fuel it carries. Range is limited to 300 miles (480 km), or 24-36 hours of combat or strenuous activity before refueling is required. The automaton must stop at a fuel depot or defender generator to refuel and requires five minutes to fuel up. Energy weapons are limited to a rate of fire of *two per melee*, regardless of the total number of attacks available to it (the rest can be fisticuffs or other actions). It simply does not have enough internal energy for a greater firing capacity. Defender generators often have pipelines to lakes of liquid metal from which they are able to create liquid fuel.

26-40% Electrical: The automaton has a dozen compact capacitors that store a limited amount of power. The range is limited to 500 miles (800 km) or 48 to 56 hours of constant activity. Since energy is relatively limited, all weapons are restricted to a rate of *three shots per melee* regardless of the total number of attacks it may have. More intelligent automatons will alternate between different weapons.

41-65% Nuclear: The easiest of the high-energy power supplies to build is nuclear. However, they typically have hazardous material involved and nuclear fuel is rare within the Great Machine. When the automaton is destroyed (dropped to -15 M.D.C.), there is typically a secondary explosion from the nuclear fuel cell that does 1D4x10 M.D. to everything in a ten foot (3 m) radius. The nuclear fuel cell is small and compact but provides up to 60 days of constant activity, twice as long if the robot goes into fuel saving stasis mode when it is not needed. Weapon systems operate at higher efficiency and can be fired at a rate of five shots per melee round.

66-75% Fission/Fusion: A step up from nuclear power cells, this energy source is much more efficient and clean. All weapons can be fired at a rate of fire equal to the number of attacks per melee round, and the automaton can function at full capacity for six months of constant activity; twice as long if the robot goes into fuel saving stasis mode when it is not needed. If the power cell ruptures (-30 M.D.C.), it explodes, doing 1D6x10 M.D. to everything in a 20 foot (6.1 m) radius.

76-85% Anti-Matter Reactor: Possibly the most volatile of the power sources, but weapons operate at peak efficiency and maximum capacity. Range is unlimited and the automaton can operate for up to two years under the most stressful of conditions. Due to the unstable nature of anti-matter, if a containment cell is breached (-45 M.D.C.) there is a resulting secondary explosion that does 3D6x10 M.D.C. to everything in a 25 foot (7.6 m) radius.

86-95% Transmitted Power Source: One of the more unique power systems that the Great Machine has developed and is especially effective in the belly of its machine world. The automaton receives the power through transmission that regularly (or constantly) fuels the whole unit. These transmissions cannot be jammed, but do have a limited range, plus the added vulnerability of a single source for possibly dozens of automatons. In this case the defender generator is the power source that transmits the power directly to the automaton. So if it is destroyed (typically has 2D6x100 M.D.C.), the automatons within its area of influence all stop working within two melee rounds (30 seconds). Range of the power transmissions is a 10 mile (16 km) radius around the generator, however some areas have towers that boost and triple the range. Each tower has 150 M.D.C. and if destroyed will cause a gap where the automatons may not function.

96-100% Extended Fuel Supply: Select nuclear, fission, or Anti-matter and double the duration that the automaton can operate.

Pools of Metal

If endless bulkheads full of mechanical components aren't enough to boggle a visitor's mind, massive seas composed of liquid metal can be found throughout the dimension. The metal is a mercury-like substance that feels cool to the touch and is roughly room temperature. It is the light blue color of a robin's egg, and has a viscosity like motor oil. While there is no apparent source for the seas of metal, it's common to see transparent pipes carrying the liquid metal to various parts of the Great Machine. Some even feed directly into some of the newest defender generators. Cutting off one of these pipelines might just be the

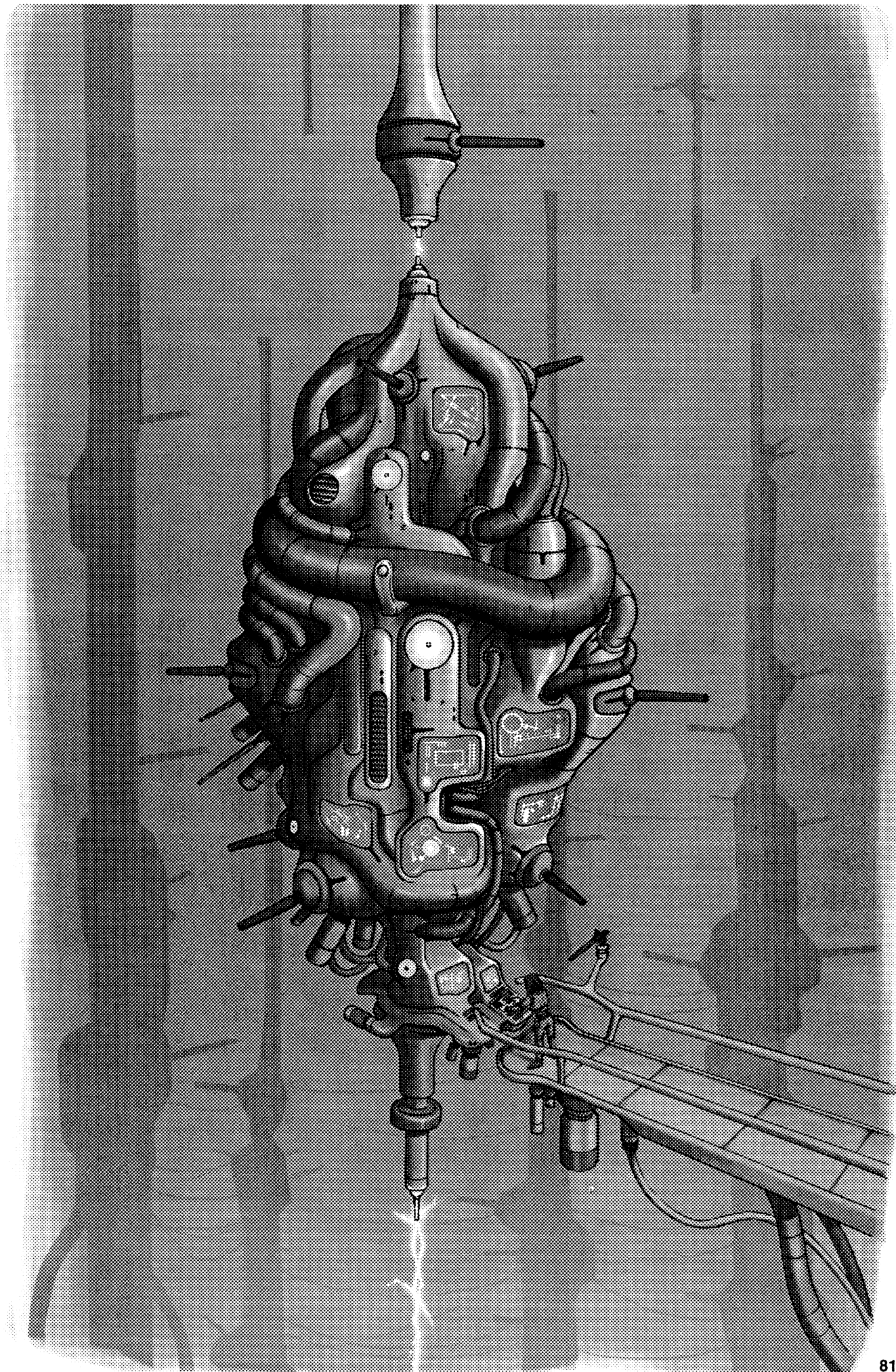
key to shutting down a specific generator, at least until repairs can be made.

In addition to pipes, a series of aqueducts also carries the liquid metal around the dimension, directing it to where it is most needed. Areas of the Great Machine that are "dry" (devoid of the liquid metal) are deliberate. These lakes and aqueducts also add to the already twisted maze of obstacles visitors must overcome. The liquid metal will not cause any immediate harm if anyone is exposed to it, but it is toxic if consumed, doing 1D6x10 points of damage direct to Hit Points (or 6D6 M.D. to Mega-Damage creatures). In addition, the individual who consumed it (usually by accident when someone falls in a lake or vat) is sick to his stomach and retches and vomits until the metal and all other stomach contents are emptied onto the floor. This will immobilize the character for 1D6+2 melee rounds, does another 4D6 points of damage (2D6 M.D. to Mega-Damage beings), and leaves the character weak and shaky for the next 1D4 hours (reduce Spd, attacks per melee round and all combat bonuses by half). Furthermore, any type of bio-regeneration is hampered and won't work for the 1D4 hours until the character starts to feel better.

Swimming through the stuff for more than 10 minutes causes skin irritation and nausea (3D6 damage direct to Hit Points or M.D.C., reduce attacks by one, combat bonuses are -1 and Spd is reduced by 10% for 1D4 hours after exposure). Double the damage and the penalties for each additional 10 minutes one swims in the liquid metal, with accumulative penalties and physical damage. Only characters protected in full environmental body armor or inside an airtight vehicle escape the toxic effects. The liquid metal is denser and heavier than water, reducing swimming speed by half and making people work three times harder than swimming in water (fatigues 3x faster).

Brain Nodes

The consciousness that is the Great Machine is effectively an Alien Intelligence with a mechanical body instead of a flesh and blood body. The usual mound of flesh with a hundred eyes, tentacles, and a gaping maw are replaced with miles of corridors, conduit, optics and sensors. Does that make the liquid metal its blood and the automatons its immune system? Maybe. Nobody knows for certain. The Machine Intelligence's life essence (or at least fragments of its consciousness) are located in large, weird machines called Brain Nodes. The intelligence that is the Great Machine can move from Brain Node to Brain Node at the speed of thought and even leave part of its intelligence behind to oversee operations in that particular area. As long as the fragmented intelligence leaves the Brain Node (for another) before it is destroyed, the creature can reform its fragments to be completely whole whenever it wants. This is no different than the ability of other Alien Intelligences to create avatars or possess mortals. Even if some of the Brain Nodes are destroyed, they represent only a tiny fragment (one percent) of the overall creature and have minimal impact on its ability to think and react. Areas containing active or inactive nodes (no essence fragment is currently present) are under the heaviest security with a platoon of automatons already constructed and patrolling the area. In addition to the automatons, 1D6+2 defender generators will be nearby and a number of other defense measures are built into the Brain Node itself. They include energy weapons built into tur-



rets or towers that are strategically placed at various locations on and around the Node as well as the perimeter of the Node's containment chamber. These locations are heavily armored and fiercely defended.

The containment chamber for the Brain Node looks like a massive command center filled with multiple monitors and computers, the Brain Node suspended in the center. Theoretically, if the Great Machine allowed it, flesh and blood beings could communicate directly with the Alien Intelligence via a Brain Node. Characters with the powers of *Machine Ghost* or *Telemechanics* could communicate without even having to access the Brain Node's key pad or interface connection. However, it is an evil being who has never been known to communicate with humans directly, and rumor has it the key pad or interface is really meant to lure mortals to attempt contact so the Great Machine can possess them. It is said, linking to the Great Machine, while creating a two-way form of direct communication, opens the operator up to possession without any chance to save against it. Actually, this legend is only half true. Yes, one can communicate with the Great Machine via a Brain Node, and yes, the Alien Intelligence can try to possess anyone who would dare to do so, but the character gets to save vs possession with his usual bonuses reduced by half. Always in control, the Great Machine can turn off (leave) a Brain Node at any point, instantly putting an end to any conversation/communications until the next activated Brain Node can be located.

Characters who are partial or full conversion cyborgs may also be possessed, or at least their machine parts usurped and placed under the control of the Great Machine. In fact, it is said the Great Machine can convert existing bionics into its own modified bionics, providing an extra 2D6 M.D. to weapons, increasing weapon range by 20% and providing greater M.D.C. to body parts and armor (increase by 30%). However, this also makes the individual an *avatar* of the Great Machine, with a fragmented part of its life essence inside the bionic parts, in effect, sharing the cyborg body. The result is the Great Machine sees and hears everything the cyborg experiences, as well as knows his thoughts and desires, and uses them to slowly corrupt the cyborg and turn him to evil. Worse, the Great Machine can seize control of the body while the mortal sleeps. Lost to dreaming the human knows nothing of what the demonic machine entity does while he is asleep. To purge the Great Machine from his body, the cyborg must get rid of every last artificial part, down to the tiniest cybernetic implant or piece of fiber optics. Otherwise, the Great Machine can hide in the most innocuous bionic or cybernetic component and return to haunt and manipulate the cyborg all over again. Should the flesh and blood and brain of the mortal be removed from the machine parts linked to the Great Machine, the splintered life essence returns to join the whole that is the Great Machine. (An ordinary exorcism would have no effect.)

Note: If the Great Machine has some secret agenda, it is unknown. For all its malevolence and paranoia, the machine entity does not venture out into the universe, nor does it try to conquer other planets and enslave other worlds. Some say the Great Machine simply "is" – that it exists and seeks only to continue to exist. Others wonder if the dimension unto itself isn't building, growing and patiently waiting until some moment before it makes its move and shows its true intent. For now, it simply ex-

ists and holds a special place in the Megaverse as one of its enigmas.

Adventure Ideas

Inside the Great Machine

Machine vs Machine

This is a mini-adventure in the Great Machine and is broken up into several Hook, Line and Sinkers™.

Part One: Trapped

Hook: Either by accident or on purpose, the player characters arrive in the dimension of the Great Machine. Game Masters, this is a good HLS to use to introduce the characters to this dimension.

Line: The player group splashes down in one of the pools of metal, but are close to shore and shouldn't suffer any adverse consequence to its exposure. Once on shore some type of automated robot skims past them, overhead, but it is oblivious to their presence. (This would be one of the repair automatons.) It is traveling relatively slowly and can be easily followed.

Sinker: The repair automaton is heading back to its defender generator. If the characters follow it, they will be in danger as the defender generator's sensors will pick up their organic signatures immediately and respond with force. The dimensional travelers will witness precision instruments moving at robotic speeds producing something and seconds later, a larger robot will emerge and attack the group without any provocation as the defender generator begins work on the next one!

Part Two: Invaders

Hook: After having encountered one or many of the Great Machine's automatons, the player characters will have managed to escape them and get a small break to rest and assess their situation.

Line: The practitioner of magic in the group (or a psychic could get a clairvoyant flash) senses a ley line nexus point not far from the group's present location. They should know enough to guess this could be a way out. **Note:** If there are no magic users or psychics, use this option: One of the players notices a screen of monitors. One screen is replaying a battle over and over again. From a second monitor the characters can discern its location with ease.

Sinker: Upon arriving at the nexus (this is one of the minor nexuses found in the dimension and is not Uni-Nexus One or Two) they find a massive battle is in progress. It seems to be a mechanized free-for-all as hundreds of automatons battle another mechanical invader. In particular, the humanoid automatons seem to be receiving the heaviest casualties. This location is way too hot for the characters to use the nexus to open a Rift, and there is no reason for them to join the battle (they'd be shot up in a matter of seconds). Closer examination of the invaders, however, may reveal familiar and frightening enemy . . . *The Mechanoids*. (See **Rifts® Sourcebook Two: The Mechanoids®** for details on these aliens, or the upcoming RPG series **Mechanoid Space®**.) If the group has never seen a Mechanoid, one of them (an NPC, perhaps) may have heard about them or

know of them through lore. Even if they know nothing, the Mechanoids appear to be tough customers, and if the bipedal humanoids try to initiate contact, they'll quickly learn Mechanoids hate humans and humanoid bipeds more than any other creatures in the Megaverse.

Part Three: Walkabout

Hook: Trapped with no way out and a possible Mechanoid invasion in progress, the player characters have no other choice but to leave the area. The battle is likely to continue for hours and will probably spill out into the surrounding area.

Line: Hours, perhaps days may go by before it is safe to return to the nexus, assuming they can even find their way back. If they do, the area is devastated from combat, with twisted chunks of metal barring the characters' path, and possibly preventing access to the nexus. If the latter, they'll have to find another way out. When things seem to be at their lowest, a signal is received on one of the characters' radios. It seems like some type of homing beacon, and is a familiar military code.

Sinker: Following the signal takes some time, especially having to find one's way through the maze of machinery and corridors. The signal leads directly to a defender generator that is guarded by several robot-like defenders. Moments later, something crawls out of the guts of the generator, a *Mechanoid Brain*. If it sees them or knows they are hiding out of sight (and it probably will with its psionic abilities), it says: "Greetings lowly humanoids. I am loath to ask this, but I require your assistance." Do the players stay to hear what the Mechanoid Brain has to offer, or do they run like hell?

Part Four: The Offer

Hook: Having been lured to a defender generator by a Mechanoid Brain, an audience is requested. Assuming the players hang around to hear what is offered, they will be allowed to approach unharmed. The Brain will even give the player group a wide enough berth so the characters feel safe enough to approach, or at least get within talking distance as the Brain insists any other type of electronic communication may be monitored.

Line: The Brain lives up to its word and does not harm the characters, however what it proposes is far more shocking. It has been trapped in this dimension for several months and while it has commandeered a defender generator without the Great Machine knowing it, the factory has been damaged to the point where it can only produce a dozen automatons a day (retooled to look like *Thin Men* and *Runts*, of course). If it were to receive some critical parts from another generator (this one is damaged and the data banks are corrupted as to how to repair it) it could construct more powerful robots, even a power armor or two for the player characters to assist them *all* in escaping. All the player group has to do is assist the Mechanoid Brain in taking over another nearby generator. If the players agree, it will dispatch a dozen Runts or Thin Men to accompany them, while it waits here. It insists it cannot accompany them for any number of acceptable reasons.

Sinker: The Mechanoid seems sincere, and any psychic readings that can tell such things will confirm it is telling the truth! This is a surprise, because Mechanoids loath humanoids, human beings in particular. And that is, indeed, the case here.

The Mechanoid Brain despises the player characters, especially if they are human, but its own survival comes first, besides, the enemy of my enemy is my friend – at least for now.

Part Five: Going Along with the Plan

Hook: The decision to assist the Brain may be a difficult one if the characters are familiar with the Mechanoids. Knowing whether they can trust the Brain should be something that lingers in the minds of the characters for some time, even if the cyborg gives them its word of honor. (Do Mechanoids have honor?)

Line: Should the characters need to rest or re-supply, basic equipment like E-Clips can be furnished by the Brain as well as a secure area to bed down and get some rest. However, the Brain is impatient and will insist the characters take action to get the parts it needs. To motivate them, the Mechanoid worries that it cannot keep their whereabouts and the fact that it controls a defender generator from the Great Machine for very much longer.

Sinker: The defender generator marked for the raid is lightly defended and the surrounding area provides significant cover and places for a guerilla style team to conduct an attack. The attack should launch without a problem and the characters are on the verge of winning when the Runts and/or Thin Men that accompanied them up and leave. They do not attack anything else except to defend themselves and make a hasty retreat, some carrying the gear the Brain requested. This may turn the tide of the battle in favor of the Great Machine, but in the end the characters should come through, achieve victory and get the rest of the equipment the Mechanoid asked them to recover.

Part Six: An Exercise in Futility

Hook: Having the necessary parts in hand, the characters can head back to the Brain.

Line: While returning to the Mechanoid the characters receive a communiqué telling them that it is not safe and not to return. The message is automated and repeated several time, but no details are given.

Sinker: Finally, some time later, another message is received advising the characters that it is safe for them to return. Upon arriving the scene is one of carnage. Piles of machines are everywhere and the Brain's defender generator seems to have increased in size while several of its robots are conducting modifications to it. The Brain will surface to tell the characters that the generator came under attack. In order to preserve itself, the Brain was forced to recall the robots assigned to the characters. (The Brain really saw a tactical advantage to flanking the attackers and used the robots assigned to the characters to achieve that end.) It also received some of the parts necessary to repair the generator, plus a few special pieces of equipment that the Brain was able to modify and use to get the generator working at full capacity already. The end result, the characters' efforts ultimately proved to be unnecessary.

Note: If the player characters don't wait and sneak ahead, they will find the Brain and the defender generator under attack by automatons. They can wait in the shadows or join the fight, but the end result is the same.

Part Seven: A Strange Request

Hook: The Mechanoid Brain points out that it was pure coincidence that it was able to fix and modify the defender generator without the materials and gear they were sent out to retrieve, and a sign that fate is on their side. It has a new plan that involves the player group's help and once they do this, the Brain can guarantee it will be able to send them home.

Line: The Mechanoid Brain needs to gain access to a location the Great Machine has designated *Uni-Nexus One*. The location is given to the characters and they can survey the area in advance to make plans if they so desire, but the Brain insists it will need to make more powerful and intelligent robots to join the battle.

Sinker: According to the Mechanoid Brain, in order to make the more powerful robots it needs a sample of each character's DNA. The reasons for this requirement are too complicated to explain, the Mechanoid tells them, and it argues they have nothing to fear from it. After all, it has been honest so far.

Characters unfamiliar with Mechanoids may find the request unusual, but may comply. To characters who know about the Mechanoids, the reasons should be obvious, the Brain plans on cloning the characters' DNA, combining it with its own, and making a few more Mechanoid cyborgs. If so accused, the Brain will laugh, make some disparaging remark about ignorant humans, and tell the characters it needs their DNA to create a hybrid robot using a neural interface, and that their DNA will accomplish that task. The bluff may or may not work depending on how desperate or trusting the characters may be.

Part Eight: Defending the Mechanoid

Hook: The Brain will obtain a DNA sample of each character, one way or the other. If the characters prevent this, the Mechanoid Brain will resort to the more risky option of cloning itself. To keep the characters as allies, it will provide for their needs, at least for the moment.

Line: It will take some time to build up a sufficient force to attack Uni-Nexus One, at least several weeks. During the interim, the Great Machine may rally its forces and attack. The player characters are expected to help defend the Brain and the defender generator. With all the modifications the Brain is doing to the defender generator and the amount of power it is using to make robots (and Mechanoids), it is only a matter of time before the Great Machine quits fooling around and makes an all-out attack. The first attack was pure happenstance and though the Great Machine knows there is a dangerous intruder afoot, it doesn't know exactly where. (The Mechanoid has been shielding its location thus far, but it is impossible to remain hidden much longer.)

Game Masters should gauge any ensuing battles according to what their players characters can handle. Likewise, if all goes reasonably well a battle doesn't occur until they attack Uni-Nexus One. Either fight will be hard fought, but the backup provided by the Mechanoid should help make all the difference. During the course of the battle one of the characters should notice that new Mechanoids make an appearance. These are the clones generated by their own DNA samples (though they may not realize it), and include another Brain, two Runners, 1D4+2 Brutes as well as an army of Thin Men and Runts.

Sinker: The Mechanoid Brain has been very busy, not just making robots and new Mechanoids, but also learning how to manipulate Uni-Nexus One to create a dimensional portal to its home dimension. However, just as it has promised, it will send the player characters home first, all it needs to know is where they want to go.

End Note: The Ultimate Betrayal

Even if the Mechanoid Brain lives up to everything it has promised and helps send the player characters home via the dimensional portal, there should be some nagging problems.

First and foremost, the Mechanoid will know what planet the characters herald from, as well as the exact coordinates to their home world via the dimensional portal within the Great Machine. That means it can dispatch an invasion force to Earth (or wherever) any time it desires, and because the Mechanoids so despise humans and all intelligent bipedal life forms, that invasion will only be a matter of time.

Second, the player characters don't know exactly what the Brain has learned while it was in control of the defender generator. It certainly seems to know an awful lot about dimensional travel via the Rifts. Does anyone really want that kind of information falling into the Mechanoids' clutches?

Third, will the Mechanoids be able to return to the Great Machine on their own now? Their initial appearance was an accident that resulted from a dimensional storm, but now this Brain seems to understand plenty about D-Travel. If they come back they may be able to steal technology, making themselves even more powerful, or worse, seize control of the Great Machine or convince it to become an ally (after all, it's a living machine like them, not a biped). The Megaverse will become a more dangerous place if either one of these two scenarios should unfold.

The only *safe* way to play this out is to destroy the Mechanoid Brain and any new Mechanoids, and find their own way home. In fact, smart characters who know about the Mechanoids should never have let things get this far, and wisely destroy the Brain as soon as possible. To do anything else is to make a deal with the devil and put all humanoid life throughout the Rifts Earth universe, and perhaps the entire Megaverse, at the mercy of the Mechanoids (known to conquer and destroy entire galaxies).

The Garbage Pit Dimension

Conan Schmidt could tell by the strain coming from Kirsten's face that the pyramid's defenders were fighting the Shifter's control.

He had to buy her some more time. The mystic barrier he had already erected was failing. It was only a matter of time before the Kydian Powerlords would come charging through.

Conan looked again at the Elf, and her familiar, a Panthera-Tereon, once more to gauge how much time was left. It was hard to tell and the time always seemed to vary, so he was relieved to see the air in front of her forming into a bluish vortex and a dimensional tear begin to appear. Under the circum-

stances, however, the best she could do was open a random Rift. Jumping through a random Rift was far more dangerous because they didn't know where they'd end up, but any place had to be better than in a Bio-Wizard's vat in Splynn.

It was time to make an exit. A deafening silence permeated the area, the Atlantean Powerlords looked around in shock as the very air began to shake and vibrate. It felt as if the whole pyramid was going to collapse. Like scattered chess pieces the dozen or so Powerlords were toppled over and a thick dust kicked up, momentarily obscuring Conan and his comrades from their sight. His Mystic Quake would buy them the precious moments they needed to exit through the Rift. Quickly turning around, Conan could see that Kirsten had already forced the Rift open so that they could depart.

"After you." Conan said in his typical gentlemanly tone. The Elf, taking a moment to marvel at her creation was startled when a roar was heard from behind. Turning around she could see two Splugorth Slavers float into view and their Altarain slaves charging toward her and the Rift. Kirsten's familiar roared in, defiance taking a defensive position behind his mistress. Apparently the magical quake had not affected the new arrivals. Not wasting another moment, Conan grabbed the delicate Shifter and dove through the portal, pulling her with him. The large feline familiar was quick to follow before the Rift slammed shut.

After a brief fall through a black void, they had landed on something hard. Conan and Kirsten couldn't tell for sure, but from their travel to Phase World, he suspected they were in a spaceship of some sorts. Invoking a Globe of Daylight revealed they were in some type of cargo container, with all kinds of storage containers. The place was a mess and they couldn't identify any of the markings. Kirsten spotted a hatchway and opened it. A stench filled the container as a murky liquid seeped in along the floor.

"Where in Hades are we?" Asked Kirsten, holding her nose.

"Not Hades, more like some type of garbage pit." Conan surmised.

Standing behind Kirsten, the Ley Line Walker looked around the outdoors. The sun was rising and the dark sky quickly began to lighten and the long shadows shortened. Mound after mound of junk and garbage was revealed in the light of day. It stretched as far as the eye could see – piles and piles of scrap and garbage. Remembering a quote from a pre-Rifts vid he once saw, Conan said to Kirsten.

"I guess we're not in Kansas anymore?"

The Garbage Pit appears to be an obscure dimension hidden in the recesses of the Megaverse and known to only certain dimensional travelers and races. As far as the eye can see, garbage is scattered to the horizon. The senses are assailed by strange odors mixed with the stench of rotting . . . stuff. The sounds of crashing junk, or something burrowing through it, also permeate the air half of the time. During the day, the air is warm and the sky is a pleasant deep blue, though there is no apparent light source. At night, the air is cool and gray clouds fill the sky, often disgorging acid rain, or releasing poisonous vapors or actually raining junk. Daylight lasts for about forty-three and a half hours followed by forty-three and a half hours of darkness, com-

plete and utter darkness. There are no stars or moons, and only those who have nightvision (able to see in complete darkness) or some means of magical or artificial illumination can see a thing. When the light comes back it appears like a sunrise, with the horizon beginning to glow an amber color at dawn, until the whole sky lights up a brilliant sapphire blue. When night falls, the sky rapidly begins to darken and gray clouds roll in. Sunrise and sunset take about one hour before the dimension is either fully lit or completely dark.

The Garbage Pit is one of those rare dimensions with little or no dimensional fabric, and as a result, Dimensional Teleporting in is very easy. So easy in fact, that long ago one or more races decided to use it as their own personal landfill. No one knows who started using this dimension as a garbage dump, but it is said to have been used as such for millions of years.

The original land mass of the dimension is buried under hundreds of miles of junk, trash and debris. Junk includes destroyed and severely damaged and abandoned spacecraft, the shattered hulls of starships, engine blocks, and the wrecks of air, water and ground vehicles of all kinds. There is also radioactive waste, chunks of destroyed buildings, bricks, twisted girders, scraps of metal, pieces of body armor and robots, spent E-Clips, broken energy weapons, chipped and broken nicknacks, scraps of paper, the corpses from dozens of different races, rotted and half eaten food, liquid and solid waste of every variety, and finally, millions of unpaired socks, among other things! Whatever you might expect to find at a high-tech, trans-dimensional garbage dump, is what you can expect to find here, and then some.

Dimensional Characteristics

The physics of this Garbage Pit dimension are unique. First, the Garbage Pit is an infinite dimension. At least, no other parallel dimensions have been found to dispute this claim and the place seems to go on forever. The dimension's primary medium is considered to be light energy. This is what provides the dimension with what most would consider to be a day and night cycle. The energy builds, giving off light, resulting in the daylight hours. When the energy reaches its maximum point it begins to wane until it is at its lowest, giving the illusion of night. This cycle continues without interruption year round. It even controls the temperature in the dimension. During the day, at what would be considered the hour before and after noon, is when it's at its hottest. Temperatures soar as high as 110 degrees Fahrenheit during the day and dip as low as zero Fahrenheit during the dead of night. Exposure to the elements is yet another danger found in the Garbage Pit.

The dimension's secondary medium is perhaps the most interesting. Despite the mounds of garbage, a land mass exists under it all. Most of it appears to be buried by several miles of trash, but there are the occasional clear areas of parched earth, as desolate and devoid of life as the surface of the moon. These open areas may stretch a few hundred yards to several hundred miles, their shape and size determined by the mountains of garbage all around them. Of course, it is only by chance that garbage has not yet filled these *flat valleys*, and though some have existed for eons, any of them could become a dumping ground at any time. Nothing can grow in the dead, packed earth of these flat valleys; besides, being out in the open is asking for trouble,

as one stands out like a beacon to potential enemies and dimensional visitors.

As noted earlier, the dimensional fabric is very weak, and as a result, dimensional travelers and poor souls caught in a Dimensional Maelstrom or other anomaly sometimes find themselves swept away and dumped here like trash. People with no knowledge of dimensional travel are stuck, and thousands have been trapped in this terrible place.

Arriving to the dimension is easy and travelers get a +20% chance when opening a Rift to it, or Dimensional Teleporting in. However, leaving is another matter entirely, thanks to the low level of magic in this cosmic dumping ground. Ley Lines are super-rare and very weak, and nexus points are almost impossible to find. Some believe it is because the ley lines are buried under literally mountains of garbage, but others believe magic is practically non-existent in this dimension. As for buried ley lines, digging down to one (assuming a person could even sense its presence) would be like starting at one of the high peaks of the Rocky Mountains and digging down to its base! And the deeper one gets, the more dense, rock-hard, and packed the ages old petrified garbage becomes.

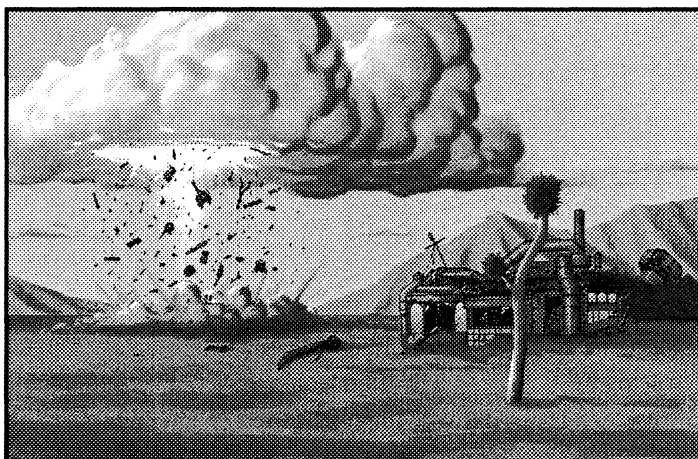
There is a *Central Nexus*, but it is located in the most desolate of locations. Few people travel to this region, as they simply do not have sufficient supplies to make it. It's at the central nexus, located under several miles/kilometers of junk, that a single Rift can be found and it only opens at peak times.

Despite the unusually long days and nights, the flow of time is considered normal. (At least when traveling to other dimensions, as the flow of time is in sync with other dimensions like Rifts Earth.) Unfortunately for newcomers, keeping track of time is no easy task and it can take several weeks to get acclimated to the unusually long nights and days. Typically, people are active for 20-30 hours of the day with the occasional catnap or rest breaks to reduce fatigue. At night, most people sleep or rest 20-40 hours, depending on how much rest they got during the day and whether or not they have a means to generate light and heat to keep working in the icy darkness.

The Garbage Pit has its share of dimensional quirks. The first thing most people notice is that they arrive into the Garbage Pit in mid-air. The dimension's focal point is 10-100 feet (3-30.5 m) above the ground. With the various mounds of junk to land on, most people just end up with a few minor scratches and bruises, though some falls can cause serious injury or be fatal. The same holds true for the junk. It seems as the mounds grow higher, so too does the dimension's focal point above them, with newly arriving trash and junk falling 10-100 feet (3-30.5 m) from the sky, like smelly manna from heaven.

Though most inhabitants and visitors don't realize it, the Garbage Pit is linked to the dimension of the *Great Machine*. In fact, the Garbage Pit is probably linked with several hundred worlds from numerous other dimensions, all of whom seem to use it as a dumping ground. That means, except for dimensional scavengers, few people visit the Garbage Pit dimension on purpose, and Rift activity, other than those that *dump* garbage as well as people caught in a random Rift, is very low. Its primary or strongest link is to the Great Machine, and as much as one quarter of the junk and garbage may originate from that one dimension alone.

Arguably, the saving grace of this dimension is the *universal energy matrix*. Junk is Rifted in from several dozen or perhaps several hundred dimensions on a daily basis. The occasional piece of tech that can be recovered, salvaged or repaired will work with any of the diverse and alien technologies and energy systems. The results are usually a patchwork of weapons, armor, vehicles, machinery and materials. Jury-rigging is a popular skill that most long time inhabitants develop along with a number of basic electronics, mechanics and building skills.



MAJESTIC 2004

Raining Junk

Since the dimensional fabric is so weak in the Garbage Pit dimension, those who use it to dump waste do so frequently. Thus, it is not uncommon to see (and for those that can, feel) dozens of Rifts open up every day. Some open at ground level, but the majority open several hundred if not thousands of feet in the air. The Rifts don't even coincide with ley lines or the few nexus points buried in the dimension. One can only conclude that dozens (perhaps hundreds) of dimensions must use the garbage pit for disposing of their waste. This causes it to literally rain junk and garbage from the sky. Travelers who are not sensitive to the opening and closing of Rifts are in real danger from objects falling from the sky and injuring them. There is little warning, with only a sudden gusting of wind and maybe a flash of light as a Rift opens and junk begins to spew from it. More than one traveler has been crushed by massive bulkheads, slabs of concrete or scrap metal. The damage taken from raining garbage can be minimal to life threatening. Consult the percentile table below.

First roll on the Raining Junk Damage Table, then on the following tables to determine the duration and size of the rain shower.

Raining Junk Damage Table

01-25% Simple garbage rains down. There is no damage, but it may prove to be an obstacle, or just inconvenient as everyone under its area of effect is covered in slimy or smelly liquid, slime, goo, or clumps of . . . (don't ask). Victims will want to clean up when possible.

26-45% Only an embarrassing moment, a few gallons of liquid waste rains down on the player characters. The only damage is to one's pride and cleanliness.

46-50% Golf ball size pieces of junk, goo and liquid waste rain down. Damage is only 1D6 S.D.C. per melee round until shelter can be found.

51-60% Medium-sized pieces of debris fall from the sky, but nothing heavier than a few pounds. Still, there is a lot of debris, making the damage 4D6 S.D.C. per melee round until shelter can be found.

61-70% Large pieces of debris or Mega-Damage material fall from the sky (both inflict M.D.) They range in size from basketballs to easy chairs. Damage is 1D6 M.D. per melee until shelter is found.

71-80% A hail of small Mega-Damage debris falls from the sky. Though small, there's a lot of it and it's coming down hard. Damage: 01-33% 2D6 M.D., 34-66% 3D6 M.D. or 67-00% 4D6 M.D. per melee round.

81-90% Large chunks of heavy debris and Mega-Damage materials fall from the sky (both inflict M.D.). The size ranges from easy chairs to automobiles. Damage is 6D6 M.D. per melee round until shelter can be found.

91-95% Giant pieces of debris and Mega-Damage material fall from the sky (both inflict M.D.). They range in size from trucks to ocean liners and may include trashed giant robots, large vehicles, aircraft, spaceships, pieces from starships, giant engines, or parts of buildings. Damage: 01-33% 1D6x10 M.D., 34-66% 1D6x100 M.D. or 67-00% 1D6x1000 M.D. per melee round.

96-99% Something huge is coming through a Rift! It's so big that a large shadow forms over the spot where it will soon come crashing to earth. 2D4 large chunks rain down for 2D6 minutes before the bulk of the humongous thing hits. Damage is 3D6x10 M.D. per melee round and shelter may not be enough to save people from the giant thing that's coming down after the debris. Hiding between junk or in a cave or tunnel deep in a garbage mound is likely to save lives, but the characters may find themselves buried in thousands, even millions, of tons of debris (Game Masters, be kind and make some way out possible). Damage is 5D6x1000 M.D. to the overall area, but those underground, shielded by a force field and other chunks of protective debris are likely to survive without taking any damage or only 5D6 M.D. from falling debris or impact concussion. **Note:** When the super huge piece hits, it often cracks or shatters on impact, scattering the tonnage, and just as often the giant item will have air pockets, open chambers and tunnels human-sized beings can squeeze, climb and crawl through to get out from under it. Getting out of the strike zone (the rainstorm of junk), however, is the best solution in this and *all* cases.

100% A colossal piece of junk is coming through a dump Rift. It's only one piece, but it takes the entire duration to come through the Rift, giving plenty of warning to anyone in the area. As with the huge debris, above, the only recourse may be abandoning one's position and getting the heck out of there. The same situation for being buried applies. When the debris hits it will do 1D6x10,000 M.D. to any structures or vehicles in the area.

Junk Storm Duration Table

01-30% The junk storm is very brief, only lasting 1D4 melee rounds (15-60 seconds).

31-60% The debris falls for 1D6 melees (15-90 seconds).

61-80% The junk will fall for 2D4 melees (30-120 seconds).

81-90% Junk and debris fall for 4D6 melees (60 seconds to six minutes).

91-100% It seems as if the garbage storm will never let up as it rains down for 6D6 melees (90 seconds to 9 minutes).

Junk Storm Area of Effect Table

01-30% The junk rains down on a tiny 4D6 foot (1.2 to 7.3 m) radius.

31-60% The junk rains down on a 1D6x10 foot (3 to 18.3 m) radius.

61-80% The junk rains down on a 1D6x100 foot (30.5 to 183 m) radius.

81-90% The junk rains down on a 1D6x1000 foot (305 to 1828 m) radius.

91-100% The junk rains down on a 1D6x10,000 foot (3048 to 18,288 m) radius; as large as an 11 mile (17.6 km) radius.

Where does it come from?

That is one of the first questions asked by any dimensional travelers that come to the Garbage Pit. Well, there's actually a variety of sources. The first and most frequent source of bodies, debris, and garbage is Center on Phase World, located in the Three Galaxies. They have thousands of garbage receptacles scattered around the arcology. The garbage is then magically transported away. The garbage is pooled in large tanks on the lower levels, and when they fill up, they are dumped through a Rift to the Garbage Pit dimension. Center is one big mystery, and no one knows how long it's been around. The only thing known for certain is that they have been dumping garbage this way for thousands of years. For all anyone knows they could have been the first party responsible for dumping garbage in another dimension.

The Great Machine is another dimension that uses the Garbage Pit as a dumping ground. Materials that it is unable to recycle are gathered in large piles and bulldozed through the various Rifts. For the most part they end up in the Garbage Pit dimension. Where the rest goes is anyone's guess.

Presumably other worlds and dimensions must use the Garbage Pit as well, however, they have yet to be identified. The United Worlds of Warlock are probably one, the Splugorth and Naruni another two, but beyond that, who knows? Roughly 20 to 30 Rifts open daily, depositing all manner of junk and debris and there seems to be no letting up in sight.

Time in the Garbage Pit

Time is difficult to tell in the pit. There is no sun to watch or a change of seasons to help. Long ago, one of the settlements determined that every 100 days would be a cycle or what roughly translates into one year. Each day is 43 and ½ hours long, followed by an equally long night which makes a complete day 87 hours long. There are no 87 hour clocks in the Garbage Pit, but a few inventive people have developed a primitive water clock. However, since water is one of the most valuable com-

modities in the Garbage Pit, other liquids like motor oil and hydraulic fluid are used. These clocks are very large and cumbersome (each is about the size of a car) and each is custom built. Some communities keep them as the centerpiece of town as most are a marvel in engineering.

Newcomers learn quickly that the day-night cycle is not as they know it. With 87 hours in a day, coordinating people and events can be frustrating. Most have given up and simply judge the passage of time with each day. Practitioners of magic in particular have a difficult time adapting as most depend on this common cycle of day and night to prepare themselves for the hours when P.P.E. is most available, but then they are in for a rude awakening when they find out that their precious ley lines and nexus points are virtually nonexistent in the Pit.

Lose Something?

Dropping an item can be a nerve-wracking experience. Not only are people continuously walking on mounds of junk, but there are also hundreds of nooks and crannies for small items to fall down into and get lost in. Visitors have to be very careful not to drop any valuables or it could be the last time they ever see them again.

If an adventurer drops something, there is a 01-25% chance of it being permanently lost. If an item is dropped while engaged in a battle, even if the character doesn't move from his position, then there is a 01-45% chance of it being lost forever. This applies to items smaller than a laser pistol or similar small-sized object. Anything larger, like a rifle or sword, is less likely to get lost (reduce the percentages noted above by half). Only Scavengers have a chance of finding lost items. Anyone else can spend days searching the same spot and without success; 01-03% chance per 12 hours of searching. The use of select magic spells and psionics only increases the odds of success to 01-05% after 1D6 hours of searching.

Lucky Finds

The majority of the Garbage Pit is truly junk and rotten garbage. However, if one takes the time to search, sometimes a useful item or two can be found, as well as salvageable parts, edible food, ice/water, useable clothes, etc. Of course, value is in the eyes of the beholder. After all, if a cyborg finds a magic scroll, and has no knowledge of magic, it is worthless to him, but finding an alien weapon or powerful bionic limb or spare part, may be of great value and importance. Scavengers of the Pit seem to have an eye for items of value, even if they don't know what the item is. This is what makes *salvaging* an art form in the Garbage Pit dimension, but only to those who know not only where, but how to search. While the junk falls from random Rifts all over the dimension, there are some fertile grounds that Scavengers have discovered and try and keep to themselves. The areas around the few settlements have been picked clean for years, and new dumpings are swarmed over like locusts. This forces skilled Scavengers to travel miles from their local settlement, sometimes hundreds of miles, to find choice salvage and rare items. While this does have its disadvantages, it makes the Scavengers very familiar with the terrain, excellent guides and scouts, and fairly skilled assessors of goods.

It's unlikely that someone is going to just find an item while traveling. One has to be constantly on the lookout and know what he or she is looking for. Most stuff is so intermixed and jumbled that it is easily passed over unless one has a keen eye for what's important and valuable in this setting. For someone other than a Scavenger it will take 6 hours to search a 20 square foot (6.1 m) area before anything of value is likely to be found. Scavengers can find something in half that time and cover twice the area or depth, moving on without wasting time when their gut tells them this spot has nothing worth looking for. Game Masters, use your discretion when people are searching through the garbage, remembering that an ordinary person or recent visitor is looking for anything that's in good condition, in working order, and obviously of some value, thus he is likely to find *nothing* he recognizes or some odd item that has little use to him or his allies. The Scavenger on the other hand, knows what has value in *the Pit*, what can be cleaned up, fixed, sold for parts, etc., and is much more likely to find a number of small things he can quickly trade or sell than any other character. Ultimately, what's unearthed is left to the sole discretion of the Game Master and are likely to be things that can be traded or sold for cash rather than something that can be put to immediate use like an energy rifle, suit of armor or even an edible sandwich. Roll on the tables that follow for some random salvage goods.

Salvageable Items Table

01-20% S.D.C. Building Material: The only salvage found is building materials. There is no need to determine quantity as just about anything could be used in the Garbage Pit. Only simple dwellings can be built, nothing complex.

21-30% M.D.C. Building Material: M.D.C. building materials are found just about everywhere, however, there may not be suitable tools to properly mold, weld and connect these super strong alloys. Furthermore, rolling this category means the building materials found are superior to the run of the mill scraps, and offer maximum M.D.C., quality and appearance.

31-40% Electrical Parts: Various electrical components are found that are useful in the repair of electronics. May include circuit boards, computer components, wiring, switches, basic electrical tools, etc. **Note:** In the alternative, the item(s) can be electronic devices such as a radio, walkie-talkie, digital camera, audio recorder and player, language translator, laser distancer, binoculars, passive nightvision scope or goggles, computer component(s), etc.

41-50% Mechanical Parts: Various mechanical components are found, typically from vehicles, but can be just about anything. An experienced Operator/Mechanic can modify and jury-rig these items to other machines and make repairs with relative ease. Good stuff.

51-55% E-Clip: Roll for condition/payload: *01-40%:* Empty, needs to be recharged. *41-60%:* Clip has 30% of its charge remaining. *61-80%:* Clip has 50% of its charge remaining. *81-90%:* Nearly a fully charged clip that has 90% of its charge left. *91-00%:* A fully charged clip! Number of E-Clips found: 1D4.

56-60% S.D.C. Melee Weapons: 1D6+2 grimy or rusty S.D.C. melee weapons are found. With a little cleaning and polishing they'll be as good as new. 01-20% Knife, 21-40% Sword,

41-60% Blunt weapon (mace, club, etc.), 61-80% Axe, 81-90% Spear, 91-95% Pole Arm, and 96-00% Bow and arrow or a cross bow. **Note:** In the alternative, they can be tools rather than weapons.

61-62% Salvageable Parts: 1D6+2 grimy, oily, or rusty components are found. To anyone else they look like junk, but to a trained eye, they can be cleaned to be as good as new. Each has a value of 2D6x10 credits each if purchased new or sold to an individual willing to pay the price, but only garner half that in trade and one third that if sold for cash to a merchant/trader.

63-65% Rail Gun Ammunition: Type will vary, but anyone with the Weapons Engineer or Field Armorer skill can modify the ammo to satisfy most needs. Number of rounds found: 01-40%: 1D4x10 rounds, 41-60%: 1D6x10 rounds, 61-70%: 4D6x10 rounds, 71-80%: 1D4x100 rounds, 81-90%: 1D6x100 rounds, 91-96%: 1D4x1000 rounds, 97-00%: 1D6x1000+1000 rounds.

66-70% Medical Supplies: 01-60%: Simple first aid kit. 61-70%: RMK robot medical kit. 71-80%: IRMS surgical kit. 81-90%: Phase Tech med kit. 91-98%: Lesser healing potion (3D6 Hit Points). 99-00%: Superior healing potion (5D6+6 Hit Points/S.D.C. or 1D6 M.D.C.). For RMK, IRMS, and Phase Tech med kit, roll on condition table.

71-75% Energy Weapon: Roll for general type: 01-20%: Vibro-Blade. 21-30%: Stun Weapon. 31-50%: Energy Pistol. 51-80%: Energy Rifle. 81-90%: Heavy Weapon. 91-96%: Explosives (hand grenades, or shaped charge, or mini-missile, etc.), 97-00%: A magic weapon (Techno-Wizard, rune, etc.). The exact make and model of the weapon is up to the sole discretion of the Game Master. 1D4 weapons are found, each can be of a similar type or roll for each. Just about any type of weapon could be found in the Pit, roll on the item's condition below.

76-80% Projectile Weapon: Roll for general type: 01-40%: S.D.C. Pistol, 41-60%: S.D.C. Rifle, 61-80%: M.D.C. Pistol, 81-90%: M.D.C. Rifle, 91-00%: M.D.C. Rail Gun. As with the energy weapons, any type of projectile weapon can found. Roll on the condition table below.

81-85% Edible Food: Possibly one of the most valuable commodities in the Garbage Pit. The type of food can vary dramatically, as can the amount. 01-05%: It's a miracle! Fresh fruit or vegetables or meat. 06-50%: Half eaten food or scraps; basically *leftovers* that got tossed in the trash. 51-60%: Dry goods like flour, corn meal, popcorn, etc.; may be sealed in package, used but still good, or even open and contaminated with weevils or other harmless insects; gross but still useable when the bugs are picked or sifted out. 61-75%: Canned food, a step up from leftovers and food that can be kept in storage for at least another 4D6 months and tastes fresh when opened. 76-90%: Preserved foods other than canned. This may included any dried or freeze dried foods, as well as salted, jerked and pickled. Often includes a variety of meats. 91-95%: Sweets, may be a candy bar still in the wrapper or a can or bottle of honey, syrup, jelly, jam, or sugar. 96-00%: MRE (meals ready to eat), military rations are not the best tasting, but last for years.

The quantity will vary, roll percentile. The numbers represent the quantity for a single person to have a single meal. 01-40%: Only enough for one person, 41-70%: Enough for 1D6 people. 71-80%: Enough for 3D6 people, 81-90%: Enough for 1D4x10

people, 91-96%: Enough for 2D6x10 people. 97-00%: Enough for 4D6x10 people.

86-90% Clean Water or Ice: As rare as real food. The quantity varies, roll for the number of gallons/liters found. 01-40%: 1D4, 41-50%: 2D6, 51-60%: 4D6, 61-70%: 6D6, 71-80%: 1D6x10, 81-90%: 2D6x10, 91-95%: 4D6x10, and 96-00%: 2D4x100.

91-92% Energized Melee Weapon: 01-50%: Vibro-Knife, 51-60%: Vibro-Sword, 61-80%: Neural Mace, 81-90%: Stun Weapon (net or other), 91-00%: Magic (Techno-Wizard, rune, magical, etc.). If applicable, roll on the condition table below.

93-95% Suit of Body Armor: These are discarded suits or pieces of armor that may even have a corpse still in it. Roll for what is found: 01-70%: Scrap pieces, not enough for armor but can be used to repair other armor. 71-90%: Half suit that is not environmental, only pieces are found that form no more than a half suit. M.D.C. is -1D6x10%. 91-98%: Full suit, but it is not environmental as there will be holes in it or pieces missing. M.D.C. is -1D4x10%. 99-100%: A full suit that is still intact and is environmental. M.D.C. is -1D4x5%. The exact type of armor will vary and is left to the Game Master's discretion.

96-98% Toy, Book or Artwork: All items that aren't necessities of life, but make life a nice, happier place and always have some level of value. 1D6 items each worth 3D6x10 credits in trade.

99-100% Exotic Find: This can be just about anything and is the G.M.'s prerogative. It can be anything from a magic scroll, to a magic weapon to exotic technology. Game Masters, this is your chance to introduce your own creations or items that will help create plot hooks for further adventures. Have fun.

Condition Table

01-40% Only good for parts, the device itself doesn't work.

41-60% Needs major repairs, and then will only work at half range and only has 1D6+3 uses/charges. If a weapon, reduce range and damage by half, and is -1D4 to strike.

61-90% Needs minor repairs, and will look nice and work as good as new with a little cleaning and minor readjustment.

91-100 Works perfectly. The device or component was well maintained or is like new.

Treacherous Travel

Dimensional travelers often arrive to this place by mistake. Those who deliberately come to "the Pit" are scavengers, junk collectors or pirates or fugitives, the latter two looking for an out of the way place where they can lay low for awhile. The inhabitants – yes, people live here – believe the Garbage Pit dimension to be the repository for waste from a dozen alien worlds. The people here exist by the barest of means and eke out a meager existence by scavenging what food and water they can find.

Travel within the Garbage Pit can be treacherous for those who don't live here and understand how things work. All kinds of dangers lurk just beneath the surface. Unsuspecting travelers are usually unaware of sliding junk and air pockets that can give way and drop people into a hole or crevice of junk. These pits and loose spots occur naturally when hollows in the debris are

covered over with junk, be it from light debris, or deteriorating and fatigued wood, plastic or metal. Damage depends on the distance one falls and what they land on. The average pit is typically 1D4x10+10 feet (6.1 to 15.2 m) deep with rubbish at the bottom (sometimes soft and sometimes hard). However, a pit or crevice can be a hundred feet (30.5 m) or deeper sometimes, and/or the bottom lined with jagged glass, stone or metal. While most people easily survive falling a short distance (10-40 feet/3 to 12.2 m), there is always 01-25% chance of landing wrong and breaking an ankle, leg or arm, or suffering a serious injury from jagged debris at the bottom. If there is an upside to these holes, pits and crevices, it's that the walls are never smooth and there are plenty of handholds to use for climbing out. More people have died due to dehydration, starvation, and the elements than falling into a trash pit, hole or crevice, but it can happen. There are also pit traps used by some of the inhabitants to protect their camps or to waylay strangers (damage is the same, but the pit is man-made).

Damage: 2D6 S.D.C. plus 1D6 S.D.C. for every 10 feet (3 m) of the fall. Some pits have shards of M.D.C. metal, and can damage and impale Mega-Damage armors, doing 1D6 M.D. per 10 feet (3 m) the character falls. Mortal Hit Point and S.D.C. creatures are cut to ribbons on M.D.C. debris, taking 1D6x10 S.D.C. damage from it plus 1D6 S.D.C. per every ten feet (3 m) from the fall.

Other dangers:

Changing landscape: Garbage falling from the sky adds to the piles of debris and changes the landscape every day, so Land Navigation and all other Navigation skills are -30%. Only the Scavenger does not suffer this penalty.

Getting lost is easy, and once one loses his bearings, it may be impossible to find his way back to friends, camp or a familiar landmark. The terrain is ever-changing and those who are not long-time inhabitants may find themselves wandering aimlessly for hours or even days.

Loose rubble makes the Prowl, Climb, Acrobatics and Gymnastic skills -20%.

Garbage avalanches: The constant shifting debris and new junk can also cause an *avalanche of garbage* that can pin and trap people and even kill them (deadly ones do 1D6x10 M.D. damage or 1D6x100 S.D.C.); most happen with little warning and smart people avoid areas with new, loose debris. **Note:** More often than not the garbage shifts and falls soon after it lands. However, there are also occasions where the garbage piles up and becomes imbalanced, loose and ready to fall from the slightest disturbance. Some of the younger and wildest Scavengers knock them over deliberately and ride the tumbling and sliding garbage like surfers on an ocean wave, or sledding down a hill on a toboggan.

Lack of water is another problem. There are no natural rivers, lakes or seas, and no underground waterways either. The only available water comes from real rain from a random Rift (accounts for 10% of the available water), water found in debris, castoff spaceships, vehicles, etc. (accounts for 30%), ice blocks among the garbage drops (accounts for 50% and sends people scurrying to find them before they melt in the heat of day), other liquids from which water can be extracted and purified (accounts for 5%), and frost that collects at night (5%).

Exposure: The extreme ranges of hot and cold also make life a challenge.

Twisting Mazes: Few landscapes provide a more natural maze than piles of junk and debris. Junk piles that can't be climbed due to their instability or perilous angle must be navigated around, so travelers are forced to wander the hills and valleys between the piles. All sorts of debris walls, crevices, and winding tunnels create a maze-like environment. In fact, scavengers and junkmen have built thousands of tunnels in and through many of the mountains of garbage, and such tunnels and caves serve as sanctuaries from junk rain, monsters, intruders and the cold temperatures at night.

Not all of the dimension is a maze. Some of the more traveled paths may actually be higher than the surrounding mounds, forming impromptu roads and bridges. Larger pieces and giant mounds of debris are often landmarks and trail markers. Near settlements, the lay of the land may actually be marked and new debris cleared away to maintain the status quo. There are signs that experienced Scavengers will be able to find and help with finding their way through the mounds.

Creatures & Monsters: A variety of monsters and animals inhabit the seas of garbage and can range from mice, rats and rodents to exotic animals and lesser demons and M.D. predatory monsters.

Living Dangers in the Trash Mounds

Danger lurks just around every debris mound where something or someone could be laying in wait for an innocent passerby. Demons, Deevils, Mega-Damage monsters, and certain scavenging animals can all be found in the Pit. The *Hang-Jaw Demon Rat* abounds in the Garbage Pit dimension, and the *Razoredged Prowler* and, to a much smaller number, the *Firethorn* are also found in this dimension. (All three are Chaos Day Demons described in *Rifts® Chaos Earth: Creatures of Chaos*, along with 20 other demons.) Black Faeries and Brodkil are also encountered from time to time in this realm. Mortal enemies come in the way of Scavengers, stowaways, fugitives, space pirates, dimensional raiders, D-Bees and aliens – most of whom get Rifted to the dimension by accident (often with the garbage) and have no way out, so they live by the skin of their teeth and take advantage of those weaker than they. Not all the humanoid inhabitants of the Pit are villains, but many are desperate and very suspicious of strangers and find it better to shoot first and ask questions later.

Supernatural Entities are the big trouble. They have nothing in common with mortal beings and like to kill and destroy without provocation. The most dangerous of the entities in this environment is the *Tectonic Entity* because it forms a physical body out of the very trash that covers the landscape. Most are able to assemble Mega-Damage bodies, making it all the more difficult to defeat them. Fortunately, the entities are not smart enough to assemble en masse and are usually encountered as one or two individuals, never in a large group. Natives are constantly on the lookout for these murderous fiends.

Other entities also make their homes in the Garbage Pit dimension, with *Poltergeists* and the rare *Haunting Entity* found around most of the inhabited areas of the Pit. They are more of a nuisance than a danger and most of the inhabitants simply ig-

nore them. 1D6 Poltergeists often attach themselves to newcomers, following the group, making noise, knocking around light debris and being a nuisance, but usually move on to someone or someplace else after 1D4 weeks. *Possessing Entities* are the scariest of the entities, but also the least common in this dimension.

Junk Beasts are an ever present danger in this environment because these things actually lurk under the junk like sharks that prowl the seas. However, unlike sharks, Junk Beasts are intelligent predators that can travel quickly through the mounds and mountains of garbage to attack humanoid prey or to make good an escape. They are also known to set up ambushes and lie hidden in wait for prey.

The inhabitants themselves also represent danger, especially to newcomers and rival clans. The culture here is pretty much *dog-eat-dog* where the strongest and most cunning get the lion's share of the good stuff and intimidate, prey upon and rule over (sometimes enslaving entire villages) those who are weaker than they or are too frightened to challenge them. The prevailing alignment of natives in the Garbage Pit is Anarchist, with a strong number of evil characters, with most of those being Miscreant and Diabolic. Unprincipled and good alignments are in the minority and finding someone willing to help a stranded dimensional traveler is like finding a needle in a haystack. Kindness in the Garbage Pit is as rare as fresh food and water, and most inhabitants suspect everyone is out to steal from them, including their neighbors. Consequently, stranded dimensional travelers find themselves targeted by all parties because outsiders are free game and viewed by many as prey.

Junk Beast

Junk Beasts are semi-intelligent creatures that roam the debris wastes of the Garbage Pit. They are a threat to everyone and best to be avoided at all costs. The Junk Beast is an alien creature that is long like a centipede, but with a vaguely humanoid face. Sprouting from out of its back are two rows of sharp spines that can be manipulated like crude arms. The front four pairs of legs are actually tentacles that reach out to attack and entangle live prey, but can also be used like prehensile appendages when necessary. What makes these creatures especially dangerous is their intelligence and ability to learn and mimic other intelligent life forms. While they are considered monsters, they are alien beings from another dimension who view humanoids and animal life as food in the same way humans see and hunt deer, pheasants and other game animals.

Junk Beasts seem able to subsist on just about any type of organic material, and are often found munching on raw sewage and rotting garbage. Humanoids and animals, however, are their favorite prey. If the Beast can get a quick meal dining on a humanoid, it attacks with great enthusiasm and is usually relentless in its pursuit of live food; stops only when its M.D.C. has been reduced by 70%.

Clever beings, Junk Beasts observe the habits of their prey and respond accordingly. They are known to wait in hiding, snatch the last person in line, attack individuals and small groups and have learned what people want and need and set ambushes at locations where such items are found (uses the item/resource as the bait in their trap). They also like to attack

humanoids who have fallen into a pit or who are injured or weak.

The monsters can burrow through the junk at a good rate of speed and are good at hiding in the waste. They can also climb without disturbing loose debris, and possess the strange ability to add machine parts to their bodies (typically weapons), and control them as if they were a natural part of their bodies.

Fortunately, Junk Beasts tend to be territorial, solitary hunters, so they hunt alone or in pairs (presumably a mated pair). Very territorial, the creature usually claims a hundred mile (160 km) radius for itself, and when another Junk Beast enters their domain, they are quick to defend it. Coming across a Junk Beast's nest is extremely dangerous, but often a boon. A Junk Beast often collects all kinds of usable items that any Scavenger would risk his life trying to obtain. Most look for energy weapons, ammo clips, tools, and electronics that even if broke, can usually be repaired. Other organic compounds can be found as well, such as food and water. This makes a Junk Beast's nest/lair something of a treasure trove.

Alignment: Considered Miscreant or Diabolic as they prey on humans and other intelligent beings without remorse.

Attributes: I.Q. 1D4+7, M.E. 1D6+18, M.A. 1D4, P.S. 1D6+38, P.P. 1D6+17, P.E. 1D6+16, P.B. 1D4, Spd 2D6+33 (24-40 mph/38 to 64 km), half that speed when burrowing.

M.D.C.: 4D4x10+60. (On S.D.C. worlds the Junk Beast has 2D4x10 +P.E. attribute number for Hit Points and 2D6x10 S.D.C. with an Armor Rating of 17 for their hard exoskeleton, but only an A.R. 10 for their bellies.)

Horror Factor: 13

Size: 15 to 20 feet (4.6 to 6.1 m) long. Females are twice this size and get a bonus 1D6x10 M.D.C.

Weight: 1000-1500 pounds (450 to 675 kg), with females weighing twice as much.

Average Life Span: Typically lives to be 1000 years old.

P.P.E.: 5D6

Natural Abilities: Supernatural Strength and Endurance, keen sense of smell (despite the pleasant aroma of the Garbage Pit) and are able to discern simple organic matter from more complex matter, like humanoids. They are able to Track living creatures by scent alone at 60% (+15% to follow a blood scent), and use surprise and ambush tactics. Able to adhere junk to their exoskeleton for concealment, adding a +10% bonus to their Camouflage skill. They can also stick several pounds of junk to their body and when they do this they add 2D4x10 M.D.C. Bio-regenerate 4D6 M.D.C. per 24 hours. Burrow through the junk and garbage at half their running speed, and possess a formidable array of psionic powers.

Equivalent R.C.C. Skills: Camouflage 80%, Climbing 90%/80%, Detect Ambush 75%, Detect Concealment 70%, Prowl 50%, Land Navigation 90% (without the penalty humanoids suffer), Salvage 40%, Computer Operation 30%, Radio: Basic 40% (though they can't speak and make weird clicks, growls, chirps and hisses), Recognize Weapon Quality 50%, Dowsing 60% and Wilderness Survival 90%.

Attacks per Melee: Six physical or psionic attacks per round.

Bonuses (in addition to attribute bonuses): +1 on initiative, +1 to strike, +2 to pull punch, +3 to save vs possession and

magic, +2 to save vs psionics, and +6 to save vs Horror Factor.

Damage: As per Supernatural Strength.

Magic: None.

Psionics: Considered a Master Psychic with 6D6+30 I.S.P. and has the following powers. Telekinesis (varies), Mind Block (4), Presence Sense (4), Object Read (6), Mind Bolt (varies), Levitation (self, varies) and Telemechanic Mental Operation (12).

Languages: They have their own language, but no one has been able to decipher it.

Value: The creature often has valuable salvage in their lairs (5D6x100 credits' worth), and their exoskeleton can be made into heavy Mega-Damage body armor. A typical non-environmental suit has 1D4x10+40 M.D.C. Their teeth and spikes can be used as Mega-Damage melee weapons that do 1D6 and 2D6 M.D. respectively.

Habitat: From an unknown alien dimension, but thrive in the Garbage Pit dimension.

Allies: None, even avoid their own kind.

Enemies: All living animals and humanoids are prey.

People in the Garbage Pit

The Garbage Pit is truly a cornucopia of people and races. No one race is dominant, and for the most part they blend together pretty well. Most gather in clans or small tribes who stick together but regard other clans as rivals and potential enemies. Most clans and groups live in a specific location that they claim as their own, but may scavenge anywhere, including areas claimed by rival clans. This can cause disputes and combat, though most people are happy to drive intruders away rather than kill them. Typical conflicts are small guerilla style raids as well as chest thumping, threats and intimidation tactics, but war can ensue and there have been incidents where an entire village is driven from their homeland or slaughtered.

Humans and just about any race found on Rifts Earth and the Three Galaxies are represented among the inhabitants. Several other more unique individuals are found as well. The occasional mutant animal, or dinosaur can also be counted among the more unique and unusual races. From time to time, a powerful being gets Rifted and trapped in the Garbage Pit. These beings may range from Demigods, demons, devils, and a host of monsters like Neuron Beasts, Witchlings, Black Faeries and Brodkil to dragon hatchlings, Faerie Folk and other creatures of magic or goodness. These powerful beings are sometimes benevolent and try to help the starving masses, but more often than not they are tyrants who find that with little effort they can easily conquer and subjugate people or win them over to worship them. Furthermore, these powerhouses can easily rally the less intelligent and monstrous races to their side as minions and henchmen. Of course, these alliances come and go like the various Rifts in the sky, and truly powerful beings aren't going to waste their time on a dung-heap like the Garbage Pit, and leave as soon as they can.

Salvage City

Salvage City was the first true settlement to be established in the Garbage Pit and is barely more than a large town. The majority of the city sits in the middle of a hulking piece of junk that must have, at one time, been a very large starship. The whole structure is riddled with holes that seem to indicate the spacecraft was in a massive battle. Its overall frame is intact and very strong, especially considering this one piece of debris is over three miles (4.8 km) long and a mile and a half (2.4 km) wide.

This shattered hulk and the fact that garbage had stopped falling from the sky above it, made the wreck the perfect place for establishing a sheltered community. Scavengers had shelter from the elements and protection from the many dangerous creatures that patrol the garbage heaps, and it made a good place for a large number of people to assemble. People arrived in droves to the damaged spacecraft where many stayed and raised families. It took almost five years for the craft to be picked clean of any useful items and parts. Those that worked day and night crawling through the ship eventually decided to settle down and make it a permanent home. One group even managed to repair one of the craft's fusion generators, providing power for the first time to over five thousand settlers at once. A small percentage of the people even have running water, but that is considered a luxury for the upper elite of Salvage City.

Many of the inhabitants have carved out a small section of the craft for themselves, calling it home. Over the years, merchants, craftspeople, traders, and builders have established businesses, and a crude commerce based on trade and barter evolved; there is no currency, as money or credits have no value here.

The city is located on a tall mesa that overlooks several large valleys of debris. People traveling to Salvage City have to make a difficult climb to the top of a mountainous garbage heap. It is accessible by a series of paths that wind around the mesa itself. This location has worked out well, making the city easily defendable and for those looking for it, easy to find. Over the centuries most of the Junk Beasts have been driven off and only a few Entities can be found in the area. Even raiders tend to avoid this heavily populated and well defended oasis of humanity and civilization, or at least what passes for it in this dimension.

The city is ruled by a council of Scavengers. Thirty-three sit on the council and they make all the laws and administer to the city's day to day needs. As one councilor resigns or die, the council takes petitions from others looking to join them. Scavengers are favored and given preference over all others. The council then votes on all petitions received and a new member is chosen by majority vote. In the case of a tie, the most senior councilor becomes the tie breaker.

Most people make the trek to Salvage City because it has the single largest supply of water known in the entire dimension. (Actually, it's not known if other places might exist thousands or millions of miles away with plenty of water and even superior resources. Nobody in this part of the dimension has traveled more than a few thousand miles in any direction.) Scavengers were quick to realize that they had equipment on hand that could purify water and even produce it to a limited degree. This has made the city an invaluable resource for survival and as a result,

the city as a whole is quite rich. The city has been able to trade drinking water, energy cells, electronics, and even oil, seeds and animals to others, making it the merchant capital of the Garbage Pit. However, Salvage City has reached its maximum population of 23,000 several years ago, so while the city will trade with outsiders, people are turned away to fend for themselves or build their own communities elsewhere. Only those who have trade goods may enter the city and they are given a limited pass based on how much they have, plus a bribe here and there also helps to extend this time as well, but ultimately, they cannot live there. This has created resentment from those struggling to survive elsewhere in the wastelands, and city dwellers caught in the free zones of the Garbage Pit are sometimes attacked, robbed or killed.

Various other towns and village encampments can be found scattered all over the Garbage Pit, but few have a population greater than 1D6x100, and most range from 15-40. Each seems to offer something unique that helps with the day to day survival in the Pit. Some offer water, planting soil, crops, tools, mechanical parts, and the list goes on and on. Other settlements survive entirely on scavenging and don't engage in trade. Most people live in caves, tunnels, empty cargo canisters, the shells of vehicles, or makeshift shanties. Some of these settlements seem to pop up overnight and disappear just as fast, others have lasted for years, but none as long as Salvage City. The big city, with its population of 23,000, seems to be an exception and has become a stable constant in an otherwise savage land. **Note:** Salvage City could easily expand by 5000 people, possibly double, without straining their ecosystem, but they prefer to err on the side of caution and work to keep the population at a slow growth rate to safely accommodate its residents.

Scavenger O.C.C.

The Scavenger O.C.C. are natives born on the Garbage Pit or who arrived at a young age and picked up the trade. They are experts at locating and recognizing valuable salvage. Most are mentored by a senior Scavenger and shown the ropes as well as several key locations known to have rich salvage to plunder. These are secret locations that Scavengers never share with outsiders, and regularly yield rare or extremely valuable items. A young Scavenger typically mentors for ten cycles before going out on their own, with most starting as simple guides through the mounds. Many Scavengers work alone or in pairs or trios, others form small teams, but only the toughest, most resourceful and clever survive for any length of time. It is the Scavengers who keep the clans and villages alive by bringing in valuable supplies and trade goods uncovered in the wastes.

Attribute Requirements: I.Q. of 9 or higher, a high P.S. and P.E. are also helpful, but not required.

Alignment Restrictions: None, although most tend to be extreme opportunists, making the majority Anarchist (30%), Unprincipled (25%) and Scrupulous (15%).

O.C.C. Bonuses:

- 1. Knack with Alien Technology:** Since salvage can be from anywhere in the Megaverse, the Scavenger has developed a knack for quickly figuring out what it is and how it works. With this knack for technology the character is not penalized



with the normal -30% penalty for alien tech. At level one the penalty is -26%, and decreases by -3% per level until the Scavenger suffer no penalty.

2. **Concealment/Hide in Garbage:** Scavengers are notorious for disappearing within the mounds of junk. This is a combination of being able to conceal one's presence and remain silent while an enemy is near. They typically disappear in the junk and can come up somewhere else. This ability has a base percent chance of 30% +5% per level of experience. If the character has Prowl, or Detect Concealment, each skill adds +5% to the character's ability to hide and slip away silently.
3. **Enhanced Endurance:** Scavengers are a hardy lot. As a result they can go longer than the typical person can without food and water. At levels one through six the Scavenger can go twice as long without food and water, and from levels seven and up they can go three times as long before feeling the effects of starvation and dehydration. This also grants them a +3 to save vs poison and disease, and +1 to save vs magic. Scavengers have also seen more of the Garbage Pit than other people and are less likely to be frightened or panicked. This gives them a +2 to save vs Horror Factor.
4. **Enhanced Navigation:** Scavengers are able to navigate the mounds of junk and debris without penalty. They are also able to recognize the signs that other Scavengers leave to mark trails and safe paths through the junk piles. Signs vary from safe trails to warnings of Junk Beast and unstable trails.

O.C.C. Skills:

Speak Native Language 98%
Speaks two additional languages (+15%).
Armorer/Field Armorer (+10%)
Basic Electronics (+10%)
Basic Mechanics (+15%)
Basic Math (+10%)
Climbing (+20%)
General Repair/Maintenance (+10%)
Jury Rig (+15%)
Rope Works (+10%)
Salvage (+15%)
Recognize Weapon Quality (+15%)
W.P. One Ancient of choice.
W.P. One Modern of choice.

Hand to Hand: Basic – can be changed to Expert at the cost of two “O.C.C. Related Skills” or to Martial Arts or Assassin for three skill selections. Many Scavengers avoid combat, while others thrive on it.

- O.C.C. Related Skills:** Select eight other skills plus select 3 additional skills at level three, and two additional at levels 6, 9, and 12. All new skills start at level one proficiency.

Communications: Radio skills and TV/Video only.

Domestic: Any.

Electrical: Any (+5%), but Electrical Engineering or Robot Electronics count as two skill selections each and don't get a bonus.

Espionage: Detect Ambush, Detect Concealment, and Intelligence only (+10%).

Mechanical: Any (+5%), but Mechanical Engineering, Robot Mechanics, and Weapons Engineer count as two skill selections each and don't get a bonus.

Medical: First Aid only.

Military: None.

Physical: Any.

Pilot: Any (+5%).

Pilot Related: Any.

Rogue: Any.

Science: Math skills only.

Technical: Any (+5%, and +10% on Languages).

W.P.: Any.

Wilderness: Any.

Secondary Skills: The character also gets to select four Secondary Skills from the previous list. These are additional areas of knowledge that do not get the advantages of the bonus listed in the parentheses. All Secondary Skills start at the base skill level. Also, skills are limited (any, only, none) as previously indicated in the list.

Standard Equipment: Light piecemeal body armor with 50 M.D.C., one weapon per Weapon Proficiency, and a total of 1D4+1 E-Clips. Player's choice of weapon with G.M.'s approval as it can be just about any salvaged weapon. Most likely it's been passed down from teacher to student, or parent to child. 1D4 weeks of provisions, 50 feet (15 m) of rope, gas mask, backpack and 2D4 sacks for carrying salvage.

Money: 2D4x1000 in tradable goods.

Cybernetics: None, but that's mainly because they're not available.

Experience: Use the Vagabond experience table which can either be found in the *Rifts® RPG* or the *Rifts® Game Master Guide*.

Hook, Line, and Sinkers™

Scavenger Hunt

Hook: The player characters are invited to Splynn (or captured as the case may be) by a powerful High Lord who is part of Splynncryth's domain.

Line: Either to win their freedom or to win a great prize (perhaps something their family or village desperately needs back home), all the characters have to compete in a Scavenger Hunt. It seems several High Lords have assembled their respective teams to find certain items that the High Lords (or their Splugorth masters) desire and now they are competing for them.

Sinker: The players are given a list of items to find. Most will be unusual, but attainable.

A small percentage of the items will be unique and one-of-a-kind. What the players don't realize until the last minute is they have to find these items in a junk pit that is the size of, well . . . a dimension!

Help Wanted

Hook: The characters are in the vicinity of Salvage City.

Line: Regardless of how much or little the characters have in the way of trade goods, they are allowed into the city and directed to see the city's council.

Sinker: The council is recruiting numerous Scavengers and newcomers. It seems that the equipment that purifies the water has broken down and components are needed to repair it. They are offering citizenship to anyone who brings back the necessary equipment. Outsiders are being recruited for fear of a panic if the city's populace learned of the trouble. Outsiders who help will be given special status and a fair reward, like drinking water whenever they need it for themselves, and that is a reward worth more than almost anything in this realm.

Treasure

Hook: The characters have learned that some of the legendary treasures from Tolkeen were rescued and spirited away from the great city before it fell to the CS.

Line: In order to find these treasures the players have to meet a former Tolkeen Shifter at a nearby Rift.

Sinker: Upon arriving, the Shifter reveals to the group that he personally sent several of Tolkeen's valuable magic treasures through a particular Rift to keep them out of Coalition hands. Now is the time to recover them, all the group has to do is find them . . . um, in the Garbage Pit. Each item (2-4 of them) was sent with a practitioner of magic to hold on to it, but all contact with these individuals has been lost, and the magic items with them. It's not likely they have left the Garbage Pit dimension because none of the safe keepers were Shifters, so they or the items must be someplace. The safe keepers should have landed a few dozen miles from Salvage City, but they could be anywhere. It is unknown if any other force (the CS, Daemonix, evil Shifter, etc.) might have caught wind of hiding the items in the Garbage Pit, and it is possible someone or something followed the safe keepers in an attempt to steal them for themselves. Or the safe keepers may have met with disaster, but the items are still around, somewhere.



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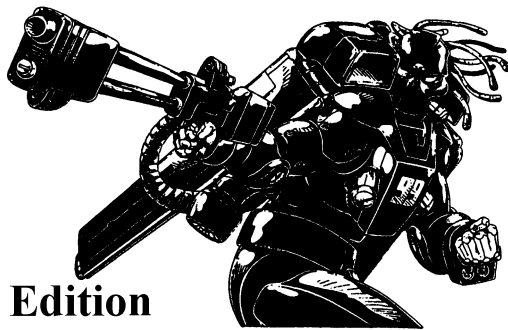
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