

ARMY of DARKNESS™

ROLEPLAYING GAME





ARMY OF DARKNESS ROLEPLAYING GAME COREBOOK

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Super Special Thanks: David Chapman (archetypes) and the always reliable, ever-mysterious Teller, for work on the War is Hell mini-setting.

Eden Studios

6 Dogwood Lane, Loudonville, NY 12211

Produced and published by Eden Studios, Inc.

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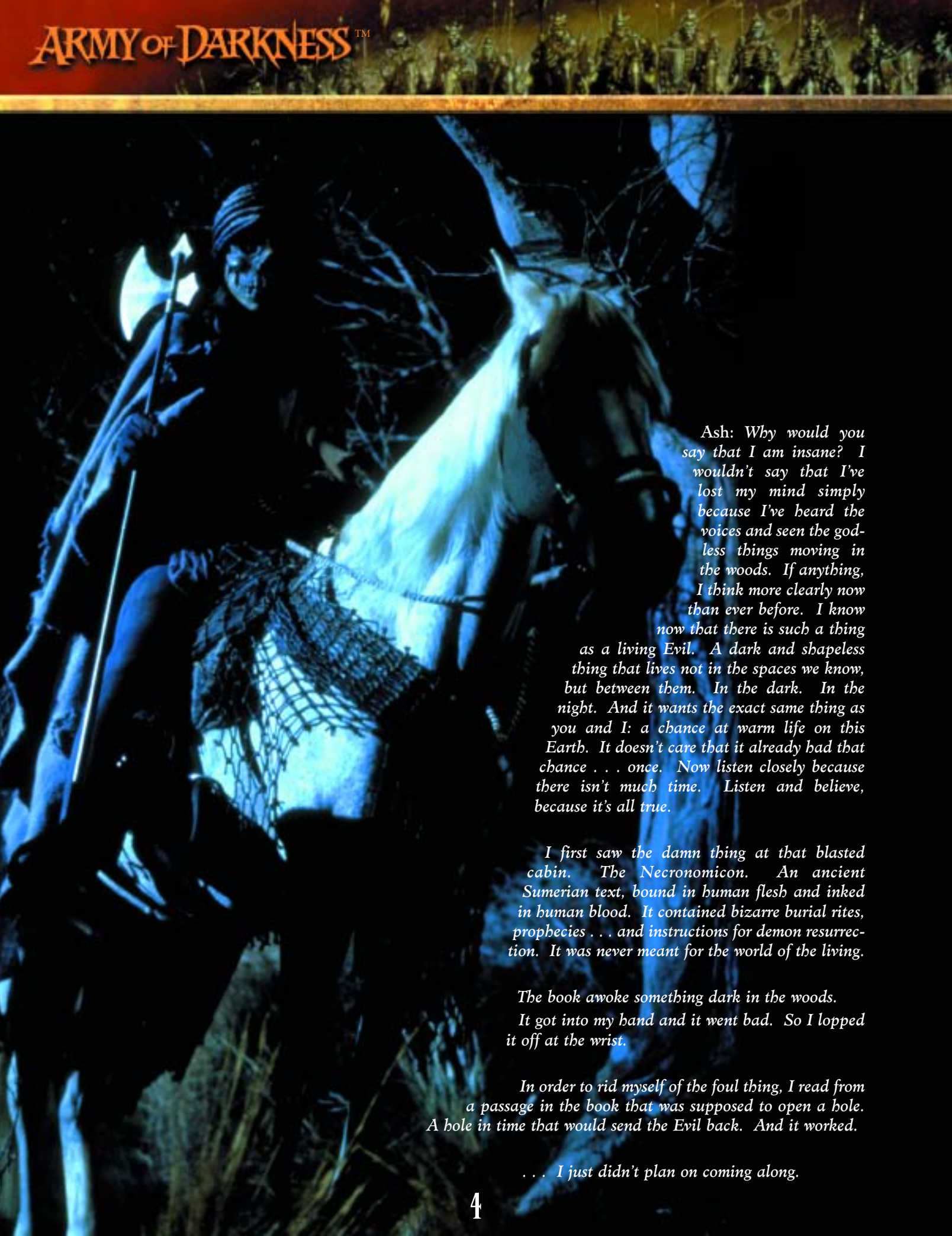
First Printing, June 2005

Stock EDN6300 ISBN 1-891153-18-8

Printed in China

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Ash: Why would you say that I am insane? I wouldn't say that I've lost my mind simply because I've heard the voices and seen the godless things moving in the woods. If anything, I think more clearly now than ever before. I know now that there is such a thing as a living Evil. A dark and shapeless thing that lives not in the spaces we know, but between them. In the dark. In the night. And it wants the exact same thing as you and I: a chance at warm life on this Earth. It doesn't care that it already had that chance . . . once. Now listen closely because there isn't much time. Listen and believe, because it's all true.

I first saw the damn thing at that blasted cabin. The Necronomicon. An ancient Sumerian text, bound in human flesh and inked in human blood. It contained bizarre burial rites, prophecies . . . and instructions for demon resurrection. It was never meant for the world of the living.

The book awoke something dark in the woods. It got into my hand and it went bad. So I lopped it off at the wrist.

In order to rid myself of the foul thing, I read from a passage in the book that was supposed to open a hole. A hole in time that would send the Evil back. And it worked.

. . . I just didn't plan on coming along.

KICKING ASH

"What is a screwhead?" Sheila asked.

Ash looked around furtively. The fire played off her lily-white skin as he lay next to her, at peace for the first time in the last week. Since he'd gone to the cabin. Since he'd somehow landed in England's distant past. Since Linda.

"Uh, nothing, baby." Pillow talk time. Sheila had given, now it was time for him to take away. The Promised One stood and started putting on his clothes. "You better blow, sugar. I've got . . . science . . . stuff to do."

Sheila stood and donned her nightgown, embarrassed. "I would not interfere with . . ."

The door to the workshop opened and a warrior stood in the dim entrance, staring dumbly at Sheila's barely clad form.

"Hey, buddy. Get your own." Ash continued buttoning his shirt.

The soldier didn't move.

"Haven't you ever seen a woman before? Close your mouth. You're drooling."

Indeed. Thick drool dropped from the man's lips.

Ash grimaced. "Now that's just gross. Look you ape, I'm gonna tell Arthur you were down here peeking at my Tom unless you get your medieval ass outta my . . ."

"Ash!" Sheila screamed.

The soldier dropped to his knees and fell forward, his armor clanging loudly. Blood spilled from his armor and a dagger showed in the small of his back. Behind him stood another figure—an armored knight in full plate and helm.

Ash finished buttoning his shirt. His ear twitched and his nostrils flared. He smelled dead man. "Three's a crowd. Four's pissing me off."

The knight's faceplate flew open, revealing the snarling face of a demon. Sheila screamed at the milk-white eyes and blood-curdling snarl that emanated metallically from its helm. The thing stepped into the room and closed the workshop door behind it. "You will not stop us! We are the things that were and . . ."

"I've heard this part." Ash dove for the workbench where he'd left his boomstick. He hit the overhanging barrel and watched it flip end over end until it landed perfectly in his hands. The man from the future blasted both barrels at the thing, but the buckshot barely dented the knight's breastplate.

"Dead by dawn!" the Kandarian screamed. It charged across the room, sword in hand.

Sheila rolled out of the thing's way, accidentally entangling herself in the blanket she had shared with Ash.

The demon slammed the sword down next to Ash, cleaving the workbench in two and sending tools flying everywhere. Its great weight pressed down on its prey, pinning Ash against the table. The horror cursed and fumed, its fetid breath causing S-Mart's Employee of the Month to cringe and cough. "I'll swallow your soul!" it screamed.

"Swallow a breath mint." Ash grabbed a pair of tongs off the bench and jammed them into the helmet's slit. He pinched the monster's nose tight, then pulled until it stretched out of the visor like taffy. "Nyuk, nyuk, nyuk." The demon reared back in pain and swung its sword wildly.

Sheila screamed again. The loose end of the blanket had fallen in the fireplace and caught fire. Ash ducked past the crying demon and grabbed the blanket with his metal hand. One quick yank and Sheila spun around like a top. He caught her in his arms and smiled. "Gimme some su . . ."

A sword shot between the two like an arrow and lodged firmly in the workshop wall. The Kandarian cackled and grabbed a large circular saw blade from the table. It hurled it like a Frisbee directly at Sheila.

Ash stepped in front of the deadly disc and caught it with his metal hand. "Three time Frisbee golf champ at Michigan State, bonehead." He whirled the blade back and smiled as it hit the unarmored area next to the knight's shoulder. The demon's arm fell to the floor in a grisly green shower of blood. It stared dumbly at the twitching limb for a moment, then snapped its head back toward the hated champion. "Go Spartans."

Before the bloody thing could act again, Ash used Sheila's blanket like a whip, lashing it around the knight's armored neck. "Yeehaa!" he yelled as he yanked. The demon staggered forward, directly into the butt of the hero's shotgun. The helm rattled like a cymbal and it stomped about in disoriented circles, the blanket still latched to it like a leash.

"You cannot defeat us! We are already dead!"

"Let's dance." Ash continued to twirl the blanket, pulling the monster in an ever-tightening circle as he wrapped it around his arm.

"The Necronomicon will be ours! The dead shall conquer the living and the world will be ours!"

One last flip of the Promised One's arm and the demon was twirled about like a top. It finally came to a dead stop—Ash's boomstick right at its open visor. "This is a no spin zone, bitch."

CHAPTER ONE

GATHERING DARKNESS

WHAT'S THE BUZZ MAN?

Ash's world isn't actually all that dark. Sure, everyone around him tends to get eaten, and being his love interest is a sure way to wind up with a demon inside you, but it's all in good fun.

Army of Darkness is half horror and half camp. We're not talking about Camp Wakamita here, we mean camp as in humor. The *Army of Darkness* roleplaying game (*AoD RPG*) is the same thing. About half of it features gory scenes of carnage and destruction. The rest is all about who delivers the coolest line while they're blasting the head off some deadite with a boomstick.

You probably found this book at your favorite game store and thought "Groovy! It's the brand new roleplaying game from Eden Studios based on *Army of Darkness*!" Okay, maybe you didn't say it like a commercial, but you basically still saw the book

somewhere and said "COOL! It's the brand new roleplaying . . ." Oh. Right. We covered that.

Part Two of this epic tale (anything over a paragraph is epic around here) is that you shelled out some shekels and walked out with this book. Now you want to know what to do with it. You'll find it works quite well for whacking deadites. Don't laugh—they're all around you—you just haven't seen them yet. It can also serve as a convenient place to hide secret messages or press leaves. Oh, and you can also play a roleplaying game with it.

Those of you who know what that is can skip right on to **Chapter Two: The Promised Ones** and dig into the juicy meat of the rules. The rest of you should read the rest of this chapter so we can tell you what this nerdy roleplaying business is all about.

LET'S GO

When you watch *Army of Darkness*, Ash gets to have all the fun. But how cool would it be if *you* were the guy with the chainsaw on his arm? Okay, maybe your name is Harold and you're not all that keen on lopping off your favorite nose-picker. That's okay, the actor who plays Ash, Bruce Campbell, probably hasn't slain any demons in real life either (though one never knows—Hollywood is a weird place). So like Bruce, you can play a "character," a make-believe person of your own creation.

Unlike the Bruce-ster, Bruce-o-rama, the Bruceinator, you aren't going to get a script. You're going to be presented with certain scenarios and you'll have to ad lib your hero's way through them. You decide what he says, who he attacks, and which skirt he wants to chase. The game rules (we'll get to those later) tell you whether or not your character is successful when he tries to cleave a deadite in two, or drive the death coaster through a horde of skeletons.

Yes, you can play Ash, Henry the Red, Arthur, or Sheila (prior to that whole *Bride of Frankenstein* schtick, of course). It's probably more fun to make your own hero though. You can play a champion *like* the Ashster, a loyal brute like the Blacksmith, or a crafty codger like the Archer Captain (go watch the flick again if you don't remember these folks—or check out their character sheets on pp. 70-75). Those of you with the less hairy chests (we mean the ladies) shouldn't feel left out here. Even though *Army of Darkness* doesn't feature any big Helgas making with the chop-chop, there's no reason you can't play a warrior too. We're talking a world of zombies and demons here, so a suit of plate mail with breast-cups isn't going to upset anyone. You can also play a lady-in-waiting, a wisewoman, or just a plain old gorgeous gal who's always falling for the wrong guy, like Sheila.

You player types are called Cast Members. We're just all movie-talk around here, ain't we? It helps the non-gamer types relate.

THE DIRECTOR

So who's the genius creating and managing these spooky scenarios? One of your friends. Probably the schmoe who called you over to play this game in the

first place. He's also the guy who likely bought this book, so show some respect knucklehead and wipe the Cheetos off your fingers before you paw through his new purchase.

We like to call this enlightened individual the "Director." He's the fellow who comes up with the adventure the rest of you play, describes it to the group, watches over the rules, and plays the parts of all the "extras"—all the primitive screwheads, rivals, and creepy-crawly bad guys who aren't played by you and your warm, Dorito-munching friends. We call those folks the Supporting Cast.

Those among the Supporting Cast who aren't inclined to swallow your character's soul are Guest Stars. The Blacksmith and the Archer Captain fit in here—unless one of your friends decides to play them. The bad guys, those who want to bathe in the Cast Members' blood and use their brains like loofahs, are Adversaries.

Besides playing the parts of the Guest Stars and Adversaries, it's the Director's job to handle the rules. He tells you when to roll those funky ten-sided dice, figures out what the results mean, and describes what happens in the game world after all the number-crunching is over. (And don't worry—there isn't a whole lot of number-crunching in this game. Like *Army of Darkness*, things move pretty fast and furious in Ash's world.)

The cool thing about a roleplaying game (as opposed to a board game like *Monopoly*) is that it's subjective. In *Monopoly*, for example, you can't decide to forget the whole real estate thing and turn that swanky Park Place hotel into a bordello. But you can here. You can try just about anything you want . . . as long as you can make a good argument for it. A knight can't suddenly grow wings and fly away from

GATHERING DARKNESS

"ALL RIGHT. WHO WANTS SOME?
WHO'S NEXT?"
-ASH



the army of the dead, for example, because that's just not possible (go ahead, consider that a challenge—we're sure you can come up with a rationale for it before the game session tonight). But he can hitch a ride on the catapult, fly over the castle walls, and come down swinging his sword at the major bad guy. Bending reality here isn't just possible, it's promoted like new and improved adult diapers.

GAME SESSIONS

Let's talk about this whole gaming thing for a second. This is pretty important stuff for you newbies, and a good refresher even for the veterans.

Most groups like to play for four to six hours at a stretch. It's a social event, so pizza, snacks, and lots of caffeine are always welcome. That's right—no health food advice to be found here. You get enough of that from busybody, veggie huggers who never meet a bran they didn't like. We're completely decadent when it comes to our game time. Jolt cola, Ding Dongs, and Doritos are tasty and help preserve your corpse should you ever become a deadite yourself (and that's a good thing, because the grody dead are just . . . grody).

Each distinct story arc is called an Episode. Sometimes you'll finish an Episode in a night, sometimes it may take a couple of sessions. A bunch of linked adventures—where you play the same characters—is called a Season. Like a television version of *Army of Darkness*. (How cool would that be?) We've got more on this in **Chapter Five: Director's Cut**, but here's a quick example. Let's say a group of warriors has decided to go after a rare suit of armor rumored to be impervious to evil. The group sets off to first find out where the thing is, and then travels to a secret cave where an ancient cult protects the suit. The heroes make with the slaying and emerge with one kick-ass suit of plate mail. That's one Episode. How long it takes to play depends on just how fast your group is. Your group might be all Dale Carnegie-goal oriented and whip through it in one night. Or they might get sidetracked while roleplaying their characters and stretch things out like Froot by the Foot. Maybe one of the heroes wants to stop at a nearby village and see his lover. Or avenge the death of his father. Or look for that lucky ham he buried before heading for Arthur's castle.

The Director has to "ad lib" side-trips like this that aren't in the adventure he's designed. As long as they're entertaining for everyone, no harm, no foul. In fact, one thing new Directors do sometimes that hurts the game is rush their Cast along. Don't be so concerned with getting to the final goal. Fun can be had along any number of paths and events. Letting the players lead the story in new and unexpected directions gets everyone involved and increases the surprise quotient for all. Shared storytelling is all about sharing . . . at least sometimes.

One last thing and we'll shut up. Where roleplaying games differ from movies is that they're social events. The best thing about them is getting together with your friends, making goofy jokes, and acting in character. The latter can be really fun sometimes—especially if your hero occasionally gets himself in trouble. The goal may seem to be finding the magic whatsit, but it's really about getting together and acting like Shemps.

Over several Episodes, not only will your story grow, but the Cast will increase in power. Characters gain experience that helps them get medieval on the terrors-that-be. That's one of the grooviest parts of the whole roleplaying gig—developing your character, both story-wise and in those all-important game stats.

GETTING STARTED

So you've plopped down some dinero and bought the book. You need to support the adventure gaming industry just a little more before you're ready. We're talking dice here.

Remember we mentioned rules? Well, you can't just say "I fight the army of the dead, defeat Evil Ash, get the Evil out of Evil Sheila, and save the world. We all done here?"

Sorry, friend. Your hero has to go through all those scenes just like in a movie. In a real movie, the script determines whether or not a character succeeds at something. In this game, we rely on dice. Every time you swing a sword or French kiss a hottie, you're going to roll a ten-sided die (we like to say "die 10," or "d10" in geekspeak). You'll add the die roll to some of your character's game stats and then tell the Director your total (we'll get into the specifics later). That gives us a little randomness and makes those really exciting actions a little more

dangerous. Yes, you can catapult onto the castle wall, but if you fail (by rolling bad), it's pancake city. That's embarrassing and causes your hero to see little bats flitting around his head.

To buy one of these legendary d10s, you're going to have to brave one of the most dangerous and feared places known to man—a game store. Hopefully, you've got one of the good ones around you and won't have to pretend you're really going to the Spatula City next door in case a hot chick sees you. Do that whole Internet thing if you don't have a local game store. There are several cool companies that make these dice in lots of different flavors (that's "colors," knucklehead—don't eat them). Check out www.edenstudios.net for some nearby stores if you don't know a Google from a Yahoo.

While you're there, pick up some gaming stones. What you're really looking for is some kind of token—the more in-theme the better. Little metal skull counters, plastic zombies, or even poker chips work well. You'll use these to record your Drama Points, little bits of luck that let you save your warrior's bacon when the odds are against him. We'll talk more about those in **Chapter Three: Ash Rules**.

Once you have returned from this epic quest to your friendly neighborhood game store, call a few like-minded friends and tell them how sad their miserable little lives are without an *Army of Darkness* roleplaying game book of their very own. Okay, they don't really have to have a book, but it certainly helps if there's more than one copy of the rules floating around. It also sends our kids to college and keeps us in Twinkies—the preferred food of professional game designers everywhere.

Cards

If you just can't get your hands on some D10s, an easy substitute is playing cards. Just grab a deck, separate out the four suits, hand one set of Ace through 10 to each player, and you're ready to go. When it's time to "roll", simply shuffle your ten cards quickly, and draw one. The Ace counts as one. If you can't figure out the rest, put down this book and walk away **VERY SLOWLY**.

The Unisystem

The game part of the *AoD RPG* is handled by the Unisystem. The Unisystem helps players and Directors decide what options are available at any given moment in the game, and the success or failure of any character's actions. These rules are presented in detail in **Chapter Three: Ash Rules**.

Although the Unisystem is designed to handle any kind of roleplaying game—in any setting, with any theme—each particular game has its own flavor. While all Unisystem games share basic features, we want to avoid the whole "One Game to Rule Them All" megalomania. For the *AoD RPG*, we're talking campy horror. There's lots of combat as well, and near-super heroics are often required by the Cast Members.

The rules in this book are very similar to our knockout sister games, *Buffy the Vampire Slayer* and *Angel*. Gaming grognards (that's "veterans" to you, uh, non-grognards) should find everything they need here without getting bogged-down in a second-by-second simulation of every sword swing. If you're looking for a grittier and more detailed Unisystem, you should also check out our oh-so-zombie-rific *All Flesh Must Be Eaten*, the not-so-Blair-like *Witchcraft*, the yikes-end-of-the-world *Armageddon*, or the tree-swinging *Terra Primate*.

So get on your Dell, dude, and check out our other stuff at www.edenstudios.net.

SUMMARY OF CHAPTERS

The *AoD RPG* is full of good stuff. Here's what we have in-store for you would-be do-gooders:

Chapter One: Gathering Darkness contains these introductory sections, some notes about roleplaying, a list of conventions, and a brief recap of the movie for that guy in Pismo Beach who didn't see it.

Chapter Two: Promised Ones covers character creation. This is where you create your own hero and really mess him up with lots of mental hang-ups, physical disabilities, and mild insanities. (Inheriting a little wackiness from Uncle Bernie, having one eye, and other handicaps give your hero more “points” to take the really cool stuff—like higher combat skills and other special abilities.) From Type to Attributes to Drawbacks to powers, all the choices are here for the taking. We also present several ready-to-go Cast Members, called Archetypes. A tweak here, a name there, and you’re ready to kick butt. Last but definitely not least, you’ll also find complete game stats for all your favorite characters from *Army of Darkness*, from the main man himself to the aptly named Blacksmith and Archer Captain.

Chapter Three: Ash Rules is the rules chapter. This is the pulsing heart of the **Unisystem** ready to be ripped still-beating . . . ah, never mind. Here you learn how to play the game, when to use dice, what they mean, and how to keep your Cast Member from getting his soul swallowed. Details on character development and experience are given, and the super-important Drama Points are explained.

Chapter Four: Battle System is a brand spanking new sub-system for **Unisystem**. This keen little chapter shows you how to manage massive battles like the one in that movie, er, what’s its name? The one with all the skeletons and the guy from Brisco County Jr.?

Anyway, you can handle anything with this fast and loose narrative system, from massive World War II engagements to an assault on a deadite stronghold, and all without touching traditional wargaming paraphernalia like thousands of painted minis or little cardboard chits.

Chapter Five: Director’s Cut is where we run you budding Directors through this whole Episode and Season thing, as well as handing out advice on how to run your games.

Chapter Six: Land of Darkness details Arthur’s England, circa 1300 AD. No history lessons here, kiddies, just descriptions of all the locations from the movie, including a map of Arthur’s castle and the skinny on the Misty Forest and the Windmill, among others. This is also your one-stop shopping center for finding stats for everyday goobers such as Arthur and Henry’s men. It rounds out with the scoop on what’s really going on with the Evil Dead, stats for all the creepy bad guys, and some Director

suggestions for running players through the *Army of Darkness* plotline but sprinkling in lots of twists to keep it fresh (heh, heh).

Chapter Seven: Worlds of Darkness presents several new settings for would-be-warriors to battle the Evil Dead. A Director might also string them together as different locations for time-traveling heroes. You’ll find the Necronomicon’s birthplace in ancient Sumeria, the post-apocalyptic world of the *Army of Darkness* alternate ending, and completely original settings we devised from the entire *Evil Dead* milieu. (Ain’t we all fancy talking now?)

Chapter Eight: Once More Unto the Breach is a fleshed out adventure to get you started. Directors who aren’t comfortable jumping into the creative deep-end from the get-go, can ease in here. Da wimps.

The **Appendix** presents several useful charts and tables, an index, and conversion notes for our other way-awesome-cool **Unisystem** games.

CONVENTIONS

No, not like the kind where you get to meet those wicked-cool game designers and play their games and buy stuff from them DIRECT so that they get 100% of the cover price instead of the distributor’s lousy 40% minus shipping and early-pay discounts and . . . er, we digress.

What we really mean is that the folks who put this book together really like to play with their expensive publishing programs. But they also know all their pretty design work has to make sense too. Here’s what all that hotshot design work means.

TEXT

Ahem. That’s a technical term. The text you’re reading now is standard text. It covers general explanations, rules, and narrative sections. Fiction sections (stuff we made up, don’t look for it in the movie) appears in italics.



"GIMME SOME SUGAR, BABY!"
-ASH

What really makes Ash cool are the one-liners he delivers when he saws through some demon's nards. We've sprinkled this book with some of the best, both because it looks cool and because we want to remind you to do the same in your game. Remember, he who has the coolest quote of the night wins.

Other words are set off from the standard text like this. These boxes contains additional, but tangential information.

These words tell tales, spin yarns, and attempt to entertain or distract. Nothing here is canon, nor is it necessary to play, but hopefully it gives you some idea of the kinds of stories that can be told by playing the *Army of Darkness RPG*.

Other words are set apart in this way. These boxes detail Guest Stars or Adversaries you Directors can use in your Episodes.

DICE

We made a big deal about those cool dice, and we already mentioned that D10 means a ten-sided die. Multipliers are given after the dice notation. For example, D10 x 4 means roll a ten-sided die and multiply that total result by four. Those of you with an abacus should realize that generates a number between 4 and 40.

GENDER

You English majors know that the guy reference (he, him, his) is customarily used for both male and female. Macho men like Ash dig it, but Sheila isn't such a big fan of being called a "he." Good or bad, Ash is the guy with the gun in this book, so we'll stick to the testosterone-y word forms when making a generic reference. This doesn't mean chicks don't rule, and should never be read to mean a gal can't do anything in this book (except pee standing up, which the rules don't cover anyway—at least not expressly).

MEASUREMENTS

Ash comes from the good old US of A, and winds up in medieval England. In both places, the people use the Imperial System. That's feet, yards, miles, and pounds. For those of you across the pond in those weird metric countries, rough conversions may be found by multiplying miles by 1.5 to get kilometers (instead of 1.609), equating meters with yards (instead of 1.094 yards), halving pounds to get kilograms (instead of multiplied by 0.4536), and so on. Don't worry, that measurement stuff won't come up very often. We're here to kick undead booty, not measure every step and shotgun blast.

COSMOLOGY

Most of you are probably thinking about those sexy hairdressers who just happen to rub up against you when you're getting your groovy DA mowed (that's a haircut, junior). But unfortunately, this word has nothing to do with cosmetics or the beautiful babes who apply them. We're talking about the way the world works in the *Army of Darkness* movie.

This is pretty important stuff, because there's a reason Ash gets to cut his own hand off with a chainsaw and live to tell about it. Needless to say, he's no ordinary Housewares clerk from S-Mart.

Ash is a "Promised One." He's the one guy picked to fight the forces of the Evil Dead throughout time. He's been given some pretty fancy abilities to pull it off, but he's no Superman. He's got scars, a white streak in his hair, and a missing limb to prove it.

Still, given that he's fought at least a dozen deadites, hundreds of skeletal warriors, and a big tree (yeah, that's right—a tree), he's lucky to still be getting any sugar at all.

We're not told why Ash is a champion, how he got that way, or even where the bad guys he's supposed to fight come from. We just know that's the way things are. We also know the bad guys seem to be present in many different times, and Ash has to defeat them whenever and wherever they arise.

We know from the official story that Ash is the Promised One, but we don't know if there are others. You can decide there are in your game, and the players can play them. We talk a lot about that in **Chapter Two: Promised Ones**. In the meantime, know that the living either fight against the demons or run from them. Mighty heroes fight evil with their swords, chainsaws, or boomsticks. Smart heroes recruit an army to help them.

The demons are summoned into our world by an ancient Sumerian book called the Necronomicon ex Mortis. Roughly translated, it means "Book of the Dead." Or maybe "List of the Dead of the Dead." This nasty tome is covered in leather of the "Oh God what are you doing—don't make me into a book!" variety. Inscribed on its parchment papers are some

devilish doodles inked in human blood (probably from the same whiner who donated his skin).

Wherever this book pops up, trouble follows. In medieval times, it was used to raise an army of the dead. (Kind of the whole point of this book, actually). In modern times, in a charming cabin somewhere in the back woods of the American south, it "infected" a couple of folks with the souls of deadites. These are nasty suckers who don't give up a mortal shell once they've grabbed hold. Going all Father Karras on their Linda Blair might work, but that's not usually an option given that they're intent on eating folks instead of just cursing and spitting pea soup everywhere. Nope. The best way to exorcise these demons is to kill the host and dismember the corpse. That's where the blood and gore usually come in.

The Necronomicon includes a number of spells. Some of them call forth the Evil Dead, others open portals in time, and still more have yet to be revealed (fun thing about a roleplaying game is that you can decide what they are and work an entire plot around it). Some of the spells even hurt the demons. Exactly why the forces of darkness decided to include a self-destruct function in their Hellish Handbook is a mystery. Those wacky demons.

The demons in the modern age never quite got around to raising an army of dead before Ash went all Black & Decker on them. In the past, however, our hero didn't quite say the words right and the eldritch backlash had some pretty grave consequences. Grave as in "things coming out of the . . ." variety. A graveyard of long-dead warriors suddenly sprang to life and declared war on those who still had their pink parts. Worst of all, they were led by an odd simulacrum. That's a fancy word for a creature conjured from thin air who is identical to some other living being. In this case, the simulacrum was an opposite, an evil version of Ash called . . . well, Evil Ash.

The book also created little Ashes from a broken mirror, and has copies that like to bite your hand off or pull you into some freakish black hole. Talk about getting sucked into a book.

As you can see, that book has a host of dark powers. What that means to you Directors is that it can do just about anything you want. Whether it's read aloud or misused in a ritual, the Necronomicon is the ultimate plot device for your *Army of Darkness* adventures.

"NECRONOMICON EX MORTIS, THE BOOK OF THE DEAD . . .
IT WAS NEVER MEANT FOR THE WORLD OF THE LIVING."
-ASH

"IT GOT INTO MY HAND"

-ASH

THE STORY

We find it very hard to believe you're reading these words and haven't seen *Army of Darkness*. Maybe you're the type who only watches *The English Patient* because your girlfriend has you whipped like taffy. Maybe your friends with better taste in movies and longer leashes talked you into trying this game and you need to catch up real quick on all the in-jokes. Now we don't want to add to your obvious troubles, so we're here for you, knucklehead. Consider this the Cliff's Notes version of the film.

Those of you aficionados who know everything about the entire *Evil Dead* series need to realize we're only dealing with *Army of Darkness* in this book—that's just how licenses work, amigo. That's okay because the setup in other Ash-movies is all summed up at the beginning of the film, so we can still tell you all about the Knowby cabin, Linda, and the strange events that started this unholy roller-coaster ride to hell.

The tale begins as Ash and his girlfriend Linda head to a remote cabin in the woods for a romantic getaway. Ash gives Linda a necklace with a small magnifying glass on the end, and the two make with the googly eyes. Linda goes to slip into something more comfortable (oh baby!) and Ash pokes around the cabin. On a desk in the living room he finds a creepy looking book and a reel-to-reel tape recorder. The big-chinned knucklehead hits play. Big mistake. On the tape is the voice of Professor Raymond Knowby, Department of Ancient History.

Knowby says he has discovered the fabled "Necronomicon ex Mortis" in the ruins of the castle of Kandar, a recently discovered site in ancient Sumeria. The book describes an evil presence that roams the dark forests and the demons at its command. By reciting certain passages in this book, the evil is awakened and the demons given license to possess the living.

Knowby then proceeds to read the relevant passages from the book (brilliant, isn't he?). The evil "force" awakens in the thick forest outside (duh!) and heads straight for the cabin, hungry after long centuries (decades? years?) of sleep. The thing smashes in the window and takes Linda from her bedroom. Linda is resurrected as a demon, and Ash, being the loving boyfriend that he is, has to dismember her screaming corpse.



Next the evil gets into Ash's hand, turning it against him. Our hero has only choice—he lops it off at the wrist with a chainsaw. Being the tough guy he is, Ash goes to the workshed and straps the chainsaw onto the end of his arm. Armed with his new toy and a shotgun, he prepares to do battle with the force.

Ash reads a passage from the Necronomicon that forces the creature from the woods to materialize in the flesh, then tears open a vortex to send it back through time. Unfortunately, Ash goes with it. Fortunately, his 1973 Delta 88 Oldsmobile Classic and its trunk-full of goodies tag along as well.

WACKINESS ENSUES

Now we're officially out of the rehash and into *Army of Darkness* proper. Ash falls out of the vortex and lands hard in a desolate quarry. He dusts himself off and sees that he's surrounded by knights in armor! The knights don't take kindly to this odd-looking stranger and surround him. Only one man, a fellow we know only as Wiseman, thinks Ash may be more than he appears. He says "He is the one written of in the Necronomicon. He who is prophesized to fall from the Heavens and deliver us from the terrors of the deadites." The knights' leader, Arthur, is having none of that and declares he's one of Duke Henry's men (Arthur's enemy).

Arthur finishes welcoming Ash by saying "To the pits with him!" Our hero is cast in chains with Henry and his warriors and dragged through the deserts (ahem) of England to Arthur's castle. The

GATHERING DARKNESS

people there spit and throw rubbish at the prisoners, and one, a hottie named Sheila, is told by Arthur that her brother fell in battle to these men. Sheila is of the “don’t cry, throw rocks instead” mentality, and throttles our hero like an angry pimp.

Arthur halts the parade at a strange-looking pit at the rear of his castle and gives a speech about an evil that has awakened in his land. He claims Henry has waged war on him during this time, and Henry responds in kind. Arthur is large and in charge so he has one of Henry’s men chucked in. The screaming lackey falls in then comes back out in a massive shower of blood.

Arthur signals for Ash to go next. The champion bravely asks them to take Henry instead, but it’s a no-go. Sheila picks up a rock and nails Ash upside the head and our hero staggers forward into the pit with a friendly shove from his guards.

In the pit, Ash finds himself knee-deep in cold water and accompanied by not one but two demon-possessed humans (who evidently trained in the martial arts during their stay down there in the dark). But this is Ash we’re talking about. The champion fights back and looks like he just might win. Arthur, who does not play well with others, orders that the spiked walls of the pit be closed to crush Ash and the demons.

Fortunately for the main man, the Wiseman grows a pair and chucks Ash his chainsaw. Ash carves up the demons, latches onto the chain that closes the spiked walls, and rides it up to the top of the pit.

Angry Ash screams at the crowd a bit, calls them primitive screwheads, and lets Duke Henry and his remaining men ride out. Arthur is not pleased, but a blast from Ash’s shotgun shatters his sword and shuts him up for a while.

QUEST FOR THE NECRONOMICON

Arthur evidently starts believing the Wiseman, because the next thing we know, Ash is getting the Caesar-treatment in the Wiseman’s tower. Some hot babes feed him grapes and Sheila comes in and begs forgiveness. The Wiseman shows up as well, telling Ash that only the Necronomicon can send him back to his own time. The Gandalf-wannabe also hints that Arthur’s people require the book as well. Ash makes it very clear he isn’t about to go on a quest for the people who put him in chains and threw him in

the pit. Before the conversation goes any further though, one of the chambermaids reveals she is possessed by the Evil Dead. She screams “You shall never claim the Necronomicon!” Ash handily dispatches the she-bitch and shows the assembled cast just why he’s the man.

Without missing a beat, the Wiseman continues where he was so rudely interrupted. “If the Necronomicon fell into the hands of the deadites, all mankind will be consumed by this evil. Now will thy quest for the book?” Ash agrees, but first enlists the castle’s Blacksmith in making him a mechanical hand from a knight’s gauntlet. Before he leaves, he and Sheila kiss and make-up. Ash hits his low here, treating the adoring Sheila like a dog. Then he grabs her and issues the most romantic line ever heard (in a horror movie) “Gimme some sugar, baby.” The two even do the whole fireside-without-clothes-thing if you watch the Director’s Cut. A little TLC calms Ash down a bit, and for the first time in the whole film he seems more concerned about the important task ahead than getting back to the future.

WITHIN THE WOODS

Wearing a cape made by Sheila and equipped with his nifty new metal hand, Ash is led to the end of a trail (in the English desert again). The Wiseman tells him “This path will lead you to an unholy place. A cemetery. There, the Necronomicon awaits. When thou retrievest the Book from it’s cradle, you must recite the words: Klaatu Verata Nikto.” The Wiseman makes Ash repeat the words and our hero gets angry. He replies “I got it. I got it. I know your damn words. All right? Now you get this straight: I get the book, you send me back. After that I’m history.” Selfish Ash has returned, and he didn’t pay as much attention to the words as he should have.

Ash rides off on his white stallion into a misty pine forest (close by a rocky American West desert—in England). If he had read this book, he’d know that’s where the evil force—we’ll call it the “Watcher in the Woods” dwells. The thing heads straight for our Promised One (using a jerky, fast-moving camera technique—high cinema art, we say). Ash makes like Roy Rogers and gallops away, but is knocked off Trigger and has to finish the chase scene on foot. He barely manages to escape by running to a windmill at the edge of the forest.



Inside the windmill, day passes magically into night as Ash watches. Later, he makes a fire and boils some water—hey, it's England, might as well have some tea. As he does so, he sees a figure staring at him and rushes toward it. It's a mirror, and it shatters all over the floor of the windmill. Moments later, each shard's reflection of Ash comes to life and crawls forth—they are the Tiny Ashes. Hilarity ensues, and the Tiny Ashes give as well as they get. The Tiny Ashes manage to knock the champion out though, and Ash wakes up Gulliver style. While tied up, his mini-hims insert one of their brothers down his throat. Ash pours boiling water down his gullet to burn the little sucker, but it doesn't seem to work. Moment later, an eyeball appears in the chainsaw champion's shoulder. The eyeball turns into a head, which sprouts out of his shoulder and eventually becomes a whole second Ash.

This doppelganger is Evil Ash. The two fight, but the real deal winds up with the shotgun. With the famous line "Good, bad. I'm the one with the gun," Ash blows his other self away, then dismembers the corpse and buries it by the windmill.

THE ARMY OF THE DEAD

Finally, Ash heads on to the cemetery and finds the altar of the Necronomicon. To his surprise, *three* books lie on the altar—all identical. The first book opens like a black hole, sucking Ash in before he manages to climb out and close the cover. The second bites him and flaps around like some kind of crazed bat before he finally beats it into submission.

With one book left, even our favorite knucklehead figures out which one is the real Necronomicon. He starts to grab it and remembers he must say the

proper words . . . which are . . . er, uh. He's forgotten them! Ash manages Klaatu and Verata but totally screws the pooch on necktie, nectar, noodle . . . damn. He isn't going to get it. He deliberately mumbles the last word and grabs the Necronomicon.

Back at Arthur's castle, all hell breaks loose. Lighting strikes some poor soul who had nothing to do with any of this, dogs and cats live together, and so on. The Wiseman, proving why he's so wise, says "Something's wrong!"

Ash tries to run out of the cemetery but it's too late. Skeletons reach from their graves and grab him. They poke him, slap him, and ram their hands down his throat before he manages to get away. He happens upon his lost stallion and rides back to Arthur's castle saying "I'm through being their garbage boy. I did my part. Now I want back. Like in the deal!"

But Ash's blooper has raised more than just the skeletons—the dismembered corpse of Evil Ash rises from its grave as well!

The Promised One arrives back at the castle with the Necronomicon and much celebration commences—until the Wiseman asks him if he spoke the exact words. Ash angrily says that maybe he didn't get every single syllable just right. The Wiseman responds with "Dung-eating fool! Thou hast doomed us all. When thou misspoke the words the Army of the Dead awoke. It's true the book still possesses the power to send you back, but to us it is useless! The evil has a terrible hunger for the Necronomicon and it will come here to get it!"

Ash doesn't care about the evil and demands to be sent back. Arthur steps forward and says he's a man of his word and he will honor his bargain. The Blacksmith, Sheila, and the rest of the people walk away disheartened, ashamed, and disappointed in the man they thought was the Promised One.

The good times continue as a winged deadite swoops in and snatches up Sheila. It takes her away to the graveyard and into the clutches of Evil Ash—now the general of the growing Army of the Dead. The Big Bad gives her some way-yukky sugar, and Sheila goes rotten as a fallen apple. Evil Ash, Evil Sheila. Get the pattern, bunky?

"WHO'S WITH ME?"

Word comes to Arthur's castle that the dead are but two days ride away. Panic sets in, but Ash steps up—seemingly no longer concerned with going home. Ash gives a Tony Robbins atop the castle walls and asks "Who's with me?" Arthur's men agree to stand and fight with the champion, and they being their defensive preparations. They pull in Ash's Oldsmobile and transform it into the steam-powered "Death Coaster." Ash pulls the chemistry book out of the trunk and shows the Wiseman how to make black powder bombs for the archer's arrows and the catapults. Finally, Ash shows Arthur's soldiers how to smash skeletons with their polearms—a tactic much different than slicing living beings.

"DEATH TO THE MORTALS!"

It's time for the big battle scene. The skeleton army appears, marching and beating their skull-drums under the banner of Evil Ash. They have come for the book. Arthur and his last knights protect it at the top of the central tower, where it is locked behind iron bars.

The fight opens as the archers loose arrows strapped with black powder bombs. The night lights up with fire and scores of skeletons are blown to pieces. The first wave is repulsed.

The second wave follows close behind. The catapults fire next, shattering more of the bony band of brothers. This time Evil Ash takes charge and the undead press their assault. A number of them approach the main gate with rams and eventually batter their way inside. The first wave has rallied now and returns to fire their crossbows at the castle's defenders. The humans fight bravely but are eventually forced back to the central tower.

THE DEATH COASTER

Ash seems to run away now, but in truth has gone to power up the Death Coaster. He comes out in a blaze of glory, smashing skeletons with a massive fan attached to the front of the Delta 88. He's just about to single-handedly turn the tide of the battle when Sheila appears before him—beautiful as ever. Ash doesn't know she's been corrupted and swerves to avoid hitting her, wrecking the Death Coaster.

Evil Sheila shows herself and dukes it out with Ash, who eventually chucks her into the pit (remember, with the water and yucky stuff at the bottom . . . from the first scene . . . ah, never mind).

COME TO PAPA

Now the bone bags gain the inner wall and climb toward the Necronomicon. Ash rises to meet them just as Evil Sheila returns for another go. Arthur's knights valiantly stand by the Necronomicon even though their leader is seemingly cut down before them. Evil Ash is just about to grab the book when his better half appears and runs him through with a spear.

Ash and Evil Ash now fight a climactic Errol Flynn-type swordfight atop the parapet. There's lots of clanging metal and then Ash sets his evil twin on fire with a torch. Nothing keeps this bony bag of bile down though, and he climbs back to the parapet, now nothing more than a skeleton. The undead bitch-smacks Ash and grabs the Book of the Dead. Our hero falls to the ground below and Evil Ash follows, jumping down onto the unsprung arm of a catapult.

Just then, Henry's army arrives, smashing through the skeletons like bulls in a china shop. Evil Ash curses his better-looking brother, but the Main Man has a plan. He slices off the skeletons's arm to grab the Necronomicon, then hacks the rope on the catapult. It releases and hurls Evil Ash into the air where the powder bomb explodes, disintegrating the generalissimo.

KISS AND MAKE-UP

With Evil Ash gone, Sheila's curse is lifted and she gets all soft and supple again. Ash picks up his damsel in distress and they rise to see Henry and Arthur's men staring uncertainly at each other. Fortunately, Henry and Arthur decide they're secure in their sexuality and give each other a big hug.

ASH SWALLOWS

The Wiseman uses the Necronomicon to devise a magical potion. Each drop allows a man to sleep for a century. Ash rides off, seals himself in a cave, and drinks his six drops.



The studio's version of *Army of Darkness* shows Ash back in his own time, back at S-Mart. He's doing his thing when a deadite shows up on Aisle Nine. Ash shows he's still the man by whipping out a lever-action rifle and riding a shopping cart toward the she-bitch. He fires along the way and blasts the thing to perdition. His final line of the movie: "Hail to the King, baby."

BUT WAIT, THERE'S MORE!

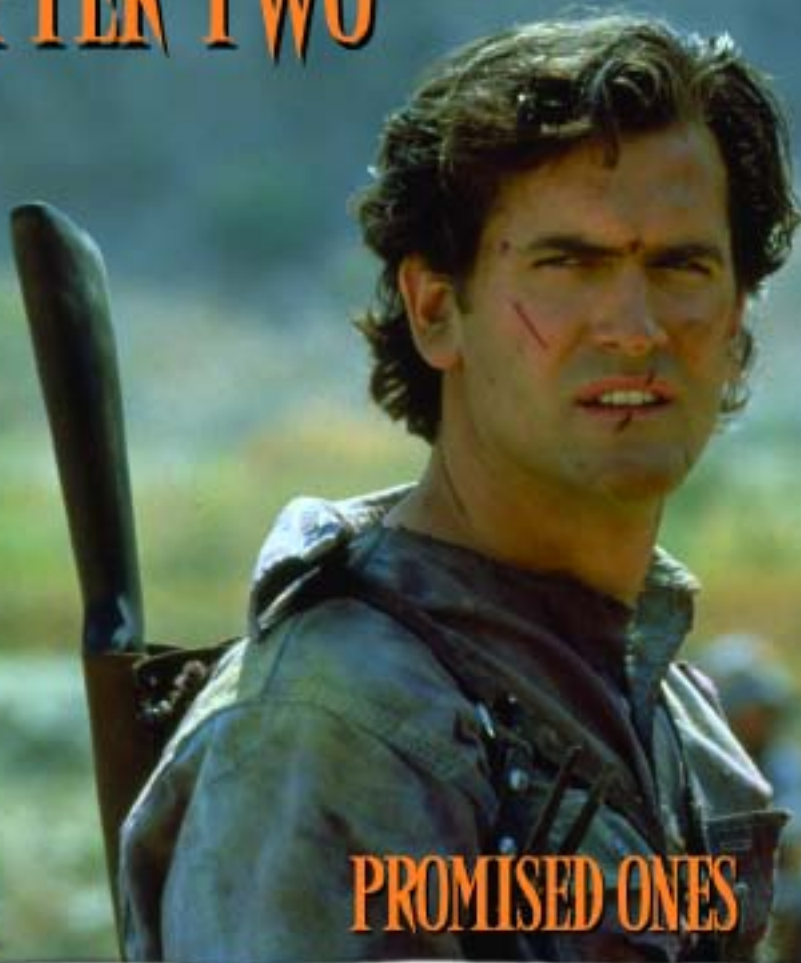
Now things depend on which version you watch. Director Sam Raimi's Director's Cut brings in a very different ending. Since he's the big cheese creator, we give this one at least as much credence as the original. Hey, we like it better because it gives us a whole new setting to play in.

In this one, bonehead Ash drinks one too many drops of the potion and sleeps too long. He staggers out of his cave and over the rise and finds London in ruins. Because he wasn't there to stop them, the Evil Dead have destroyed the world. Ash screams, and the camera fades to black.

We explore this grim finale in **Chapter Seven: Worlds of Darkness**, and give you our take on what happens next.

GATHERING DARKNESS

CHAPTER TWO



PROMISED ONES

VILLAGER #1: TRULY, HE IS THE PROMISED ONE!

It's time to go to the work shed, whip out the Black & Decker, and strap it on your bloody stump. This chapter deals with making your own heroes, from tough-as-nails champions like Ash to those knuckleheads who surround him.

In the **Unisystem**, we like to call the player characters "Cast Members." It makes us feel like we're in the movie business, which pays about a quadrillion times better than the games industry, but that's a story for another time.

CASTING CALL

ASH: MY NAME IS ASH, AND I AM A SLAVE.

"Casting" characters for your fight against the evil of the Necronomicon isn't a Big Deal. Just about anything you can imagine should fit in somehow. Ash is a time traveler, and if you want to run with the idea that there are other champions like him, they can certainly arrive in the Middle Ages from other times and places. Maybe heroes gifted with supernatural powers, vampires with souls, angels, mages, intelligent monkeys, or flesh-eating zombies drop in from some of our sister **Unisystem** games (see p. 9). Ash could even go to small towns or big cities in California, a planet full of intelligent apes, or a world over-ridden by Romero-type zombies. The potential is nearly endless. As long as you've got a little supernatural chutzpah in your world, Promised Ones and Evil Dead can drop from the sky to play for a while.

Just make sure you ask your Director before you go making anything too wild. He may have a particular setting and story in mind, and it's important the characters fit into it. Making a whole group of varsity cheerleaders might be great in the eye-candy department (though a little freaky if all your fellow players are big hairy guys), but it isn't helpful if your Director needs warrior-types for the adventure he has in mind. Even then, talk to the guy. It might be cool to "bring it" to the undead with pom-poms and flip kicks. Just remember this isn't a cheer-tocracy. It's a cheer-tatorship. Or Director-tatership. (Dang, say that three times fast.) Your Director has the final say.

Now, you don't have to make time travelers. In fact, most Cast Members should be natives of whatever setting your story starts in. In Middle Ages England, characters could be knights, blacksmiths, courtesans, or wisemen. In the post-apocalyptic future, they might be hardened scroungers who live in the old subways and defy their demon overlords (assuming they have demon overlords). They can always get sucked along the timestream with those egotistical Promised Ones when it's time to move on to a new setting.

Talk to the guy who's valiantly supporting the game industry (that's the Director, cheesehead) and find out what he has in mind. If he wants to do a time travel dealie like in *Army of Darkness*, you can pretty much make whatever you want. If he'd rather keep things a little more tame, stick to characters that are appropriate to the starting setting.

If you're scratching your head about what kind of character to make and now they might all fit together, we have a couple of suggestions below.

ASH AND COMPANY

Under this option, you hop right into the movie and play Ash, Arthur, Henry, Sheila, the Blacksmith, and all those other cool characters. 'Cause we're menches, we've statted out the Original Cast (see pp. 70-75). As you can imagine, that makes it muuuuuch easier to play.

You can just copy the sheets and hand them around the table. Then your Director can give you a quick rundown of what all those weird terms and numbers mean (see p. 21).

The benefit here is that everyone knows his character already. It might be a good idea to watch the movie again real quick so that those who are playing some of the lesser Cast Members can bone up on

their parts, but otherwise you're good to go. Cue the adventure.

There are two downsides to this approach. First, there's only one Ash and you have to decide who gets to play The Man. A chainsaw duel is a particularly appropriate way to choose the lucky player but we strongly advise against it. No lawsuits, please!

Seriously, it's likely more than one player is going to want to play Ash. There are several different ways to handle this conundrum. Here's a couple of ideas that might help you keep from making an Ash of yourself (sorry, we had to say that at least once in all these pages).

- **Director's choice:** The Big Kahuna may know who he wants for his various roles and decide the whole matter himself.
- **Get it over:** Roll a die. Highest roller gets ta be da man.
- **Vote:** Let everyone decide who makes the best Ash and go with it. For that matter, vote on all the different roles, from the man himself to Sheila. (This can kinda suck if all your friends are guys and one poor manly man gets Sheila—it's like being picked last for that recess football team.)
- **Bid:** Here's a fun one! Let everyone secretly bid a number of their starting Drama Points (see p. 108). Highest bidder forfeits his points but gets Ash. Ties mean a roll-off.
- **Change the cast:** This is the wacky world of *Army of Darkness*. Maybe in your story, some freakish event splits Ash into multiple "clones" of himself. This time though, they're all good! If that's the case, there should probably be an equal number of Evil Ashes out there, but that's fine too. It might be fun to watch a whole castle-full of Ashes compete with each other for the most sugar. Think of it as one of those Elvis impersonator conventions, with each hero being just another of the Elvi. Er, Ashi?
- **Switch:** This one's really fun. Let one guy play Ash for a while, then switch at an appointed time. Maybe every scene, every hour, or whenever the nachos run out. Oddly enough, that fits with the movie just fine. Ash is a man of many faces. Sometimes he's all serious and heroic, other times he's a selfish coward. That means you'll have to switch out the other roles as well. We know that's a little crazy, but it might be a blast if you think your group is capable of some flexible roleplaying.

PROMISED ONES

A second option is making up your own characters. Now, you're adding something new to the *Army of Darkness* universe. Can you out-Ash Ash? We bet you can. Gamers are a creative lot. We know, we've met lots. Oh wait, we are gamers!

Before we go further, we've got to open up a can of alternative cosmology here. Don't shake it first! It's very embarrassing when cosmology sprays all over your new black *Army of Darkness* t-shirt (yeah, we know what's in your wardrobe, pal).

Anyway, what we're talking about here is something that's definitely NOT official Sam Raimi/Bruce Campbell/MGM pictures history here. We're talking about changing the way the *Army of Darkness* world works for your game—but just a tiny smidge.

In *Army of Darkness*, Ash is a prophesized hero. Remember that whole “Hail he who comes from the sky to deliver us from the terror of the deadites!” line? Right. Well, what if Ash isn't the only “Promised One?” What if there are more? Maybe there are Promised Twos and Threes. And just who are these Promised Multitudes? We bet you know where this is going.

What if each of you make your own character from whatever time period you want—from Muffy the cheerleader to Fabio the Roman gladiator to Og the caveman. Each one has been chosen by some power to fight the evil of the Necronomicon. The current fight takes them to medieval Europe (if your Director is using the default *Army of Darkness* setting). Maybe these folks are just as clueless as Ash was when he landed in Arthur's realm. Or maybe some have been fighting deadites through the ages and know the score all too well.

Either way, they're all Heroes (the capital H means something special—see p. 22) and well-skilled in the art of demon-bashing.

MISH MASH

Of course you can also mix these ideas. Maybe one person gets Ash and another decides to play Henry the Red, but the rest of the group wants to make their own Cast Members. That's fine too!

Ash and Henry might be a little ahead of the rest of the crew just because of who they are, but a good Director can also make things more challenging for them as well. A few extra deadites might amble their way in a fight, or the responsibilities of leadership may be burden enough to even things out.

If your group is mostly made up of munchkins who love to hack and slash and are competitive about it, we don't really recommend this option. Someone's inevitably going to feel “character sheet envy” if he peeks over at Ash's stats.

GETTING YOUR GROOVE ON

The **Unisystem** uses a point system to create characters. Basically, you buy different abilities by spending character points. The better or more powerful a characteristic is, the more “expensive” it is. Some negative features, known as Drawbacks, do not cost any points. Instead, they have a negative value—by acquiring them, you actually get more points to buy other things. Keep in mind, of course, that these Drawbacks limit or hurt your character in some way, so loading them on carelessly is not a good idea. So now you understand why Ash is such a screw-up sometimes. He has to pay for all that butt-kicking goodness somehow.

Not everything about your character is based on points. Some elements are creativity-driven: your character's concept (what kind of person he is) and personality, as well as his name and history. These depend wholly on your imagination and the limits your Director wants to impose upon it.



THE CHARACTER SHEET

Attributes: These show how strong, fast, and smart Ash is. The human average is 2. Ash may not look like Hulk Hogan, but his Promised One-ness (see p. 39) gives him an extra boost when it matters. See p. 23.

Life Points: This measures how much damage Ash can take before he takes the Big Nap. See p. 27.

Drama Points: Drama Points allow the character to do cool stuff, like killing a monster in one shot or avoiding certain death. Keep careful count of these—they're more valuable than a case of Mountain Dew on game night. See pp. 48, 108.

Qualities and Drawbacks: The good stuff costs points, the bad stuff gives you points to get more good stuff. Ash is loaded up on responsibility. He can't shake being surrounded by demons and zombies even when he tries, but he does get some extra cosmic power-type stuff to help him survive. See p. 27.

ARMY OF DARKNESS™

CHARACTER NAME: Ash (Ashley J. Williams)
 CHARACTER TYPE: _____
 DESCRIPTION: _____

LIFE POINTS 81
 DRAMA POINTS 20
 EXPERIENCE POINTS

ATTRIBUTES

STRENGTH	6	INTELLIGENCE	3
DEXTERITY	6	PERCEPTION	4
CONSTITUTION	8	WILLPOWER	4

SKILLS

ACROBATICS	3	KNOWLEDGE	1
ART	0	KUNG FU	5
COMPUTERS	0	LANGUAGES	0
CRIME	0	SOB. FIX IT	4
DOCTOR	0	NOTICE	2
DRIVING/RIDING	3	OCCULTISM	2
GETTING MEDICAL	5	SCIENCE	1
GUN FU	5	SPORTS	2
INFLUENCE	4	WILD CARD	0

QUALITIES

Attractiveness +2	Hard to Kill 3
Fast Reaction Time	Nerves of Steel
Really Big Chin	Regeneration (10 Life Points per hour)
Promised One	Toolman (Choose one quality)

DRAWBACKS

Adversary (Director and Director)	Mental Problems (Stress, Obsession, Nerves, Insanity)
Clown	Physical Disability (Injury, Paralysis)
Emotional Problems (Fear of Commitment)	Schmuck
Mental Problems (Panic, Nervousness)	

COMBAT MANEUVERS

Maneuver	Base	Damage	Notes
Assault	11	30	Back/Stub, and one-handed
Boomerick	11	20	Ball: use pistol range
Chainsaw	8	42	Back/Stub, maximum of 60 points
Dodge	11	—	Defense action
Kick	10	14	Back
Punch	11	12	Back
Stomp	11	14	Back/Stub

USEFUL INFORMATION

SUCCESS LEVELS TABLE

Roll	Success Level	Description
9-11	1	Adopted
12-13	2	Disaster
14-15	3	Disaster
16-18	4	Very good
19-20	5	Excellent
21-23	6	Excellent
24-26	7	Masterful
27-29	8	Outstanding
30-32	9	Superb
33-35	10	Godlike
<1	<1	

Skills: These reflect knowledge and training. Someone who knows his way around a sawed-off shotgun has Gun Fu 4. Mr. "shoot the demon while surfing on a rolling cart" has Gun Fu 9. See p. 43.

Success Level Chart: When a roll is called for, match the result up with this chart, then tell your Director how many Success Levels you got. See p. 78.

Combat Maneuvers: How much damage the character's attacks do, and the bonus to the roll. Add the Success Level of the attack to the damage. See pp. 48, 88.

CHARACTER ELEMENTS

Characters in the *AoD RPG* have four basic elements. Some elements are conceptual (what kind of character is this?) while others are numerical attributes (what are the character's actual abilities?). As you make each selection, you narrow down the possibilities of the character, until you finally have a clearly defined fictional individual ready to go out and start kicking deadite derriere.

Character Element Summary

- 1. Type:** The Character Type determines the general power level and nature of your character. Heroes like Ash and Arthur are tough and skilled. Primitive Screwheads are normal people who depend on their wits and luck to survive.
- 2. Attributes:** Your character's natural abilities, both mental and physical.
- 3. Qualities and Drawbacks:** The innate advantages or penalties that affect your character.
- 4. Skills:** Your character's training and learned abilities.

CHARACTER TYPE

Creating a character involves allocating a number of points to his various game statistics.

Character Type determines how many points you have to spend on each character component—your character-building budget, in accountant-speak.

HERO

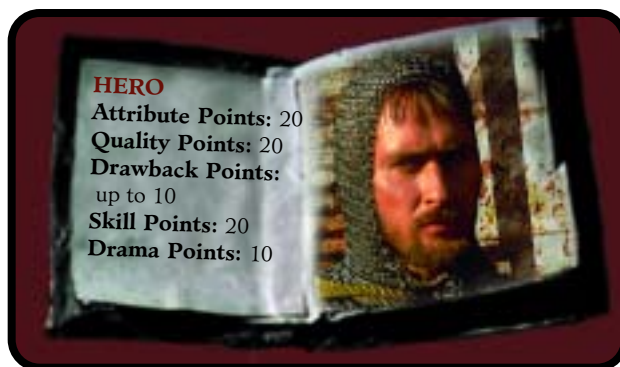
HENRY: I AM HENRY THE RED, DUKE OF SHALE, LORD OF THE NORTHLANDS AND LEADER OF ITS PEOPLES.

ASH: WELL HELLO MR. FANCY-PANTS.

Heroes are a step above the common man, but still nowhere near as ferocious as the Ashster and his ilk (what exactly is an "ilk" anyway?). Arthur and

Henry are good examples here. They get enough points to wade through a mess of skeletons, but not so much that they aren't taking a risk doing it.

Most Heroes in the *Army of Darkness* game should be fairly competent in some form of skull-splitting, with a four or more skill levels in at least one combat skill.



PRIMITIVE SCREWHEADS

SOLDIER: I'LL OFFER UP MY COURAGE.

Primitive Screwheads are regular Joes who unwittingly wind up fighting evil forces. In some ways, they're the most noble of all because they don't get the kewl powerz of the hero dudes. They get to crap their pants, scream, and bleed a lot. But still they fight on, because they're the good guys. Despite the very real risk of death, they stand and fight because someone has to. Hum your favorite anthem while talking about these guys, because they're real heroes (but not Heroes—you get that whole capitalization thing, don't you?)

Primitive Screwheads are guys like the Archer Captain who pledged his bow to Ash just before the big honkin' battle. Even Gold Tooth, who's a miserable cur in the opening scenes of the movie, is a Primitive Screwhead in this context.

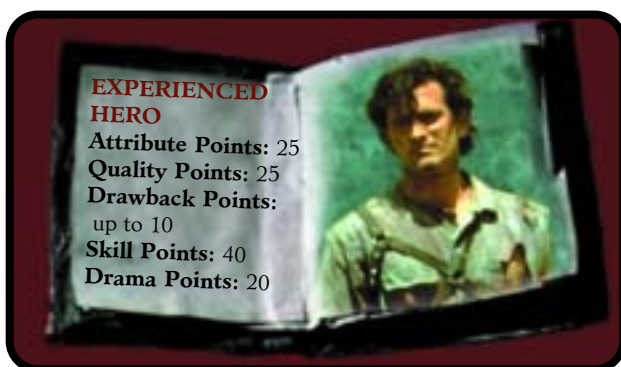


EXPERIENCED HERO

ARTHUR: ARE ALL MEN FROM THE FUTURE LOUD-MOUTHED BRAGGARTS?

ASH: NOPE. JUST ME BABY ... JUST ME.

These are the answer to the Big Bads. You could call them Big Goods—but that just isn't as catchy. These guys and gals are experts in at least a couple fields (usually getting medieval on icky things) and can survive more than a few blows to the head. We're talking Ash here and any other "Promised One" types if you care to go that route.



ATTRIBUTES

ASH (AS HE'S ABOUT TO PICK THE LAST OF THE THREE NECRONOMICONS): WELL, IT SEEMS FAIRLY OBVIOUS ...

Attributes are inborn characteristics of your character: his strength, intelligence, senses, and so on. By selecting a set of Attributes, you define the limits of what the character can and cannot do. So, if you buy a very low Strength for your Cast Member, don't be surprised if he has trouble holding his boomstick steady.

BUYING ATTRIBUTES

Attributes are purchased using Attribute Points (got that, rocket scientist?). Those points are set by your Character Type, whether Experienced Hero, Hero, or Primitive Screwhead (see p. 22).

Attributes can be bought up to level five on a one-for-one basis (i.e., Strength 3 costs three points, Strength 4 four points, and so on). Attributes above level five are more expensive: three points per additional level. You should not purchase an Attribute past level six, the effective human maximum (buying an Attribute at level six would cost eight points). Beings with supernatural abilities (Promised Ones and the like) can have Attributes above six.

At least one point must be put into each Attribute.

We'll get a bit more concrete here for you knuckleheads. A Primitive Screwhead has 15 points to distribute among the six Attributes. He can have three Attributes at level two (average) and three at level three (somewhat above average). Or you could drop one of his Attributes to one, and increase one to four. Such a character would really shine in one aspect, is above average at a couple other things, is average in two areas, and sucks at one thing.

A Hero has 20 points. With that, you can give him four Attributes at level three and two at level four. This creates a balanced character relatively good at most things. Or you could keep three of his Attributes at average level, move two to level five and one to level four. That bloke is going to be extremely gifted in certain areas.

PROMISED ONES

"LADY, I'M AFRAID I'M GONNA HAVE TO ASK YOU TO LEAVE THE STORE"

-ASH



The Meaning of Numbers

Level 1: The character is below average in that Attribute. Strength 1 indicates a poor physique, either a petite or flabby, sedentary person. Dexterity 1 reveals clumsiness, someone likely to drop things—not to be trusted with delicate manual work unless highly trained or the job is irrelevant. Characters with a Constitution 1 are delicate and often in poor health. Intelligence 1 is below average—not mentally challenged, but pretty much a dope. Perception 1 depicts someone not very aware of his surroundings, likely to miss what's before his face. Willpower 1 results in a person who is easily intimidated and influenced by others, a follower instead of a leader, and somebody who is likely to succumb to temptation. In other words, Attributes at level one are fairly incompetent. If your character has an Attribute at level one, he's going to be quite feeble at tasks that rely upon it.

Level 2: This is average for human beings. Most people in any given group have Attributes at this level, typically with one or two at levels one or three. Nothing wrong with being average, but the character is unlikely to shine with such Attributes, unless his skills are so high he can compensate.

Level 3: This is above average but not extraordinary. Strength and Constitution 3 show some athletic aptitude—somebody who works out at least three times a week (but probably just to impress chicks), or a natural athlete who has not taken time to develop his talent. Characters with Dexterity 3 are graceful—good when tripping the light fantastic (by that we mean dancing), grabbed near the beginning in pick-up sports, and reasonably assured not to fall off horses, balance beams, and tables (yes, tables). Intelligence 3 indicates a bright person who can easily learn new skills if he has the temperament to do so. With Perception 3, a character has good senses and intuition, and is not easily fooled or confused. Characters with Willpower 3 are rarely bluffed or bullied under normal circumstances.

Level 4: An Attribute at level 4 is well above average. Very few people, perhaps one out every ten in a random group, have one or two Attributes at this level. Strength and Constitution 4 can be found only in athletes (including the best football players in a large high school or college campus), extensively trained Special Forces soldiers, and other people who spend a large amount of time and effort keeping in shape. A Dexterity 4 is only common among gymnasts, acrobats, dancers, and other talented individuals. Mental Attributes at level 4 indicate near genius (Intelligence), very acute senses and intuition (Perception), or an “iron will” (Willpower). Not too many of those types in this game, sugar.

Level 5: This is the “practical” human limit. People at these levels are extraordinarily talented, able to perform complex and difficult feats with little practice. While people with Attributes at level five are not “record breakers,” they are among the best and the brightest. In a small or medium-sized community, only a handful of people have one or two Attributes at this level, and they are likely to be well known for their strength, wisdom or toughness. Cities, large college campuses, and elite groups of knights or warriors have more of these extraordinary individuals, but even there they are not common.

Level 6: This is the true human limit. A few people with “freakish” Attributes may exceed it (to level seven), but they are a handful even among the teeming billions living in the 21st century. Characters with one or more Attributes at level six are very rare, something on the order of one in ten thousand, or less. People with more than one Attribute at level six are perhaps ten times less common, and so on.

Level 7+: This is generally reserved for things with red glowing eyes. Someone with Strength 7 is as strong as a horse; Dexterity 12 represents inhuman, cat-like grace; you get the picture.

THE SIX ATTRIBUTES

STRENGTH

A measure of your character's physical power, Strength determines how much damage he inflicts with hand-to-hand weapons, how much weight he can carry, and how much damage and exertion he can withstand before collapsing. Strength is useful to people who do a lot of heavy lifting or anybody likely to enter hand-to-hand combat—so yeah, that pretty much covers everyone in *Army of Darkness*. Characters apt to have high Strength include warriors, manual workers, and soldiers. Low strength indicates either small size and body weight or just a lack of exercise. Not too many gyms in medieval Europe, you know.

The Strength Table shows how much a character of any given Strength can lift without much effort. This load can be carried around for a while but it's not gonna be pretty.

A character's maximum lifting weight—for brief periods—equals double the Lifting Capacity. Should only be done often by those who enjoy watching their intestines herniate out all over their new khakis.

DEXTERITY

Dexterity indicates your character's physical coordination, agility, and gracefulness. It helps with any task that requires motor control and precision, from performing card tricks to shaking booty to feeding knuckle sandwiches to those who sass you

(Dexterity helps to land the punch; Strength determines how much it hurts the fellow whose nose got in the way). If you plan to have your character fight like Chow Yun-Fat, go with a high Dexterity (and a much splashier wardrobe).

CONSTITUTION

This Attribute shows how physically hardy or healthy your character is. Constitution is important when it comes to resisting disease, damage, and fatigue. It is also used (along with Strength) to determine how much of a pounding your Cast Member can take and still keep ticking. Constitution also comes into play with physical skills that involve endurance, like swimming and long-distance running. If your character might, say, cut off his own hand and replace it with a chainsaw, metal gauntlet, or corkscrew, we recommend a high Constitution.

PROMISED ONES

STRENGTH TABLE

STRENGTH	LIFTING CAPACITY
1-5	50 lbs x Strength (Strength 5: 250 lbs)
6-10	200 x (Strength - 5) + 250 lbs (Strength 10: 1,250 lbs)
11-15	500 x (Strength - 10) + 1,500 lbs (Strength 15: 4,000 lbs/2 tons)
16-20	1,000 x (Strength - 15) + 5,000 lbs (Strength 20: 10,000 lbs/5 tons)
21-25	1 ton x (Strength - 20) + 5 tons (Strength 25: 10 tons)
26-30	2 ton x (Strength - 25) + 10 tons (Strength 30: 20 tons)

INTELLIGENCE

There aren't too many rocket scientists in the *Army of Darkness*. It's usually better to cut off a deadite's head than try and analyze why it hates its mother. But hey, it's your character! Sometimes brains does win out over brawn.

Intelligence determines your character's ability to learn, correlate, and memorize information. The higher his Intelligence, the easier it is for him to perform scholastic skills (Knowledge, Science, etc.). This Attribute is also used to understand and interpret information. Note that Intelligence and education are two separate things; you can be brilliant but illiterate. Education is covered by your character's skills, which determine what he's learned in his life. Again, not too many of Arthur's peasants have attended prep school.

PERCEPTION

When a skeleton reaches up out of the ground for your spiffy new boots, Perception might help you spot him before he swallows your "sole." This mental Attribute governs the five senses of the character and is important when spotting clues, detecting deadly ambushes, or sensing when the wonky evil of the Necronomicon is about to rear its ugly head (and that is one ugly head, even for a book).

WILLPOWER

This Attribute measures your character's mental strength and self-control, as well as his ability to resist fear, intimidation, and temptation. Willpower is also good for taming uppity yokels. Use it to intimidate and dominate the primitive apes around you. Any supernatural ability that tries to control or influence victims is also resisted by Willpower. That's damn important when a demon bites your pink parts and tries to infect your brain. A strong-willed person might be able to confine the demon to a single limb (oh, say your hand), or maybe can re-exert control after a short time (though that's very rare—most jokers fold like a house of cards when demon spit gets in their veins).

ATTRIBUTE BONUSES

Some Qualities (like Promised One) provide bonuses (or in some cases penalties) to one or more Attributes. These bonuses are applied after Attributes have been purchased normally. For example, if you spend five points on Dexterity, and your character has a Quality that adds a +1 to Dexterity, a Dexterity 6 is the final result.

LIFE POINT TABLE

CONSTITUTION

STRENGTH	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
1	18	22	26	30	34	38	42	46	50	54
2	22	26	30	34	38	42	46	50	54	58
3	26	30	34	38	42	46	50	54	58	62
4	30	34	38	42	46	50	54	58	62	66
5	34	38	42	46	50	54	58	62	66	70
6	38	42	46	50	54	58	62	66	70	74
7	42	46	50	54	58	62	66	70	74	78
8	46	50	54	58	62	66	70	74	78	82
9	50	54	58	62	66	70	74	78	82	86
10	54	58	62	66	70	74	78	82	86	90

LIFE POINTS

Life Points represent your character's physical health. The Strength and Constitution of the character are the determinant factors; a big muscle-bound blacksmith can survive more punishment than a prophecy-spouting wiseman. Life Points determine the amount of physical damage the character can take before being unable to function.

Life Points are determined by adding the character's Strength and Constitution, multiplying the result by four, and adding 10. (Best to just skip the math and consult the Life Point Table.) This formula is for human beings. Some creatures have different Life Point totals (many demons are much tougher than normal humans, see p. 157-163).

The Hard to Kill Quality (see p. 34) is a good way to increase Life Points. Players should figure out Life Points at the end of character creation after all Attributes have been settled.

QUALITIES AND DRAWBACKS

Qualities are innate characteristics that give the character an advantage in certain situations. Being a Promised One is a Quality—they're tougher than normal human beings and can take a beating that would make put most folks in the boneyard. They pay for it by being the target for evil stuff and more than a little pain and suffering. Qualities cost Quality Points to acquire. That's not too hard to remember, right bunkie?

Some Qualities are package deals—your character buys one Quality but gets a number of benefits, or some benefits and some downsides. Criminal and Cop are good examples of package Qualities. In general, your character is limited to purchasing one of these types of Qualities. Then again, if your Director okays it, who are we to say thee nay.

Drawbacks somehow limit or detract from the character—bad eyesight, emotional problems, or being as ugly as a demonic hag, for example. Drawbacks have values. When a Drawback is acquired, the character gains extra points that can be used to buy Qualities or skills. Think of the extra points as a little reward for making the character a bit more three-dimensional and entertaining. He's

clearly more interesting than the extra who just stands there and swings his sword (and usually dies quickly . . . and badly).

Beginning characters are limited to 10 points in Drawbacks. That does not mean you have to take all 10 points' worth; that's up to you.

CHANGES DURING PLAY

After creating the character, some (but not all; use common sense) Qualities and Drawbacks may be acquired or lost in the course of a game. For example, a scarring wound could reduce the character's Attractiveness, or a change in fortune might increase or reduce the character's Resources or Social Level. When such a change is brought about during play, no experience points (see p. 113) are needed to purchase them. If you want to purposefully change a character's Quality or Drawback, you must spend experience points and come up with a good reason for the change. This intentional change is relatively limited, however (see p. 115).

New Qualities and Drawbacks

The Quality and Drawback list covers most of the basics but is far from exhaustive. In many cases, a "new" Quality or Drawback can be an extension or variation of an existing one. The value of the characteristic should be balanced out by the benefits or penalties it grants. Most Qualities or Drawbacks should be worth between one and three points; only the most powerful or crippling of them should have a value of four or higher, unless they are "combo" Qualities that merge several important abilities. These "combos" often include Attribute bonuses; each Attribute bonus costs one character point, with the maximum bonus being +5 to any one Attribute.

PROMISED ONES

LIST OF QUALITIES AND DRAWBACKS

The following list includes Qualities that are appropriate for the horror action genre (the one *Army of Darkness* fits in, dimwit). Some fit better for modern-day characters, many can be given to either contemporaries or olden days types. If you are playing a period-piece character, check with your Director to see if he's okay with your choices.

ACUTE/IMPAIRED SENSES

2-POINT QUALITY OR DRAWBACK

Ever see a dog's ear twitch when someone or something approaches? That's an example of Acute Senses. Not hearing the demon even when it's trying to swallow your soul is an example of Impaired Senses (and a very short life-span). Characters with this Quality have one sense that is more (or less, if it's a Drawback) refined and sensitive than the rest. Normally, the senses are represented by the Perception Attribute. Acute or Impaired Senses indicate that Vision, Hearing, Smell/Taste, or Touch are higher or lower than normal for a person with a given Perception Attribute.

When bought as a Quality, an Acute Sense gives your character a +3 bonus to any Perception-related roll that relies on that sense. If acquired as a Drawback, Impaired Senses give a similar -3 penalty to Perception-based rolls.

Some Impaired Senses (hearing and sight in particular) can easily be corrected by glasses, hearing aids, and similar devices. If the impairment is eliminated by some technological means, your Director should reduce the value of the Drawback to one character point. As long as your character's glasses or hearing aid or whatever is on, he's fine. If, say, a

deadite knocks his glasses off, he won't be able to see all the things that want to turn him into worm-food. It is possible to have more than one type of Acute or Impaired Sense, or to have Acute Hearing and Impaired Eyesight or a similar combination of senses. For obvious reasons, knucklehead, you cannot select both the Impaired and Acute versions of the same sense.

ADVERSARY

VARIABLE DRAWBACK

BAD ASH: I'M BAD ASH. AND YOU'RE GOOD ASH. YOU'RE GOODY LITTLE TWO SHOES.

We've all got them. Whether it's the kid who throws the newspaper at your cat every morning or that guy down the street with all those shotguns just looking for a chance to . . . anyway, we're talking enemies here. The kind who want to carve their initials in your forehead.

The more powerful the Adversary is, the higher the value of this Drawback. Your Director determines if an Adversary is appropriate to his game. If the Adversary is unlikely to appear frequently, he can reduce the point value or disallow it altogether.

Individuals are valued at one to three points as Adversaries, depending on their resources and abilities. A normal person grants one point, a veteran knight two, an elite warrior or leader three points. An organization may be worth three or more points, depending on its power. A gang of bandits garners two points, a local power (city police department, barony) three to four points (depending on its size and competence), and a wide-spread power (the CIA, Church of Evil Ash, the King's Guard) five points or more. A large group with supernatural powers could give six or more points.

Not all of these opponents are likely in the "default" setting of medieval Europe, but they should give you some guidelines if your warrior winds up fighting the evil of the Necronomicon in some other time period. Now, nothing's stopping you from taking the CIA as an Adversary in ancient England, but don't whine if your Director sets a zero Drawback value for the spooks.

You should come up with a good reason why your character has earned the enmity of the Adversary. Your Director can then weave this enemy into the plot in any way he sees fit. Alternatively, you can select the Drawback and leave it to your Director to decide who the Adversary is.



Killing the Adversary is not usually enough to eliminate the Drawback—your Director should see to it that another Adversary of similar value rears its ugly head shortly afterwards.

ARTIST

2-POINT QUALITY

Your character is an artist, someone unusually talented and creative. Artists make fine garments, paint masterpieces, write Great American Novels, put together great mix CDs, design award-winning RPGs, and other cool stuff like that.

Artists get a +1 to any two mental Attributes (Intelligence, Perception, or Willpower); the bonuses cannot be stacked onto one Attribute, and the limit remains six for humans. They also get a +1 to (what else?) the Art skill. Artists tend to be a bit sensitive and emotional, though; they have a -1 penalty to Willpower rolls to Fear Tests or otherwise letting their emotions rule their behavior.

ATTRACTIVENESS

1-POINT/LEVEL QUALITY OR DRAWBACK

To get sugar, you've got to have looks. Here's how to get some.

This Quality or Drawback makes people comely or frightening. The average modern person has an Attractiveness of zero. Attractiveness typically ranges from -5 to +5 in humans. A +1 or +2 make the person stand out in a crowd. At +3 or +4, the hero could be a model and probably has one of those really big heroic chins. At +5, he's damn near the sexiest hunk of man meat walking.

The far end of the spectrum covers those who should not be seen in the light of day. At -1 or -2, the person has homely features or unsightly scars. At -3 or -4, the character's features are downright repulsive. At -5, he just might be mistaken for a deadite. Most of the common peasants in Arthur's time are lucky to get off with only a few pox sores, so the average looks are in the -1 to -2 range.

A positive Attractiveness helps when dealing with people of the right sex or sexual persuasion. Looking good might get you some sugar or convince fellow warriors to fight alongside the manly men. Add your character's Attractiveness bonus to any activity (usually Influence skill rolls) that involves persuading people. Negative attractiveness works the opposite way, except when the purpose is to intimidate; people are more scared of an ugly mug than a pretty face.



Attractiveness costs one point per level if bought as a Quality, or adds one point per level if acquired as a Drawback. After character creation, Attractiveness can change only by events that modify the character's entire appearance, either through scarring or plastic surgery, or just maturing (if your character starts out young enough).

BIG CHIN/REALLY BIG CHIN

1- OR 3-POINT QUALITY

ASH: ME? I'M THROUGH RUNNIN'. I SAY WE STAY HERE AND FIGHT IT OUT!

True heroes save others, and that's what this Quality lets you do. In *Army of Darkness*, you can tell real brave hearts by the size of their chins (the person's chin, not the heart's chin . . . oh, never mind). A chainsaw champion like Ash has a massive neck-hat.

Once per game session, your large-throated character can give someone else +10 on any one test. Best of all, he can do it after the player has made his test. This costs the good guy a Turn (only thing he can do that Turn), however, and he must explain what he's doing to help his friend. This could be anything from a few words of encouragement, a helping hand up a cliff-edge, or distracting a bad guy so that his companion can get in a lucky shot.

A hero with a Really Big Chin has another special effect as well. Once per session, he can restore half of another character's Life Points just as if that Cast Member had spent a Drama Point. No action need be spent for this effect—the champion can simply shoot his companion a wink or look of camaraderie.

PROMISED ONES

Such a sign of respect from an admired hero is enough to give new life to the downtrodden.

This Quality is going to be most often found over the neck of a Hero or Experienced Hero, but no reason a Primitive Screwhead or other character can't possess it.

BUFF GUY

3- OR 4-POINT QUALITY

The Buff Guy could be a modern-day athlete sucked into a portal and dropped into medieval Europe. Or he could be a native focused on the physical—a tournament-active knight, a martial arts monk, or a blacksmith. Any of these professions could make one a beefy fellow.

Without additional charge or value, Buff Guys gain +1 to any two physical Attributes, to a maximum level of six (the bonuses cannot be stacked on one Attribute); two levels of a physically oriented skill (and at least one more level must be purchased separately on top of that), like Driving, Getting Medieval, Kung Fu, or Sport. That's a four-point Quality. Those with the hallmarks of a true Buff Guy also suffer a -1 penalty to all Tasks or Tests involving intellectual abilities (anything using the Intelligence Attribute), except where his physical specialty is involved. This Quality costs three points.

CLOWN

1-POINT DRAWBACK

No one delivers a one-liner like Ash. But there's hope for the rest of you. If your hero is the type who makes jokes even when the *Army of Darkness* is bearing down on him, he's probably a Clown. We don't mean the big shoes, red nose variety (those are too creepy, even for us). We mean those guys and gals who can crack wise even when they're cutting off their own hand. The biggest problem these characters have is that they cannot keep their mouths shut even when they know a joke will only work against them.

Clowns are generally accepted and liked during situations where their quirky humor is not out of place (parties and other social gatherings, or among friends). Their sense of humor gets them in trouble during tense and dangerous situations. Another problem the Clown faces is that people often do not take him seriously even when they should.

Oh, who are we kidding? Clown is a great Drawback that will probably never hurt you in an *Army of Darkness* adventure. Just to make it legit and keep your Director quiet, you should at least entertain the rest of the group from time to time. Slap dip on your face, sit on a bag of chips, stick some pencils up your nose (not too deep), or even juggle some kittens if you really aren't that witty. Slapstick is a key part of the *Army of Darkness* experience.

CONTACTS

1-POINT/LEVEL QUALITY

ASH: THEN WE'LL GET HENRY THE RED AND HIS MEN TO FIGHT WITH US.

Contacts in medieval Europe aren't worth much unless you're looking for fancy things (like soap), or for information (like just what that thing out in the woods is), or to avoid the Duke's none-too-lenient anti-poaching edicts. Okay, so maybe they are helpful. In fact, they're a boon in many times and places, such as when the Necronomicon rises in modern L.A. (where everything seems to happen, according to the movies).

The more helpful the contact is, the higher the Quality's point value. For any and all Contacts, your Director determines their availability at any given time. Generally, the more time your character has to get word to his Contacts, the more likely the Contacts come through.

Contacts that only provides hints, rumors, or gossip costs one point. If the Contacts usually provide reliable information and help the character out in small ways (letting the hero borrow a horse or forging him a groovy new mechanical hand), this Quality sets you back two points. Actual allies who help your character in any way they can run three to five points, depending on the Contact's resources. In the *Army of Darkness* game, Contacts might provide clues to the Necronomicon's next move, where it's pages might be found (if they've been scattered somehow), or where useful artifacts or weapons might be hidden. If you're playing the Original Cast or in the environs of Arthur's castle, the Wiseman could be the basis of a character's two-point Contacts Quality.

"YOU'RE A GOODY LITTLE TWO-SHOES."
-ASH

Cop/Ex-Cop

5- OR 4-POINT QUALITY

Cops are those guys and gals who risk their lives every day so the rest of us don't get our new lawn flamingo stolen. Sadly, in real life, most crooks are just that stupid. They steal the most ridiculous and valueless things and kill people for no good reason whatsoever. These are the kind of people cops deal with every day, and we salute them for it.

But let's put that depressing thought behind us and go with the movie version of cops. These are the Arnolds and Dirty Harrys of the world who thwart terrorists, engage in car chases, and run up against brilliant masterminds with almost flawless plans. These kinds of cops are right at home in the battle against the Evil Dead. They can be rookie beat cops, black and white patrolmen, or hardcore homicide detectives. Or they might be in feudal law enforcement (assuming any such thing exists)—the Duke's or King's sheriffs or deputies, charged with enforcing ducal or royal law.

Cops get +1 to any physical Attribute (Strength, Dexterity, or Constitution; cop training and all that), and a +1 bonus to the Crime, Driving/Riding, and Gun Fu skills. They also have the force of law behind them—with reasonable cause, they can search people, detain suspects, and do other nifty things. Of course they have to be in their own time period and society for all that authority stuff to kick in.

The job includes a measure of obligation to your law enforcement agency. Cops who ignore orders or abuse their authority can get in serious trouble—videotapes of you beating a man with your nightclub can and will be used against you. Too many "lapses in judgment" and you become an Ex-Cop, with all the skills of a normal police officer but none of the authority. Ex-Cops usually have a lot more attitude, but there's no shortage of that among the regular maverick cops (at least on TV and in the movies).

This Quality costs five points if the character is a serving police officer and will mostly stay within his own "jurisdiction" (his own time and town). This also applies if you are one of the sheriff's men and you ride the hills and dales looking for outlaws. It costs four points for a retired (or fired) cop, or one who's been "misplaced" in time or space and misses modern-day donuts shops something fierce.



COVETOUS

1- TO 3-POINT DRAWBACK

Everybody wants stuff. A Covetous character wants stuff really badly, and does almost anything to get it. He may want solid gold goodies, the adoration of millions, or all the horizontal tango-time he can get with a particular gal. Whatever it is, he's placed it over any code of morals; he's willing to bend it like Beckham to get what he wants. For most folks, figure they're constantly after whatever they covet, but don't often break the law or violate their own code of ethics over it. But when an opportunity comes that's just too good to pass up, he'll stoop to his lowest personal level to grab it.

There are four types of covetousness: Greed (money and wealth), Lechery (sexual relations), Ambition (power and influence), and Conspicuousness (fame and renown). It is possible to covet two or more of those things, but each additional source of desire adds but a single point to the value of this Drawback.

The Covetous Drawback has three levels of severity, worth one, two and three points respectively.

Mild: Your character knows what he wants and he spends a great deal of time and effort to attain his goals. He won't usually break his own rules or those of society to do so. This is a one-point Drawback.

Serious: Presented with enough temptation, your character may act even if it goes against his better judgment or morality. He may resist if the action he contemplates is truly wrong and reprehensible—stealing credit for a heroic deed performed by a friend, for example—but resisting requires a Willpower (doubled) roll, at a penalty of -1 to -3 if

PROMISED ONES

the temptation and possible rewards are great. This is a two-point Drawback.

Desperate: This is a desire so strong that it often overwhelms any scruples your character may have. When presented with temptation, he can only avoid acting by making a Willpower (doubled roll) roll, with penalties ranging from -1 to -5 depending on the size of the prize. For a high enough reward, your character will turn on friends or loved ones, and even betray his principles. This is a three-point Drawback.

CRIMINAL

2-POINT QUALITY

SHEILA: FOUL THING! A POX ON YOUR THROAT! THOU ART A MURDERER!

We told you what we think of real crooks under Cop/Ex-Cop. In the real world, these are stupid, ugly, ignorant people who live by taking advantage of others. Even the Evil Dead don't want these losers.

But let's go with the Hollywood stereotype again, where every man in prison is wrongfully accused, and every criminal really has a heart of gold—life has just conspired against him. (Yeah, we don't buy it either, but do you really want to play a real criminal?)

Criminals get +1 to any Attribute (Intelligence, Perception, or Willpower if they are thinking-type criminals; Strength, Dexterity or Constitution for the brawn-over-brain types), +1 to the Crime skill (where else?), and +1 to a skill related to their criminal career. A getaway driver, for example, gets +1 to his Driving/Riding skill, a cat-burglar takes his bonus to Acrobatics, and a Merry Man would put it into Getting Medieval or Wild Card (Bow).

On the down side, Criminals have poor impulse control when it comes to money. They have to make a Willpower (doubled) roll whenever the opportunity for a fast buck presents itself—for example, snatching at solid gold goodies while the rest of the Cast are fighting for their lives. Your Director may add penalties to that roll, depending on the amount of loot available—no penalty for a few hundred bucks, -1 for several thousand dollars, -2 for over \$10K, -3 for over \$100K, and -5 for a really big score (a million dollars or more). Also, there's the whole "it's not a good idea to break the law" thing. That kind of stuff can land you in jail. In other times, such as Arthur's England, thieves get their hands chopped off or thrown in the pit.

DEPENDENT

2- OR 3-POINT DRAWBACK

Your character has a relative or close friend he must often protect. To get any points for Dependents, they must be around all the time and relatively unable to protect themselves. We're talking rugrats and your typical useless-in-a-fight girlfriend/younger sibling/Aunt May folks. If your character has one Dependent, he gets two points. More than one Dependent is worth three points. No, you don't get any more if you lug an entire daycare around with you. And, if you're thinking of going that route, complying with the local child welfare laws is a sure route to insanity.

DULLARD

2-POINT DRAWBACK

This individual is totally lacking in creativity and artistic talent. Maybe he is too stoic and practical, or maybe he just doesn't have the imagination to do anything artistic. This Drawback does not just affect his ability in the arts, but also in many social skills where flair and creativity are necessary.

Your character has a -3 penalty when trying to do anything artistic. This penalty does not affect rolls where other people's art is judged; many expert critics are Dullards. When he does try to create something, however, the best he can hope for is a mediocre result. In addition to the penalty, the character can never get more than one Success Level in artistic pursuits, regardless of how high his skill levels or rolls are. People with this Drawback also make poor liars, charmers, or social butterflies. The same penalty applies to Influence as well—a lack of creativity affects the ability to lie convincingly, for example.

EMOTIONAL PROBLEMS

VARIABLE DRAWBACK

If you sit around all day in a dark room listening to Dust in the Wind, you're probably suffering from depression. If you're yelling at folks in traffic, you've got anger management issues. Complain enough to the right government agency and you might even get a monthly check for it.

There are any number of possible Emotional Problems. We've set out a few to give you some ideas. Feel free to come up with your own, run them by your Director, and assign them a character point value by consulting the examples we provide.

Depression: Your character's emotional problems make the very act of living a chore. Common symptoms include sleep problems (either oversleeping or insomnia), severe procrastination ("I'll build the Death Coaster later"), and a lack of interest in anything. A character with Depression suffers a -1 to most Tasks, and tends to avoid becoming involved. This is a two-point Drawback. A severe shock may snap someone out of this state for a while (a life-threatening crisis could do it), but the character sinks back into inactivity afterwards. Certain drugs and psychiatric treatment can reduce the effect of this problem (but this also reduces its value to one point).

Emotional Dependency: These are clingy types who are overly dependent on others. Once one of these Sir Needsalots makes a friend, he wants to hang around him all the time. When involved in a relationship, Needy Nelsons look for constant attention. This is a one-point Drawback.

Fear of Commitment: Whenever your character starts feeling too close to somebody, he becomes afraid and pulls back. (Ash is like that but he has a pretty good reason—not long ago he had to cut up his girlfriend with a chainsaw.) Or perhaps the guy fears that if he reveals too much about himself, the other person would see the "real him" and be appalled or disgusted. This makes it very difficult to have a healthy relationship with friends or lovers. This problem is a one-point Drawback.

Fear of Rejection: When this person experiences rejection (or thinks he has been rejected), he gets hurt and angry. People with this problem may be afraid to make friends or approach those they are attracted to, and if their fears come true, they harbor a great deal of resentment and loathing. This is a one-point Drawback.

Emotional Problems can be overcome during play, but it doesn't happen often. When it does, it should be a central component of the story, all morale-like and accompanied by a soaring soundtrack. A good example is the anger and frustration Ash exhibits in the beginning of *Army of Darkness*. At first he's all "primitive" this and "boomstick" that. Later on he's risking his life and leading the people of Arthur's kingdom like the true hero he is.

If you can roleplay overcoming your warrior's hang-ups well, your Director might allow the lug to eliminate the Drawback without having to "pay" any experience points to do so (see p. 115). And there's probably a Drama Point or two in it for him as well.

FAST REACTION TIME

2-POINT QUALITY

ASH: COME ON! I GOT PLENTY FOR EVERYBODY!

Greenhorns freeze up like old guacamole when a deadite jumps out of the bushes at them. In combat, contact sports, or other physical confrontations, characters with this Quality gain a bonus for Initiative purposes (if using dice, add +5, see p. 87-88), modified by common sense (Fast Reaction Time cannot help the target of a crossbow bolt fired from ambush, for example). Those with this Quality also gain a +1 bonus on Willpower Tests to resist fear (the shock value of the scare is muted by the ability to move NOW).

GOOD/BAD LUCK

1-POINT/LEVEL QUALITY OR DRAWBACK

Good Luck means Fortune smiles down on your hero far more often than on most people. Whenever he needs a break, there is a good chance circumstances conspire to give him one. If your character suffers from Bad Luck, on the other hand, Murphy's Law ("if anything can go wrong, it will") always applies to everything he does. Good Luck points are like low-key Drama Points (see p. 108), but have the advantages of being re-usable and more flexible.

Each level of Luck counts as a +1 bonus (or -1 penalty) that can be applied to any roll, after the die is rolled, once per game session. Multiple levels can be added together for a big bonus on one roll, or spread around several different actions. For example, if your character has three levels of Good Luck, he can get a +3 bonus on one action, a +1 bonus to three actions, or a +2 bonus for one and a +1 bonus for another.

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With Good Luck, you decide when it comes into play. Bad Luck, however, is in the hands of your Director, who chooses when it affects a given roll. Directors should exercise caution and good judgment when applying Bad Luck. If they use Bad Luck for meaningless rolls, the Drawback becomes little more than a minor inconvenience. On the other hand, applying Bad Luck to Survival Tests (see p. 103) or other critical rolls is a good way to alienate folks. Make the Bad Luck count, but don't abuse anyone. We're trying to get you all to have fun here, not kill everyone out of hand.

HARD TO KILL

1- TO 5-POINT QUALITY

Characters with this Quality are extremely tough and can withstand an amazing amount of damage before going down. Even after they are severely wounded, medical attention has a good chance of reviving them, scarred but alive. This Quality is bought in levels. Level five is the highest possible for human beings; Promised Ones can have more levels. Each level of Hard to Kill adds three Life Points to your character's pool. Additionally, each level provides a +1 bonus to Survival Tests (see p. 103).

Most every warrior in the brutal world of *Army of Darkness* should have a few levels of this Quality.

HONORABLE

1- TO 3-POINT DRAWBACK

ARTHUR: VERY WELL. AS WE ARE MEN OF OUR WORD, WE SHALL HONOR OUR BARGAIN. THE WISEMAN SHALL RETURN YOU TO YOUR OWN TIME.

Your character follows a code of behavior, and will not break it lightly, if at all. The more restrictive and rigid the code is, the higher its value. A knight, for instance, vows to follow such a chivalric code. Unfortunately, few nobles in medieval Europe truly practice such a code—it is the dark ages, after all. In a life-or-death situation where honor must be ignored, your character might do so, but even then a Willpower Test is necessary to overcome the psychological barriers reinforcing the code of honor.

Minimal: Your character does not lie or betray friends or loved ones, or people he respects. Anybody else, especially people from groups he dislikes or is prejudiced against, is fair game. This is a one-point Drawback.

Serious: This code of honor is more complex, and applies to everyone, friend or foe. Your character always keeps his word and does his best to fulfill any promises he makes. He will not betray the trust of others once he has accepted it. He may be reluctant to give his word except in a good cause (at least a good cause as he sees it), because once it has been given he will abide by it. This is a two-point Drawback.

Rigid: Your character lives by a strict set of rules that controls most of his actions towards others. In addition to all the other restrictions above, he refuses to participate in acts of betrayal such as ambushes, striking helpless or unsuspecting foes, or cheating in any way. Lying is anathema, and he only does so in cases of extreme need. Even then, he'll have to live with guilt, and probably isn't a very convincing liar in the first place. Any tasks requiring lying suffer a -2 to -6 penalty, as set by your Director. This is a three-point Drawback.

HUMORLESS

1-POINT DRAWBACK

Laugh and the world laughs with you. Except for this guy, because he's lost or never had a funnybone. Most people find this trait unattractive and bothersome. In fact, most folks just don't want to be around such an unfun person. Clowns and practical jokers love him however—he's their favorite target.

LOVE/TRAGIC LOVE

2- OR 4-POINT DRAWBACK

Some say it's the most powerful force in the world. Ash believes love is for suckers. "Gimme some sugar, baby" isn't exactly the stuff of Shakespearean sonnets. But maybe your hero isn't as jaded as our chainsaw-toting friend. Maybe he has a gal Friday, wife, or constant companion that he just can't live without. We're talking Nick and Nora, Tarzan and Jane, Buffy and Angel, Clark and Lois (or Lana depending on your generation), Peter and MJ, Ben and J-Lo—hard-core love (ahhh, never mind, scratch that last one).

A Cast Member with this Drawback starts the game with a relationship or develops one shortly after the game begins (usually during the first or second game session). This love may or may not be reciprocated; your character might be in love with someone who barely knows he exists. Whenever the character has to choose between following his heart

or his head, he must make a Willpower (not doubled) roll at a -3 penalty. This Drawback is worth two points.

A character possesses the Tragic Love Drawback when any romantic relationship he develops ends badly. This can happen in two possible ways: something bad happens to the character's beloved, or the character has an unfortunate tendency to fall for the wrong people. Tragic Love can be a good source of Drama Points and is a four-point Drawback.

MENTAL PROBLEMS

1- TO 3-POINT DRAWBACK

ASH: I ... I NEVER EVEN SAW THESE ASSHOLES BEFORE. YOU GOTTA TELL 'EM YOU DON'T KNOW ME. WE NEVER MET, TELL 'EM!
HENRY: I DO NOT THINK HE'LL LISTEN, LAD.

Your character has some major malfunction. Maybe his parents abused him, or he's in dire need of the Purple Pill. His hangup could be quirky or downright insane depending on how severe the problem is. Some common Mental Problems follow.

Cowardice: Your character is more afraid of danger and confrontation than normal people. He may shun bad stuff altogether, or only risk it when he's sure he has the upper hand. Use the value of this Drawback as a penalty to rolls to resist fear. Some cowards—like Ash—try their best to avoid danger but just buck up and take it when they're forced into it. Don't be afraid to put your hero in harm's way when push comes to shove. You'll pay for the Drawback on those nasty Fear Tests (see p. 84).

Cruelty: This person actually likes to inflict pain and suffering. At the lower level, he reserves this for people who have angered or attacked him, but at the highest level he is a sadist with no feelings of remorse (such levels are not appropriate for most Cast Members unless you want to play someone who has more in common with the deadites).

Delusions: Your character believes something that just isn't true—he might be an ignorant racist, think he's really a character in some bizarre nerd-game, or talk to a big invisible rabbit.

Obsession: A particular person or task dominates your character's life, to the exclusion of most other things. Maybe he has to have the hottest computer, complete his HeroClix collection, or buy every single Eden Studios product ever made. He'll do just about anything within his normal moral purview to

pursue or complete his Obsession. He may neglect other duties, both personal and professional, to pursue that which fascinates him. The "obsessee" may be a person (who may or may not be aware of your character's feelings, but who almost certainly would be upset about their intensity) or a task (like getting revenge on somebody, or performing some important or notorious feat).

Paranoia: "They" are out to get you. Trust no one. Everything is a conspiracy and everyone is keeping secrets. A paranoid character expects treachery at every turn, and rarely trusts even his friends and relatives. Now in Ash's world, where the dead rise out of the ground, being paranoid is somewhat healthy. However, a character with this Drawback is seriously bent. This makes him annoying and even frightening to have around, and his testimony less likely to be believed, even when he is speaking the truth. Paranoid characters often suffer from other Emotional and Mental Problems (their point values are determined separately).

Phobia: Cast Members with Phobias have an intense and mostly irrational fear of something—snakes, heights, enclosed spaces, public speaking, the number 13, whatever. The harder it is to overcome the fear, the more this Drawback costs. Whenever the character faces the subject of the phobia, he has to make a Fear Test (see p. 84) with a penalty equal to the value of the Drawback. If the situation is normally frightening (say, the character is afraid of insects and now he faces a giant mutated undead scorpion, which would frighten anybody), add the value of the Phobia to the regular Fear Test penalty. Most fears should be irrational—it doesn't really make sense to have a Phobia of the undead—that's just normal. Still, you could go that route if you want. Your hero will be particularly ineffective in a game where he often crosses paths with the subject of his terror, however.

Recklessness: This character is supremely overconfident and impulsive, he never looks before he leaps—and gets into all kinds of trouble as a result. He says what's on his mind with no consideration for diplomacy or courtesy, rushes into dangerous situations, and rarely wastes time on second thoughts. Reckless does not necessarily mean suicidal, however. Acting on impulse no doubt puts the character in jeopardy, but doing something that is clearly lethal is not roleplaying, it's just stupid.

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Zealot: A zealot is a person whose beliefs (political, religious or personal) are so strong they dominate his life and behavior. He is willing to sacrifice anything, including his life (or the lives of others) in service to the ideals he holds dear. This character is dangerous to himself and others, and shows a total disregard for the law whenever it conflicts with his beliefs. Mad cultists, wild-eyed crusader types, fans of D20, and other mixed nuts qualify for this Drawback. This differs from Obsession in scope (Zealot behavioral dictates are more comprehensive) and severity. This Drawback is rare outside of the Deranged level. Your Director will determine if a Mild or Severe level is even possible.

The higher the value of the Mental Problem, the more severe and debilitating it is. Generally, Cast Members should not have Mental Problems worth more than two points, although playing the occasional lunatic can be fun once in a while. Just ask my friend, Wilbur. He may be a frog but he's quite the conversationalist.

Mild: The hang-up is controllable and your character seldom allows the problem to control him during times of crisis, especially when friends and loved ones are involved. People may not even know something is wrong with him. This is a one-point Drawback.

Severe: The problem is severe and affects your character's daily life. Anybody who knows the character realizes or strongly suspects that something is wrong with him. This is a two-point Drawback.

Deranged: The character is clearly deranged, with no regard for such considerations as the law, the safety of others, or the integrity of his immortal soul (you know, little things like that). That does not mean the character is completely berserk. He may control himself out of fear of being stopped or discovered, but when no such fear exists, watch out.

NATURAL TOUGHNESS

2-POINT QUALITY

Your character is tougher than normal. Betcha couldn't figure that out by the header. He has four points of Armor Value (see p. 102) against blunt attacks, such as fists, baseball bats, dropping pianos, and the like. Bullets and slashing attacks are unaffected by this resistance however. This Quality is common among professional boxers, bouncers, woodsmen, and gladiators.

NERD

3-POINT QUALITY

WISEMAN: IF THE NECRONOMICON FELL INTO THE HANDS OF THE DEADITES, ALL MANKIND WOULD BE CONSUMED BY THIS EVIL. NOW WILL THOU QUEST FOR THE BOOK?

Your character is one of the smart, maybe brilliant types, more comfortable with a book or a computer than with other people. Nerds don't have many friends (except maybe online), but in modern times they'll probably be the first to make a million bucks and can then buy all the friends and chicks they want. Good luck to you book-worms in the Dark Ages though. Have fun transcribing old texts and getting bullied by sword-boys.

Nerds gain +1 to any two mental Attributes, to a maximum level of six (bonuses cannot be stacked on one Attribute); +2 skill levels to be added to any one of the following: Computers, Knowledge, or Science; -1 penalty in any roll involving social situations (due to either prejudice against them, their own social ineptitude, or a steadfast belief in their own superiority). These characters are prime candidates for the Emotional Problems or Outcast Drawbacks.

NERVES OF STEEL

3-POINT QUALITY

A character with this Quality can stare down a demon and still say "Let's do it." Whether he's too dumb or too tough to be frightened is open to question, but he remains unruffled even in the face of unspeakable horrors. This is often key in keeping dry-cleaning bills down. The nervy guy is immune to fear except when confronted with the strangest supernatural manifestations, and gains a +4 bonus to his rolls even then.

NOSY REPORTER

5-POINT QUALITY

The truth is out there, and if your Cast Member has his way, it's going to be on the eleven o'clock news. Your character has an uncanny ability to pry into other people's business and make it public knowledge. It doesn't make him many friends, but he gets his name in the papers a lot. Of course, reporters in a world filled with skeletons and deadites soon discover the world is a very dark and complex place, and that most newspapers and TV stations cannot handle the truth. Might be time to open a rogue website and spread the news yourself.

"MY SWORD'S BY YOUR SIDE!"
-GOLDTOOH

Nosy Reporters get a +1 to both Intelligence and Perception, +1 to the Notice skill, and +1 to a skill related to their field (crime reporters get, duh, Crime, while a political beat type raises his Knowledge Skill). Your Kolchak also gets two points worth of Contacts to represent assorted sources of information.

On the minus side, these characters cannot restrain their innate inquisitiveness, and they almost always end up in trouble. Whenever your character tries to resist his curiosity (deciding that, for example, meeting alone with an unknown source at midnight in the cemetery might not be a good idea), he must make a Willpower (doubled) roll.

OBLIGATION

VARIABLE DRAWBACK

ARTHUR: LIKELY HE'S ONE OF HENRY'S MEN.

With great power comes great responsibility. That's what Uncle Ben says. With great power also comes high electricity bills. My Uncle Jim told us that, right after he screamed about turning all the lights off. But we digress—let's go back to that responsibility bit.

An Obligation must be followed to various degrees, and grants a number of points depending on the strictness of its dictates. Members of churches, guilds, secret societies, or modern-day agencies have obligations to their organizations. Usually, the higher the rank and authority, the greater the obligation. In a feudal society, vassals have obligations to their liege (like Arthur and Henry's knights). Failure to fulfill one's duty can lead to trouble—demotion, loss of job, loss of head, etc.

Minimal: Obeying the basic precepts of the leader, organization, or creed and not betraying its members are the major points here. This is worth no points. Your character is expected to abide by whatever rules and customs the organization or leader sets.

Major: The welfare of the group or leader is placed above that of your character. He is always on call, and does not have time to pursue a normal job (unless it's a cover for the real assignment or it is his job) or much of a personal life. The penalties for disobedience or selfishness are severe, and may include death. This is worth two points. Lesser knights and middle-level clerics have this level of Obligation to their lord.

Total: Such characters are expected to die for their group or lord if asked. Missions are extremely hazardous, and there is a constant danger of imprisonment, torture, or execution. Demands of the group are all consuming. This is worth three points. Arthur and Henry's personal retinue have this level of Obligation. The lords are often at war and being taken prisoner appears to merit a one-way trip to the Pit. An archbishop or other high poobah in a church or religious fellowship would also bear such an obligation due to the demands of his position and faith.

OCCULT INVESTIGATOR

4-POINT QUALITY

Horrific roleplaying games often refer to "Things Man Was Not Meant To Know." Most are kind of vague about what that is. Not so in *Army of Darkness*—the Necronomicon is the Thing Man Was Not Meant To Know. As Ash himself says, "It was never meant for the world of the living."

But some schmoes just can't leave well enough alone. They've read one too many Lovecraft stories and think they can handle staring into the mouth of madness. Some go nuts and become the next Big Bad. A rare few are those important characters who know some bizarre secret to defeat the evil.

Occult Investigators get a +1 to any two mental Attributes (Intelligence, Perception, or Willpower) and a +2 bonus to the Occultism skill. Furthermore, they get a +1 bonus to Fear Tests, thanks to their relentless drive to learn the Truth. This is not always a good thing, though.

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When presented with an opportunity to learn something supernatural—stopping to gather a few ancient scrolls as the temple starts to collapse, for example—they must do it unless they make a Willpower (doubled) roll, with penalties of –1 to –5, depending on how valuable the find is.

OUTCAST

2- TO 5-POINT DRAWBACK

You character is not loved by those around him. Because of his looks, beliefs, habits, interests, lack of charisma, or mannerisms, those around him have decided he is persona non grata (for those who don't do Latin and don't have a dictionary, Ash would say "blow" to them). Outcasts have a rough time in social situations: they suffer a –2 penalty to Influence rolls. They automatically attract the attention of any cruel or abusive character.

If their difference is clear and the community as a whole shuns them, they are considered second-class citizens and suffer repression from the local authorities. These folks are burdened with a four-point Drawback.

If they don't appear different from others and are just ostracized by those who know them, they avoid legal restrictions. That drops the Drawback to two points.

Some Outcasts make it a practice to avoid paying too much attention to their surroundings to spare themselves hurtful looks or whispers—these types suffer a –1 penalty to all Notice rolls. Others are the proverbial "fish out of water" and are unfamiliar with modern or medieval society (they may be from out of town—way out of town). This detriment is mostly roleplayed but should affect the character's behavior with regularity. Adding either the "notice" or "unfamiliar" features to the Outcast Drawback raises the value by one.

PHOTOGRAPHIC MEMORY

2-POINT QUALITY

A photographic memory grants your character an uncanny ability to remember things. After reading a book, he can quote passages without missing a word, and he almost never forgets anything. No "Klaatu, Verata, N—hem, hem, hem" for him. Your Director will provide information that your character would remember whenever it is necessary. Also, your Cast Member receives a +1 bonus to any skill roll where memorizing facts is useful, such as Knowledge and

Science. Finally, any rolls where memory plays a role gain a +1 to +3 bonus, at your Director's discretion. Oh, and gambling against these card counters extraordinaire is probably a bad idea.

PHYSICAL DISABILITY

VARIABLE DRAWBACK

EVIL ASH HEAD: I'M BLIND. I'M BLIND.

Some misfortune has affected your hero's body, whether from birth or by accident. He may suffer from limb loss, spinal column damage, or any number of impairments. Some possibilities are discussed below. Check out the Tool Man Quality (see p. 42) for some cool things you can do with your handicap.

Blind: The character cannot see anything. Unless he's got some type of radar sense (and wears a double-D logo), combat is never going to be his strong suit. Perception and Notice rolls (modified by Acute or Impaired Hearing) are needed to find a target in combat, and even then attack and defense rolls are at a –5 penalty. This is an eight-point Drawback.

Missing or Crippled Arm/Hand: The hand in question cannot be used to grab or hold objects. Any task requiring two hands is at a disadvantage (–3 or worse) or simply impossible. This is a two-point Drawback. A character with a prosthetic hand can overcome some of these problems, reducing the Drawback to one point in value. And yes, prosthetic hands do indeed include mechanical hands and chainsaws.

Missing or Crippled Leg/Foot: Your character is unable to walk or run normally. With the help of crutches or a cane, he can move at up to one-third normal speed (see p. 84). Hand-to-hand combat rolls are at a –2 penalty. This is a three-point Drawback. Modern prosthetics can reduce the penalties, increasing speed to up to half-normal, and reducing combat penalties to –1. This reduces the Drawback value to two points.

Missing or Crippled Arms: Both arms are missing or crippled. Your character cannot use any tools normally. Some people with this handicap have learned to use their feet with great skill to compensate for their loss, but it still sucks—big time. This is a four-point Drawback.

Missing or Crippled Legs: Your character is unable to walk. Without the help of a wheelchair, the best he can do is crawl or roll on the ground. This is a four-point Drawback.

"YOU GOT THAT?"
-ASH

PROMISED ONE

PREREQUISITES: GETTING MEDIEVAL 3,
GUN FU 3, OR KUNG FU 3

16-POINT QUALITY

SHELLA: THE WISEMEN SAY YOU ARE THE PROMISED ONE. 'TIS SAID THOU WILT JOURNEY FOR THE BOOK TO HELP US. AND THAT THOU WILT LEAD OUR PEOPLE AGAINST THE EVIL.

As far as we know from *Army of Darkness*, there's only one Promised One—Ash. This is your game though, and you (or at least your Director) get to decide if Ash is the one and only or if there are others handpicked by some high muckity-muck to fight the Evil Dead.

These champions aren't told they were born to fight the forces of darkness, they just find themselves hip deep in the dead at some point in their lives. Eventually, they find out about the Necronomicon, the Watcher in the Woods, and their own destiny.

Promised Ones are rarely white knights. Most of them have serious personality flaws they must overcome if they're to one day succeed against the Evil Dead. That just makes the character more interesting. Your Director will make sure that your character is nicely rounded out with Drawbacks of one type or another. (Directors, just in case you're not paying attention, that's a major league hint.)

Characters must buy at least three levels of Getting Medieval, Gun Fu, or Kung Fu (not counting the benefits of this Quality) before they can purchase this Quality.

Here's what these cursed souls get for their hard-earned Quality points:

- +2 Strength, Dexterity, Constitution, and Willpower. Promised Ones may possess Attributes above the human maximum (six).
- Fast Reaction Time, Nerves of Steel, and two levels of Hard to Kill. Promised Ones can buy an additional eight levels of Hard to Kill with other Quality points.
- +1 to the Getting Medieval and Kung Fu skills. You can't battle an army of undead if you can't fight your way out of a paper bag.
- Damage is regenerated at a rate of one Life Point per Constitution point every hour.

- A two-point Adversary Drawback directed toward minions of the Necronomicon. These usually consist of deadites and skeletons, but evil takes many forms in many different settings.

PSYCHIC VISIONS

1-POINT QUALITY

Your Mr. Mysterious somehow has the ability to see or sense things not normally seen or sensed. His visions offer more than whether the next meal is going to give him the runs. He sees epic events, personal tragedy, and inevitable treachery in dreams, visions, or portents.

Most of the time, the visions are not very clear, nor do they happen very often. They cannot be activated on purpose—they just happen. No rolls are needed. Directors should make the visions or dreams ambiguous and use images and situations from the character's life. The visions should reflect his current problems and worries. Friends and enemies of your character may pop up in the visions, offering advice, vague threats, or deep philosophical comments. Your Director can use the visions to drop hints about upcoming events the group might not otherwise have known about, like the latest machinations of the nefarious Necronomicon and how to defeat them.

RECURRING NIGHTMARES

1-POINT DRAWBACK

Your character is plagued by terrifying dreams that relive some traumatic experience, or are just fright-

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ening and disturbing. Every night, your Director should check to see if your character suffers from nightmares. They may be imposed at his discretion, or may be rolled randomly (on a roll of one on a D10, a nightmare results). On any night when the character is afflicted by the nightmare, he suffers -1 to all rolls the following day due to exhaustion.

RESISTANCE

1-POINT/LEVEL QUALITY

Some people are just innately better at ignoring the bad things that life (or the unliving) throws at them. This ability allows your character to fend off the effects of a particular type of harm. Each different type of Resistance Quality must be purchased separately. Some examples are presented below, but others may be devised by you or the Director.

Poison: Your character has a cast-iron stomach; add the level of this Resistance to any Constitution rolls made to resist the effects of poison (see p. 104).

Demonic Powers: This is a great Quality to have in *Army of Darkness*. It adds to your hero's resistance against the supernatural abilities of demons. To use it, the character simply adds his Resistance level to any rolls against being controlled or dominated through supernatural means. This includes the infection/possession power of deadites.

Pain: Each level of this Quality reduces the penalties associated with severe wounds, and adds to any Consciousness Test necessitated by severe injured (see p. 103).

RESOURCES

2-POINTS/LEVEL QUALITY OR DRAWBACK

Money doesn't mean much to Promised Ones—they very likely won't travel with more than what's in

their hands and on their backs. It's also not hugely important for most in the Middle Ages. Each of them—peasant, craftsman, soldier, knight, nobility—have a status (see p. 41). Goods and services are provided according to that societal position (or not provided as the case may be). Barter is the usual medium of exchange.

But this isn't universally true. Certain merchants could be wealthier than knights, and their wealth is in a more easy to use form. Serfs with large estates could be effectively as wealthy as their local lord even though they have less land, because they don't have the massive costs of the lord (warhorse, armor, and noble household to maintain, and gifts to give). Lords could be so overextended (due to poor harvests and over-borrowing from his local merchants) that his effective wealth level does not reflect his position. For those special situations, you might purchase a separate Resources level for your character.

Also, for games situated in the modern world, or those involving more grounded individuals—those who aren't sucked up in cyclonic timestreams every other week—money and status are completely separate features. These folks should deal with the Resources and Status Qualities differently.

A character's level of Resources determines how much material wealth he has access to. This trait varies widely. Some levels are described below. In the case of a student or other person dependent on parents or guardians, the resource level detailed applies to that older type. Whether your character has access to these assets at any given time is a matter for your Director and the plotline.

Destitute (-10): Has the clothes on his back, ten dollars' worth of stuff and maybe a shopping cart. Lucky to scrounge a few dollars a month.

Miserable (-8): Personal wealth of about \$100 worth of property (including the clothes on his back). May live in public housing, or might be homeless. Might earn \$100 a month.

Poor (-6): Personal wealth of some \$500 in property and lives in low-income housing. Has an income of \$500 a month or what he gets from welfare.

Hurting (-4): Personal wealth of about \$1,000 in property, and lives in a small apartment in a bad part of town. Has an income of about \$1,000 a month before taxes.

Below Average (-2): Personal wealth of \$5,000 in property (including an old vehicle, perhaps), and lives in an apartment. Has a pre-tax income of \$1,500 a month.

Okay (0): Personal wealth of \$15,000 in property. Has an income of \$2,500 a month before taxes.

Middle Class (+2): Personal wealth of \$50,000 in property (will usually include a partially-paid house or condominium as well as a new or slightly used car). Has an income of \$5,000 a month before taxes.

Well-off (+4): Personal wealth of \$300,000 in property. Has an income of \$10,000 a month before taxes.

Wealthy (+6): Personal wealth of \$700,000 in property. Has an income of \$40,000 a month.

Rich (+8): Personal wealth of \$2,000,000 in property. Has an income of \$50,000 a month.

Multimillionaire (+10): Personal wealth of \$5 million in property. Has an income of \$200,000 a month.

Each additional level adds an additional \$5 million in property and \$200,000 to monthly income.

SCHMUCK

2-POINT DRAWBACK

ASH: I GOT IT! I GOT IT! I KNOW YOUR DAMN WORDS, ALL RIGHT?

"Klaatu Verata Nikplphhh." Pretty much says it all. Schmucks are those goofballs who always screw up those critical moments. Their actions don't usually destroy the world, but they come close. They certainly make life much more difficult—both for them, their companions, and everyone who draws breath.

Schmucks must make an Intelligence (not doubled) roll whenever tasked with some critical mental task, such as repeating magical phrases, mixing magical potions, or talking their way out of trouble. Failure means the hero flubs in some way that has fairly serious results down the road. Once the die is cast, the player should try to roleplay the tragic error and at least give the rest of the group a chuckle out of it. Your Director might reward good ad libbing with a Drama Point. The hero'll need it.

This Drawback is only worth two points because it's fairly easy to circumvent. The character can always let someone else recite the magic words or create the potion.

SECRET

VARIABLE DRAWBACK

There exists a dangerous and hidden fact about your character. This could be a secret identity or a shady past. The more damaging the secret if it became known, the higher the value of the Drawback. For example, damage to your Cast Member's reputation and livelihood would be worth one point; a threat to his well being (he might be arrested or cast out if the truth were known) two points; loss of life, limb, and lymph nodes three points.

SITUATIONAL AWARENESS

2-POINT QUALITY

The observant almost always know what is going on around them, and can react with uncanny quickness to the unexpected. These characters gain a +2 bonus to any Perception-based rolls to sense trouble or danger in the immediate surroundings. It is very hard to sneak up on them; the same bonus applies to resist any Crime rolls made to get the drop on them as well.

STATUS

1-POINT/LEVEL QUALITY OR DRAWBACK

ASH: I GOT NEWS FOR YOU, PAL. YOU AIN'T LEADIN' BUT TWO THINGS NOW. JACK AND SHIT. AND JACK LEFT TOWN.

Don't use this Quality if your hero is going to be hopping in and out of different settings (ask your Director if you're not sure). If you're basically stuck in one locale where a character's societal rank can actually be used, feel free to spend those points.

This trait represents the standing of the character in the eyes of the people around him. It includes any fame, glory, notoriety, or social position the character possesses. In medieval Europe, Status was hugely important. Titles and position were well worth fighting over.

For those with a more modern background, Status could also reflect military rank or job title (assuming that standing has any impact on the current situation). The Status Table (see p. 42) runs down a few examples. Others should be devised based on the table entries.

STATUS TABLE

LEVEL	DESCRIPTION
-2	Criminal, outcast
-1	Foot soldier, swordsman, archer, private, street juggler
0	Soldier responsible for burial detail, corporal, modern citizen
1	Sergeant, doctor, attorney
2	Captain, local priest, local politician, "name" journalist, minor celebrity
3	Unlanded knight
4	Landed knight, celebrity
5	Baron, bishop, major celebrity
6	Duke, archbishop
7	King, media mega-star
8	Emperor, pope

In modern society, access to, or the ability to generate, wealth often creates societal position. A character gains a +1 bonus to his Status equal to one-half his Resources level (if positive). In medieval times, access to resources was generally a function of status and thus is not purchased separately. That may not always be the case however, and the Resources bonus may be applied at your Director's discretion.

Status may affect some rolls (mostly involving Influence—the "Do you know who I am?" factor). But it's largely a background tool. Low-status people have considerable more problems functioning in society. They are more likely to be harassed by the authorities. Doors are closed to them. High status people can get away with more. Their word carries more weight, the authorities cut them more slack, and merchants may offer better deals hoping they tell all their high society friends. On the down side, high Status may come with obligations, as those of a feudal lord to support and defend his vassals.

TEENAGER

2-POINT DRAWBACK

In medieval Europe, characters with this Drawback are 13 to 15 years old. Everyone over 16 was pretty much considered an adult in those days. In more modern societies, characters under the age

of 18 get this Drawback (sure, you still can't drink until you're 21, but life is hard—suck it up).

Life sucks when you're a teenager. You feel like an adult, and you want plenty of adult things, but you don't have the legal rights of an adult. Most of the problems teenagers face are social. Most adults instinctively distrust and look down on them (for good reason, you whippersnappers!), they have a lot of legal restrictions, and they have parents or guardians bossing them around. And then there's all that angst and heartbreak of their so-called lives, but that's a different show.

TOOL MAN

3-POINT QUALITY

AS IF THE BOOK AWOKE SOMETHING DARK IN THE WOODS. IT TOOK LINDA, AND THEN IT CAME FOR ME. IT GOT INTO MY HAND AND IT WENT BAD, SO I LOPPED IT OFF AT THE WRIST.

You know the drill. Or the chainsaw, or the weed whacker. Yeah, the one on the end of your stump, buddy. Take that handicap and turn it into an asset.

A character with this Quality must first take a Physical Disability Drawback. Both could be purchased during character creation. Alternatively, the Drawback could be imposed on your character during play (those nasty Directors). If that's the case, you need to spend experience points to gain this Quality (see p. 115), and you must also find someone to install your new Go-Go Gadget arm, leg, or whatsit. That takes a Mr. Fix-It roll with at least three Success Levels, not to mention some quality time with your stump.

Once you've got the Quality, you can add "attachments" to your refurbished phantom limb. Electrical attachments aren't much use unless they're rechargeable, and even then, finding some place to plug your stump in might be difficult, especially in medieval England or post-apocalyptic London. Useful attachments include gauntlets, chainsaws, and power drills (see pp. 97-102) but all sorts of other weapons can be strapped on. Knives, swords, Ginsus, and so on are treated just like the normal varieties, except they can never be dropped. Because they literally become part of their anatomy, characters with normal weapons (not power tools) attached add +1 to their attack rolls when wielding them.

SKILLS

ASH: DON'T TOUCH THAT, PLEASE! YOUR PRIMITIVE INTELLECT WOULDN'T UNDERSTAND ALLOYS AND COMPOSITIONS AND ... THINGS WITH MOLECULAR STRUCTURES ... AND THE ...

So how do you know if your axe-wielding manic—er, champion—cleaves that deadite in half or misses like a drunken batter in night baseball? And what's the deal with driving the Death Coaster? Is Ash the only driver, or can the “primitive screw-heads” of Arthur's army get behind the wheel too? The answer lies in each character's skills.

Skills are learned abilities, the result of training, study or experience. In general, anything that can be taught is considered a skill. The character's background, education, and life experiences determine what skills he would be likely to have.

Skills are broken down into broad categories. Rather than assign a skill to different types of guns, for example, the Gun Fu skill covers the ability to fire anything with a trigger. This is not realistic, but reflects the reality of the AoD setting. It also makes character creation easier: rather than having to page through a huge list of skills for your character, they are all noted on the character sheet. That way, you can run down the choices quickly and decide which are most appropriate.

Skills can be run using the broad categories all at the same level. That's easiest. For those who like to see a bit more detail, the specifics of each skill are left to your imagination. If your Cast Member is an intrepid jungle explorer, his Science skill would reflect mostly an expertise in botany and biology, and his Knowledge skill would deal mainly with geography and exotic cultures. A fence may have a Crime skill that lets him doctor financial records and contact “suppliers” and “customers,” but he probably can't move stealthily or pick a pocket worth a damn. Thus, skill uses outside your character's focus might suffer a roll penalty (at your Director's discretion).

BUYING SKILLS

To acquire skills, use the character points allocated to the skills category (as determined by the Character Type). Skills cost one point per level for levels one through five. After level five, each addi-

tional level costs three points. For example, Bruce wants his character to have the Driving skill. He decides the hero is an excellent driver—in fact, he could race cars for a living! Such expertise requires a skill of five or higher. Bruce decides to go for broke and gives the character a Driving skill 7. This costs five points for the first five levels, and six points for the other two, for a total of 11 character points. Bruce's character is an ace driver, but he is unlikely to have very high skills in anything else. No doubt, he's going to get time-sucked into a Wild West setting where there are no cars and he feels like a big doofus.

The Meaning of Skill Numbers

Like most numbers in the Unisystem, high is good and low is bad. The higher a skill level, the more proficient the character is at using that skill.

An unskilled character has level zero. It may still be possible to use the skill (your Director will make that call), but some skills just can't be used if you don't have some training (Languages for instance).

A level one indicates a beginner or amateur, somebody who has just learned the basics.

Level two or three represents general competency—the ability to perform average tasks with ease.

Level four or five indicates extreme competence in the subject, the result of a lot of study or practice.

Higher levels indicate true mastery of the skill or craft, and the ability to perform the most difficult tasks with relative ease. A master of Kung Fu has a skill level in the 7-10 range, for example.

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ACROBATICS

This is the skill used to perform tumbles, somersaults, and other complex maneuvers. It is also used to dodge attacks, climb obstacles, and perform similar tasks of agility. If you want to make a character who jumps around like Errol Flynn on crack, this is your friend.

Using the Skill: Acrobatics is used with Dexterity to perform most maneuvers, including avoiding close combat attacks and yanking triggers on boomsticks and other firearms. When jumping for distance, climbing, or swimming, use Strength and Acrobatics instead. Acrobatics can also replace Crime when trying to move silently (use the higher of the two skills for sneaking around attempts).

ART

Art covers all the various artistic skills, such as singing, painting, or making horse blankets from your belly button lint. That doesn't mean your character knows all artistic skills though. When creating the character, decide which art or arts are the character's specialty. Maybe you made a rock star who turns out to be a Promised One—this is the skill he'd use to do his head-banging thing for the ladies.

Using the Skill: There are two types of rolls that use this skill. First, to create art, use Intelligence and Art (for writing and painting), Dexterity and Art (for dancing or playing an instrument), or Constitution and Art (for singing). The Success Level determines how good the creation (or performance, for things like music or dance) is. To judge someone else's art, use Perception and Art or

consult some whiny reviewer who couldn't do half as good a job if he had a whole staff to . . . er, sorry. Use Perception and Art.

COMPUTERS

There isn't much call for this skill in medieval Europe, but since Promised Ones can come from just about any time period (and also travel to different eras), this is the skill your nerd uses to get his cyber-groove on.

People don't need this skill to use a computer. Just about any modern person can find the on switch and use a mouse and keyboard. The Computers skill lets your character do fun things like breaking into confidential databases, writing his own programs, programming his VCR and other cool stuff. We mean hacking, of course, and not the kind that involves blood and gouts of arterial spray.

Using the Skill: Add Intelligence and Computers to write a program or hack into a secure system. For hacking, the system's security imposes penalties, from -1 for a high school record system to -8 or worse for the FBI database. Perception and Computers help diagnose software or hardware problems without having to call a help line and being on hold until the sequel to *Army of Darkness* comes out.

CRIME

Breaking and entering, skulking around, picking pockets—if it's illegal, this skill covers it, with two major exceptions: computer hacking uses the Computers skill, and conning people depends on the Influence skill. Your character doesn't have to be a criminal to have this skill; cops, private investigators, medieval rogues, and other honest but street-wise folks have it as well. (Sure they do.)

Using the Skill: Dexterity and Crime are used for things like moving stealthily (although Acrobatics can replace Crime here), lifting someone's coin purse, and picking locks. Victims resist such activities with their Brains (see p. 82), or Perception and either Notice or Crime (whichever is better). Crime and Intelligence are used to identify criminals and street contacts (this roll is modified by how familiar the character is with the local underworld).



DOCTOR

Doctor is not the skill you use on naïve young ladies—but score one for trying, young nerdster! Use Influence and some shiny baubles for that.

If you need to splint a broken bone or stitch up a nasty gash, this is the skill for you. Only characters from the modern world (at least 1950s or so) should have a skill higher than four. Most “chirurgeons” of the Dark Ages have a skill of two or three at best, and many were quacks with lower levels than that.

Using the Skill: An Intelligence and Doctor roll is used to treat injuries. Each Success Level restores one Life Point of damage (only one roll per patient per day). The victim also does not lose any more Life Points from bleeding and such. Perception and Doctor can be used to diagnose a medical problem, or determine the cause of death of some unfortunate victim. “I think he died when his head was ripped off, Dan.”

DRIVING/RIDING

As with Doctor, only those from an era with vehicles of some sort should have a Driving skill. Driving covers all vehicles, whether wheeled, hover, watery, or pulled by asthmatic pygmies. If your character is not familiar with a specific vehicle (trying to drive an 18-wheeler or a motorcycle if he has only driven cars before), rolls will be at -2 to -5 or worse. Your character can’t pass driver’s ed without at least one level in this skill.

Those from the Middle Ages can replace this with a Riding skill, covering horses, oxen, camels, or whatever’s local. It can also be used for starting, stopping, and controlling carts or other livestock-drawn vehicles (or aforesaid pygmy pullcart).

Using the Skill: Dexterity and Driving/Riding for your basic high-speed chases, vaulting onto your horse, and other complex maneuvers (don’t roll for routine driving unless your Cast Member is from Texas, home of the worst drivers in the entire world). Use Intelligence and Driving/Riding for basic mechanic maintenance stuff (or care of riding beasts)—for major repairs, you’ll need the Mr. Fix-It skill (or Doctor if you’re dealing with an injured Shadowfax).



GETTING MEDIEVAL

Chainsaws, swords, axes, and other things designed to bash, hack, or skewer foes are covered by this skill. It also covers “muscle-powered” ranged devices such as crossbows, bows, and thrown weapons.

Using the Skill: Dexterity and Getting Medieval cover most combat maneuvers. Feints use Intelligence (or Perception to recognize them). There’re a whole bunch of kewl Combat Maneuvers that use Getting Medieval (see pp. 88-92).

GUN FU

There aren’t a lot of firearms in medieval Europe, but time-traveling champions might bring their gats with them on occasion. Guns are highly prized there, but wisely reserved only for the Big Bads, like Evil Ash. There are just too many skeletons to waste lead on.

Using the Skill: Dexterity and Gun Fu for pointing and shooting. Intelligence and Gun Fu help clear a jammed gun.

INFLUENCE

How do you talk Sheila into giving you a serious lip lock? Or convince a handful of beaten people to fight the armies of the dead? Influence, man! Didn’t you see the header? Geez! It’s a 20-point font for crying out loud!

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Influence allows your character to pick up somebody at a bar, scare people into giving up important information, or otherwise persuade others to do what you want.

Using the Skill: Intelligence and Influence for fooling, scamming, or fast-talking others. Willpower and Influence to intimidate people. If your character is trying to seduce somebody, any Attractiveness levels act as bonuses or penalties to the roll. A boomstick in the face is also quite convincing when trying to make someone back down; the proper circumstances add bonuses or penalties in the one to five range. Status may also factor in.

KNOWLEDGE

All non-scientific disciplines are covered by Knowledge. History, heraldry, law, psychology, and the like are part and parcel of this skill. Knowledge can help you figure out how to make gunpowder, manufacture a mechanical hand, or rig up a catapult for hurling cows. We mean boulders. Right. Definitely boulders. Because hurling cows would be cruel. And weird.

Using the Skill: Knowledge is used with Intelligence for the most part. Such a roll adds its Success Levels to some Occultism or Influence rolls.

KUNG FU

Call it brawling, martial arts, fisticuffs, or flailing your arms around wildly, this skill covers the art of using hands and feet (and other body parts) to hurt your fellow man (or dead man). Kung Fu is indispensable for warriors who plan on fighting the *Army of Darkness*. Deadites respond much better to fists than they do stern letters of warning from your lawyer.

Using the Skill: Dexterity and Kung Fu for hitting someone or avoiding being hit. Many Combat Maneuvers (see pp. 88-92) are based on the Kung Fu skill. Intelligence and Kung Fu may be used to identify a fighting style, or to feint an opponent. Perception and Kung Fu counter such feints.

LANGUAGES

Fortunately, both Arthur's and Henry's people speak good old English. Well, actually, Old English, but that's close enough. On the other hand, if you want to read the Sumerian edition of the Necronomicon or speak French to impress chicks, you need this skill. Languages covers any language other than one's native tongue.

Using the Skill: This skill is used differently from the rest. Each level of Languages indicates fluency in one language (the player decides which ones). When trying to decipher some arcane inscription, use Intelligence and Language. In the *AoD RPG*, knowing a few languages really helps your character understand others. What's that you say? The basic structure and symbols of the language being deciphered bear no relationship to the ones you know? Let's not sweat those details. Make a roll and your Director will tell you what you learn. If you mistranslated . . . rest assured the repercussions will be dire (but they were probably going to run that way anyway).

After character creation, picking up new languages is difficult. This skill cannot be improved unless the character spends several months studying the new language (see p. 115).

MR. FIX-IT

If it's broken, those with this skill can fix it. Yes they can. If it ain't broken, they will improve it (sometimes into not working at all). If it just ain't, they will build it. Mr. Fix-It covers all technical and craft skills, from carpentry to mechanics to setting up electronic equipment. This is what your character needs to build a Death Coaster or manufacture a mechanical hand. Adventure-wise, he could use this skill to set up elaborate and interesting traps. Knowing how to engineer complex devices is the Knowledge skill. Actually building them relies on Mr. Fix-It.

Using the Skill: Perception and Mr. Fix-It for spotting a problem. Intelligence and Mr. Fix-It to do the repairs or construction work. Things that require a soft touch use Dexterity and Mr. Fix-It instead.

NOTICE

This skill is a real Ash-saver. Without it, your Cast Member won't see that deadite sneaking up behind him, or notice clues that help him defeat the latest horror from Perdition.

Using the Skill: Perception and Notice to spot things. Intelligence and Notice to remember something your character saw before but didn't realize was important until now.

OCCULTISM

Forbidden knowledge, the Black Arts, the stuff you only find in outlawed books or some really dark heavy metal songs. This is the skill of the truly arcane. It includes things like the basics of demon slaying (knowing they must be dismembered, for example), identifying the Necronomicon's minions and their weaknesses (just what is Evil Ash?), researching spells and rituals, and otherwise learning "Things Man Was Not Meant to Know." Access to some freaky old books is a plus, and having the Necronomicon itself is a big fat +5, or +10 if it directly relates to the nastiest Evil Dead or the Watcher in the Woods.

Using the Skill: Intelligence and Occultism to recognize or research some supernatural name. Perception and Occultism to identify a creature on first sight.

SCIENCE

You can't blind them with science unless you know it. This skill covers all your basic sciences—physics, biology, chemistry and so on. It can come in handy when dealing with the supernatural, if only to figure out if something is really supernatural. Characters with this skill earn the privilege of saying "That's just scientifically impossible" a lot. At higher levels (five and above), weird science is possible—things like mechanical hands and tools that will scramble an egg while it's still inside its shell. (Now that's weird!)

Using the Skill: Intelligence and Science for most things, from mixing a chemical formula to inventing a new device to analyzing the soporific properties of plant sap. Perception and Science is used to spot science-oriented clues, like identifying an unusual biochemical residue.



SPORTS

The ability to hit a ball with a stick, throw a ball, or do other things that may or may not involve balls. All sports are covered by this skill, except things like boxing and martial arts, which use Kung Fu, and gymnastics, which is part of Acrobatics. (Okay, so really, just things with balls.) In a pinch, Sports can be used instead of other skills to do things like swing a bat at a skeleton's skull or ride a winged deadite.

Using the Skill: Depending on the nature of the sporting event, one of the three physical Attributes is used. Coordination- and agility-based tasks (throwing a baseball) depend on Dexterity, brute force activities (weight lifting or tackling) relies on Strength, and endurance sports (marathon running) use Constitution.

WILD CARD

Unlike some games, which list skills for Use Rope and Intuit Direction (we kid you not), the **Unisystem** concentrates on things you'll actually use. We know. Revolutionary, huh? But sometimes you just might make a character who needs some otherwise little-used skill. That's where Wild Card comes in. This is your fill-in-the-blanks skill—it can cover anything you want, with one caveat. The Wild Card skill cannot be broader than the pre-existing skills (Weapons, for example, which would cover both Gun-Fu and Getting Medieval, would earn a "nice try, bozo" award). The Wild Card skill can also be used in a more specific way to remove certain

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maneuver penalties. Say you want to be very good with a chainsaw. Using the Getting Medieval skill brings in a -3 penalty (see p. 98). Taking Wild Card (Chainsaw) and using it instead of Getting Medieval eliminate that -3 penalty (at the expense of not being as versatile). Be careful here, a Wild Card skill focused on Decapitation is going to get ugly fast.

COMBAT MANEUVERS

ASH: YOU WANT A LITTLE? DO YA?

You probably noticed by now a list of Combat Maneuvers on your character sheet. (You'll find your character stats tattooed on your ass somewhere. Really! Check them now with help—from a very close friend.)

Maneuvers are your character's preferred moves. There's a complete list in **Chapter Three: Ash Rules** (see p. 88-92). Head over there and pick the ones you want for your character. There's no limit or pre-reqs here; take as many as you like. Then again, if your character is a talker rather than a fighter, or if he wouldn't know which end of a shotgun to point at the target, including those maneuvers (and any number of others) is probably a waste of time.

Before filling in this list, you should become familiar with the rules on these puppies. Combat Maneuvers have three elements.

Bonus: This is the total of your character's appropriate Attribute, skill and modifiers. The bonus is what you add to the die roll to determine how well the attack or defense worked.

Damage: This lists the base damage of the maneuver (if the maneuver does any damage). Add any Success Levels of the roll to the base damage.

Notes: This adds any special effects of the attack. Decapitation hurts big time (damage times five), if you can pull it off.

DRAMA POINTS

Sometimes a character needs to succeed at something, no matter what the odds against it are. In a movie or TV show, the scriptwriter just decides the character succeeds, period. In the *Army of Darkness* RPG, we simulate this with Drama Points. When you use a Drama Point, your character gets a huge bonus to his chances—think of it as the universe lending a helping hand. The impossible shot hits the target, the Big Bad falls off the parapet and onto a catapult filled with explosives, or the crossbow bolt aimed at your hero's heart pierces his whiskey flask instead. (Er, fruit juice. Yeah. That's what champions drink. That or milk. With a hair in it. They are Tough Guys, after all.)

All these crazy things are possible when you spend a Drama Point. Think of them as audience-controlled plot devices. The ups and downs of Drama Points are covered in **Chapter Three: Ash Rules** (see p. 108).

Characters start with a set amount of Drama Points depending on their Character Type. Primitive Screwheads get more beginning points because they really need 'em to keep up with the big boys.

FINISHING TOUCHES

These are the little things that mean so much—appearance, name, shoe size. These touches bring life to your Cast Member and make him more than a list of numbers on a sheet of paper. (Make sure to lock the folder away at night so your fully realized character doesn't crawl out and get into your Pez.)

Name: What's in a name? Among other things, it can provide some insights into your character's background and personality. An ethnic name can provide some depth. A weird first name, like Nicodemus, probably led to a lot of bullying as a kid. A nickname can add color (too many nicknames, of course, and your character may end up sounding like a refugee from The Sopranos).



Appearance: You can go the “Police APB” route and be content to provide height, weight, eye and hair color, and the like, but some details make your character more memorable. A neat idea is to “cast” your character: “the part of my character will be played by such-and-such actor (or singer, or any public personality).” This provides a quick visual frame of reference. Everybody knows what the Austrian former bodybuilder turned into action hero looks like, for example. If everybody does it, your Director could even do a little Cast List: “Starring Bruce C. as Ash (well, duh), Bridget F. as the female contract killer, and E. Harris as the crusty old sergeant at arms.”

Other Characteristics: Maybe your character has some distinctive habit or mannerism—his hair is always a bit messy and tends to fall over his eyes, or he always looks nervous or uncomfortable around strangers. Does he have any scars, tattoos, or piercings that are easily noticeable? How does your character normally dress? What kind of art or music does he like? Is he one of those super cool gamer types? Or is he some poor schmuck who never discovered just how awesome roleplaying games are. Particularly those from ultra-chic Eden Studios.

ARCHETYPES

So, after all that, you’ve decided not to bother with creating your own characters? Wow, what a waste of reading. Ah well, as we mentioned way back when, we’ve got you covered there too. On the next dozen or so pages, you’ll find a number of ready-to-play characters—four Heroes and eight Primitive Screwheads—complete with stunning full-color pictures. The characters have their own story and background, and can be used as-is or modified by players as they see fit. The Archetypes are designed to be used in the default medieval England setting, though some obviously didn’t start there (like Ash). If you want to use them in an alternative *Army of Darkness* setting (see **Chapter Seven: Worlds of Darkness**), you’ll need to mess around with their write-ups a bit. Go ahead and give that creative gray matter a work out. It only hurts in the beginning . . . or so we’re told.



THE OFFICIAL CAST

Making your own or using the ones we devised not to your liking? Okay, be like that! We know that some are only happy with the originals. And once again, we are way ahead of you. After the Archetypes are the Official Cast stats from the movie (ah, *Army of Darkness*, you dummy. What movie did you think we were talking about? The cast of the *Pianist* isn’t going to be of much use here!)

We’ve listed the stats as they are by the middle of the movie, just before the *Army of Darkness* reaches Arthur’s gates. If your Director wants to set the game up at some prior time, say before the intense training session lead by Ash (via the ever-reliable musical montage), adjust things as needed (may be lower the Getting Medieval skills by one or two points).

Okay, that’s it! You’re set to go. The stars of the show have been cast, and it’s time to get the cameras rolling and the action started.

PROMISED ONES

ARCHAEOLOGIST

LIFE POINTS 26

DRAMA POINTS 20

PRIMITIVE SCREWHEAD

ATTRIBUTES (15)

Strength 2
Dexterity 2
Constitution 2
Intelligence 5 (1 level part of Nerd Quality)
Perception 3 (1 level part of Nerd Quality)
Willpower 3

QUALITIES (10)

Good Luck 1 (1)
Nerd (3)
Photographic Memory (2)
Resistance (Demoniac Powers) 4 (4)

DRAWBACKS (5)

Covetous (Mild Conspicuousness) (1)
Covetous (Mild Greed) (1)
Humorless (1)
Mental Problems (Mild Obsession, Relics) (1)
Mental Problems (Mild Paranoia) (1)

SKILLS (15 + 5 FROM DRAWBACKS)

Acrobatics 0	Knowledge 5 (2 levels part of Nerd Quality)
Art 0	Kung Fu 1
Computers 2	Languages 3 (Sumerian, any two others)
Crime 0	Mr. Fix-It 1
Doctor 1	Notice 2
Driving/Riding 0	Occultism 3
Getting Medieval 0	Science 3
Gun Fu 0	Sports 0
Influence 1	Wild Card 0

Maneuvers	Bonus	Base Damage	Notes
Dodge	3	—	Defense action
Kick	2	6	Bash
Punch	3	4	Bash



BACKGROUND ON THE ARCHAEOLOGIST

Indiana who? That's just preposterous. I'm afraid we archaeologists are a boring lot. Hmm. Unless you count the Sumerian expedition of '93. I was there with Professor Knowby. Knowby. HA! He should have been called Don't Knowby! Er, sorry.

Anyway, yes, that one was rather exciting. I was brought along because I can read ancient Sumerian, you know. Yes, one of three ancient languages I'm proficient in. I hold PhDs from two different prestigious universities, by the way. Not that that has gotten me very far on the talk-show circuit. Anyway, we found all sorts of interesting glyphs and pictographs concerning the ancient legend of Gilgamesh, gods, demons, and the like. Fascinating stuff, really.

I was quite upset when Knowby found the book. Do you know what a rare find that was? A book? I mean—the Sumerians didn't even *use* books! They "wrote" on clay tablets in cuneiform. But did Knowby share credit for this discovery? Of course not. Certainly I distanced myself at first, fearing a hoax of some sort, but then Knowby disappears and the next I hear the book's on a bestseller list. The crackpot made millions.

So I decide to do something about it. I paid a "visit" to his office and, sharing the old bastard's healthy paranoia, I knew to search all the hidden areas. Didn't take long to find some papers hidden behind a file cabinet drawer. Turns out he made some initial notes during his translation. Boy were they a mess. I noticed three errors right off. Still, it gave me the opening I needed; I could step in and give a real translation. Since I couldn't find the original book (and was pretty certain that Knowby wouldn't be cooperative), I picked up a copy of the *Secrets of the Necronomicon* and used the notes to analyze it. During my work, I started trying to reverse translate by reciting the words in ancient Sumerian out loud. Big, big mistake.

So now I'm not so sure Knowby is off enjoying his cash. In fact, if he's here in this medieval cesspool of a land, I'd like to find him and give him a piece of my mind. That's if I live long enough.

Quote: "Where did you find that? Give it to me! I'll . . . analyze it for you."

ROLEPLAYING THE ARCHAEOLOGIST

You were cheated out of a major find once by Professor Raymond Knowby—or so you believe—and you've vowed not to let it happen again. You try to keep for yourself any relic or artifact the group comes across, even if you're not the best suited to make use of it. When . . . if . . . you get back to civilization, those items should be your meal ticket. You believe that Knowby sold his translation of the book and published the *Secrets of the Necronomicon*, and you used to think he was in seclusion somewhere enjoying his millions. Now your certainty is waning. You're starting to wonder if you should have just left well enough alone. Still, your change in circumstances hasn't abated your somewhat misguided anger at Knowby.

FOLK HERO

LIFE POINTS 64

DRAMA POINTS 10

HERO

ATTRIBUTES (20)

Strength 6 (2 levels part of Promised One Quality)
Dexterity 6 (2 levels part of Promised One Quality)
Constitution 6 (2 levels part of Promised One Quality)
Intelligence 4
Perception 3
Willpower 3 (2 levels part of Promised One Quality)

QUALITIES (20)

Fast Reaction Time (Part of Promised One Quality)
Good Luck 4 (4)
Hard to Kill 2 (Part of Promised One Quality)
Nerves of Steel (Part of Promised One Quality)
Promised One (16)
Regeneration (6 Life Points per hour)
(Part of Promised One Quality)

DRAWBACKS (10)

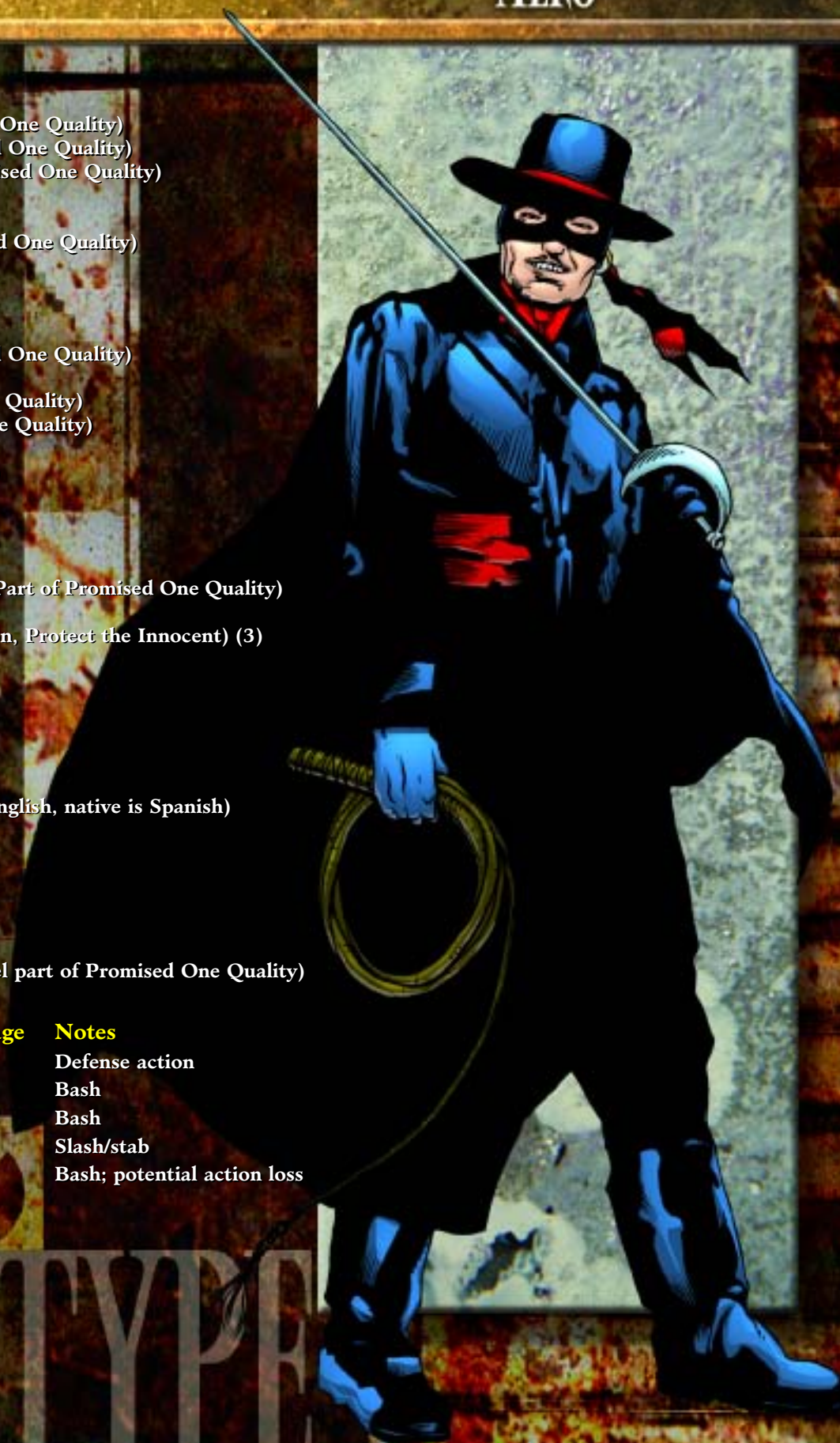
Adversary (Deadites and Skeletons) (Part of Promised One Quality)
Honorable (Rigid) (3)
Mental Problems (Deranged Obsession, Protect the Innocent) (3)
Love (Tragic) (4)

SKILLS (20 + 10 FROM DRAWBACKS)

Acrobatics 5	Knowledge 0
Art 0	Kung Fu 4*
Computers 0	Languages 1 (English, native is Spanish)
Crime 4	Mr. Fix-It 0
Doctor 0	Notice 4
Driving/Riding 4	Occultism 0
Getting Medieval 6*	Science 0
Gun Fu 0	Sports 0
Influence 3	Wild Card 0

*(1 level part of Promised One Quality)

Maneuvers	Bonus	Base Damage	Notes
Dodge	12	—	Defense action
Kick	9	14	Bash
Punch	10	12	Bash
Saber	12	24	Slash/stab
Whip	10	12	Bash; potential action loss



BACKGROUND ON THE FOLK HERO

I am from Mexico, the land God has chosen to smile upon with sun, sand, and beautiful women. I was born to wealth, and mi casa es grande, but my love for the people of my homeland is even greater. I renounced my titles to wander the land and protect the poor and trodden-down peoples with my trusty whip and my lightning fast sword.

The people know me by many names, but I simply call myself, The Avenger, for it is my sworn duty to right wrongs and protect the peasants from the wealthy nobles.

But lately I have faced a far more solemn task. A strange book was recently brought to our lands. Some fool read the passages aloud, and it awoke something in the ancient Mayan ruins. Things began to come from the jungle, taking away the peasants in the night. Later, they came back, as demons straight from the blackest pits of Hell!

I vowed to my God that I would stop these Evil Dead, and I ventured into the ruins. I cut my way through the jungle and fought off the very trees themselves. Then I battled through two of the vicious demons, slicing them to ribbons with my dueling saber.

Finally I came to the old ziggurat. A long-sealed entrance was open. I went inside and found a strange book—wrapped in tough leather and inked in what could only be human blood. I grabbed the book and fled, hoping to find a padre who could exorcise the foul spirits that inhabited it and end this curse. But as I cut my way through the jungle, a horrible monster came rushing toward me! I fought, but my saber was no match for its bark-like skin.

The last thing I remember was the monster about to stuff me into its maw and odd voices chanting from the jungle. A massive storm ripped through the jungle and I was knocked unconscious. The next thing I knew, I was here.

Quote: “Call it robbing from the dead to give to the living. Now, on guard!”

ROLEPLAYING THE FOLK HERO

You are truly out to save the oppressed, whether they are peasants forced to overwork for cruel lords or average townsfolk terrorized by the Evil Dead. You may have a secret identity if your game is set in your homelands. If so, you also wear a mask and possibly a costume to boot. If the game focuses on traveling far away from home in either time or space, you do not have to worry about anyone discovering your secret and can dress as you choose. Still, the señoritas seem fascinated by mysterious strangers in masks and capes.

ARCHETYPE

GAME DESIGNER

LIFE POINTS 48

DRAMA POINTS 10

HERO

ATTRIBUTES (20)

Strength 4 (2 levels part of Promised One Quality)
Dexterity 5 (2 levels part of Promised One Quality)
Constitution 4 (2 levels part of Promised One Quality)
Intelligence 6 (1 level part of Nerd Quality)
Perception 6 (1 level part of Nerd Quality)
Willpower 5 (2 levels part of Promised One Quality)

QUALITIES (20)

Fast Reaction Time (Part of Promised One Quality)
Good Luck 1 (1)
Hard to Kill 2 (Part of Promised One Quality)
Nerd (3)
Nerves of Steel (Part of Promised One Quality)
Promised One (16)
Regeneration (4 Life Points per hour)
(Part of Promised One Quality)

DRAWBACKS (7)

Adversary (Deadites and Skeletons)
(Part of Promised One Quality)
Attractiveness (Smelly) -4 (4)
Emotional Problems (Fear of Rejection) (1)
Mental Problems (Severe Obsession, Turn the fight against
the Evil Dead into an RPG) (2)

SKILLS (20 + 7 FROM DRAWBACKS)

Acrobatics 0	Knowledge 5 (2 levels part of Nerd Quality)
Art 0	Kung Fu 1
Computers 4	Languages 3 (Sumerian, any two others)
Crime 0	Mr. Fix-It 1
Doctor 1	Notice 2
Driving/Riding 0	Occultism 3
Getting Medieval 0	Science 3
Gun Fu 0	Sports 0
Influence 1	Wild Card (Gaming) 5

Maneuvers	Bonus	Base Damage	Notes
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Dodge	7	—	Defense action
Kick	6	10	Bash
Punch	7	8	Bash



GAME DESIGNER

BACKGROUND ON THE GAME DESIGNER

Oh man. How cool is this? I mean it was sweet enough when I found some old spooky looking books in that storage room in the university library. They were perfect for my upcoming game session. I needed a funky spell of some kind and the book added a nice air of authenticity. A bit too authentic turns out. When I was working through the atmospherics (y'know candles, muted lighting, incense) prepping for my game, I read a few lines of the "Winds of Change" spell. Things started getting funky and the next thing I knew, I was here, actually *in* a roleplaying game.

It's weird no doubt, but it's pretty cool too. I mean—it's like every game I've ever played. I'm like a freakin' Cast Member! I traveled through time and now I'm saving the world, killing demons, and kissing girls! Well, nothing's really happened with any girls yet, but I'm still hoping. And I've had to run from most of the demons so far, but there was that one in Byzantium the other day I just about licked. I suspect it had several Drama Points left to keep it alive.

What are . . . ? Oh, never mind. Just trying to model all this for when I get back. I'm gonna make the kewlest freakin' game ever. And I think I'll use the Unisystem too. Yeah, that oughta work real well with this kinda stuff. Zombies and demons'll fit right in.

Oh, sorry. You were asking me how to defeat Kandarian demons? Well, there are demons listed in the *Big Book of Bad Guys* supplement, but there're the three different versions, all written by different people. And then there's those weird British daemons in the *Big Book of Bad Guys, UK edition*. But really it's just a matter of hacking them to bits like everything else. Suckers probably have a lot of Life Points. Maybe some damage resistance, that kinda thing. I'd suggest something really big, like a rocket launcher. You got any of those around here? Shame really . .

Against the skeletons you've just gotta stick with blunt or cutting weapons. Piercing probably does like half damage or something. And bullets, well, they'll just knock off a few ribs. No help there. What we really need is a magic sword! Some kind of vorpal weapon would be ideal. Oh, man! That'd be kewl! A vorpal weapon. Or how about a VORPAL CHAINSAW! I'd crap my pants for a vorpal chainsaw!

Quote: "Oh, man. That's gotta hurt. It's like 'die twice, save for half.'"

ROLEPLAYING THE GAME DESIGNER

You're a professional nerd. You're not particularly good at fighting, but you sure know your morning star from your guisarme. You hope to get better at these things and become like one of your favorite characters, but the learning curve is fairly steep. Your most annoying habit (to others) is thinking of *everything* in game terms. Remember all those roleplaying seminars about not referring to things in skill levels and Attribute rolls? Well, you're the exception. Mention those things all you want. Just remember that no one else will know what the hell you're talking about.

ARCHETYPE

GLADIATOR

LIFE POINTS 72

DRAMA POINTS 10

HERO

ATTRIBUTES (20)

Strength 7 (2 levels part of Promised One Quality)
Dexterity 6 (2 levels part of Promised One Quality)
Constitution 7 (2 levels part of Promised One Quality)
Intelligence 2
Perception 2
Willpower 4 (2 levels part of Promised One Quality)

QUALITIES (20)

Fast Reaction Time (Part of Promised One Quality)
Hard to Kill 2 (Part of Promised One Quality)
Natural Toughness (2)
Nerves of Steel (Part of Promised One Quality)
Promised One (16)
Regeneration (7 Life Points per hour)
(Part of Promised One Quality)
Resistance (Pain) 2 (2)

DRAWBACKS (4)

Adversary (Deadites and Skeletons) (Part of Promised One Quality)
Honorable (Minimal) (1)
Mental Problems (Mild Cruelty) (1)
Mental Problems (Severe Obsession, Hunt the Evil Dead) (2)

SKILLS (20 + 4 FROM DRAWBACKS)

Acrobatics 3	Knowledge 0
Art 0	Kung Fu 4*
Computers 0	Languages 1 (English, native is Roman)
Crime 0	Mr. Fix-It 0
Doctor 0	Notice 3
Driving/Riding 4	Occultism 1
Getting Medieval 5	Science 0
Gun Fu 0	Sports 4
Influence 0	Wild Card 0

*(1 level part of Promised One Quality)

Maneuvers	Bonus	Base Damage	Notes
Axe	12	35	Slash/stab
Dodge	12	—	Defense action
Gladius	12	21	Slash/stab
Kick	9	16	Bash
Net	8	—	Entangled and perhaps prone
Punch	10	14	Bash



GLADIATOR

BACKGROUND ON THE GLADIATOR

I was born somewhere in northern Africa. In the desert. My mother was a slave, my father was a Roman merchant. When he saw how big I was, he sold me to the gladiators.

I had my first fight to the death when I was 12. It was in some backwater pit in the desert like my home. I didn't want to kill, but it was him or me.

Ten years later, I remained undefeated. My master took me to Rome for a great competition. Three lions. I bested them all, one by one. The last broke my gladius and I had to kill it with my bare hands.

After my wounds had healed, my master took me to a secret place. A pit I had never heard of, far from the normal circuit. At first I thought it a cruel jest of some sort. Standing across the dark arena from me was an old woman. I stared at her, then looked at my master. He was laughing, but seemed nervous. I was quite valuable by now. The stack of coins by his side proved this was to be an important fight. But against an old woman? Were they betting I wouldn't kill her?

I never had to make that choice. The woman suddenly rushed at me, her eyes milky white and her skin torn and cracked. She was a harpy or hellion or some such. I fought the thing to a standstill. My master gave me the thumbs-down, nervously. I stabbed the hag through the heart—but she crawled up my blade and tore off my helm!

I stabbed her again and again, but still she kept coming. Finally, I hacked her to pieces. She screamed that I would join "them" as she quivered and finally died. I raised my gladius in triumph. My master collected his coins and told the guards to escort me to my quarters.

I never made it to my bed. Somewhere along the way, a mighty wind swept down and scooped me up. I tumbled for what felt like days until I landed here. Now I know my lot in life. My true purpose. I am a slayer of demons.

Quote: "We who are about to die salute you."

ROLEPLAYING THE GLADIATOR

You are a big, strong brute bathed in the blood of hundreds of unnecessary kills. You don't have the modern man's guilt about these deaths, but you are happy to now have a more noble pursuit—the destruction of the Evil Dead. You hunt them relentlessly, caring little for personal property or comforts as long as your muscles can still hack the horrors to pieces.

ARCHETYP

GUNSLINGER

LIFE POINTS 52

DRAMA POINTS 10

HERO

ATTRIBUTES (20)

Strength 4 (2 levels part of Promised One Quality)
Dexterity 7 (2 levels part of Promised One Quality)
Constitution 5 (2 levels part of Promised One Quality)
Intelligence 3
Perception 4
Willpower 5 (2 levels part of Promised One Quality)

QUALITIES (20)

Attractiveness +2 (2)
Fast Reaction Time (Part of Promised One Quality)
Hard to Kill 2 (Part of Promised One Quality)
Nerves of Steel (Part of Promised One Quality)
Promised One (16)
Regeneration (5 Life Points per hour)
(Part of Promised One Quality)
Situational Awareness (2)

DRAWBACKS (4)

Adversary (Deadites and Skeletons) (Part of Promised One Quality)
Honorable (Minimal) (1)
Humorless (1)
Outcast (2)

SKILLS (20 + 4 FROM DRAWBACKS)

Acrobatics 4	Knowledge 0
Art 0	Kung Fu 3*
Computers 0	Languages 0
Crime 1	Mr. Fix-It 0
Doctor 2	Notice 4
Driving/Riding 4	Occultism 0
Getting Medieval 2*	Science 0
Gun Fu 6	Sports 0
Influence 0	Wild Card 0

*(1 level part of Promised One Quality)

Maneuvers	Bonus	Base Damage	Notes
Dodge	10	—	Defense action
Kick	8	12	Bash
Punch	9	10	Bash
Six Shooter	13	12	Bullet



GUNSLINGER

BACKGROUND ON THE GUNSLINGER

You wanna know my story? There ain't much to tell really. I did some slingin' in Abilene. Dodge. Been to Deadwood a few times too. That's where I saw my first deadite. It was an Injun. Chewin' off some squaw's ear. I didn't think much of it at first. Tried to just ride on past. Kiowa do strange things, you know.

Then it came after me. I pumped a few rounds into it, but of course it kept on coming.

It spooked my horse.

I don't like it when something upsets my horse.

Bastard wouldn't apologize, so I plugged him right between the eyes.

Then this bloated witch comes from the rise, screaming all kindsa nonsense to me about draggin' my soul down to Hades. I told her I've been there. Didn't think much of it. That one took a lot more convincing. The kind of convincing where you have to reload a few times.

Eventually it was in so many pieces it stopped floppin'. Before she did, a swirling wind caught up with us. I thought it was just some odd dust whirlwind . . . just a strange day gettin' stranger. Next thing I know, I'm in some kind of ancient land, like out of some tenderfoot storybook.

That was a few weeks back. Now I know I'm one of those who's supposed to stop 'em. I'm not much for butcher's work, so I plug 'em and leave the carving for the posse. Comprende? Big problem is I'm running out of bullets.

Quote: "You gonna fight back or just stand there and bleed?"

ROLEPLAYING THE GUNSLINGER

You are cool and aloof. You like to stand back and blast holes in demons and deadites and let everyone else get soaked in gore. Bullets don't do much against skeletons but you usually let the others handle the little nasties. Demons can take some blasting and keep on coming, but as long as you've got a fast horse to stay out of their reach, you can blow out their kneecaps and other stuff to slow them down. That gives the rest of your companions room to finish them off too.

ARCHETYPE

HOLLYWOOD DICK

LIFE POINTS 56

DRAMA POINTS 10

HERO

ATTRIBUTES (20)

Strength 5 (2 levels part of Promised One Quality)
Dexterity 7 (2 levels part of Promised One Quality,
1 level part of Ex-Cop Quality)
Constitution 5 (2 levels part of Promised One Quality)
Intelligence 3
Perception 5
Willpower 4 (2 levels part of Promised One Quality)

QUALITIES (20)

Ex-Cop (4)
Fast Reaction Time (Part of Promised One Quality)
Hard to Kill 2 (Part of Promised One Quality)
Nerves of Steel (Part of Promised One Quality)
Promised One (16)
Regeneration (5 Life Points per hour)
(Part of Promised One Quality)

DRAWBACKS (9)

Adversary (Deadites and Skeletons) (Part of Promised One Quality)
Covetous (Mild Ambition) (1)
Covetous (Severe Conspicuousness) (2)
Mental Problems (Severe Obsession,
Get a movie made about his life) (2)
Mental Problems (Severe Recklessness) (2)
Schmuck (2)

SKILLS (20 + 9 FROM DRAWBACKS)

Acrobatics 3	Knowledge 3
Art 0	Kung Fu 3*
Computers 0	Languages 1 (Spanish)
Crime 4#	Mr. Fix-It 0
Doctor 1	Notice 4
Driving/Riding 3#	Occultism 1
Getting Medieval 2*	Science 0
Gun Fu 6#	Sports 1
Influence 2	Wild Card 0

* (1 level part of Promised One Quality)

(1 level part of Ex-Cop Quality)

Maneuvers	Bonus	Base Damage	Notes
Dodge	11	—	Defense action
Head Butt	9	10	Bash
Kick	10	12	Bash
Pistol	13	12	Bullet
Punch	9	10	Bash
Nightstick	9	15	Bash



BACKGROUND ON THE HOLLYWOOD DICK

They're making a movie about me, you know that? Yeah. I optioned with Shyster and Goldbrick a few weeks before I wound up here. They heard about what I've done and how I do all my own stunts. Hell, I do my own stunts every day.

They got my record from the tabloids, before things went bad. I dunno if you read the *Daily Globe*, but that stuff they said about me fighting a bunch of zombies was all true.

It all started out on Embarcadero and Vine. I saw this big group of gangbangers tearing up shops in broad daylight. I was a patrolman then, so I pull up in the zebra—that's what we call our black and white squad cars—and tell 'em to cease and desist. They turned on me and I could see right away they wasn't right. I looked around but there weren't any film crews. And I know what to look for 'cause I'm personal friends with some bigwigs in Hollywood, y'know. Like Bobby Dinero and Siggie Stallone.

Anyway, I put a few rounds right between the eyes of these guys—hey, I've seen those zombie movies—but they don't stop. They just keep coming and screaming. So I empty my nine and jump into the squad car. They surround me and start trying to break out my windows, but I just floor it. Smash a couple on the road, slam a few more into a building. It was beautiful.

Problem is, Internal Affairs shows up and wants to know why I've made street pizza outta seven perps. I told them the truth, but they didn't believe me. I lost my gun and badge and got turned out on the street.

So I hang out the shingle and hand out a few cards. You know, private dick to the major players. One of 'em is this bigwig who's done a few pics. Mostly low-budget horror crap but he's startin' to do big stuff like superheroes and what-not. He says, "That's quite a story, friend. We should make a movie about that!"

Next thing I know, he's showing me this book he found in some pawnshop. You know the one. Leather skin, fulla red ink. He got some college student to translate it for him and had been reading the passages. Next thing I know, he's showing me how it works and this big special effect opens up in the sky.

And here I am.

Quote: "Oh yeah. They gotta put that in my movie."

ROLEPLAYING THE HOLLYWOOD DICK

The fight against the Evil Dead is important to you, but only as a means to an end. Your real goal is to have a movie made about your exciting life as the "Promised One." You like to strike poses, deliver cool lines, and act like a real ladies man (you're not). Unfortunately, luck just isn't with you. You always flub your lines and things just never seem to go your way.

NIGHT STALKER

LIFE POINTS 42

DRAMA POINTS 10

HERO

ATTRIBUTES (20)

Strength 4 (2 levels part of Promised One Quality)
Dexterity 5 (2 levels part of Promised One Quality)
Constitution 4 (2 levels part of Promised One Quality)
Intelligence 6 (1 level part of Nosy Reporter Quality)
Perception 6 (1 level part of Nosy Reporter Quality)
Willpower 5 (2 levels part of Promised One Quality)

QUALITIES (20 + 1 FROM DRAWBACKS)

Contacts 2 (Part of Nosy Reporter Quality)
Fast Reaction Time (Part of Promised One Quality)
Hard to Kill 2 (Part of Promised One Quality)
Nerves of Steel (Part of Promised One Quality)
Nosy Reporter (5)
Promised One (16)
Regeneration (4 Life Points per hour)
(Part of Promised One Quality)

DRAWBACKS (7)

Adversary (Deadites and Skeletons)
(Part of Promised One Quality)
Bad Luck 5 (5)
Clown (1)
Emotional Problems (Fear of Rejection) (1)

SKILLS (20 + 6 FROM DRAWBACKS)

Acrobatics 0	Knowledge 3
Art 2	Kung Fu 1*
Computers 2	Languages 0
Crime 3#	Mr. Fix-It 0
Doctor 0	Notice 5#
Driving/Riding 0	Occultism 4
Getting Medieval 1*	Science 1
Gun Fu 3	Sports 0
Influence 5	Wild Card 0

*(1 level part of Promised One Quality)

#(1 level part of Nosy Reporter Quality)

Maneuvers	Bonus	Base Damage	Notes
Dodge	7	—	Defense action
Kick	5	10	Bash
Pistol	8	12	Bullet
Punch	6	8	Bash



NIGHT STALKER

BACKGROUND ON THE NIGHT STALKER

Sounds pretty menacing, doesn't it? No, it's more from the old television show, where the reporter went out and fought monsters. He didn't intend to go be a champion—that's just the way it ended up. I mean, who else is going to do it?

That's what happened to me. One minute I'm at the museum covering this boring lecture on a recent Sumerian dig. Some joker reads the wrong passage out of some old book and the place goes wild. Dinosaur bones came to life, my assistant Sally—she had a bit of a thing for me, y'know—got fat and bloated and started biting people.

Sure, I stuck to taking pictures at first, but eventually, museum security went down and there I was with a little pea-shooter .38 in my hand. I'm lucky to hit the inside of a barn, but I managed to slow Sally down long enough to run. Wound up in the medieval display. There's a big sword in some knight's hand. Since the alarms were going anyway, I decided I'd better play Lancelot or I'd wind up like the rest of them.

Good thing I got the drop on her. Damn shame I had to put the camera down.

Next thing I know, the professor who started this mess is crawling up the hall. He's got that book in his hands again and he starts reading more! I'm thinking this is a bad idea—and it was. This big vortex opens up and sucks a bunch of us in—demons, dead guards, reporters, Sally. We ended up here, but I'm the only one who survived. Well, except for the walking dead. I don't have what it takes to stop them, so I looked for someone who did. I'm hoping that's you.

Quote: "The bad news is I need someone to fight these things. The good news is I'll make you a star."

ROLEPLAYING THE NIGHT STALKER

You're curious and inquisitive, and even though you're sarcastic about these things, you're dedicated to the cause. Trouble is, you're more of an observer than a fighter. So you spend your time rallying others to the fight. You can talk an Eskimo into ice cream and you know it. A few snapshots and a well-written story goes a long way with would-be heroes.

ARCHETYPE

RACE CAR DRIVER

LIFE POINTS 32

DRAMA POINTS 20

PRIMITIVE SCREWHEAD

ATTRIBUTES (15)

Strength 2 (1 level from Jock Quality)
Dexterity 6 (1 level from Jock Quality)
Constitution 2
Intelligence 2
Perception 3
Willpower 2

QUALITIES (10)

Attractiveness +3 (3)
Buff Guy (Jock) (3)
Fast Reaction Time (2)
Hard to Kill 2 (2)

DRAWBACKS (6)

Covetous (Serious Conspicuousness) (2)
Mental Problems (Severe Obsession, Speed) (2)
Mental Problems (Severe Recklessness) (2)

SKILLS (15 + 6 FROM DRAWBACKS)

Acrobatics 0	Knowledge 1
Art 0	Kung Fu 2
Computers 0	Languages 0
Crime 0	Mr. Fix-It 4
Doctor 0	Notice 3
Driving/Riding 6*	Occultism 0
Getting Medieval 2	Science 0
Gun Fu 3	Sports 0
Influence 2	Wild Card 0

*(2 levels from Jock Quality)

Maneuvers	Bonus	Base Damage	Notes
Big Ass Pistol	9	18	Bullet
Dodge	9	—	Defense action
Grapple	10	—	Resisted by Dodge
Punch	8	4	Bash



ARCHETYPE

RACE CAR DRIVER

BACKGROUND ON THE RACE CAR DRIVER

There I was, coming up on the 499th lap when the storm hits. I mean, Daytona gets storms, I know that, but not like this. Damn thing was like a big hurricane on its side.

There was all this debris in the air. I saw hot dogs, Gatorade jugs, and those big 44-ounce beer cups flying past me. And it ain't like I was driving Miss Daisy, if you know what I mean.

Then the cars ahead of me started piling up. I saw Riggs and Higgins burst into fireballs. Matheune turned into road pizza, and Taylor went through the wall right under the bleachers.

People started flying by next. I shite you not when I say I saw an 80-year old woman in a lounge chair spin past me. I'll never forget what had to be her last words "Damn you, Bonaponte! That thing actually GOT an engine in it!?" I mean, that's hardcore.

Next thing I know, I got two choices and about an eighth of a second to make a call. I can slam into Becker's #4 car and hope it absorbs most of my impact, or I can run up Galloway's Chevy and hit it like a ramp—but that puts me smack in the vortex.

I shift into 8th and drop the pedal to the metal. Galloway's wheels are still spinning and musta gave me some kinda boost, because I shot right over the pileup, clear the wall, and plow straight into the vortex.

When I woke up, here I was. That was a couple weeks ago. As you can see, I've modified old #13 a little. I've got about a quarter tank left. That oughtta be good enough to ride through their ranks a few times and smash up some deadites. You boys handle the demons, I'll crush the skulls.

Quote: "This one's for all those hardcore grandma racing fans out there."

ROLEPLAYING THE RACE CAR DRIVER

You're a speed junkie. Whatever the ride, the faster the better. You're not quite as much of a daredevil outside a cockpit, but put a steering wheel in your hands and you're a madman. You try not to fight the Evil Dead on foot if you can help it. When you do, momma's .44 magnum comes in handy.

ARCHETYPE

ROLLERBALLER

LIFE POINTS 66

DRAMA POINTS 10

HERO

ATTRIBUTES (20)

Strength 6 (2 levels part of Promised One Quality)
Dexterity 6 (2 levels part of Promised One Quality)
Constitution 5 (2 levels part of Promised One Quality)
Intelligence 3
Perception 4
Willpower 4 (2 levels part of Promised One Quality)

QUALITIES (20)

Promised One (16)
Fast Reaction Time (Part of Promised One Quality)
Hard to Kill 4 (2; 2 levels part of Promised One Quality)
Natural Toughness (2)
Nerves of Steel (Part of Promised One Quality)
Regeneration (5 Life Points per hour)
(Part of Promised One Quality)

DRAWBACKS (4)

Adversary (Deadites and Skeletons)
(Part of Promised One Quality)
Attractiveness -2 (2)
Mental Problems (Severe Recklessness) (2)

SKILLS (20 + 4 FROM DRAWBACKS)

Acrobatics 0	Knowledge 0
Art 0	Kung Fu 4
Computers 0	Languages 0
Crime 3	Mr. Fix-It 1
Doctor 1	Notice 3
Driving/Riding 3	Occultism 0
Getting Medieval 4*	Science 0
Gun Fu 1	Sports 6
Influence 0	Wild Card 0

*(1 level part of Promised One Quality)

Maneuvers	Bonus	Base Damage	Notes
Dodge	12	—	Defense action; uses Sports skill
Kick	9	14	Bash
Punch	10	12	Bash
Stick of Pain	12	35	Slash/stab; used two-handed



BACKGROUND ON THE ROLLERBALLER

Name's Broomhilda. Least that's my stage name. I've been skating for the Loudonville Eyes since 2044. Well, that's three years ago to me. That's a long time in rollerball. What? You never heard of rollerball? It's only the most physically demanding, brutal sport on cable. And I'm one of the biggest stars.

That's how I got this mug. You think demons did this? Fat chance. Those nasty things can't lay a finger on me. I got this scar in my first regionals. Tried to jump the center pit with a wicked relay and got smashed right into the ring. Lost a tooth a month later when I stopped the ball from going in with my face. Got MVP for that one. This big dent in my head here came from the playoffs. Got caught between Hurty Gertie and Michigan Madison. Y'know those two definitely take 'roids—no matter what *Sports Illustrated* says. I've seen 'em do it. It's all super-engineered and stuff. Not like in the old days. Well, the new days to you I guess.

I first saw the demons after the Carella Cup in '46. There was riots in the street. People were flipping hovercars and riding the fans, burning electric policemen. It was a mess. They tried to hurry us stars outta there, but our bus got caught in the mob. A bunch of us geared up and went out in our pads to fight, and that's when I saw 'em.

There musta been a dozen of 'em, all fat and bloated and looking like they'd been dead for weeks. They had weird white eyes and—well, you know what they look like. I whupped up one, then Large Marge got her throat ripped out right next to me. Her head popped like a zit and showered the rest of us in enough blood to drown one of those new six-legged cows.

I got mad and started fighting harder, but then Marge got up. She was sporting a new head—a major league ugly one—and screaming she'd swallow my soul. I chopped into her up with my stick and a whole lotta elbow grease and that was all she wrote.

Next thing I know, I'm getting twirled around in some sorta storm. I landed here just a few weeks ago. I had that blacksmith fella put blades on my stick, and now I call it the Stick of Pain. You like it? I've also added a few pieces of metal to my pads, and lookie there—I'm a lean, mean, deadite-fighting machine. Gotta say—the pay's worse than rollerball, but there ain't as many rules.

Quote: "All right, deader. Five creds says I can bounce your skull off that wall, off your buddy with the horns, and smack into that barrel. You in?"

ROLEPLAYING THE ROLLERBALLER

Some say you are the Promised One. You don't know about that, but you do know there are no penalty boxes and no fines for hacking up what's already dead. This crusade has not only given your life meaning, but really gives you a chance to work out all that aggression as well. One nice perk of your travel through time to 1300 AD—everyone else's teeth are worse than yours.

VIKING

LIFE POINTS 64

DRAMA POINTS 10

HERO

ATTRIBUTES (20)

Strength 7 (2 levels part of Promised One Quality)
 Dexterity 5 (2 levels part of Promised One Quality)
 Constitution 5 (2 levels part of Promised One Quality)
 Intelligence 2
 Perception 5
 Willpower 4 (2 levels part of Promised One Quality)

QUALITIES (21)

Fast Reaction Time (Part of Promised One Quality)
 Hard to Kill 2 (Part of Promised One Quality)
 Natural Toughness (2)
 Nerves of Steel (Part of Promised One Quality)
 Promised One (16)
 Regeneration (5 Life Points per hour)
 (Part of Promised One Quality)
 Resistance (Pain) 2 (2)

DRAWBACKS (7)

Adversary (Deadites and Skeletons) (Part of Promised One Quality)
 Bad Luck 5 (5)
 Covetous (Severe Lechery) (2)

SKILLS (20 + 7 FROM DRAWBACKS)

Acrobatics 3	Knowledge 0
Art 0	Kung Fu 5
Computers 0	Languages 1 (English)
Crime 2	Mr. Fix-It 0
Doctor 0	Notice 4
Driving/Riding 0	Occultism 2
Getting Medieval 6*	Science 0
Gun Fu 0	Sports 1
Influence 0	Wild Card 4 (Sailing)
	*(1 level part of Promised One Quality)

Maneuvers	Bonus	Base Damage	Notes
Axe	11	40	Slash/stab; used two-handed
Dodge	11	—	Defense action
Head Butt	8	14	Bash
Kick	9	16	Bash
Punch	10	14	Bash



BACKGROUND ON THE VIKING

Yah! I haf cum frum der fjords to fight der eevil. I furst saw der eevil in my home in Norway. My madder was coookeeng in der keetchen of our hoot when der neighbors started screameeng. I ran outside to stand by my papa and saw Goodwife Olafson floateeng in der air dere like der seagull!

I grab my trusty axe and say "Goodwife Olafson, put down that Jimmy and stop biting on his head." Mrs. Olafson yust yump and scream some more, sayeeng she was going to swallow my soul and all dat dere. Then she bite little Jimmy real hard until he scream for his madder.

My pa grab his axe and make der chop-chop on Goodwife Olafson, but she just keep yumpeeng and screameeng. Then she bite my papa on his chin—yeah, dat dere really hurt—and said "dead by dawn!" I says "Goodwife Olafson, stop biteeng me fadder on der lips!" and sweeng Helgenholm—that's me axe—in beeg circle but Goodwife Olafson leans the wrong way and I cut off her arm. I shore hated to do dat to Goodwife Olafson, but she was eating me fadder's lips, you know dere.

So then my papa yump up and say—with his good lip—that he was going to keel her some more. Goodwife Olafson grew big long neck like snow serpent and bonked me fadder on his heed. So I swing Helgenholm again and put Goodwife Olafson's head on der snow. It keep screameeng and saying naughty words in front of der cheeldren so I haf to cut it some more. Finally I keel her to death.

After big fight, all der girls in der village geeven to me by dere papas! They say I big cheef now and all dem want me to marry dere daughters. I took dem all but that not what I supposed to do. They say marry but I make the yum-yum instead. Tribe say "Go away!" and I set sail for der England. Dere I find more of der eevil to fight and beautiful soft women to ride my Viking long-boat.

Quote: "Stand back, youngling, while I make vit der chop-chop. After I cut dees deemon in two, how about we go back to the castle and make bouncy-bouncy?"

ROLEPLAYING THE VIKING

Killing demons and claiming women as your reward. That's what you're all about. Not much else matters as long as there's blood on or bosoms in your hands.

ARCHETYP

ARMY OF DARKNESS™

CHARACTER NAME: Ash (Ashley J. Williams)

CHARACTER TYPE: _____

DESCRIPTION: _____

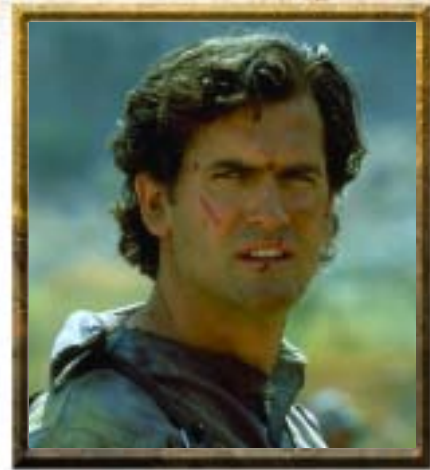
LIFE POINTS

81

DRAMA POINTS

20

EXPERIENCE POINTS



ATTRIBUTES

STRENGTH	<u>6</u>	INTELLIGENCE	<u>3</u>
DEXTERITY	<u>6</u>	PERCEPTION	<u>4</u>
CONSTITUTION	<u>8</u>	WILLPOWER	<u>4</u>

SKILLS

ACROBATICS	<u>3</u>	KNOWLEDGE	<u>1</u>
ART	<u>0</u>	KUNG FU	<u>5</u>
COMPUTERS	<u>0</u>	LANGUAGES	<u>0</u>
CRIME	<u>0</u>	MR. FIX IT	<u>4</u>
DOCTOR	<u>0</u>	NOTICE	<u>2</u>
DRIVING/RIDING	<u>3</u>	OCCULTISM	<u>2</u>
GETTING MEDIEVAL	<u>5</u>	SCIENCE	<u>1</u>
GUN FU	<u>5</u>	SPORTS	<u>2</u>
INFLUENCE	<u>4</u>	WILD CARD	<u>0</u>

USEFUL INFORMATION

NOTES

SUCCESS LEVELS TABLE

ROLL TOTAL	SUCCESS LEVELS	DESCRIPTION
9-10	1	Adequate
11-12	2	Decent
13-14	3	Good
15-16	4	Very good
17-20	5	Excellent
21-23	6	Extraordinary
24-26	7	Mind-boggling
27-29	8	Outrageous
30-32	9	Superheroic
33-35	10	God-like
+3	+1	

QUALITIES

Attractiveness +2	Hard to Kill 5
Fast Reaction Time	Nerves of Steel
Really Big Chin	Regeneration (8 Life Points per hour)
Promised One	Tool Man (Chainsaw, iron gauntlet)

DRAWBACKS

Adversary (Deadites and Skeletons)	Mental Problems (Severe Obsession, Return home)
Clown	Physical Disability (Missing Hand)
Emotional Problems (Fear of Commitment)	Schmuck
Mental Problems (Mild Cowardice)	

COMBAT MANEUVERS

Maneuvers	Bonus	Base Damage	Notes
Axe	11	30	Slash/stab, used one-handed
Boomstick	11	20	Bullet; use pistol ranges
Chainsaw	8	42	Slash/stab, maximum of 60 points
Dodge	11	—	Defense action
Kick	10	14	Bash
Punch	11	12	Bash
Sword	11	24	Slash/stab

ARMY OF DARKNESS™

CHARACTER NAME: Lord Arthur

CHARACTER TYPE:

DESCRIPTION:

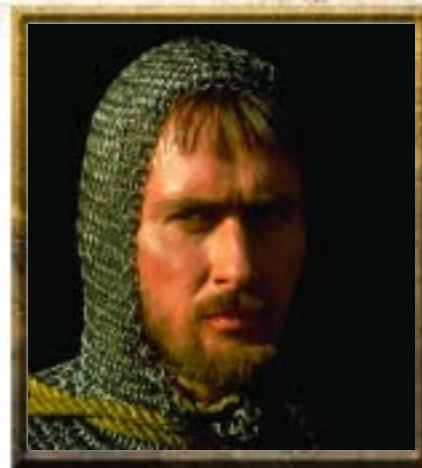
LIFE POINTS

46

DRAMA POINTS

10

EXPERIENCE POINTS



ATTRIBUTES

STRENGTH	3	INTELLIGENCE	3
DEXTERITY	4	PERCEPTION	4
CONSTITUTION	3	WILLPOWER	3

SKILLS

ACROBATICS	3	KNOWLEDGE	2
ART	0	KUNG FU	4
COMPUTERS	0	LANGUAGES	0
CRIME	1	MR. FIX IT	0
DOCTOR	0	NOTICE	3
DRIVING/RIDING	5	OCCULTISM	0
GETTING MEDIEVAL	5	SCIENCE	0
GUN FU	0	SPORTS	3
INFLUENCE	2	WILD CARD	0

USEFUL INFORMATION

NOTES

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27-29	8	Outrageous
30-32	9	Superheroic
33-35	10	God-like
+3	+1	

QUALITIES

Attractiveness +1

Nerves of Steel

Hard to Kill 4

Status 5

DRAWBACKS

Honorable (Serious)

Obligation (Total)

Humorless

Mental Problems

(Mild Obsession, Takes responsibilities bit too seriously)

Mental Problems

(Mild Obsession, Worried about respect for his position)

COMBAT MANEUVERS

Maneuvers	Bonus	Base Damage	Notes
Crossbow	9	16	Slash/stab
Dodge	9	—	Defensive action
Kick	7	8	Bash
Punch	8	6	Bash
Sword	9	12	Slash/stab

ARMY OF DARKNESS™

CHARACTER NAME: Duke Henry the Red

CHARACTER TYPE: _____

DESCRIPTION: _____

LIFE POINTS

61

DRAMA POINTS

10

EXPERIENCE POINTS



ATTRIBUTES

STRENGTH	<u>5</u>	INTELLIGENCE	<u>2</u>
DEXTERITY	<u>3</u>	PERCEPTION	<u>3</u>
CONSTITUTION	<u>4</u>	WILLPOWER	<u>3</u>

SKILLS

ACROBATICS	<u>2</u>	KNOWLEDGE	<u>1</u>
ART	<u>0</u>	KUNG FU	<u>4</u>
COMPUTERS	<u>0</u>	LANGUAGES	<u>0</u>
CRIME	<u>2</u>	MR. FIX IT	<u>0</u>
DOCTOR	<u>0</u>	NOTICE	<u>3</u>
DRIVING/RIDING	<u>4</u>	OCCULTISM	<u>1</u>
GETTING MEDIEVAL	<u>5</u>	SCIENCE	<u>1</u>
GUN FU	<u>0</u>	SPORTS	<u>1</u>
INFLUENCE	<u>3</u>	WILD CARD	<u>0</u>

USEFUL INFORMATION

NOTES

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17-20	5	Excellent
21-23	6	Extraordinary
24-26	7	Mind-boggling
27-29	8	Outrageous
30-32	9	Superheroic
33-35	10	God-like
+3	+1	

QUALITIES

Attractiveness +1

Nerves of Steel

Hard to Kill 5

Status 6

DRAWBACKS

Honorable (Serious)

Obligation (Total)

Mental Problems
(Mild Recklessness)

COMBAT MANEUVERS

Maneuvers	Bonus	Base Damage	Notes
Axe	8	25	Slash/stab
Crossbow	8	16	Slash/stab
Dodge	8	—	Defense action
Kick	6	12	Bash
Punch	7	10	Bash
Sword	8	20	Slash/stab

ARMY OF DARKNESS™

CHARACTER NAME: _____ Sheila

CHARACTER TYPE: _____

DESCRIPTION: _____

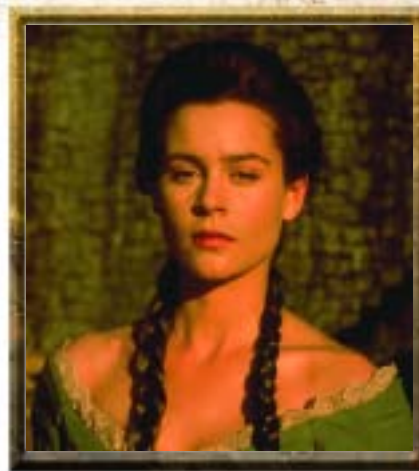
LIFE POINTS

35

DRAMA POINTS

20

EXPERIENCE POINTS



ATTRIBUTES

STRENGTH	2	INTELLIGENCE	3
DEXTERITY	3	PERCEPTION	4
CONSTITUTION	2	WILLPOWER	2

SKILLS

ACROBATICS	3	KNOWLEDGE	1
ART	3	KUNG FU	2
COMPUTERS	0	LANGUAGES	0
CRIME	2	MR. FIX IT	0
DOCTOR	1	NOTICE	4
DRIVING/RIDING	0	OCCULTISM	1
GETTING MEDIEVAL	1	SCIENCE	0
GUN FU	0	SPORTS	0
INFLUENCE	4	WILD CARD	0

USEFUL INFORMATION

NOTES

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21-23	6	Extraordinary
24-26	7	Mind-boggling
27-29	8	Outrageous
30-32	9	Superheroic
33-35	10	God-like
+3	+1	

QUALITIES

Attractiveness +3

Hard to Kill 3

DRAWBACKS

Honorable (Serious)

Love (Ash)

COMBAT MANEUVERS

Maneuvers	Bonus	Base Damage	Notes
Dodge	6	—	Defense action
Groin Kick	2	6	Bash, possible stun
Punch	5	4	Bash

ARMY OF DARKNESS™

CHARACTER NAME: _____ Blacksmith

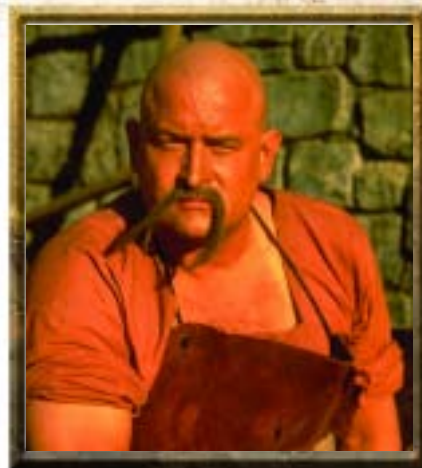
CHARACTER TYPE: _____

DESCRIPTION: _____

LIFE POINTS 66

DRAMA POINTS 10

EXPERIENCE POINTS



ATTRIBUTES

STRENGTH	<u>6</u>	INTELLIGENCE	<u>3</u>
DEXTERITY	<u>3</u>	PERCEPTION	<u>3</u>
CONSTITUTION	<u>5</u>	WILLPOWER	<u>2</u>

SKILLS

ACROBATICS	<u>2</u>	KNOWLEDGE	<u>2</u>
ART	<u>3</u>	KUNG FU	<u>4</u>
COMPUTERS	<u>0</u>	LANGUAGES	<u>0</u>
CRIME	<u>0</u>	MR. FIX IT	<u>6</u>
DOCTOR	<u>0</u>	NOTICE	<u>3</u>
DRIVING/RIDING	<u>2</u>	OCCULTISM	<u>0</u>
GETTING MEDIEVAL	<u>4</u>	SCIENCE	<u>1</u>
GUN FU	<u>0</u>	SPORTS	<u>0</u>
INFLUENCE	<u>0</u>	WILD CARD	<u>0</u>

USEFUL INFORMATION

QUALITIES

Really Big Chin

Nerves of Steel

Hard to Kill 4

DRAWBACKS

Honorable (Serious)

Humorless

COMBAT MANEUVERS

Maneuvers	Bonus	Base Damage	Notes
Crossbow	7	16	Slash/Stab
Dodge	7		Defense action
Hammer	7	18	Bash
Kick	6	14	Bash
Punch	7	12	Bash
Staff	7	21	Bash

NOTES

SUCCESS LEVELS TABLE

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21-23	6	Extraordinary
24-26	7	Mind-boggling
27-29	8	Outrageous
30-32	9	Superheroic
33-35	10	God-like
+3	+1	

ARMY OF DARKNESS™

CHARACTER NAME: Archer Captain

CHARACTER TYPE: _____

DESCRIPTION: _____

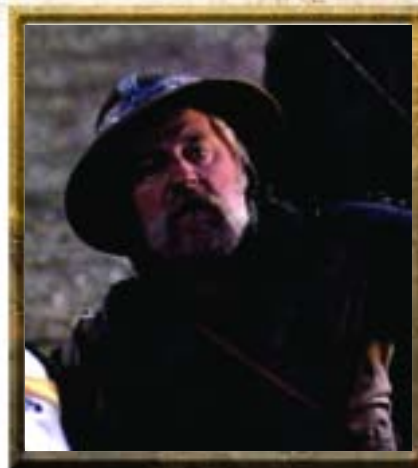
LIFE POINTS

45

DRAMA POINTS

20

EXPERIENCE POINTS



ATTRIBUTES

STRENGTH	<u>3</u>	INTELLIGENCE	<u>2</u>
DEXTERITY	<u>3</u>	PERCEPTION	<u>3</u>
CONSTITUTION	<u>2</u>	WILLPOWER	<u>2</u>

SKILLS

ACROBATICS	<u>2</u>	KNOWLEDGE	<u>0</u>
ART	<u>0</u>	KUNG FU	<u>2</u>
COMPUTERS	<u>0</u>	LANGUAGES	<u>0</u>
CRIME	<u>2</u>	MR. FIX IT	<u>1</u>
DOCTOR	<u>0</u>	NOTICE	<u>2</u>
DRIVING/RIDING	<u>3</u>	OCCULTISM	<u>0</u>
GETTING MEDIEVAL	<u>3</u>	SCIENCE	<u>0</u>
GUN FU	<u>0</u>	SPORTS	<u>0</u>
INFLUENCE	<u>0</u>	WILD CARD	<u>6</u>

USEFUL INFORMATION

NOTES

SUCCESS LEVELS TABLE

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17-20	5	Excellent
21-23	6	Extraordinary
24-26	7	Mind-boggling
27-29	8	Outrageous
30-32	9	Superheroic
33-35	10	God-like
+3	+1	

QUALITIES

Hard to Kill 5

Nerves of Steel

DRAWBACKS

Obligation (Total)

COMBAT MANEUVERS

Maneuvers	Bonus	Base Damage	Notes
Bow	9	12	Slash/stab
Dodge	6		Defense action
Kick	4	8	Bash
Punch	5	6	Bash
Sword	6	12	Slash/stab

CHAPTER THREE

ASH RULES

EVIL ASH: WHO RULES?
SKELETONS: YOU, MY LORD!

You've watched the film again, bought this groovy book, and your players have created awesome new characters. Now you all need to know what to do with those stalwarts. This is the part where we tell you. This chapter is written mostly for you Director types, but it won't hurt to have your players be familiar with the basic rules (as long as they ain't the argumentative types).

Let's recap this whole crazy roleplaying schtick for those anxious ones who skipped **Chapter One: Gathering Darkness**—don't worry, we'll keep it short, like your boomstick. Despite what a few bad commercials, TV shows, and after-school dramas would tell you, there's no virgin sacrifices, devil worship, or wearing of funny capes here. Sorry to disappoint there. Roleplaying games are about a bunch of

friends sitting around eating really unhealthy but yumilicious food and telling interactive stories. The stories have the outline of a plot, though it can change at any minute. The guy who directs the action and describes the scene is you . . . the Director (ding, ding, ding!). You set up the basic story (**Chapter Five: Director's Cut** talks more about that), play the roles of all the other characters (bad guys are found in **Chapter Six: Land of Darkness**), and pretend to know the rules in this book when there's a dispute (hence this chapter). Please don't wear a cape. If you do, don't be surprised if your players put down their sheets and suddenly remember they've got to be elsewhere . . . right now.

That's the basics. Let's dig into it a little more.

RUNNING A GAME

As we noted in the first chapter, come game time each player needs a character sheet for his Cast Member, a pencil, some scrap paper and a ten-sided die (get your own—touching another man's dice is like peeking at a urinal). You should have any notes you've made for the adventure you're about to run, this beautiful book that was a steal at any price, and other information you think you might need handy. The rest is done mainly by talking—describing the scene or what the characters are doing, or acting out the Cast's dialog.

Your job as Director is to describe the situation. If your Cast Members are all Promised Ones from another time period, it might start something like this: "You're sitting in traffic on the 501 coming out of L.A. It's hot as hell and tempers are getting short. There's a weird thundercloud up ahead. Must be rough because debris is starting to swirl around like a cyclone. Except—that's weird. It's like the cyclone is on its side! People start running everywhere. You get out of your car and see what looks like a giant bird come flying out of the storm. Someone screams and the bird—which has the ugliest pus you've ever seen—breathes fire! You try to wake yourself but this is no dream! Cars start exploding all around you. You're thrown into the air along with several other folks. You brace for the impact but there is none. To your horror, you're being sucked into the cyclone!"

"You 'fall' horizontally for what feels like hours, swirling and tumbling like one of those freaks at the Cirque de Soliel. Then it gets real bright and there's the feeling of your stomach dropping out your Calvin Kleins. You land hard. In the desert. Wow—the storm must have thrown you miles away from the freeway. But you're alive. You look around. There are a few other folks here as well, all as dazed and confused as you. You also see a couple of cars—sans startled folks—drop in as well. What do you do?"

The action becomes a little less narrative and a little more interactive at this point. The Cast Members can get acquainted, realize they're not in Kansas anymore, and eventually run into a group of Arthur's knights (if you want to follow the movie somewhat). Otherwise, the plot is up to you. The Cast might appear in the wastelands of Mad Max, Tatoine, Carson City, England circa 1300, or an entirely new world of your own creation. Wherever

the Necronomicon rears its ugly head (and yes, it does have one), your heroes' fight against the *Army of Darkness* can take place.

Most of the time, when a player wants his Cast Member to do something, it gets done—talking, walking, checking out some chick, and so on. Sometimes, however, the outcome of an action is in doubt. Just because a Cast Member wants to shove his boomstick down some demon's throat, for example, does not mean the demon opens up and says "Ahh." That's where the dice and the numbers on the character sheet come in.

THE BASICS

In the **Unisystem**, a die is rolled when a character is trying to do something important and there's some chance of failure. You tell the players when to roll, and what character sheet numbers to add to the roll. The die roll represents luck and chance; the character sheet numbers are the skills and natural abilities of the Cast Member. The better those skills are, the more likely the character will succeed. An expert gunman will hit a target more often than someone who closes his eyes and flinches when a gun goes off, for example. Sometimes, luck allows the untrained to succeed, and the expert to fail—that's where the die rolling comes in.

Basic Roll

D10 + Attribute + (Attribute or skill)

Basic Success: 9

So what's all that mean? We'll take it nice and slow so we don't lose anyone on the way (you know who you are).

D10: The roll of a ten-sided die. Like chins on heroes, bigger is better. A 10 is better than a one.

Attribute: The character's natural abilities. Use the Cast Member's Strength to see if he can lift a deadite over his head, or Dexterity to steal someone's dagger out of their scabbard. In some situations (lifting something, for example), only Attributes are used. Usually in those cases, roll and add the character's Attribute doubled (e.g., if the

Cast Member has Dexterity 3, add six to Dexterity-based rolls). In certain cases . . . say, when footing is treacherous or positioning awkward, no skill is used and the Attribute is not doubled. Those are pretty rare circumstances though. Also, sometimes two different Attributes (no doubling) are used instead of an Attribute and skill. This is just one of the many cases where you as Director ultimately make the call (oh, the power, the power!).

Skill: The character's learned abilities. Use Kung Fu to punch someone, or Crime to pick someone's pocket. Always use an Attribute alongside a skill.

The player announces what his character intends to do. You tell him what skill and/or Attribute to add to the roll, and whether there's any of that doubled stuff going on. You might also impose some modifiers based on circumstances (we'll get to that later). The player rolls the dice and massages the result according to the modifiers. If the total is nine or higher, the character succeeds. Otherwise, it's a no-go and there's egg on his face (or worse).

SUCCESS LEVELS

In some situations, you need to know more than whether the character has succeeded at something—you need to know how well he succeeded. If so, check the result against the Success Level Chart (it's also on the character sheet—that's how much we love you). The greater the number of Success Levels, the better the character did. Some difficult tasks require more than one Success Level. If those multi-success jobs aren't urgent, Success Levels may be added from previous attempts, with each attempt taking a set amount of time.

SUCCESS LEVELS TABLE

ROLL TOTAL	SUCCESS LEVELS	DESCRIPTION
9-10	1	Adequate
11-12	2	Decent
13-14	3	Good
15-16	4	Very Good
17-20	5	Excellent
21-23	6	Extraordinary
24-26	7	Mind-boggling
27-29	8	Outrageous
30-32	9	Superheroic
33-35	10	God-like
+3	+1	

Tell Me More: Ash wants to knock a deadite into next week. He rolls his Dexterity (5) and Kung Fu (6) against the demon's Combat score of 14. Ash rolls an eight, so that's 19. He succeeds with five Success Levels (and adds that to the damage as well, see p. 96).

Hit Me Again: You decide that the Blacksmith needs three Success Levels to install a new Stanley (as in the power drill) on the Promised One's arm. He rolls a D10 and adds it to his Intelligence (3) and Mr. Fix It (6). The roll is a lousy one, so the total result is 10—he succeeds with one Success Level—not quite good enough. He wants to keep working on it though, and you decide he can try again every hour. The Promised One gets impatient and starts mouthing off, but the loyal Blacksmith keeps working. He rolls again and gets a five. That's a total of 14, which is three Success Levels all on its own. Ash's arm is installed and ready to go.



Success Levels and You

So what's the deal with Success Levels? How important are they to the game? What do all those numbers mean, and why should you care?

Most of the time, Success Levels don't matter much. For most things, a result of nine or greater means the Cast Member has succeeded at whatever task was being attempted. Sometimes, however, just doing something is not as important as doing it well, and that's where Success Levels come in. Let us elaborate.

Creative Stuff: How well a hero pulled off an artistic feat, such as painting a picture or writing a roleplaying game, depends on his Success Level. One Success Level is pretty mediocre; he didn't do anything wrong, but it didn't look too good. No rotten tomatoes get thrown, but he gets quite a few yawns. If the audience was already hostile or suspicious, whatever was being attempted is not going to work. Two Success Levels is decent—he pulls it off (whatever it is) without a hitch and looked competent doing so. Three Success Levels is a good job—this is where people get real applause and cheers. High fives all around. Four Success Levels gets standing ovations, favorable reviews from most critics, maybe even new work if the right person is in the audience. At five and above, he is on fire (in a good way); everything worked perfectly, and almost everybody loves what he did. Like this game. Obviously five Success Levels or better. Right? Right.

Hurting and Healing Your Fellow Man: When the character attacks someone, how well he struck influences how much he hurt the target. Add the Success Levels of the attack roll to the base damage of the attack. On the flip side, for uses of the Doctor Skill, each Success Level heals one point of damage.

Lengthy Tasks: As we mentioned, things that take some time (like breaking down a door or lifting something really heavy) may require the Cast Member to get a high number of Success Levels, usually in the 5+ range. Characters can accumulate Success Levels by trying over and over. For example, you might decide that breaking down a sturdy door requires eight Success Levels. A strong Cast Member could roll well enough to get all eight Success Levels in one or two tries, while a wimpier character might take several tries (at one to two Success Levels a pop, it might take four to six rolls before the door breaks).

RESISTED ACTIONS

Sometimes, an action is resisted. This usually happens when the character is trying to do something someone else would rather didn't happen. Say you're trying to push a determined deadite off your Death Coaster. Whacking him with a stick is also a Resisted Action.

Resisted Actions involve two or more characters. Both make their rolls in the usual way. If one succeeds (gets a total of nine or above) and the other doesn't . . . well, that's pretty easy. If both succeed, the one with the higher total wins. If both fail, nobody accomplishes anything. If you still need a

comparison, the higher roll fails less badly. In case of a tie, the defender (if there is a defender) wins; otherwise, it is just a tie. Guest Stars and Adversary characters typically use a fixed value (no roll) for their action (the Muscle, Combat, or Brains Score, see p. 82); the Cast Member needs to beat those Scores to succeed at an attack. If defending, the Cast Member needs to beat or simply tie those Scores.

I Wanna See It In Action: Ash dreams about Sheila and one of the Wiseman's hot chambermaids mud wrestling. (You may have missed this in the movie, but uh, we're sure it's in some cut somewhere.) Sheila makes a Dexterity and Sports roll and gets a total of nine—just barely succeeding. The chambermaid is a Guest Star,

so she just uses her Muscle (which is 10). The chambermaid wins this round, and Sheila's clothes are ripped off down to her medieval skivvies. Ash smiles, wakes up, and is promptly slapped. Women know, man.

Without the Sexploitation This Time Please: Ash tries to wrestle the Necronomicon from Evil Ash's hands. Both Ashes have Strength 5, so it comes down to a simple die roll—whoever rolls highest wins. If both fail, they go back and forth with no clear winner. If one wins and one fails, or both succeed but one's total is higher than the other, he just started his own Nasty Book of the Month club.

ROLL MODIFIERS

Factors other than skill and Attribute levels may modify a roll. Easy tasks gain bonuses; difficult and complex ones incur penalties. The Base Modifiers Table gives some guidelines. Notice that modifiers are the flip side of Success Levels. Negative modifiers make it harder to reach the Success Levels needed; positive ones make it easier. Still, you can make finer adjustments with modifiers (a +1 bonus affects a roll but does not amount to a full Success Level change). Also, positive modifiers could transform a roll into a success in a way that a Success Level decrease cannot (e.g., once you lower the required Success Levels to one there's no way to make the task any easier using that method).

In general, modifiers should be used sparingly; most rolls are going to be Challenging (no modifiers).

BASE MODIFIERS TABLE

Easy: +5

Moderate: +3 to +4

Average: +1 to +2

Challenging: No modifier

Difficult: -1 to -2

Very Difficult: -3 to -5

Heroic: -6 to -9

You've Got To Be Kidding: -10 or worse

TO ROLL OR NOT TO ROLL

Die rolls are useful only when the situation has some dramatic value and where the outcome is in doubt. Keep rolls to a minimum to allow the story to progress smoother. Generally, if the action is routine or not important, rolling shouldn't be involved. Also, some things should be so ridiculously easy that making rolls is a waste of time—no need for Perception and Notice rolls to spot a demon breathing fire at you, for example. Some basic pointers follow.

Good Times to Roll: Shooting a crossbow bolt at a charging demon; searching an ancient crypt for relics; climbing a ladder with a gaggle of skeletons slashing at your heels.

Bad Times to Roll: Parking the Death Coaster; shooting a crossbow bolt at a paper target (unless wagering is involved); climbing a ladder with plenty of time.

Not every situation is going to be as clear-cut as these, but in general, you should try to keep the action flowing. The less time the players spend rolling dice, the more time they can spend getting into their characters and thinking up One Liners (see p. 112).

USING ATTRIBUTES AND SKILLS

As we said, when rolling is called for, you decide what skills and Attributes the player adds to the roll. The skill descriptions in **Chapter Two: Promised Ones** provide some guidelines. Here we give you a few more words of wisdom (ain't we grand?).

Strength: Strength affects how much damage the Cast Member inflicts in hand-to-hand combat. Beyond that, Strength is used when brute force is key. Lifting a heavy object uses Strength (doubled), or Strength and Sports if the character has some weightlifting background. Strength is also used when trying to tackle someone to the ground (use it with Kung Fu or Sports) or when breaking free from someone's grip (using Strength (doubled) or Strength and Kung Fu, whichever is better).

Dexterity: Most physical actions use Dexterity. Dexterity includes both general agility and nimbleness (for use with Acrobatics and Kung Fu) and fine coordination (for things like Crime).

Constitution: The least-used Attribute in terms of rolls, Constitution comes in handy when the character needs to resist fatigue, injury, or disease. For most of those rolls, add the character's Constitution (doubled). Some Sports rolls (marathon running, for example) use Constitution instead of Dexterity. Constitution also controls things like singing ability (use Constitution and Art to sing, for example).

Intelligence: Used in any roll where a character's memory and intellectual ability are important. It helps in such things as deciphering some ancient text (Intelligence and Occultism) or feinting an enemy during a brawl (Intelligence and Kung Fu). Sometimes it is hard to decide whether to use Intelligence or Perception in a roll. Rule of thumb: if memory or thinking ability is the most important element, use Intelligence instead.

Perception: If the roll requires the character to notice something, Perception is the Attribute to use. It measures how aware the Cast Member is of his surroundings. Notice is most commonly used with Perception, but almost every skill can benefit from Perception. To wit, Perception and Kung Fu can be used to detect some weakness in an opponent's fighting style.

Willpower: Willpower is mostly used defensively, but it can also apply to a number of skill rolls. Trying to intimidate others, or avoid being intimidated, uses Willpower and Influence, for example.

UNSKILLED BUT GAME

Just because a character doesn't have a skill (level zero) doesn't mean his player won't try to have him use it at some time. Players are like that, y'know. You could just say "no way, Jose" and leave him in the lurch. That would teach him not to get too uppity. That's probably too harsh for a game between buddies though.

If you allow unskilled attempts at all, first you have to decide if there's any possibility of success. That depends on the skill. Swinging a club or pulling a trigger is pretty basic and should be allowed even if the joker has a Getting Medieval 0 or Gun Fu 0 (and by the by, with those stats, what the hell are they doing playing this game?). Performing open-heart surgery with a Doctor 0, or jazzing the Death Coaster with a Mr. Fix-It 0 is asking for trouble.

Feel free to bar that attempt or simply declare it a failure and apply the repercussions. Then again, with Drama Points, many impossible actions become possible. So don't get too strict here.

If the particular task can be attempted unskilled, you decide what modifiers (if any) apply as usual. You can leave things as they stand as far as unskilled goes (other modifiers depend on the situation of course). The player rolls as usual but gets to add no bonus for his character's skill (since it's zero, duh). That's the generous, kind-hearted, and thoroughly whipped way (not that there's anything wrong with that). Alternatively, you could apply a penalty of some sort, say between -1 and -5. You could even allow the open-heart surgery stuff (with a few medical manuals) at an even greater penalty (-6 to -10), but that's probably just a waste of time barring Drama Point usage. Also, if by some miracle, the character pulls it off, he should be limited in the number of Success Levels possible. Decent (two Success Levels) is the most allowed.

WORKING TOGETHER

Those who play well with others may sometimes want to work with others as well. It not only puts a warm fuzzy in everyone's heart when they share, they can accomplish more.

When characters have plenty of time to work together, they simply add their Success Levels to the completion of the task. Digging out of a collapsed mine, for example, might require something like 50 Success Levels, and each hero gets to make one

Strength (doubled) roll every 10 minutes. Easy enough, and lets you measure how long it takes if there's a dramatic need to do so (maybe they're running out of air or the mine is flooding).

Sometimes the situation is a little more urgent though. Maybe two amigos need to lift a dead demon off their friend in a hurry, or help each other climb over a really high wall fast.

The one with the best chance of succeeding becomes the lead character. Everyone who wants to join the party rolls separately and adds +1 to the leader's roll per Success Level.

Then the leader rolls and adds the benefits of his bosom companions before determining his final Success Levels. Losers who fail the roll actually hurt the overall progress—they subtract three from the leader's final result. "Helpers" like that get the whole group turned into Demon Chow.

ABILITY SCORES

To keep die rolling to the bare minimum, the basic rules apply only to Cast Members and (if you so choose) important Guest Stars and Adversaries. Rather than roll for every deadite, skeleton, and archer who comes along, the Guest Stars' and Adversaries' Attribute and skill levels are condensed into Ability Scores. The scores are the "roll totals" of those characters. Whenever Cast Members need to fight or outwit these characters, they need to beat the Ability Score number. No dice for them!

Ability Scores are pre-rolled results; they are generated by taking the character's Attribute and skill averages and adding six to the total. You could also dispense with all that calculation crap and just assign Scores based on how strong you want the opposition to be (see p. 134). Most Ability Scores are in the 9-14 range, but powerful monsters and skilled Guest Stars may have much higher levels.

There are three Ability Scores: Muscle, Combat, and Brains.

Muscle: This score is used for contests of strength—things like tackles, breaking free from grapples and holds, strangulation and similar brute force situations. Cast Members need to tie or beat the Muscle Score number with their rolls. Muscle is double the Strength level of the Supporting Cast Member plus six. Some creatures have bonuses for

extra limbs (flailing intestines, tree limbs, and other weird stuff).

Combat: This is the number used for attacks and defenses. Add the Supporting Cast Member's Dexterity level, the average of his combat-oriented skill levels, and six. This score determines the Success Levels of an attack; add those Success Levels to the base damage of the attack. So, if a skeleton's Combat Score is 12, you know he has two attack Success Levels in any successful hit. He (it?) adds two to the damage of any attack that connects with someone's pink parts.

Brains: This score applies to all mental and perception abilities of the character or creature. It is used to spot enemies, resist attempts to control or deceive, trigger magical or supernatural abilities, and so on. It equals the average of the character's mental Attributes (Intelligence, Perception, and Willpower) and the average of any appropriate skills, plus six.

Show Me Arthur's Mooks: Arthur's warriors have Strength 3, Dexterity 3, Constitution 3, Perception 2, Intelligence 2, and Willpower 2. They're very average in brains and spirit, and a little better when it comes to agility and brawn to reflect their martial lifestyle. Their Muscle score is 12 (Strength doubled plus six). Combat is 12 (you figure their average skill is about 3—they do play with swords every day, you know). Their Brains Score of 10 is nothing to brag about at—you decide most of their mental skills weigh in around 2.

Chapter Five: Director's Cut gives much more detail on characters created by you Directorish folks (see p. 131-132). The appendix includes a handy chart for assigning, rather than calculating, Scores (see p. 229). The Quick Sheet next collects all the Supporting Cast Member's vital statistics in one place (blank sheets can be found at the end of the book). We use the Quick Sheet to present Guest Stars and Adversaries in the remainder of this book. So pay attention, bucko, this will be on the test.

Every Guest Star or Adversary in this book has its game stats in Quick Sheet form. Just to make sure you know the drill when you get to those babies, here's a quick rundown of what each entry means.

THE QUICK SHEET

Name: This is its Strength plus Constitution divided by the square root of its Total Quality Points. Nah, not really. It's just a name, friend. We wanted to mess with you a bit here.

Attributes: These are abbreviated Str, Dex, Con, Int, Per, and Will. Hey, we're doing our part to save trees (and decrease our carpal tunnel syndrome).

Motivation: What makes the character or critter tick? We're talking high concept rather than detail here. A word or two that describes the character's goals is usually enough. Most monsters are single-issue creatures ("Blood!" "Kill humans!" "Get the book!" "Phone home!"). With men, it usually has something to do with women.

Ability Scores: The Muscle, Combat, and Brains numbers the Cast Members need to beat with their rolls in order to do something to the thing in question (or avoid having something done to them).

Critter Type: The basic species—Human, Deadite, Undead, Minion, or Skeleton.

Name: Wiseman
Motivation: Find the source of the evil and destroy it, better living through chemistry
Critter Type: Human
Attributes: Str 1, Dex 2, Con 3, Int 5, Per 5, Will 4
Ability Scores: Muscle 8, Combat 9, Brains 16
Life Points: 26 **Drama Points:** 10
Special Abilities: Status 4

Maneuvers			
Name	Score	Damage	Notes
Dodge	9	—	Defense action
Punch	9	3	Bash
Staff	9	7	Bash



Life Points: What the character or monster can absorb before going thud. Some Combat Maneuvers do real nasty stuff when a certain negative Life Point total is reached (unless a Survival Test is rolled). You decide whether that applies to a particular Supporting Cast Member (or whether they just fall over a zero Life Points and need not be worried about any more).

Drama Points: Good, bad, and neutral folks may have a few Drama Points (see p. 108). That means even a skeleton can occasionally put a bony finger in Ash's eye.

Special Abilities: Any unique or unusual powers get listed here.

Maneuvers: A list of the most common maneuvers (see p. 88-92) the creature uses, including scores, damages (including "default" Success Levels from the attack score, but no other modifiers) and notes. Weak or low-ranking characters only have a couple of maneuvers. Big nasties and other minions of the Necronomicon typically have a few more. For those who want to use dice for Guest Stars and Adversaries rather than relying on their pre-calculated scores, simply subtract six from the scores given, and use that result as the modifier to a roll. Note that damage totals must be re-calculated in this case as the Success Levels of the roll (not the set score) affect the final damage.

MOVEMENT

The *AoD RPG* is meant to be played fast and loose, with a focus on story and fun. For the most part, precise movement actions aren't needed. Simply let the characters get where they want to be and move the action along.

If your fights get tactical though, how far a character can move in any given Turn (see p. 87) might be important. In those cases, add that character's Dexterity and Constitution to get the yards he may move in a second (times five for a Turn). Doubling the sum of Dexterity and Constitution shows the miles per hour that character can run.

Chases: Movement concerns may also arise during a chase scene. First, you must decide how much of a lead the chasee has on the chaser. We suggest granting +1 per Turn of head start. Then have the two racers (or their mounts if they are riding) perform a Dexterity (doubled), or Dexterity and Sports Resisted Action (insert the Combat Score here if you like). (This, of course, assumes relative parity between the racers—if one's on a horse and the other is dragging a ball and chain, just skip the whole rolling thing.) The winner gains +1 per Turn. So, if the lead sprinter started with a three Turn head start (+3) and the chaser won the first Resisted Action, the lead would be down to +2. Once the lead is eliminated (brought down to zero), the chasee is caught; if it grows to +5, the chasee gets away.

Leaping: If you need to figure out how high or far a character can leap, refer to the Jump Table. With a good running start, double those distances. With a good Dexterity and Acrobatics roll (or the Combat Score) increase the distance by one yard (forward) or one foot (upward) per Success Level. Drama Point additions here bring in those nifty action film wire techniques (that wasn't around when *AoD* was filmed but that shouldn't stop us).

Climbing: Use a Dexterity and Acrobatics roll (or the Combat Score) modified depending on the condition of the vertical surface. No modifier comes in for a place with good handholds (a typical England circa 1300 cliff face); -6 for a rain-slicked, close-fitted stone castle wall. Some surfaces—say wet glass (not likely in England circa 1300 but you never know)—just aren't climbable. If you really need to know how far the climber moves in a Turn, multiply the Success Levels or the roll or Score by one yard.

JUMP TABLE

STRENGTH	HIGH JUMP	LONG JUMP
1-2	1 foot	2 yards
3	2 feet	3 yards
4-5	4 feet	5 yards
6	5 feet	6 yards
7-8	7 feet	8 yards
9-10	10 feet	10 yards
+1	+2 feet	+1 yard

HORROR

Let's face it. Fighting an army of skeletons is just plain weird. Sure, it's funny when their heads fall off and they sit there all yammering and complaining and stuff. But the first few times you see it, it's downright freaky. And when those deadites take over your lover smack in the middle of foreplay, well—ick. And . . . ow.

Most of the time, the horror aspect of the game should be roleplayed rather than determined by rolls—the first time a hero sees a deadite, for example, he should freak out in whatever manner is most appropriate to his character. During a fight, though, freaking out can cause a deadly delay, and that's when Fear Tests come into play.

When something frightening happens, the characters must make a Willpower (doubled) roll (Qualities like Nerves of Steel or Fast Reaction time help). This is a Fear Test, modified by any of the circumstances below.

In the world of *Army of Darkness*, don't make a character roll every time he sees a skeleton. Definitely make them roll the first time they see such a creature, and any time one startles them somehow—such as when one suddenly pops up out of the ground and wraps its bony hands around their ankles.

If the result of the roll is nine or higher, the character may be afraid or apprehensive, but can act normally. If the result is eight or less, he freaks out. Make up an appropriate reaction or use the Panic Table for inspiration.



FEAR TEST MODIFIERS CHART

The first time a hero sees a skeleton or other icky: -1

A deadite or other minion: Half the creature's Attractiveness, rounded down (e.g., Attractiveness -7 would give a -3 to Fear Tests)

Splatter factor: -1 for some blood; -2 for murder victim's body; -3 for R-rated gore; -4 for cult film carnage.

Sudden or unexpected encounter: -2 (e.g., buckets of blood, a character's doppelganger springs from the shadows, and so on).

Familiarity Factor: After seeing it often enough (third or fourth encounter), eliminate the penalty to the roll.

PANIC TABLE

ROLL RESULT	EFFECT
7-8	Startled: The character is put off his stride but not paralyzed. He can act normally but Initiative is lost; the critter wins Initiative automatically on that Turn.
5-6	Freak out: The character screams and flinches away. Only defense actions can be attempted on that Turn, and the character cannot go on Full Defense (see p. 93).
3-4	Run Away! The character takes off like a road runner for a full Turn, unless cornered, in which case cowering in terror is more his speed. No attacks are possible, and defense actions are at -2. After each Turn (or handful of seconds), a new Fear Test can be rolled (reduce any penalties by one with each successive Turn, until the character snaps out of it).
2 or less	Total Terror: The character is not in control of his actions. He may lose his lunch, wet his pants, gain a white streak in his hair, pass out, or something equally embarrassing.

Keeping It Lively

There's a lot of combat in a typical *Army of Darkness* game. You don't want it to devolve into a Bingo game like this:

Director: "What do you do?"

Bruce: "I attack with my chainsaw."

Director: "Okay. Roll Dexterity and Getting Medieval."

(Rolls)

Bruce: "Sixteen—no, seventeen. Five Success Levels."

Director: "Okay, you hit him. Add five to your base damage."

Bruce: "I don't do math. I have an agent for that."

Agent: "Mr. Campbell did 15 points."

Director: "Thanks. The skeleton attacks back. That's a 12 Combat which can't touch you so you're fine."

Bruce: "I'm bored. Tell my agent how it ends and he'll get back to me. I'm heading for the bar."

It can't be said enough—Description. Description. Description. If you don't create a picture of the action in the minds of the players, action sequences will be number-crunching exercises instead of memorable life-or-undeath struggles. This goes for Directors as well as players. Don't say Evil Ash attacks with the chainsaw. Say he spins about in a poetic dance-of-death, ensuring the legacy of Black & Decker lives on for generations. At your discretion, really good descriptions might even add +1 to the Success Level, or have a special effect. (Bruce—"I stuff my chainsaw inside the skeleton's ribcage, creating a buzzing shower of bone splinters that blind the other boneheads." Director—"Kewl! The rest of the skeletons are stunned this Turn and can't act!") Really good stuff might require a Drama Point, and should almost always work only once. After that the bad guys wise up and find some way to ignore the "special effect."

Try to visualize the action. You may have a tougher time here because you've got so many bad guys to keep track of, but at least try to be descriptive with minions and demons. ("Evil Sheila smiles and points the crossbow at your crotch. She shoots! She scores!")

If you draw a blank, don't sweat it. More important is describing the effects of the Cast Member's actions—especially when they put down some evil beastie. ("The chainsaw rips through the deadite and rips off its head. It goes flying through the air, screeching all the way, and lands smack in front of the Death Coaster where it's ground into pulp.") In those situations, your players should give you some help.

As a final work of advice, if you have to choose between the rules and fun, go for the fun. Be flexible—no rules system is going to cover all the bases, and if your gut feeling tells you that it's better to ignore or modify the rules for dramatic purposes, your gut is probably right.

COMBAT

ASH: ALL RIGHT. WHO WANTS SOME? WHO'S NEXT? HUH?

There is no combat in *Army of Darkness*. The deadites and skeletons are mean-spirited, but don't resort to physical violence to settle their issues with humanity. They prefer round-tables and community action meetings. It takes a village, after all.

Okay, that's a load of bunk. There's nothing the Evil Dead like better than biting into wiggling man-flesh, and deadites live for a little dying.

Combat in the **Unisystem** uses the same rules described above, but with a few extra features. You should read this section well—plenty of blood will be spilled and bones splintered in your game. We promise!

BREAKING IT DOWN

To make things go a bit easier when the rough stuff starts, the action is divided into segments, known as Turns. A game Turn represents a short bit of time—five seconds or so. During a Turn, a normal character can attack once and defend against one attack without penalties. More nimble characters can make more than one attack during a Turn (see p. 93).

Each Turn has three stages: Intentions (where the players say what their Cast Members intend to do), Initiative (who goes first), and Actions (where the fight actually happens, and damage, if any, is resolved). A combat usually lasts more than one Turn, unless the characters are really on the ball.

Intentions: At the beginning of the Turn, ask the players for intentions—what their characters want to do. Intentions can include such things as “I whip out my boomstick and unload both barrels into the thing's piehole,” or “I drive the Death Coaster through swarm and straight toward Evil Ash.” Decide if the action being attempted is feasible, or if it will take more than one Turn to complete. If there is a problem with the intention, and it's something the character would know (the shotgun's out of ammo or the Death Coaster's out of gas), warn the player. Otherwise, the intention stands (even if it turns out to be a really stupid one).

Initiative: At the beginning of a fight, you determine who attacks first by using simple common sense. If it's an ambush, for example, the ambushers go first. If a hero is attacking a crossbow-wielding skeleton, and can't reach it until the end of the Turn, the nasty gets to shoot first. Unleashing a mental or supernatural power goes before a kick, and so on. Generally, mental actions (spells and similar supernatural powers) go first, followed by ranged weapons (guns, crossbows, cruise missiles) and finally good old punches, kicks, baseball bats and power-tools-turned-weapons.

If the situation is less clear-cut (a Primitive Screwhead chances upon a bonebag going around a blind corner, for example), the character with the highest Dexterity (modified by Fast Reaction Time, see p. 33) goes first. If both sides have the same Dexterity (and they both have or lack Fast Reaction Time), each side rolls a die. The higher roll wins; a tie means both characters act at the same time (really painful if they were punching each other in the face). During subsequent Turns, determine Initiative in the same manner, or award it to the character who has momentum (whoever managed to connect a punch without being hit back, for example).

If you really want simple Initiative, powerful bad guys (Evil Ash, demons, and so on) go first, then good guys, then losers like skeletons and other “lesser” mooks.

Actions: Whoever wins Initiative attacks first (assuming the Intention involved an attack). The target may be able to defend against the attack. Attacks are resolved like any other roll—the player rolls a D10 and adds the Attribute and skill involved, plus or minus any modifiers. The defender does likewise, and the higher (or equal if defending) roll gets their way (unless the attacker's total is below a nine, in which case everyone just stands around looking less-than-manly). When fighting Guest Stars or Adversaries, attacks have to beat (defenses beat or tie) the target's Combat Score to be successful. After the first attacker is done, the second gets to go (no shocker there), and so on. If an attack hits, damage is determined based on the attack's base damage, the Success Levels of the attack roll, the defender's armor, and any damage type or other modifiers. Drama Points can be spent at various points in this process to give an edge during the fight (see p. 108).

Initiative Rolls

If your group absolutely, positively needs something more random for their Initiative rolls, have each player involved in a combat roll a D10 and add his character's Dexterity (plus any Fast Reaction Time bonuses) to the total. The character with the highest total goes first, and so on.

COMBAT MANEUVERS

When the time for talk is over and the time for senseless violence begins, a nice repertoire of action moves can be a real face-saver (not to mention spleen-saver, lung-saver, and maybe even chin-saver). Fisticuffs might work in the junior leagues, but we're fighting the *Army of Darkness* here. The Ultimate Evil. The Big Bad. The Guys Who Don't Play Well with Others.

Against such vileness, you need something a little fancier. Spinning sword strikes, figure-eights, and chainsaw ballets are all highly recommended. Even better, chicks dig 'em.

The Combat Maneuvers listed on each player's character sheet provides all the diverse ways in which their Cast Members can inflict pain and suffering on the forces of evil. The most common ways to do unto others before others do unto you are described in detail below. The appropriate roll modifiers, and the base damage inflicted by the various maneuvers is also listed (damage is discussed more at p. 96). Everything is also gathered in a nice neat reference table in the Appendix.

Aiming: Sometimes it pays to take careful aim. Bullets are precious in medieval Europe—you can't just hop down to the local inn and buy a box of 12-gauge shells. Aiming delays the shot action until near the end of a Turn (after everyone else goes and perhaps causes the aimer pain and suffering). The player adds Perception and the appropriate skill (Gun Fu for guns, Getting Medieval for archaic ranged weapons) to the roll, or just uses the Brains Score. The shot action gets a bonus equal to the Success Levels of the aiming roll.

Bow Shot: Darling of the archer. A character can fire a bow as fast as he can draw and shoot; multiple shots use the multiple actions penalties (see p. 93). A Bow Shot uses a Dexterity and Getting Medieval – 2 roll, or Combat Score – 2, and its base damage is (4 x Strength) points (Slash/stab type; to a maximum of 20—Success Levels and modifiers can bring the total higher). Modifiers due to range are applicable (see p. 95).

Brain Shot: We're sure you've heard of those undead types that can only be harmed by hitting them in the gooey grey stuff. Assuming the Cast Members run into any of these uglies in an *AoD RPG* game, this is the recommended maneuver. Attacking the brain specifically (not the face, head, etc.) uses the appropriate Combat Maneuver with a –4 penalty, or the Combat Score – 4. Bash damage is doubled, Slash/stab damage tripled, and Bullet damage quadrupled—nothing says lie down and be dead like large scale brain trauma.

Break Neck: Before this maneuver may be attempted, the character must succeed at a Grapple (see p. 90). After that, the attacker rolls and adds Strength and Kung Fu, or just uses the Muscle Score. The defender rolls and adds Strength and Constitution. If the attacker's roll is higher, the base damage is (4 x Strength) points (Bash type). If the total damage reduces the defender to –10 Life Points, he must pass a Survival Test at a penalty equal to the Success Levels of the attack. If he fails, his neck is broken, with fatal results. If the defender is a deadite or other “unloving” creature and the successful attack reduces it to –20 Life Points, it has to pass the same Survival Test a human would (those buggers are much tougher than us pink-flesh bags). If the undead critter fails, it screams and dies just like any other.

Chainsaw Ballet: Got a chainsaw and a tutu? Okay, you can skip the tutu. Really. Skip it. Anyway, take a chainsaw and a few Fred Astaire dance-moves and you've got one deadly maneuver. To pull it off, the Black & Decker knight moves through a crowd of bad guys, swinging his chainsaw wildly. Make a Dexterity and Getting Medieval – 4 roll (remember to apply any additional penalties from the power tool itself) to attack and defend for the Turn. Every Success Level allows him to attack one additional foe along his path (his usual movement rate if you're measuring moves). Apply the attack roll to each opponent separately. Damage is

reduced to half the usual amount though (round down), so Chainsaw Ballet is really only useful when dancing through skeletons and other “lesser” foes. Going Barishnikov with a boss demon is a really bad idea. On the up side, the Chainsaw Ballet result is applied to defend against all close combat attacks (ranged attacks are unaffected) targeting the toe-tapper that Turn (no multi-action penalties here). The Ballet is the only action that can be attempted in a Turn (multi-actions are right out). It's also pretty damn tiring. Every Turn after the first that this maneuver is repeated, the roll penalty increases by two (cumulatively). For those without appreciation for the power tools, the Ballet can be conducted with a sword, staff, or other balanced weapon. In that case, any damage inflicted is not halved (something about using the right tool for the task or some such nonsense).

Choke: Before this maneuver may be attempted, the character must succeed at a Grapple (see p. 90). After that, the attacker rolls and adds his Strength and Kung Fu, or just uses his Muscle Score. The defender rolls and adds his Strength and Constitution (or again uses the Muscle Score). If the attack result is higher, the base damage is (Strength – 1) points (Bash type). Furthermore, the defender cannot breathe (see Suffocation, p. 104). He is at –2 to all actions—being choked to death can be quite distracting.

Crossbow Shot: Crossbows are easier to use than bows, but take longer to reload. Usually, it takes one Turn to reload a crossbow after shooting (very hard to do when you've got a deadite in your face). Crossbow Shots use a Dexterity and Getting Medieval roll, or the Combat Score, and do 16 points of base damage (Slash/stab type). Modifiers due to range are applicable (see p. 95).

Decapitation: That means taking something's head off for those of you in Yorba Linda. It's considered impolite to decapitate your friends, but lopping the head of a deadite is socially acceptable (assuming you don't socialize with demons that is). Decapitation uses a Dexterity and Getting Medieval – 5 roll, or the Combat Score – 5, but damage is multiplied by five (after Success Level bonuses are added and armor effects subtracted; damage type is not applied; weapon damage is listed on pp. 97-102). If the damage is enough to reduce the victim to –10 Life Points or less, a Survival Test is in order.



If that fails, the head comes off. This should be enough to kill most undead and demons (unless a specific description says otherwise).

Disarm: Ideal for goody-two-shoes who want to capture and rehabilitate the bad guys, or for those who want to separate the nearby skeleton from his two-handed battleaxe (wise move). Disarm uses a Resisted Action with a Dexterity and Getting Medieval – 2, or Dexterity and Kung Fu – 3 roll, or the Combat Score – 2 against the target's Parry maneuver.

Dodge: This is where the hero ducks, dives, somersaults, or leaps out of the way of an attack. Dodging hand-to-hand attacks can be done once per Turn without penalty; dodging missile attacks (bullets, ninja stars, harpoons) suffers a –2 penalty on top of any other modifiers. If there is no available cover, the missile-weapon Dodge penalty increases to –4. Use a roll and add Dexterity and the highest appropriate skill (Acrobatics, Getting Medieval or Kung Fu), or just use the Combat Score.

Feint: The art of juking your adversary and popping him where he least expects it. A Feint is run as a Resisted Action. It uses an Intelligence and Kung Fu or Getting Medieval roll, or the Brains Score, and is resisted by the target's roll adding Perception and either of those skills, or just the Brains Score. If the attacker wins, he can add the Success Levels of the Feint roll to his next attack roll against the same opponent.

Grapple: Just want to grab someone and shake 'em until his teeth rattle in his head—or in the case of a skeleton, rattle more? Gotta grapple them first, though. Grabbing people is fairly easy; use a Dexterity and Kung Fu + 2 roll, or the Combat Score + 2. The victim resists with a Dodge action. The attacker has to decide what part of the body to grab: limbs, the whole body, or the neck. When Grappled, the target is at -2 to actions that involve the grappled limb, or -1 to all actions if grappled around the body. If both arms are grappled by two attackers, the victim is at -4 to most rolls, and cannot Dodge. A neck grapple doesn't impair the target, but sets him up for either the Break Neck or Choke action. The victim can try to break free with a Strength (doubled) roll, or the Muscle Score versus another Grapple roll.

Groin Shot: Unfortunately, this one is usually reserved for the bad guys. The good guys don't get to do it much because (A) it's uncouth and (B) the bad guys don't usually have jumbies to mess up. The attack employs an attack Combat Maneuver with a -3 penalty to the roll or score. Damage is normal, but a male victim must gain at least one Success Level with a Willpower (doubled) roll (or the Brains Score) minus double the Success Levels of the attack. If not, he is knocked down and unable to do anything for the Turn. Females aren't completely unscathed, but the Willpower roll (or Brains Score) suffers only a -1 penalty. Every Turn after the first, the character can make a new roll with a cumulative +1 bonus to recover. The Groin Shot can be used with several different maneuvers. Kicks are the most common, but depending on the relative positions of the characters, punches, weapon attacks (DEAR GOD NOT THE CHAINSAW!), and even a head butt (embarrassing but effective).

Gunshot: When you absolutely, positively have to kill something, we recommend shooting it with a big freakin' gun. Use a Dexterity and Gun Fu roll, or the Combat Score. Base damage varies depending on the gun used (see pp. 97-102), but all benefit from Bullet type damage (see p. 97). Modifiers due to range are applicable (see p. 95).

Head Butt: Sometimes, a character has to use the old noggin in ways not recommended by the Surgeon General. Head butts are very effective if he has Grappled the target first, or in other very close action, because the victim can't really dodge out of the way. If the Head Butt misses, though, the attacker hits with

the wrong part of the head, and he takes the damage instead of his target. Head Butts use a Dexterity and Kung Fu - 2 roll, or the Combat Score - 2, and do (2 x Strength) base points of damage (Bash type).

Jump Kick: To impress friends and smite foes, few things beat a jump kick. It's not easy to do, but when done right, it puts the kick in "butt-kicking." Jump Kicks require two rolls, but count as a single action. The first is a Dexterity and Acrobatics roll, or the Combat Score, to get airborne; the second is a Dexterity and Kung Fu - 3 roll (or the Combat Score - 3). The kick does 3 x (Strength + 1) base points of damage (Bash type), and gains an additional damage bonus equal to the Success Levels of the prior Dexterity and Acrobatics roll or Combat Score. Of course, if either of the rolls miss, the Jump Kick becomes a Jump Stumble (the Cast Member falls down, see p. 93, and loses 500.7 cool points). A Jump Kick is the only attack action the character can attempt on that Turn (no multi-actions with this puppy).

Kick: The plain vanilla kick is a simple, yet effective way to put a hurting on someone. If a Kick is parried though, the target has a golden chance to try and Grapple the leg (and Toss liberally). The Kick uses a Dexterity and Kung Fu - 1 roll, or the Combat Score - 1, but football and soccer players can replace Kung Fu with Sports if they like. Ditto for ballet dancers (use Art instead of Sport). The Kick's base damage is 2 x (Strength + 1) points (Bash type).

Knockout: Sometimes a character wants to take somebody out without inflicting permanent damage. Any Bash attack (Punches, Kicks, baseball bats, and so on) can be turned into a Knockout attack, using a Dexterity and Kung Fu - 2, or Dexterity and Getting Medieval - 2 roll, or the Combat Score - 2. The total damage of the attack is halved, but the victim has to make a Constitution (doubled) roll (or use the Muscle Score) with a penalty equal to the Success Levels of the Knockout roll, or he goes down for the count. Recovery from a knockout is in your fiendish Director-y hands; the victim may recover in a few Turns, or wake up an hour later . . . possibly in a dank hole, surrounded by rotted and ravenous undead. Yikes!

Melee Weapon Strike: Now we're cooking with pointy things! This is what you need you to bash, slash, or poke someone with a hand weapon. It uses a Dexterity and Getting Medieval roll, or the

Combat Score. Baseball or hockey players can substitute Sports to swing stick-like weapons (fencers and archery enthusiasts use Getting Medieval just like normal folks). Since weapons do different types and amounts of damage (see pp. 97-102), each weapon should have its own listing in the Combat Maneuver List portion of the character sheet. So basically, you'll never see "Melee Weapon" listed as a maneuver during a game session. Ain't we stinkers for listing it here?

Parry: Your basic blocking move, used to deflect punches, kicks, and other close combat attacks. Weapons may only be Parried by weapons—trying this maneuver against a weapon by using a body part is called "defender takes damage from weapon attack" (that it hurts beaucoup). A hand-to-hand attack may be Parried by a weapon and that's going to cause normal damage to the bonehead who rushed in unarmed. A Parry uses a Dexterity and Kung Fu roll, or a Dexterity and Getting Medieval roll, or the Combat Score. Thrown weapons can be parried at a -2 penalty. Arrows and crossbow bolts are parried at a -6 penalty. Characters can't parry bullets unless they come from a galaxy far, far away.

Punch: A real hero has to get his hands dirty sometimes. It's best to wash them with the blood of your enemy's broken nose (are we macho or what?). Uses a Dexterity and Kung Fu roll, or the Combat Score, and does 2 x Strength points of damage (Bash type). 'Nuff said.

Slam-Tackle: This maneuver lets you make like Adam Sandler in *The Longest Yard*. Tackles use Strength and Sports rolls, or Muscle Scores, and can be Dodged, but not Parried. On a successful hit, the target takes 2 x Strength base points of damage (Bash type) and, if he fails to resist with a Strength (not doubled) roll or the Muscle Score divided by two, he goes down hard. At the end of a successful Tackle, the attacker can Grapple the victim's legs or torso without rolling. Tackling is the only attack that can be attempted on that Turn (no multi-actions here either, nice try).

Spin Kick: This is a spinning or roundhouse kick, harder to execute but delivering more damage. When a character really wants to leave a mark, he should use a Spin Kick. This move has the same potential Parry problems as the regular Kick. It uses a Dexterity and Kung Fu - 2 roll, or the Combat Score - 2, and does 2 x (Strength + 2) points of base damage (Bash type).

Sweep Kick: Just the thing to slow down a charging demon, the Sweep Kick does little damage but sends foes to the ground by kicking their feet out from under them. This attack uses a Dexterity and Kung Fu - 1 roll, or the Combat Score - 1. If it hits, the defender takes Strength points of base damage (Bash type). Further, the defender must resist with a separate Dexterity and Acrobatics roll, or the Combat Score to keep his feet. If not, he falls down (see p. 93).

Takedown: This includes judo throws, wrestling moves, trips, and similar methods of making an enemy kiss the ground. The Takedown uses a Strength and Kung Fu roll, or the Muscle Score. If the target fails to Parry or Dodge, he hits the mat (see p. 93) and takes Strength points of Bash damage. Otherwise, the defender takes no damage and the Takedown fails.

Target Limb: Sometimes you want to disarm a bad guy (literally). Targeting a limb uses the appropriate Combat Maneuver with a -2 penalty, or the Combat Score -2. Damage over half the target's maximum Life Points cripples or severs that limb; excess damage is lost. Combine that with a Slash/stab weapon and things get real ugly, real fast. Then again, if gore skeeved you out, you'd have never gotten this far.

Through the Heart: This attack has no effect on some creatures (those heartless bastards), but most things, including people, find it hard to survive after a sharp piece of wood gets stuck in or near the old ticker. Attacking the heart uses the appropriate Combat Maneuver with a -3 penalty, or the Combat Score - 3. Damage to living types is quadrupled (after applying the base damage, Success Levels, and armor; this multiplier replaces the damage type modifier). It could be worse for certain types (say . . . vamps and wood). In that case, you should declare the multiplier (we like five, but that's just us).

Throw Weapon: The art of taking a properly balanced weapon and making sure the hilt end doesn't hit first. The range of this attack is two yards plus two yards per Strength level. Throw weapon uses a Dexterity and Getting Medieval - 1 roll, or the Combat Score - 1, and the base damage varies by the weapon tossed (usually based on one Strength level less than normal; see p. 97-102).

Toss: Use this maneuver to toss kittens, deadites, and dwarves . . . with panache. The defender must be Grappled first (see p. 90) and the attacker must

have a minimum Strength 4. Then, the attacker uses a Strength (doubled) – 4 roll, or the Muscle Score – 4, and the defender resists using a Strength (not doubled) roll or the Muscle Score divided by two. If the attack succeeds, it does Strength points of base damage (Bash type). Also, the defender is tossed one yard for each Success Level in the roll, and is knocked down (see p. 93). If the attack fails, the defender remains Grappled, but takes no damage and doesn't go anywhere. That could leave you in a fine pickle.

Wall Smash: Grabbing someone and slamming them into a wall or object is hard, but very satisfying. The attacker must have sufficient Strength to lift the target easily (see p. 25). He must also succeed in a Grapple roll first. If so, he can swing the target around and introduce him bodily to a nearby structure. That requires only a Strength and Acrobatics roll or the Combat Score. The grabees defends with a similar roll or Score (assuming he has defense actions available). Damage is 3 x Strength (Bash type). There may also be damage to the surface slammed (see p. 104-105).

Wrestling Hold: This is a half-nelson, full-nelson, or pretzel twist, in which the character immobilizes the enemy, usually by grabbing him from behind and twisting one or both arms. It requires a successful Grapple (see p. 90). After that, the attacker must succeed with a Strength and Kung Fu – 2 roll, or the Muscle Score – 2. The defender resists with a Strength or Dexterity (whichever is better) and Kung Fu roll, or the best of his Combat or Muscle Scores. If the attacker wins, the defender is at –1 to all actions for every Success Level in the attack until he breaks free or the attacker lets his go. Otherwise, the defender remains Grappled.

COMBAT COMPLICATIONS

The *Army of Darkness RPG* is a cinematic game. That means lots of mean and nasty things can and should happen. If everyone is simply swinging swords every round, life's gonna get pretty boring. Here are some complications to help liven things up. Or deaden them, as the case may be.

Attacking from Behind: It's not kosher, but it sure beats smelling the breath of some of the horrors the Necronomicon spits out. A distracted opponent cannot defend against attacks from behind (kinda the point really). Targets with Situational Awareness (see p. 41) are the exception; they can defend, but at a –2 penalty. At your discretion, other would-be victims may get a Perception and Notice roll before they are bushwhacked; in that case, they can defend with a –2 penalty.

Bondage: Sometimes, killing isn't the objective (hey, it happens). Sometimes tying a character up or otherwise restraining him is the idea. When tied up, chained or otherwise restrained, fighting is a lot more difficult. If the character's legs are free, he can Kick at no penalty. If he can move (i.e., isn't bound to a stake or chained to a wall), he can also Head Butt people. If his arms are tied in front of him, he can Punch at a –2 penalty. Getting free uses Dexterity and Acrobatics, with penalties from –1 (the bad guys don't know a slip knot from a slip case) to –6 (for miles of rope, handcuffs, or Zap It!).

Dance of the Power Tools: So you've got a chainsaw, power drill, or other devices, and you're surrounded by the dead. This is the move for you, Bob Villa. Dance of the Power Tools allows your hero to spin in place, slashing, drilling, or buffing a bunch of losers who are already in close combat with you. The hero gets to defend against every close combat attack (doesn't do squat against ranged attacks) this Turn (using Dexterity and Getting Medieval with a –1 modifier). He can't make any attacks, but you should roll a die for each goober who makes an attack. A roll of one means the goof-ball has walked into twinkie-toes' power tool and gets gored. Damage is rolled normally.

Draw!: Sometimes you need a weapon right away and it ain't in your hand. Normally, drawing or equipping a weapon counts as an action. If the item is buried in a backpack, tool chest, or some deadite's skull, it could take several Turns to ready.



Full Defense: This one is also known as “Not in the face!” Going fully defensive allows the character to defend against two attacks at no penalty (and against others if extra actions are available), and gives him a +3 bonus to all defense actions (Dodges and Parries, for the most part). No attacks are allowed on the Turn the character goes into Full Defense mode. This is a good idea for Primitive Screwheads and Guest Stars (particularly those with Combat Scores below nine) who want to keep their enemies busy until help arrives.

Full Offense: This might be the option for you Conan-types. It's also good when several attackers are going after one target. The character gets a +2 bonus on all attacks in that Turn, but cannot defend against any attacks. Note that for those most feeble of Guest Stars and Adversaries (Combat Score 8 or lower), the only way to have any chance of success when attacking is to go Full Offense, or use a Drama Point.

Knockdowns and Fighting While Lying Down: Getting knocked on one's bottom is a bad thing. When a character is knocked down, he cannot attack for the remainder of that Turn, and defenses suffer a -4 penalty. In subsequent Turns, attacking is possible but it too takes a -4 hit. Getting up usually takes a full Turn (no other actions). Doing it in an action requires a Dexterity and Acrobatics roll (getting more than two Success Levels does it with that oh-so-cool flip and snap thing). A number of Combat Maneuvers result in a knockdown. Also, any blow that inflicts more than triple the victim's Strength in damage (before accounting for damage type or maneuver modifiers) may result in a knockdown (if it seems dramatically appropriate).

Mounts: When you start talking about England circa 1300, horses are a mark of status, a measure of wealth, and an integral part of combat. Knights in shining armor are a whole lot more impressive when astride monster horses with mean dispositions. In the worlds of the Necronomicon, horses might not be the only things bearing riders. We don't like to think about skeletons on flying demons, but that doesn't mean they don't exist.

So, how's mounted combat work? First off, the rider can attack or direct the mount to attack in a Turn. This assumes that the mount is the attacking-on-command type (a warhorse or a demon). If the rider directs the mount to attack, he has to pull off

a Riding roll (this is considered part of the mounts attack and doesn't count as a multiple action). If he fails, the mount ignores him unless attacked itself. If the rider wants to both attack and direct his mount, he suffers multiple actions penalties.

Both the rider and the mount get to defend once per Turn (without suffering multiple action penalties) but they suffer a -1 penalty each (one may be dodging one way and the other the other way). The rider can work with his mount to defend against one single attack but has to make a Riding roll. If he succeeds, no penalty is applied to the defense roll.

If the rider has a weapon with some reach (swords, axes, spears, etc., no daggers or punches) and is attacking someone not mounted nearby, he gets a height advantage: +3 to the attack and +1 to his effective Strength for damage purposes. A rider may not use a two-handed weapon. Also, ranged weapon attack rolls are much harder from on top a mount: -1 to -4 depending on how fast the mount is moving and how uneven the ground is. Attacking up at a mounted rider imposes a -3 attack penalty unless the ground-pounder has a pole arm (see p. 93). In that case, the rider must close with the pole-arm wielder using a Dexterity and Ride roll against the stander's Dexterity (doubled) or Dexterity and Acrobatics roll. If the rider fails, only the pole armer may attack. This is how several ground troopers can beat a rider. Unless the knight simply rides away and comes back with a lance charge, that is. Even then, a set pole arm attack gets initiative against a mounted charge. Without pole arms, the footman's best bet is getting a bunch of buddies and Grappling the rider to the ground.

If both combatants are mounted, combat works as normal—rider vs. rider. Knights with a modicum of self-respect didn't attack mounts but you never can tell with EVIL. Obviously, whoever or whatever is being attacked rolls for defense.

Jousting involves galloping full speed toward each other all the while pointing lances in menacing ways. It's pretty serious stuff as a measure of manliness. As a measure of sanity, it's right after taking a bath with a toaster. Dodging isn't an option in a joust; best have a shield (the bigger, the better) and good parry skills.

Multiple Actions: Characters can attack once and defend once a Turn at no penalty. That's nice and simple and for those who don't want to bother with a bunch of added complexity, that should be

the final rule. On the other hand, fast and furious fighters should be able to do more (at least they do in movies and TV). If you want to head down that route, those with Dexterity 5 or greater gain extra actions per Turn according to the Additional Actions Table.

ADDITIONAL ACTIONS TABLE

DEXTERITY	ADDITIONAL ACTIONS
5-6	1
7-8	2
9-10	3
11-12	4
+2	+1 per

The extra actions may be taken as attacks or defenses. As it is difficult to do more than two things at once (like roll dice and eat snacks for some of us), additional actions suffer cumulative penalties of -2. Again, we summarize with an Additional Actions Penalty Table.

ADDITIONAL ACTIONS PENALTY TABLE

ADDITIONAL ACTION	PENALTY
First	-2
Second	-4
Third	-6
Fourth	-8
+1	-2 per

Note that if a character is faced with more than one attack in a Turn, but has only one defense available (either because he is of insufficient Dexterity, or he has used or plans to use his additional actions as attacks), the undefended attacks land if the modified roll is nine or greater. In effect, a character without defense actions resists attacks with a zero total.

To simplify things a bit, multiple actions should be resolved as a single roll (roll once and add the various modifiers and the extra action penalties to each successive use of that roll). In the case of one-on-one attacks using the same skill, this means that if the first attack hits, all subsequent attacks will hit

(the attacker loses -2 per attack, but so too does the defender per defense, which may be partially offset by the Full Defense option, see p. 93). This is not the case with a one-on-many situation as each defender has his own defense action roll or Score. Also, it may not be an issue if different skills are used in different actions. If a character is shooting a gun and swinging an axe, the roll stays the same but the skill level added might be different. This makes the maneuvers list on the character sheet particularly useful (the basic totals are already done).

For those who really like their dice, each attack, defense, or other action can be rolled separately, and then the various modifiers applied. This option is a bit more time-consuming. Also, since the Heroic Feat Drama Point kicker (see p. 109) only applies to one roll, it is less useful if you do things this way.

Gimme Some Example, Baby: Ash, he of Dexterity 6, winds up fighting not one but two shiny deadites, one a walker and the other a flyer. He decides to blast one with his boomstick and show the other the high quality of S-Mart's top of the line Black & Decker Manly Man's Chainsaw.

He can make take one extra action per Turn, but that's all he wants, so no appeals to the Supreme Court of RPGs here. He rolls a six, adds 10 (combo of his Dexterity and Gun Fu). That's a grand total of 16 for the shooting action. Swinging the chainsaw, he keeps the six roll, but adds 11 (combo of his Dexterity and Getting Medieval), subtracts two (for second attack action), and winds up with a 15. The deadites' Combat Scores are 14, so he hits them both. One gets a face-full of buckshot and the other gets to revisit what it had for dinner.

If the demons survive and both strike back, Ash gets one Parry or Dodge roll as usual, but not the second he might otherwise get because he used his additional action to attack. Since the second demon's Combat Score is greater than nine (unless it tries some stupidly fancy maneuver), it's going to lay into our chainsaw champion. That's the price of a good offense.

Multiple Actions Options

The basic multiple action rules limit characters to a certain number of actions. This is done for simplicity's sake; in truth, a character should be able to act as many times as he wants in a Turn. At the risk of some additional complexity, some of you Directors may decide to handle multiple actions differently.

Cumulative and Universal Penalties: Each additional action declared in the Intentions phase of combat adds -2 to all actions that phase. That means if a character declares four attacks or four defenses in a Turn, each action suffers a -6 penalty (the first attack or defense has no penalty; each one after that imposes -2 cumulatively). This allows characters to act as much as they want, at the expense of degrading all their actions.

Off Balance Penalties: Under this optional rule, each extra action taken in one Turn imposes a -2 penalty to all actions in the next Turn. So, a character who takes four additional actions in one Turn suffers a -8 to all actions in the next. Again, the limit on actions is removed, but the frenzy of activity makes the character highly ineffective and vulnerable thereafter.

Interruptions: Another possibility is to have the player roll for each of his character's attacks and defenses, but if an attack is blocked, initiative switches over to the opponent. That gent then gets to use his actions he runs out or until a defense is used successfully. Once that happens, the first attacker resumes his actions (if any). In a one-on-many fight, the same sequence applies.

Multiple Opponents: Numbers count. When two or more attackers gang up against a single target, they get a +1 bonus to all actions for each attacker, to a maximum of +4 for four attackers (more than four attackers just get in each other's way). So, if two skeletons attack a knight, they each get a +2 to their Combat Score. By the same token, if three Primitive Screwheads charge a deadite, they get a +3 bonus to their attack and defense rolls. On top of this, if the defender doesn't have enough actions to defend against all attacks, he resists those additional attacks with a zero defense roll. Here is another way for below-nine Combat Score characters to have a chance of hitting their opponents—attack in numbers.

GUNS, CROSSBOWS AND OTHER MISSILES

ASH: YOU SEE THIS? THIS IS MY BOOMSTICK!

Now it's time to reach out and touch someone, whether it's with barbed crossbow bolts or a face-full of 12-gauge buckshot. Generally speaking, missile combat works just like regular combat. Attackers make their rolls or use their Combat Score, and the target tries to defend (usually by Dodging).

Range Penalties: To keep things simple, assume no penalty at Short Range, a -1 penalty to shots at Medium Range, and a -3 penalty to shots at Long Range. Short range is under five yards for pistols, and 20 yards for rifles. Medium range is under 20 yards for pistols, and under 100 yards for rifles. Long range is up to 50 yards for pistols and up to 300 yards for rifles. The individual weapon descriptions indicate whether pistol or rifle ranges are used.

Multiple Shots: If shooting doesn't work at first, shoot them again and again. Most modern guns are semi-automatic; they can fire more than once in a five-second period (in fact, most handguns can be emptied in five seconds). Roll and add Dexterity and Gun Fu; each additional shot uses the same roll, but applies a -1 cumulative penalty (due to recoil; -2 for Big Pistols or larger). Semi-auto guns are not constrained by the multi-action rules unless shooting at targets spaced far apart (yep, they are brutal—it's the way of the gun). Bows use the Multiple Action rules (see p. 93). Crossbows and other single-shot weapons must be reloaded after each shot.

Automatic Fire: Automatic weapons (assault rifles and machine guns) can fire a constant stream of bullets until the gun runs dry or the barrel overheats. This is wildly inaccurate. When used as suppression, the shooter picks a doorway-sized area and fills it with lead. This empties the magazine. Anyone moving into that area is hit by a number of bullets equal to the Success Levels of a Dexterity and Gun Fu roll. No dodge is possible.

Trained soldiers fire bursts—controlled gunfire that sends three bullets downrange. For bursts, make one attack roll; each Success Level in the roll allows one bullet to hit the target (up to three). Successive bursts in the same Turn use the same roll but apply a -3 cumulative penalty.

With either autofire or bursts, the base damage for each bullet is modified by armor, and then added together before applying the Bullet type modifier. Success Levels do not affect the damage calculation.

DAMAGE: HOW MUCH DOES IT HURT?

Here's where the fun begins. If you're the one doing the hurting, that is. If you're the one getting the hurting, you'd best hope for cute nurses, sponge baths, and no medieval chirurgic quacks and their leech-healing methods.

When an attack hits a defender, subtract the total damage inflicted from the defender's Life Points. Once his Life Point pool is depleted, the character is at risk of losing consciousness or dying. Armor can protect the defender from some harm (see p. 102).

DAMAGE BASICS

Each attack action has a base damage number or a formula. If it is a number, the base damage is fixed, an inherent characteristic of the weapon—a .45 pistol does the same base damage for everybody. Formulas usually depend on the Strength of the attacker—a punch from a 400-pound demon is going to hurt more than a slap in the face from Sheila. Do the calculations once, and write the base damage of the attack on the Combat Maneuver List.

During play, the actual damage inflicted is equal to the base damage, plus one per Success Level of the attack roll, minus any Armor Value possessed by the defender (see p. 102), multiplied by any damage

type or other modifier. That may seem a bit complicated, but once you play through a few combats, it will become much easier. The character sheet has the Success Level Table right by the Combat Maneuver List, so a quick glance provides that information. Quick Sheets have the Success Levels of the Combat Score worked into their damage entries.

Show Me Please: Ash has a Strength 5. His Kick does 12 points of damage because our teachers taught us how to read the Kick formula of $2 \times (\text{Strength} + 1)$. He gets to add any Success Levels to his damage as well, so with a roll of 18 (five Success Levels), his kick inflicts 17 points of life-damaging bootage.

Getting Nastier: Ash cranks up the chainsaw and goes to work. The base damage for this bad boy is $6 \times \text{Strength}$, with a maximum of 60 points. Ash's Strength 5 results in 30 base points of grisly, bone-gnawing gore. Success Levels and Slash/stab modifiers (see below) are applied on top.

And Nastier: Shotguns do a flat 20 Life Points of damage per shot. Ash can fire both barrels for 40 points of damage in one Turn. If he gets two Success Levels on each and is firing at a fleshy-type nasty, the 44 points are doubled to 88. That's one seriously messed-up demon.

TYPES OF DAMAGE

There are four types of damage: Bash, Slash/stab, Bullet and Fire. None of them are good for a body, but they affect people in slightly different ways.

Bash Damage: This covers any attack by a blunt object (fists, two-by-fours, falling safes, and so on). Bash attacks reduce Life Points normally. It is the only type of attack that can be used to knock out a victim (knives and bullets tend to knock people dead).

Slash/stab Damage: Pointy or sharp objects cause blood loss, puncture vital organs, and do other gross and gory stuff. Double this damage against most victims, after subtracting for armor or similar protection (if any).

My Spleen!: Evil Sheila returns Ash's love by sticking a spear firmly into his torso. Sheila has a Strength 5 when all eviled up, so she does $3 \times (\text{Strength} + 1)$, or 18 points of damage. Ash is all-too human and this is Slash/stab damage, so he loses 36 Life Points. If Ash were wearing a chain mail loincloth, he could have subtracted eight points from Sheila's damage before it's doubled. That makes the final result 20. Still dangerously close to singing soprano, but better than 36.

Bullet Damage: Bullets do nasty things to people. They mostly work like Slash/stab attacks, doubling against meaty-type individuals after armor is subtracted. Skeletons take very little damage from bullets, however, as the impact knocks a few bones away, but otherwise does no real physical damage unless they're hit in the skull. Bulletproof vests are very good against Bullet damage, but not so good against Slash/stab attacks.

Fire Damage: Burns are really bad. Fire can scar horribly, and Fire damage heals more slowly than normal. A person on fire takes three points of damage every Turn until somebody puts him out. If more than 20 points of Fire damage are inflicted on a character, scarring occurs (assuming the victim lives). Fire damage also heals at half the normal rate; the player should keep track of fire damage separately. Skeletons burn at one point per round. Bones just don't ignite very well.

The Simple Option: If you and your players want to keep things simple, have all damage work the same way as Bash attacks—no doubling effect, no healing modifiers and so on. This option is not very realistic (gawd, can't have that), but it is easier to remember.

BUCKETS O' BLOOD

Army of Darkness is action-horror, and when characters bleed in this genre, they bleed buckets. Any time a poor sucker suffers more than 30 points of damage in a single blow, the area around him is literally showered in blood. Everyone within a few feet (five if you want to be exact about it) has to make a Constitution (doubled) check or lose his next action.

Anytime someone actually dies from a "bloody" wound—death by Black & Decker, decapitation for fun and profit, watching *Dawson's Creek* until his

head explodes—the gore is even greater. Everyone in a ten-foot radius has to make a Constitution roll. There are chunks of brain, bone, and other ick this time, so Constitution isn't doubled.

Demons are a special case here. They're so full of blood they impose a -2 penalty on all Buckets o' Blood rolls. Blech.

One nice thing about all this blood though is that it dries quickly. Characters are usually miraculously clean by the next scene.

WEAPON DESCRIPTIONS

ASH: IT'S A TRICK. GET AN AXE.

The following weapons may be used during the game. Their base damage codes are gathered in a convenient and spill-proof container in the Appendix.

Axe: Used by fire departments and medieval knights, although for different purposes. Long-handled axes can be wielded two-handed (add +1 to Strength when figuring damage). Does base damage of $5 \times \text{Strength}$ points (Slash/stab type). This drops to $4 \times \text{Strength}$ points of base damage when the axe is thrown.

Black Powder Bombs/Dynamite: Things that go boom in a big way. If you're lucky, they make your enemies go boom and leave you the hell alone. Use a Dexterity and Getting Medieval - 1 roll (or Sports without a modifier if your field of expertise involves throwing) or the Combat Score - 1 to throw the thing (use Throw Weapon ranges, see p. 91). With three or more Success Levels, the bomb goes exactly where you want. Any less and it goes a little

ASH RULES

astray (minimum damage imposed to target; where exactly it lands with respect to others is up to you Directors). On a failure, the bomb doesn't land close enough to the target to do any damage (but again others might not be so lucky). Base damage for black powder bombs is 20 points within a yard of the point of impact, 12 points within a ten-yard radius, and five points within a twenty-yard radius (all Bash type). Modern dynamite does 25, 15, and 6 points respectively. Really big bags of black powder (like the kind Ash put on the catapult) do mucho more damage more widely: 40, 20, and 10 respectively. Fuses on the homemade types are touchy. On an attack roll of one, they blow up in the user's face (point of impact damage; no Success Levels kicker). That's gonna hurt.

Blunt Weapon: Any kind of non-sharp bludgeoning instrument. Good for smacking people around and making 'em respect your a-thor-it-tee. Small ones include police batons, belaying pins, and big sticks. They do base damage of 3 x Strength points (Bash type). A quarterstaff is basically a long narrow stick, very nifty for attack and defense. It is used with both hands and its base damage is 3 x (Strength + 1) points (Bash type). Bigger blunt weapons—baseball bats, sledgehammers, heavy maces—do 4 x Strength points of base damage (Bash type). They are generally used two-handed (add +1 to Strength when figuring damage).

Boomstick: Otherwise known as a shotgun. Sawed-off versions suffer a -2 when rolling, but are easier to conceal. They do a base 20 points of Bullet damage and use pistol ranges. Regular boomsticks shoot once and can be reloaded in one action. Double-barreled shotguns can fire both barrels as one action (use one Gunshot roll). Reloading

requires an action with a Dexterity (doubled) roll; otherwise, it takes a Turn. Pump action shotguns can be fired twice a Turn (-2 to second shot) for eight shots. Four shots can be reloaded in an action with a Dexterity (doubled) roll; otherwise, only two shots get slammed home.

Bow: Neat primitive weapon for killing people at range—very common in Arthur's realm. The maximum effective Strength when using a bow is five. That means if the user's Strength is greater than five, the base damage tops out at 20. Does 4 x Strength points of base damage (Slash/stab type) and uses pistol ranges. Bows can be loaded and fired in one action.

Chainsaw: Loud, messy, and extremely effective. This is key for the Tool Man types, but it could also be used by those too cowardly to lop off their hand. Starting the chainsaw takes a standard Strength (doubled) roll (for the Tool Man types, the starter cord is hooked to the brace and "yanked" by the flexing of mighty muscles; you may impose penalty depending on the character's physical position or circumstances). Failure means the character simply has to try again on his next action. Most chainsaws run for about one hour on a single tank of gas. Then again, gasoline might be very difficult to come by in medieval Europe, a futuristic wasteland, or that little village from Deliverance.

Using a chainsaw requires a Dexterity and Getting Medieval - 3 roll, a Dexterity and Mr. Fix-It - 3 roll, or just the Combat Score - 3. Its base damage is 6 x (Strength + 1) points (Slash/stab type; to a maximum of 60 before Success Levels, armor, and damage type modifiers are applied). On an attack roll of one, roll again. If the second roll is a failure or a "one" result, the character has hit himself with the ouchy end.

Crossbow: A hot item in England circa 1300. Not as fast as bows, but easier to use and way cool-looking. Base damage is a fixed 16 points (Slash/stab type). A crossbow can be reloaded in an action with a Dexterity (doubled) (for modern ones with a reloading winch) or Strength (doubled) (for the rest) roll; otherwise it takes a full Turn. A dainty version is called a pistol crossbow. This vicious little thing does 10 points of base damage (Slash/stab type) and takes an action to reload.

Dagger/Knife: These are shivs or other easily concealed pointy objects, used by rogues, thieves, thugs, and lowlives. Base damage is 2 x Strength points (Slash/stab type). This drops to 2 x (Strength

– 1) points when the knife is thrown. Smaller daggers, called pigstickers do 2 x (Strength – 1) points of damage (Slash/stab type). This drops to (Strength – 1) points when the pigsticker is thrown. Bigger knives can be had, but they are called short swords in England circa 1300.

Flail: This nasty piece of work sports a number of spiked heads attached to chains strung from a heavy wooden handle. It's also called a morning star. Flails do 4 x Strength Bash damage. Because the chains wrap around, flail attacks cannot be parried. They're a bit unwieldy though. On a roll of one, roll again. If the second roll fails to hit, or is a one again, the wielder damages himself. A flail can be used to entangle a weapon and grants +2 on Disarm maneuvers. If the Disarm works, the flail wielder must make a Dexterity (doubled) roll to separate the weapons (or just toss the flail and grab something else).

Flamethrower: When blasting, crushing, and slashing your foes gets old, you can always switch to scorching them. Using a flamethrower requires a Dexterity and Gun Fu – 2 roll, or the Combat Score – 2. Base damage is six points (Fire type), then three points per Turn until somebody puts the target out. Anything flammable hit by the burst ignites. The average tank can hold 10 “bursts” of fuel, and it can reach up to ten yards.

In settings where you have to McGyver a flamethrower (as Ash might have done), you can put together any sort of compressed flammable substance (like hairspray) and expel it over an open flame of some kind. This trick has been done in hundreds of movies, but that don't make it any less dangerous (so don't do it—really—you'll blow your hand off and your parents aren't very likely to buy you a new chainsaw to replace it). Spraying any kind of aerosol onto a naked flame produces a “burst” as a real flamethrower (only at close range—three yards at most). Base damage is three points (Fire type), then three points per Turn until the target is put out. Your average beauty product holds about five “bursts.” We did warn you not to try this at home—on an attack roll of one, roll again. If the second roll fails to hit, or is a one again, the flame back-flashes to the can causing the damage to the wielder. Not cool. Definitely not cool.

Flare Gun (Signaling Pistol): If your champion ever runs into the Evil Dead at sea (Hellooooo, sailor!) or carrying a survival kit (how handy), he might decide to light them up with a flare gun. With a successful Gunshot Maneuver, the signal flare

impales the victim and ignites. Base damage for the flare is nine points (Fire type). The victim makes a Dodge roll. If successful, he's blinded for one Turn but otherwise escapes further damage. If failed, the flare catches in his clothing (if any—those crazy naked demons just take the initial damage), causing five points (Fire type) damage each subsequent Turn (until he can get far away or cover it with something—flares are almost impossible to put out, even underwater) and blinding him for that duration. The flare pistol holds one flare at a time, reloading takes one Turn (one action with a Dexterity (doubled) roll), and it uses pistol ranges.

Gauntlet: Big iron hands suck for picking your nose, and they're no friend to the single man either. They're great for slapping bad guys, however—much better than flailing away with a stump. Gauntlets do 2 x (Strength + 2) damage when punching.

Grenade: Use this if your hero comes across a real live hand-grenade. Homemade versions are Black Powder Bombs (see p. 97). Grenades make a lot of noise, attract a lot of attention, and have a knack of not going where you wanted to throw them. But in enclosed spaces, they can really rattle the rafters. Grenades work just like Black Powder Bombs but the base damage is 30 points within one yard of the point of impact, 20 points within a three-yard radius and eight points within a five-yard radius (Bash type for concussion grenades; Slash/stab for frag grenades). Also, there's no fuse issue (don't you love modern technology?).

Lance: A lance is a long pointy stick used to take people out from the back of a horse (if you don't have a horse, treat the weapon as a spear, see p. 101). If you're playing fair, your opponent has a mount and a lance as well. Joust anyone?

Lances are used one-handed (the other holds the mount's reins) and do 3 x (Strength + 1) Slash/stab damage. Use the rider's or the mount's Strength, whichever is greater. If you have ten yards to get your horse up to speed, lance damage is doubled. If the damage suffered from a lance charge, after modification for armor and shield but before Slash/stab doubling, is greater than three times the defender's Strength, he winds up on his butt (prone). If he happened to be on a horse, the defender can substitute the Riding skill for Strength. If the rider gets knocked down, he takes an extra five points of Bash falling damage (it's an insult to injury type thing).

Jousting lances are meant for tournaments and sport, not killing folks. They are considered Bash damage weapons. Jousting is not without risk, however. Also, if they inflict over 20 points of damage, they break and the damage is nullified. If the attacker rolls a ten, the jousting lance malfunctions—it does not break and it inflicts regular Slash/stab damage. Knights, like modern-day soldiers, die in practices, displays, and training exercises.

Lasso: Yeehaa! If you want to play Roy Rogers, this is the weapon for you. Lassos are great non-lethal weapons, perfect for capturing hostages or villains. Lassos need some room to work—indoors is not good, unless you're in a big open space. They need a minimum distance of three yards between Lasso Boy and the chosen victim; maximum is the throw range for the user. Lassoing uses a Dexterity and Getting Medieval – 4 roll, or the Combat Score – 4. On a successful attack, the victim's arms are roped to his sides. This weapon usually does no damage unless the neck is targeted, in which case it does (2 x Strength) base damage (Bash; tripled against living, breathing beings after Success Levels and armor are accounted for).

After a roping, figuring out who is in control requires Resisted Action rolls—use Strength (doubled) or the Muscle Score. The winner gets to pull the loser around or knock him to the ground. If the legs are targeted (–2 penalty to attack roll), the victim resists at –4 to his Strength roll (or –8 to the Muscle Score).

Musket: If your hero comes from or arrives at the 1800s or early 1900s, his boomstick might be a musket. They're not very accurate (use pistol ranges) and reloading is as slow as Ash figuring out Sheila's pissed off, but they pack a big fat punch. Damage is 17 points (Bullet type). Reloading a musket takes 12 Turns, minus the Success Levels of a Dexterity and Gun Fu roll.

Net: Nets are pretty much throw-and-forget type weapons. They entangle most any foe for at least a few seconds, which is usually long enough to run over and beat them with sticks if that's what you're into. Casting a net uses a Dexterity and Getting Medieval – 2 roll, or the Combat Score – 2. With a success, the victim is entangled but takes no damage. All his actions suffer a –4 penalty, and a Dexterity and Acrobatics – 4 roll, or the Combat Score – 4 is necessary to stay on his feet. Prone, netted characters are in a world of hurt (–8 to all actions).

Getting untangled is far from easy. A Dexterity and Acrobatics roll, or the Combat Score may be tried but it's the only action that may be taken that Turn. Breaking the net is even tougher, usually requiring five or more Success Levels from a Strength (not doubled) roll. (Really flimsy or makeshift nets are much weaker.) A hero with a small weapon—such as a knife—can also cut himself free by making a Strength (doubled) roll and getting five cumulative Success Levels.

Pistol: Your typical handgun, this covers most police issue weapons (.38s, 9mm, and so on). Revolvers are stuck at six shots per gun; pistols can have as many as 17 rounds in a magazine. Base damage is 12 points (Bullet type). Big Pistols, like a .357 Magnum, a .45 colt, and other “makes big holes in people”-type weapons have 10 or fewer shots in their magazines. Base damage is 15 points (Bullet type). Big Ass Pistols include .44 Magnums, Desert Eagle .50 cal, and other massive hand cannons. Don't be surprised if those carrying such a weapon are overcompensating for something . . . These guns also carry 10 or less bullets, but do 18 points of base damage (Bullet type). Poppuns are small-caliber, easily concealed guns, used by little old ladies who want protection and other wimpy gun-owners. They do base 9 points of Bullet damage and hold 10 bullets.

Revolvers reload at the rate of two bullets a Turn, four with a Dexterity (doubled) roll. A character can reload an entire clip in an automatic pistol without using an action with a Dexterity (doubled) roll. Otherwise, it takes an action.

Pole Arm: Whether you're talking pike, long spear, halberd, bardiche, or the ever-silly glaive-guis-arm, these are very long sticks with pointy or bladed things stuck at the end. Pole arms must be used two-handed (damage bonus already factored in) and cannot be thrown. Base damage is 5 x (Strength +1) points (Slash/stab type). A pole-armed fighter can reach out and touch from a good distance and thus gets initiative automatically against any other type of weapon. Indeed, without a Resisted Dodge roll to get in close, shorter-armed combatants can't attack at all. On the flip side, if the opponent does get in close, the pole armer can't attack (dropping the weapon in favor of another or backing away with another Resisted Dodge roll is recommended).

The end of a pole arm may be rammed into the ground and the tip lowered to point at a charging attacker (mounted or not). This is called “setting the weapon for a charge.” In that case, the pole-arm wielder gets initiative against the charger, and if he hits, the charger takes double damage.

Power Drill: Only rechargeable drills do any good, and even then you’re talking about needing to recharge after just about every fight—torquing a drill in demon flesh takes a toll on the batteries. On the plus side, the charge keeps for a long time until it’s used—practically forever. Power drills cause 2 x Strength Slash/stab damage, and ignore the first four points of armor. Use a Dexterity and Getting Medieval – 2 or the Combat Score – 2 to attack.

Rifle: Your basic hunting rifle is either a single-shot or has 5-10 rounds in a magazine. It does 20 points of base damage (Bullet type). These suckers must be reloaded one bullet at a time. You can pop in one shell in an action with a Dexterity (doubled) roll, or spend a whole Turn loading three rounds. Assault rifles are standard issue military weapons, usually with 20- to 30-round magazines. They can fire automatic or 3-round bursts. Base damage is 16 points (Bullet type). Reloading an assault rifle can be done without using an action as long as the hero has a magazine ready to go and makes a Dexterity (doubled) roll; otherwise it takes an action.

Rocket Launcher: Anyone who’s played a first person shooter knows the weapon of choice when facing *Doom*-like demons is the rocket launcher. Without military knowledge, however, rocket launchers are about as useful as a big drainpipe. Most, like LAW rockets or AT4s, require several steps to operate. To properly use one, the hero needs to have a Gun Fu 3 or higher and some kind of military background. If he can find the operator’s manual (yes, they do exist), he’s in like Flynn as well.

Using a rocket launcher requires a Dexterity and Gun Fu – 2 roll, or the Combat Score – 2. Base damage is 100 points at the point of impact, 35 points within a two-yard radius, and ten points within five yards (all Fire type). You definitely don’t want to fire this thing at anyone standing too close to you! Maximum range is roughly 150 yards.

These stats cover bazookas to LAW rockets. More modern devices do 150 points of damage at the point of impact but have the same area effect. If it’s reloadable (like a bazooka or a panzerschrek—most modern day rocket launchers are disposable), doing so takes five Turns.

Spear: Pointy thing at the end of stick. Fairly common in ancient times, the middle ages, and post-apocalyptic futures. Spears must be used two-handed (damage bonus already factored in). Base damage is 3 x (Strength + 1) points (Slash/stab type). This drops to 3 x Strength points when the spear is thrown. A specially weighted and constructed spear is a javelin. It does 2 x Strength Slash/stab damage and suffers no attack penalty or damage reduction when thrown. (Note that this entry is for relatively short spears. Long ones are treated as pole arms and cannot be thrown.)

Submachine Gun: Basically a pistol that shoots a bunch of bullets very fast. Nice to have in your corner when the going gets nasty. Can fire automatic or bursts. Base damage is twelve points (Bullet type). Reloads like an assault rifle.

Sword: Rapiers, broadswords, and other large pieces of cutlery. This also covers katanas and other fancy weapons. Some of these weapons can be used two-handed; in that case, add +1 to the effective Strength of the wielder. Does base 4 x Strength points of Slash/stab damage. A Big Ass Sword is heavy and must be used two-handed (the +1 to Strength is already built-in). Base damage is 5 x (Strength + 1) points (Slash/stab type). Short swords do 3 x Strength points of base damage (Slash/stab type). Throwing a shortsword requires Strength 4 and does 3 x (Strength – 1) damage.

Tranquilizer Gun: Great for bringing down animals without hurting them. Why you’d use one of these on the minions of darkness we have no idea, but hey, it’s your funeral. A typical dose of tranquilizer is a narcotic poison with a Strength 6 (see p. 104). Each Success Level in the poison roll reduces the victim’s Strength by one level. If reduced to zero, the target falls unconscious for one hour. Reduce this unconsciousness time by 10 minutes per Constitution level (minimum of 10 minutes). Skeletons and other nonliving creatures can’t be tranquilized, but deadites can. (Oooh, Mommy! Can we keep it?)

Whip: Want to do the adventurer/archaeologist shtick? Here’s your buddy—the whip. They don’t kill too many folks, but they hurt like hell and can entangle and trip those who make you angry. Real bullwhips have a lot of reach, so it works more like a ranged weapon out to five to seven yards. Like lassos, they need space to work, and a minimum distance of two yards to be effective.

Whips use a Dexterity and Getting Medieval – 2 roll, or the Combat Score – 2. The damage is not spectacular 2 x Strength (Bash), but it really, really smarts. No matter what, a living victim loses his next action due to the ouch-factor. Worse, if he fails to make a Willpower (doubled) roll minus half the Strength of the attacker (round up), he's stunned by pain for an entire Turn.

Whips can also be used to entangle or grab stuff (like guns, cigarettes and, if you're really good, full glasses without spilling a drop). Targeting a limb incurs a –2 penalty; a small object (gun, stake, knife) –4, and something really small and fragile (cigarette) –6. These attacks do no damage—if limbs are entangled, use the lasso rules.

ARMOR

It's the Dark Ages. Everybody's doing it . . .

We mean wearing armor, you lout. Big heavy steel stuff that keeps claws, swords, and arrows off your oh-so-silky man-flesh.

Armor has, not surprisingly, an Armor Value. This number subtracts damage from an attack. Depending on when it was made, it might be more suitable against Bullet than Slash/stab and Bash attacks. Some creatures may have natural armor in the form of scaly skins or bony plates. Many types of armor (padded, chain, and leather) can also be found in horse versions, called barding. It works the same but protects the horse, not the rider (doh!). Horses don't like to be in barding for too long—it chaffs and makes them grumpy (not good).

Bulletproof Armor: Whether a vest or a body suit, this stuff is made of Kevlar and composite materials (that means it ain't around in England circa 1300, but nice try). It provides 15 Armor Value against bullets and bashing, seven against Slash/stab weapons.

Chain Mail: These finely woven metal links are heavy but they provide eight points of armor protection. This value is halved against firearm attacks.

Leather Armor: This could be a mutant's X-cov-eralls or a suit for a man without fear. It could be just a leather breastplate, helmet, and greaves. Armor protection is three or four (for hardened leather).

Leather Jacket: Looks cool and may have plenty of zippers or metal attachments. Provides two points of armor protection.

Metal Helmet: Only covers the head but it covers it well. Grants 16 points of Armor Value (assuming a Head Shot connected). Other types of helmets exist; use the particular armor for the specifics.

Military Armor: This top-of-the-line ceramic and Kevlar covering provides 40 Armor Value. This is halved against Slash/stab weapons.

Padded or Quilted Armor: This stuff looks pretty silly (imagine yourself surrounded by thin pillows) but it's better than being bare-assed. Its Armor Value is one.

Plate Armor: This is the fancy stuff you see in museums around the country. Covers the entire body and is a bear to get around in (can't move much more than a slow walk). It provides 20 points of protection, 10 against bullets.

Plate Mail: This is chain mail reinforced by solid metal plates. It provides 16 points of Armor Value. This value is halved against bullet attacks.

Shields: Shields make it easier to block strikes. A Parry maneuver by a combatant equipped with a small shield gains +1 (such as a buckler), a medium shield +2 (such as a Viking's round shield), a tower shield +4 (such as a scutum). If the Parry would have succeeded without the shield's bonus, it's a clean deflect and no damage is taken. Otherwise, damage is calculated as normal but the shield provides additional Armor Value protection of 15 for a small shield, 20 for a medium shield, and 30 for a tower shield. A shield may also be used offensively with a Dexterity and Getting Medieval roll. It does 2 x Strength Bash damage and allows a Strength (doubled) Resisted Action to knock the target prone.

"ALRIGHT. WHO WANTS SOME? WHO'S NEXT? HUHF? HOW ABOUT IT? WHO WANTS SOME? HUHF? WHO WANTS TO HAVE A LITTLE?"

-ASH

SWAT Armor: For the heavy ordinance squads of boys in blue. This armor grants a boffo 30 points of protection, halved against Slash/stab weapon attacks.

BAD STUFF

If a Cast Member is hurt enough, bad things start to happen. Those reduced to 10 Life Points or below are severely injured, and find it hard to continue fighting; all combat rolls suffer a -2 penalty. If reduced below five Life Points, this penalty goes up to -4.

Consciousness Tests: When reduced to zero Life Points or below, unconsciousness or incapacitation (i.e., the character is conscious, but can only lie there and work very hard on breathing) is likely. The player has to make a roll modified by both Willpower and Constitution, at a penalty of -1 for each of the character's negative Life Points. So, a character at -4 Life Points (he has taken enough damage to reduce his Life Points to zero, and four more points on top of that) has a -4 penalty to his Consciousness Test. The Resistance (Pain) Quality (see p. 40) adds a bonus to Consciousness Tests, and also reduces wound penalties. If successful, the character may continue to act normally (though they should move very tenderly). After the first one, Consciousness Tests must be repeated each time the character is injured, and whenever a Survival Test is required.

Survival Tests: If a character is reduced to -10 points or worse, death is a possibility. After each such injury, he has to make a Survival Test. This uses Willpower and Constitution (just like Consciousness Tests), at -1 for every 10 points below zero (i.e., a character reduced to -32 Life Points would have a -3 penalty to the Survival Test). The Hard to Kill Quality (see p. 34) provides a bonus to Survival Tests. If the character passes the Test, he lives. If he doesn't, he Passes On to The Great Beyond (cue somber music).

Slow Death: If a character is below -10 Life Points, makes a Survival Test but does not get medical help within a minute, he may still die. Survival Tests are required every minute after the first, at an additional -1 penalty per minute (so after five minutes, the additional penalty would be -5; half an hour later, it would be -30, and even a Drama Point may not be enough to save his ass). A successful Intelligence and Doctor roll stabilizes the character.

Dying Words and Actions: Characters who fail a Survival Test are most likely unconscious and incapacitated as well. This is a huge downer, both for them and for the storyline. If a character dies, the player has the option of performing one last deed, or saying some famous last words, at your discretion. The Last Deed option allows the character to act normally for one or two Turns (no wound penalty applies). Famous Last Words can take as much as a minute (more likely, they should consist of a couple of sentences). These are the character's last acts—make them count.

Resuscitation: Some injuries may kill the character, but leave him intact enough for medicine to bring him back. Drowning, gunshot wounds (except to the brain), and similar injuries may not be destructive enough to prevent modern science from saving the character. Common sense should be your guide. If the character was burned to a crisp or killed by a soul-sucking demon that stole his life force, CPR just ain't gonna do the trick. Resuscitation requires an Intelligence and Doctor roll, followed by another Survival Roll from the victim. In addition to all the previous modifiers, the victim gets a bonus equal to the Success Levels of the Intelligence and Doctor roll, and a -1 per five minutes since his untimely demise. None of this applies to medieval doctors, of course. If a character dies in England circa 1300, Drama Points are the only way to bring him back.

GETTING BETTER

There's no ER in the Dark Ages. No George "Mo Hair" Clooneys, no snappy banter where everything is followed by "stat!" Mostly there's just leeches, amputation, and pain.

Still, even the Wiseman's skills are better than nothing (usually). Injuries heal at the rate of one Life Point per Constitution level every day spent under medical care—yes, including the Wiseman's tender mercies.

MORE BAD STUFF

If hacking and slashing don't get you, one of these other forms of bodily harm might.

Disease: Diseases have a Strength Attribute. Roll and add double the disease's Strength; this is resisted by the victim's Constitution (doubled). If the disease "wins," the victim is drained of one Attribute level per Success Level in the disease roll. The Attribute depends on the type of disease. When the Attribute is reduced to zero, the victim is unconscious or incapacitated, and the disease starts draining Constitution. When Constitution goes to zero, the victim dies. Disease rolls are rarely more frequent than once per hour, and typically only once per day. Some diseases do not kill; they just incapacitate victims with fevers, chills, and weird bumps in places best not discussed in a family game. You time-travelers just remember that the local ladies don't practice the same kind of hygiene gals from the 20th century do. No details required, but just remember one thing—people in Arthur's kingdom take baths infrequently—say every never.

Falling: Try to miss the ground whenever you fall. If you're one of those unfortunates who just has to obey the laws of physics, take damage instead. Any fall from more than a yard inflicts three points of Bash damage per yard. For cinematic purposes, falling damage tops out after 50 yards (150 Life Points)—not that this matters to most folks, but those with Drama Points can work their way around death in this case.

A Dexterity and Acrobatics roll (or the Combat Score) reduces the fall's effective distance by one yard per Success Level. So a character who gets four Success Levels in his Dexterity and Acrobatics roll takes no damage from a three-yard fall, and suffers six points of damage from a six-yard fall.

Poison: Those tricky bad guys have all kinds of tricks. Hence the tricky adjective. Poisons works like disease. The Attribute drained depends on the type of poison. Paralyzing agents affect Dexterity, while debilitating venoms might drain Strength. The frequency of poison rolls depends on how powerful the substance is. Very deadly poisons roll every Turn, while less powerful agents roll once per minute, per hour, or even per day. An Intelligence and Doctor or Science roll may help identify the poison and remove it from the victim. In other cases, it's an antidote or nothing. And some poisons are supernatural and require special forms of antidote.

Suffocation: Water, smoke, and really heavy pillows might suffocate a hero. Most real men try to avoid dying this way—it's much less cool than getting ripped apart by a nasty. Anyone can hold out for 12 Turns. After that, a Consciousness Test is required with a cumulative –1 penalty every Turn. Survival Tests kick in, again with a cumulative –1 penalty, each 30 seconds.

BREAKING STUFF

Unless it is dramatically inappropriate, characters can break things without having to roll. Smashing a plate glass window or hacking your way through a door does not require rolls and damage calculations. On the other hand, if you're smack in the middle of a fight, you may need to know if you can break down a door to escape. Typically, the Success Levels of a Strength (doubled) roll determine how fast a door is knocked down. Walls require a certain amount of damage before a man-sized hole is punched into them. The Breaking Stuff Chart summarizes.



TOSSED ITEM CHART

ROUGH WEIGHT	DAMAGE TO WALL/OBJECT	SAMPLE ITEM
Up to 100 lbs.	2 x Strength	chair, end table
Up to 200 lbs.	3 x Strength	person, recliner
Up to 400 lbs.	4 x Strength	heavy couch, lawnmower
Up to 1000 lbs.	5 x Strength	motorcycle, refrigerator
Up to 2000 lbs.	6 x Strength	small car
Up to 2 x previous	(+1 previous) x Strength	

BREAKING STUFF CHART

Interior Door: Three Success Levels.

Reinforced Wooden Door: Four Success Levels, and the first Success Level of each attack roll is ignored.

Metal Door: Six Success Levels, and the first two Success Levels of each attack roll are not counted.

Reinforced Metal Door: Eight Success Levels, and the first five Success Levels of each attack roll don't do jack.

Wooden/Plaster Wall: Armor Value 4; 20 points of damage.

Brick Wall: Armor Value 6; 40 points of damage.

Concrete Wall: Armor Value 10; 80 points of damage.

Let Me Outta Here!: Arthur has secured the Necronomicon behind steel bars. Evil Ash trounces the constipated knight and tries to rip the bars off. You decide the bars count as a metal door. Evil Ash's Muscle score is 22, so he has six Success Levels. He yanks at the bars and does a number to the wall around them. Still, since the first two Success Levels are ignored, he doesn't get past them. He tenses again and will have no problem wrenching them open in the next round . . . but just then the good and honorable Ash stabs him in the back with a spear (okay, not so honorable but geez, it's Evil Ash!).

Inanimate objects also get busted up in combat. Combatants toss their opponents around. Misses wind up with axes buried in walls or hillsides. In many cases, you can just wing the FX and describe it as you see fit. If more precision is required, the damage done to walls and other objects depends on the tossed object and the Strength of the tosser (damage done to the tossee is handled via the Wall Smack maneuver, see p. 92). The Tossed Item Chart runs it down. The tosser must have a Strength Attribute sufficient to life the item or person without much effort (see p. 25). Still, several folks can work together. You get to decide if they all can fit around, and get a handle on, the object to be tossed.

VEHICLES

ASH (STANDING IN THE OPEN CAB OF THE DEATH COASTER): NOW, SAY HELLO TO THE TWENTY-FIRST CENTURY.

You can't do *Army of Darkness* without the Death Coaster. Your own settings might be filled with vehicles as well—imagine deadites in your favorite “axes and axes” movie—*The Road Warrior*, *The Fast and the Furious*, or even *Ben-Hur*. Yeah! That's the stuff! Vroom, baby, vroom!

Okay. We're over it. Let's throttle this bee-atch down and show you how vehicles work in the *Army of Darkness* RPG. Let's start by discussing a vehicle's Attributes.

Weight: The total poundage of the vehicle gives you some idea of its size and bulk. In case a character is driving over unstable ground or ice, it might help you decide whether the vehicle breaks through and bottoms out. For the most part, weight is only used for determining damage during collisions.

Speed: This has two values, maximum speed and average cruising speed. The former is for going all

out. That puts some serious stress on the vehicle though. After a certain period (your call), start asking for Toughness (doubled) rolls with a cumulative -1 penalty for each successive roll. When one fails, the vehicle blows a whatsit. The repercussions of that range from a slow coasting stop to one of those big summer-blockbuster flip-through-the-air-and-call-the-stuntman-union affairs. This all assumes that the driver doesn't spin off the road because of a failed Driving roll, of course.

Armor Value: How much damage a vehicle's skin or armor stops before it starts taking damage. This runs in the area of two to ten for your typical car.

Damage Capacity: The Life Points of the vehicle. When a vehicle's Damage Capacity has been depleted, it usually ceases to function. It may not be completely destroyed, but it's no longer chugging around (a Survival Roll using Toughness may be allowed though).

Toughness: This is the equivalent of the Constitution Attribute, and measures the vehicle's ruggedness, redundant systems, and damage control. When a vehicle takes a lot of damage, a Survival roll—Toughness (doubled)—is needed to see if the vehicle continues to function.

Handling: This is the equivalent of the vehicle's Dexterity. It reflects how the vehicle maneuvers and responds to the driver. For some rolls, you have to use the lowest of the driver's Dexterity or the vehicle's Handling attribute. A semi just isn't going to corner like a Lamborghini. Handling varies from one to five or so for most autos.

DRIVING AROUND

No rules are needed to cruise around, retract the roof, or parallel park. It's when things get exciting (your basic car chase, smashing into a concrete abutment at 50 mph, or running through hordes of skeletons) that a few guidelines are needed.

Chases: These are resolved as resisted rolls, using Dexterity (or the vehicle's Handling, whichever is lower) and Driving. The faster vehicle gets a +1 bonus for every 10 mph of speed it has over the slower one. You can use the Combat Score for Supporting Cast members or monsters, modified if the vehicle's Handling is lower than the character's Dexterity. Both sides roll and keep track of their Success Levels every Turn. The pursued gets one

automatic Success Level for every two Turns of head start he had. The first side that gets five more Success Levels than their adversary "wins." If the pursued wins, he manages to lose the chasers. If the pursuers win, they catch up and can attempt less than friendly stuff like ramming and hijacking.

Redline Me: Your Promised One with a lead foot is on a Harley chasing a semi full of the new bestseller—*Secrets of the Necronomicon!* He thinks it's probably a real Bad Thing if they make it from the printer to the distribution point where they'll be shipped out all over the world. The Promised One picks up the truck right out of the gate, so there's no head-start bonus there. Our Harley Hero then gets three Success Levels on his Driving roll and the trucker gets two. He's on top of him and can blow out his tires or try some other Daring Plan. On the next Turn, our hero rolls bad and gets no Success Levels but the trucker gets three—he's now two ahead of the biker. If he can get three more "points" ahead of our Lone Biker of the Apocalypse on following Turns, he'll streak off into the night without further molestation.

Crashes and Collisions: Boom, baby, boom. Here's what happens when a vehicle hits something. Vehicles weighing under two tons do 10 points of Bash damage for every 10 mph of relative speed. Vehicles over two tons inflict 20 points per 10 mph of relative speed, and heavy vehicles (over 10 tons/20,000 lbs) inflict 30 points per 10 mph of relative speed. Relative speed factors the movement of both collidees. If only the vehicle is moving, it's easy—the vehicle's speed is the relative speed. If two vehicles collide and they are moving toward each other, the relative speed is the sum of both vehicles speed. Head-on collisions almost always result in tombstones.

How much damage the vehicle doing the smashing takes depends on how solid the target is—hitting a small animal does very little damage; smashing into the side of a mountain is quite painful. Small animals or objects do no damage. Large animals or human-sized things cause the vehicle to take one-third of the damage it inflicts (round down). Hitting a lighter vehicle produces half the damage inflicted, and hitting anything solid or heavier than the vehicle does the same amount of damage right back at 'cha.

If the vehicle hits something hard enough to come to a stop, passengers inside the vehicle take half the damage if not wearing seatbelts and one-fifth of the damage if they are. Air bags provide an additional 20 points of damage protection.

Smash Me: The trucker from our previous example decides to slam on the brakes and let the biker run right into his tailgate. They were both doing about 70 mph, but their relative speed as the truck brakes is probably closer to 30 (a subjective call on your part based on the slowing of the truck as it brakes). That's 60 points of damage to the bike since the truck is a wee bit larger than a Harley (the bikes stops working in a big way). The truck takes only 30 since the bike is definitely a "lighter" vehicle.

Maneuvering: When trying to make tight turns at high speed, weave around traffic, and impress folks with donuts on wet pavement, make Dexterity (or Handling, whichever is lower) and Driving rolls. Speed kills—apply a -1 penalty for every 10 miles an hour over 50. Sharp turns incur a -2 penalty on top of that. Sudden moves (trying to avoid a deer jumping in front of you) suffer a -3 penalty. Trying to run another driver off the road works like an attack/defense combo—both sides roll a Maneuvering roll. If the defender ties or wins, he avoids the attempt; if the attacker wins, he pushes the target onto the shoulder . . . or worse.

A FEW VEHICLES

Here's a handful of vehicles ready for road rage, complete with stats.

18-WHEELER

Weight: 10 tons	Speed: 90/60
Armor Value: 6	Damage Capacity: 180
Toughness: 4	Handling: 2

BUS

Weight: 12 tons	Speed: 90/60
Armor Value: 5	Damage Capacity: 150
Toughness: 4	Handling: 2

HUM-VEE

Weight: 3 tons	Speed: 80/50
Armor Value: 8	Damage Capacity: 110
Toughness: 5	Handling: 3

MOTORCYCLE

Weight: 500	Speed: 160/70
Armor Value: 2	Damage Capacity: 30
Toughness: 1	Handling: 5

PICK-UP

Weight: 2 tons	Speed: 110/65
Armor Value: 5	Damage Capacity: 50
Toughness: 3	Handling: 3

SEDAN (PRE-DEATH COASTER)

Weight: 1 ton	Speed: 130/65
Armor Value: 4	Damage Capacity: 45
Toughness: 2	Handling: 4

ASH RULES



THE DRAMA POINT SYSTEM

ASH: OH, YOU LITTLE BASTARDS! ALL RIGHT ... (LIFTS Mallet INTO FRAME) I'LL CRUSH EACH AND EVERY ONE OF YOU. I'LL CRUSH YOU TO PIECES, I'M TELLIN' YOU!

Up to this point, the rules mostly simulate “reality”—the reality where people get punched and lose teeth, and where people fail at the most inappropriate moments and suffer and die as a result. But reality is a distant cousin of cinematic epics like *Army of Darkness*. The heroes survive against impossible odds, or perform incredible feats at just the right moment, especially when it's dramatically appropriate. This affects things beyond deeds. Sometimes the cavalry arrives in the nick of time, or a vital clue is discovered just when the characters need it. Then there's the magical recovery time—up and about the next day. While Promised Ones have supernatural recovery powers, those who tag along beside them should suffer numerous casualties every time they come into conflict with evil undead. But they don't. Unless they meet a dramatically appropriate end (usually as a set-up to the big finale), they keep on swinging scene after scene.

That's where Drama Points come in. Using these suckers allows the Cast to temporarily “short-circuit” reality and perform heroic feats that Mother Reality just has to frown upon. Think of Drama Points as “script aids”—they prevent the heroes from suffering ignominious, meaningless deaths because of bad luck. They do not make the characters unbeatable, however. For one, players get a limited number of Drama Points, so they have to be used with great care or the characters may exhaust their good fortune before the dramatic finale. Also, the bad guys have Drama Points too; this allows even a lowly skeleton to get a lucky punch in on Ash now and then, or gives the Big Bad Guy some way to escape certain death.

Characters start the game with 10 to 20 Drama Points. These points are not regained automatically. Drama Points have to be earned. They may be awarded for performing heroic feats. They are also given as “payment” for the times when tragedy or misfortune strikes the Cast. When bad things happen to good people, the Cast may get some Drama Points as a “karmic payment.” Finally, Drama Points are earned when the players help recreate the feel of campy horror, usually by helping develop sto-

rylines and subplots beyond the basic “kill the monster” scenario, or delivering killer one-liners like Mr. Chainsaw Hand.

Playing It Straight

The Drama Point System is not for everybody. Some players just don't like thinking in terms of Hollywood heroics, and prefer a more realistic approach. Those folks probably shouldn't be playing AoD RPG though. Drama Points also encourage a certain degree of metagaming, with the players thinking about the rules of the game instead of the actual story their characters are living. While the results are largely positive—the game is meant to simulate the feel a campy action-horror flick—the means may not be to everyone's taste. If you don't like Drama Points, you can always play the game “straight.” The characters are on their own, to live and die by their talents and the luck of the dice. Definitely not recommended, but you gamers are a stubborn lot.

Games without Drama Points are grittier and deadlier. The gulf between Heroes and Primitive Screwheads cannot be bridged; it is recommended that all the Cast Members be either Heroes or Primitive Screwheads—otherwise, the Primitive Screwheads get totally upstaged. Injured characters may be incapacitated for long periods of time, and death is much more likely even among Heroes. This is not necessarily a bad thing, but players who want to perform the same feats Ash do in the movie are going to be disappointed. As usual, you and the players should talk things over and settle on something that will satisfy the group. See? We're just one groovy love-fest here.

USING DRAMA POINTS

Players use Drama Points in one of five ways: Heroic Feat, Let's Go, Plot Twist, Righteous Fury, and the ever-popular Back From the Dead.

Drama Points may be used at any time, even when the character isn't acting or doesn't have Initiative. This is mostly applicable for I Think I'm Okay. An attacker could do 100 points of damage to a character and bring him to -40 (serious Consciousness and Survival Test territory), but if the defender has a Drama Point to spend, that hit becomes 50 points and he remains on his feet. Heroic Feat and Righteous Fury happen on the character's action; Plot Twist and Back From the Dead are implemented outside of combat or other die-rolling situations.

You have veto power over the use of Drama Points. Usually, if something bad is slated to happen to the character, using Drama Points won't help him get out of the situation. The consolation prize, however, is that those situations earn the character extra Drama Points. So, if Ash is meant to get blindsided and knocked into a pit, his player doesn't get to use Drama Points to escape his fate. Instead, he gets a Drama Point for his troubles.

HEROIC FEAT

Sometimes, a character really needs to take down that demon, disarm the time bomb with ten seconds left on the clock, or shoot the oxygen tank in the shark's mouth before it swims over for a bite.

By spending a Drama Point, the character gets a +10 bonus to any one roll. This can be an attack or defense action, or any use of a skill, or even a Fear or Survival Test. Any subsequent uses of that roll result, such as multiple actions, also enjoy the 10-point kicker. Alternatively, Heroic Feat can be used to make things hurt more. In that case, the +10 bonus is added to the base damage in addition to any Success Level bonuses (then armor, damage type, and other modifiers are applied).

A player has to announce his character is using a Drama Point during the Intentions phase of a Turn (see p. 87), or before rolling during non-combat situations. Also, only one Heroic Feat may be performed in a Turn. It can be used either for attack, defense, or damage, but not for more than one of those in the same Turn.

Dramatic Example Anyone: Sheila, pre-Evil, needs to hit a demon but has little chance with her Dexterity 2 and Getting Medieval 1, so she spends a Drama Point for a Heroic Feat. Her base of three plus 10 is 13, and with a die roll of eight she sports an impressive 21. Sheila nails the demon in the snout and does 2 x Strength damage, which is four. She can't spend another Drama Point on a damage bonus (she's already done her Drama this Turn) but she does get to add in her six Success Levels for a total of 10 points of damage. If she was using a knife, that total doubles to 20. You go girl!

I THINK I'M OKAY

The bullet didn't hit any vital organs. The character rolled with the impact and the deadite's sword just gave him a shallow cut. Somehow, the injuries that should have killed a character or at least put him out of commission are not as bad as he thought they were. Or maybe he got his second wind—a few bandages on his bloody but largely harmless wounds and he is ready to go. Whatever the rationale, I Think I'm Okay allows Heroes, Primitive Screwheads, and normal folks to get back into action after enduring beatings that would have sent a pro football player to the hospital.

For a mere Drama Point, the character immediately heals half the Life Point damage (round up) he has suffered up to that point. The character is still bloody and battered, but he can act normally. I Think I'm Okay can be used only once per Turn, but it can be used several Turns in a row, each use halv-

ASH RULES

ing whatever damage remains. If the character had suffered enough damage to be incapacitated or unconscious, however, healing does not necessarily awaken him. You decide if the time is right for the character to revive and join the action. Also, if the injuries were life threatening, you may decide the character has to go get some TLC at some point, although he can wait until the action (or the Episode) is over.

Examples.com: Ash is down 37 Life Points. He spends a Drama Point, says I Think I'm Okay, and gets 19 back (37/2, rounded up). It's good to be the king.

PLOT TWIST

Heroes often find help and information from the most unlikely places or at precisely the right time. Maybe Sheila figures out how to fire up the Death Coaster just as Evil Ash is about show his better half no mercy. Or maybe the heroes find out about the Necronomicon's latest evil from a fleeing peasant.

Once per game session, each character can spend a Drama Point and get a "break." This is not a Get Out of Jail Free Card. If the hero gets pushed into a pit with a pug-ugly, a Plot Twist won't allow him to escape, but it might get the Wiseman to toss down his chainsaw. Or if the warrior is already down and beaten, a Plot Twist might give the bad guys some reason to keep him alive, or maybe give his friends some clue where he's at so they can play the cavalry.

This one's mostly up to you, but pleading (and free snacks) should definitely enter into the equation. If you decide no Plot Twist is possible, the player gets back the Drama Point.

RIGHTEOUS FURY

There always comes that point when the hero's been beat to hell, his friends are reeling, and it looks like the bad guys are going to win. Does the show end with everyone crying like Euro weenies? Of course not. When the going gets tough, the tough get pissed off.

By spending two Drama Points, the character gets a +5 bonus to all attack actions for the duration of the fight. These benefits are cumulative with Heroic Feats, if used. Problem is, an appropriate provocation is necessary to invoke the Righteous Fury rule. A player can't decide his character is irate because someone pissed in his Cheerios. He needs to be truly provoked—a brutal attack on a loved one, an unexpected betrayal of trust, or crimes so horrible they go beyond the Necronomicon's usual mayhem.

A hero can also get righteous if all the other Cast Members are at half their Life Points or less.

BACK FROM THE DEAD

Death is an odd thing in *Army of Darkness*. Promised Ones generally don't die—every time they should have, something Really Bad happens that makes everyone's life tougher from that point on. Champion's companions aren't so lucky though. A crossbow bolt to the eye is still—well, a crossbow bolt to the eye.

Let's talk about normal folks first.

By spending Drama Points, Primitive Screwheads and other heroes can come back from the dead through some miraculous circumstance. The sooner the character comes back, the more Drama Points it costs. In the *Army of Darkness RPG*, this happens in one of two ways.

For five Drama Points, the hero's wounds weren't as bad as they seemed, but he still has a major injury of some sort. This is entirely up to you and the manner of the character's death. We recommend paying the Ferryman an eye, an arm, or a leg. This may require a little "editing" to make sense if you already described a really grotesque death.

Huh?: Say you describe the Blacksmith being blown into a billion pieces by Ash's pipebomb. There was a big blood-spray and everything. Then comes Back From the Dead time. Now that the

**"DEFEND THE NECRONOMICON, LADS!
OR PERISH IN THE DEVIL'S FIRE!"
-ARTHUR**

Spending Drama Points

So a character has 10-20 shiny Drama Points and is ready to do the impossible. How many should be spent in an Episode? What happens if the player runs out? While the answers vary from one gaming group to the next, here are some rules of thumb for both you and the players.

If the player spends all his Drama Points, he may not have them when his Cast Member really needs them. And if he tries to hoard them greedily, his character may get his butt kicked on a regular basis (which may force the player to spend Drama Points to nurse him back to health). It's a balancing act.

Ideally, players should spend no more (and hopefully less) Drama Points than they earn in the game session. That way they have a nice stash saved up for the Final Showdown or some other dramatic moment.

During the typical Episode, players should probably not spend more than five Drama Points apiece—assume a maximum of two points on each of two fights, and one point for some non-combat use. But that's in a "fair" fight. If a group of four Primitive Screwheads gets ambushed by some nefarious Minion, they might get in trouble and wind up spending many more. In those cases, it's better to use one Drama Point for a Plot Twist to stop the fight. If you want to keep up the pressure and constantly put the Cast in dangerous situations, players may end up spending 10 Drama Points per session. In that case, you are going to have to make good those expenses by giving out more Drama Points than normal.

Players should not use Drama Points frivolously. Usually they should be saved for a fight with the Big Bad or the main villain of the Episode. By using tactics and letting the Heroes go in front while the Primitive Screwheads maneuver around the fringes, low-ranking villains can be defeated without much in the way of Drama Point expenditures.

Remember to scale the enemies to the abilities of the characters. If none of the Cast Members have a Combat Maneuver with a bonus higher than nine, for example, putting them up against a bunch of demons with Combat Scores of 16 (which means the best Cast Member needs a seven or higher on a D10 just to avoid getting hit, and an eight or higher to hit the monster) is asking for trouble. That forces the Cast to spend a bunch of Drama Points to win the day.

So, as a rule of thumb—maximum expenditure of five Drama Points per game session (depending on how long the session is), with an average of two or three points. If all the players are spending more than that amount on a regular basis, you may need to turn down the heat a bit. If only one player is overspending, then it's probably his problem and not the game's.

fight's over, the Blacksmith is all scorched and bloody and one of his arms is a stump, but he's alive.

If the hero wants to come back right away, he pays 10 Drama Points and just stands up.

Come on, I've Got His Brain on My Shirt!: Turns out the bomb was all bang and no blast. The gore must have come from somewhere else. Where did that deadite go? The Blacksmith is alive and well—just stunned and unconscious.

EARNING DRAMA POINTS

Once a player spends his Drama Points, they are gone for good. To get more, he is going to have to work for them. Fortunately, they can be obtained in a number of ways.

EXPERIENCE POINTS

Characters can use experience points (see p. 115) to buy Drama Points. Heroes can buy them at the rate of two experience points for each Drama Point. Primitive Screwheads get a discount: they can get one Drama Point for every experience point they spend. This is the most mechanical way to gain more Drama Points, and can result in characters that improve very slowly

ONE LINERS

Army of Darkness is as much about the one-liners as it is about kicking undead booty. Players who put in the effort to come up with a funny and memorable line should be awarded with a Drama Point, but usually no more than once per game session. Both you and the players have to agree that the line is worthy of the reward. Don't give points for all the usual Ash-isms unless they're used in a particularly creative manner. Come up with your own—one-liners that fit your character.

HEROIC ACTS

Smashing skeletons does not constitute a Heroic Act—it's part of the usual job description for the Cast. To earn Drama Points, a character needs to perform acts of self-sacrifice for the good of others. The sacrifice should be significant—serious risk of death or injury, or some personal loss. This type of act should get one or two Drama Points, depending on how serious the sacrifice was.

WHEN BAD THINGS HAPPEN TO GOOD PEOPLE

Sometimes, the plot may require that something bad happen to the Cast Members. Someone sneaks up behind the character and clobbers him from behind; a demon takes over one of the Cast or an important Guest Star. This shouldn't happen often, or the players are going to feel railroaded. When it does, you should "pay" for the privilege by giving the affected characters one to three Drama Points. When this rule is invoked, the players cannot use Drama Points to undo the results—if the villain is meant to get away this time, he has to get away. Ditto if this is their turn to end up as hostages. The more unfair the situation is, the more Drama Points they get—up to three Drama Points for situations where the characters are totally getting hosed.



THE AGONY THAT IS LIFE

This is the tragic version of When Bad Things Happen to Good People. When a subplot involving a Cast Member and his Drawbacks (things like Addiction, Love, and Emotional Problems) results in a tragic situation, he gets one to three Drama Points every game session where the subplot comes into play. The players really need to get into character, though. "My character goes to the local pub and gets plastered. Oh, woe is me" just ain't gonna cut it. Roleplay out the depression over losing your loved one and you might wind up with some Drama Points. Don't dwell too long on this stuff though. This game is called *Army of Darkness*, not *Maniacs: A Love Story*.

EXPERIENCE AND IMPROVEMENT

ASH (THRUSTING SPEAR): (GRUNTS.)

HORSEMEN (THRUSTING SPEAR IN IMITATION): (GRUNTS.)

ASH (THRUSTING SPEAR INTO GROUND): YEAH!

Keep doing something and you are bound to get good at it. Ash is relatively unskilled when he first straps a chainsaw on, but he's doing ballet with it by the end of the flick.

At the end of each game session, you should give players experience points. These points can be used to improve Attributes or skills, to gain new Qualities or buy off Drawbacks, or to buy Drama Points.

EXPERIENCE POINT AWARDS

Typically, each player should receive between one and five experience points in a game session. Everybody who participates gets one experience point (call it the "You Drove a Half Hour, oh, and Picked Up Ranch Doritos Before Playing" award). If the characters succeeded in thwarting evil through teamwork, heroic butt-kicking and creative thinking, an additional one or two points should be awarded. Players who stayed in character and helped move the story along should get another one or two points. At the end of major story arcs, another point should be awarded to everyone in the group, plus one more at the end of the Feature.



"GROOVY!"

-ASH

Varying Awards

With a set number of experience point awards, groups that play more often or more intensely will see their characters become very powerful very quickly. On the flip side, a group that meets only infrequently or treats their sessions more as social gatherings may find their characters stagnate a bit. To avoid these problems, experience awards can be adjusted.

Groups that meet relatively infrequently or take their time advancing the storyline should earn up to seven points per session and rarely less than two or three.

The default level of awards (one and five points per session) should be used for groups that meet regularly.

For those with the time and craving to run full-throttle with this game, award at most three points per session. This will keep the incidences of uber-Cast Member down.

ASH RULES

ATTRIBUTE IMPROVEMENT COST TABLE

OLD ATTRIBUTE LEVEL	NEW ATTRIBUTE LEVEL	COST
1	2	15
2	3	15
3	4	20
4	5	25
5	6	30
6	7	35
7	8	40
8	9	45
9	10	50
10	11	55
11	12	60
+1	+1	5 x New Attribute Level

USING EXPERIENCE POINTS

Experience points help characters improve in several ways. They represent wisdom from fighting and investigating the supernatural, physical improvements from all that fighting and wearing heavy armor, and learned abilities such as making crude bombs using your college chemistry book.

Improving Attributes: Swing axes enough and your axe-swinging arm is going to get stronger. Strength, Dexterity, and Constitution can be improved through physical training. Explaining improvements in mental Attributes is a bit harder, but not impossible. Perception can get better if the character learns to pay more attention to the world around him. Willpower improves after undergoing

severe ordeals; whatever doesn't swallow your soul only makes you stronger, and all that jazz. Intelligence might get better as a result of maturity and simple exercise—give those neurons a workout and they may start improving.

Improving an Attribute costs five times the next level, with a minimum of fifteen. So, raising an Attribute from one to two costs fifteen points; raising it from five to six costs 30 points. The player must pay for each level increase. The Attribute Improvement Cost Table summarizes these costs.

SKILL IMPROVEMENT COST TABLE

OLD SKILL LEVEL	NEW SKILL LEVEL	COST
0	1	5
1	2	4
2	3	6
3	4	8
4	5	10
5	6	12
6	7	14
7	8	16
8	9	18
9	10	20
10	11	22
11	12	24
+1	+1	2 x New Skill Level

Usually, humans can improve each Attribute by one level and no more. However, if the character starts out the game fairly young (somebody with the Teenager Drawback, for instance), you can allow him to improve Attributes by up to two levels, allowing for those growth spurts that can happen before the character reaches 18. Promised Ones are not limited to a one- or two-step increase in Attributes, and can improve them up to level 12. Some beings have Attributes well above level 12, but they are not meant to be Cast Members. They should also be approached very respectfully.

Skills: Raising a skill has a cost equal to the new level times two (i.e., to raise a level three skill to level four costs eight experience points). A skill cannot be improved by more than one level at the end of a game session. There is no limit to skill levels.

Getting a brand-new skill (i.e., one that is at level zero at the beginning of the game) costs five experience points for the first level. After that, it improves normally. This assumes the Cast Member was able to learn the skill somehow, either by having a teacher or through plain old practice.

Languages: Language is a special case; no matter how good the Cast Members are, they are not going to pick up a new language from one session to the next. To improve this skill, the character must spend at least a month studying each language intensively before spending points on it.

Qualities and Drawbacks: Some Qualities are inborn—if a character doesn't have them now, he never will (Acute Senses, for example; vision or hearing rarely improves with time). Others are possible additions. Still, unless your players present a very convincing in-game rationale for being allowed to buy a specific Quality with experience points, only the following may be purchased after character generation: Contacts, Good Luck, Resources, and Status. You should always feel free to deny any Quality purchase that you believe is unjustified.

In some cases, a newly manifested Quality costs no points—if the Cast Member becomes rich through his own efforts, he should not be charged for the increase in Resources level, for example.

Some Drawbacks can be “bought” off, although again some reason for the change should be provided. Also, if you are not convinced that the player or Cast Member has displayed behavior that would lead to the removal of a Drawback, don't allow this expenditure of experience points.

In other instances, a Drawback is imposed on a character for the sake of the storyline. A Primitive Screwhead who gets an arm chopped off, for example, doesn't get new Quality points for it. It is also possible for a player to take on a new Drawback, and receive the character points for it. For example, the Impaired Senses (Hearing) Drawback might be voluntarily accepted by a character who spends a great deal of time practicing with his loud industrial music bards.

Drama Points: Players can also buy Drama Points with experience points, at the rate of one Drama Point per two experience points if the Cast Member is a Hero or Experienced Hero, and one for one if he is a Primitive Screwhead.

Munchkining 201

After a sufficiently large number of games, Primitive Screwheads can become quite powerful. If they're getting too beefy, you may want to say they can't buy Experience Points with Drama Points on a one for one basis. Declare them at Hero level at that point and force them to spend two experience points per Drama Point. Alternatively, leave them at the same purchase ratio and just throw in a few more nasties. It's up to you, really.

Improvement Costs

Just as you can vary the amount of experience points you award to keep the power levels among characters to a dull roar, so too you can adjust the costs of improvements. If Attributes and skills seem to be rising too fast, bump up their cost by one to five. Another adjustment could be to charge twice or thrice the amount of points for any new or increased Qualities. If you go that route though, you may want to think about expanding the Qualities available for purchase. The rationales for the improvements are going to get harder to swallow, but hey, it's a wild and wacky world out there. No reason the characters can't be also.

SAMPLE COMBAT ASH MEETS EVIL SHEILA

Here's how a sample roleplaying session might go, as well as a taste of how combat runs. Ash has just wrecked the Death Coaster thanks to the sudden appearance of Sheila.

TURN 1

Ash/Bruce: "You get that knucklehead on the phone and tell him I want the *Deadlands* movie now! Screw *Spider-Man 3*! That'll never make any money anyway."

Director: "Um, Bruce, can we get back to the game?"

Sheila/Embeth: "Yeah, get with it dufus. I've been waiting to play the *Army of Darkness* roleplaying game for years!"

Ash/Bruce: "Sorry, sugarpie. Now where were we? There was an army of the dead or something right?"

Director: "Yeah. You've just wrecked the Death Coaster . . ."

Ash/Bruce: "Your dad's gonna kill you for that, Sam."

Director: ". . . because Sheila appeared in front of you."

Sheila/Embeth: "I'll go ahead and reveal my surprise now."

Director: "Bruce, Sheila stands over you, revealing cracked-white skin, sharp teeth, and an evil look in her eyes."

Ash/Bruce: "That's what you two were doing back there? I thought you were 'auditioning' her again."

Director: "Quiet, you!"

Sheila/Embeth: "I whip out my spear and stab him right between the eyes!"

Ash/Bruce: "Whoa, baby. Can't we talk about this?"

Sheila/Embeth: "Pillow talk, baby. I stab him."

Director: "Okay. Sheila has you, so she goes first. Make me a Dexterity plus Getting Medieval roll, Embeth."

Sheila/Embeth: "Kewl. I'm all supergal now, so my Dexterity is 6 right? And my Getting Medieval is 6. I rolled a 5 on that little weird numbered thing. That gives me a 17. Beat that, baby."

Ash/Bruce: "No problem, Chiquita. I'm the Main Man, remember? I roll out of the way like a banana."

Director: "A banana?"

Ash/Bruce: "Yeah, a banana. Deal with it. Dexterity 6, Getting Medieval 5. And the little plastic thing says 4. That's a . . . agent?"

Agent: "15 Mr. Campbell."

Sheila/Embeth: "Hah! Nailed you!"

Director: "Yikes. With Evil Sheila's new and improved Strength 5, the spear does 18 damage, plus four Success Levels makes it 22. Doubled because it's Slash/stab makes it a whopping 44."

Sheila/Embeth: "Girl Power!"

Ash/Bruce (slaps his face in a really good Three Stooges/Curly fashion): "My turn. What's near me?"

Director: "Well, you're kind of near the pit."

Ash/Bruce: "Perfect. I grab the spear and use it to flip her into the pit. I'm giving you the shaft, baby."

Director: "Sweet. I should use that in my next film. Okay, both of you make a Strength and Kung Fu roll."

Ash/Bruce: "My agent says I got a 16."

Sheila/Embeth: "Dang."

Director: "Do you need help?"

Sheila/Embeth: "I can do my own math, thank you. This little die hates me. It rolled a one. That's just a 12."

Ash/Bruce: "Heh heh heh. Dig the chin, baby. H. E. R. O."

Sheila/Embeth: "I spend a Drama Point. That gives me a 22, right?"

Ash/Bruce: "Oooh!"

Director: "Nice! Embeth, you're supposed to decide to use them when I ask you what you want to do, before you roll anything."

Ash/Bruce: "Nyuk, nyuk, nyuk."

Director: "But this is your first time, so I'll let you get away with it. Sorry, Bruce. You try to flip Sheila but she overpowers you and slaps you upside the head with the haft."

Ash/Bruce: "Damn right I'm getting the shaft."

Director: "No, the haft. She hits you with the haft."

Ash/Bruce: "What's a 'haft'?"

Director: "The stick. The stick part of the spear."

Ash/Bruce: "Nerd."

TURN 2

Director: "Okay. Next Turn. What does everyone want to do? You'll be going first, Bruce, since Ash is the star."

Ash/Bruce: "Let's try out this chainsaw."

Sheila/Embeth: "BRUCE!"

Ash/Bruce: "Come on, baby. Lemme show you my tool."

Sheila/Embeth: "All right, wise guy. I'll use that Beguile power you told me about, Sam."

Director: "Oh, nice one! Okay. You go first then since Ash has to start up the chainsaw. What do you say? Let's see you act."

Sheila/Embeth: "Oh, Ash! Don't hurt me! I believe in you! You are the Promised One!"

Ash/Bruce: "I gotta put up with that crap?"

Director: "Make a Willpower roll."

Ash/Bruce: "I double those right?"

Director: "Usually, but not with Sheila. You loooooove her."

Sheila/Embeth: "You loooooove me! You loooooove me!"

Ash/Bruce: "Creepy. Okay. Agent says 8."

Director: "Nope. Not good enough. Ash powers down the chainsaw and says 'Sheila?' That's your Turn."

Ash/Bruce: "That's crap."

TURN 3

Director: "Okay, you don't want to chop her up anymore. It just doesn't feel right."

Ash/Bruce: "Yeah, right. Don't I cut up my girlfriends like every other night?"

Sheila/Embeth: "What a lady's man."

Ash/Bruce: "I didn't see you complaining last night, baby."

Director: "Okay. Tell me what you want to do Embeth—Ash is still confused from your transformation so I'll give you initiative again."

Sheila/Embeth: "I'll lunge at him and throttle the jerk. See if I can't use these pretty new nails to rip out a jugular or two."

Ash/Bruce: "Damn. When did you get so blood-thirsty? And where are the jugglers? Did I miss something?"

Director (gives Bruce "the look."): "Okay. You have to grapple first, but you can take an extra action if you want since your Dexterity is 6. That lets you Grapple and Choke all in one move. What do you want to do, Bruce?"

Ash/Bruce (looks at Embeth and acts hurt): "I'll go full defense this Turn. She's got blood in her eyes."

Sheila/Embeth: "Okay, Grapple is Dexterity and Kung Fu + 2. I get an 21."

Ash/Bruce: "My agent says 14. Hey knucklehead, you add that +3 for me going full defensive? That's what I thought. Better start calling Eric Estrada. That's a 17, Sam."

Sheila/Embeth: "Hah! Still not good enough. Dead by dawn! Now I get to choke you. Hmm. Strength and Kung Fu plus a die roll. I get 18."

Director: "Minus 2 for your second attack this Turn. That's a 16."

Ash/Bruce: "Mr. Ten Percent says 15."

Director: "Evil Sheila glides across the ground and grasps you by the throat. You feel her fingers sinking into your flesh. Lose four Life Points, and you're at -2 to your actions until you break free . . . or suffocate."

Ash/Bruce: "Man, I'm really hurting from that Death Coaster crash and the spear that almost nailed Stanley."

Sheila/Embeth: "Stanley?"

Ash/Bruce: "Yeah. As in the power drill."

Director: "Didn't we use that gag already in this book?"

All: "Shhh!"

Ash/Bruce: "I'll spend one of those Drama Point thingies. The kind that give me all my Life Points back."

Director: "Ah, the ones that don't exist. You can spend a Drama Point to get back half of the Life Points you've lost."

Ash/Bruce: "That'll do. Now get your hands off me, witch."

Sheila/Embeth: "Rude, but hot. Let's go, LOVER."

CHAPTER FOUR



BATTLE SYSTEM

ARTHUR: HOW WILL WE FIGHT AN ARMY OF THE DEAD AT OUR CASTLE WALLS? HOW WILL YOU FIGHT THAT? MORE WORDS? MOST OF OUR PEOPLE HAVE ALREADY FLED. WE ARE BUT SIXTY MEN.

One of the highlights of *Army of Darkness* is the massive battle between the skeletons and the desperate human defenders of Arthur's castle. Oh, and that Ash guy. If you want to have one of these big battles in your game, go buy hundreds of miniatures, paint them, and report back here for a detailed tactical combat.

Okay, just kidding. That would be slower than molasses and not a whole lot of fun. Oh, maybe the first 12 hours or so wouldn't be so bad, but after that it'd just get old.

Have no fear, knuckleheads. We have a bitchin' way of handling the biggest battles and the maddest mayhem. We like to call it our Cinematic Battle System.

Throughout this section, we'll use the movie as an example, but you can use this for any scenario, from the post-apocalyptic alternate ending to a weird World War II type setting (which we just happen to have in **Chapter Seven: Worlds of Darkness**, fancy that).

GETTING NARRATIVE

The Cinematic Battle System is a quick and dirty system designed for you Directors who like to play fast and loose with numbers so they can concentrate on describing the action. Battles are found in rounds, an arbitrary measure of time created mostly

to distinguish it from Turns. Things happen a bit slower in battle because more folks are doing more things. The exact amount of time in a round depends on what's going on. If the armies are fully engaged in hand-to-hand combat, each round might only be a few minutes. If they're still maneuvering and only firing occasional volleys as targets come in range, the round might be half an hour long or more.

Given the concentration on the action (not the mechanics), your description does actually matter even though it's a fairly subjective summation of how you think the battle is going. The heroes' plans and reactions must make sense within the context of your interpretation of the battle results.

For example, let's say Arthur's men meet a group of skeletons in an open field battle. The first couple of rounds don't go so well and the humans are starting to lose. You describe the warriors falling back and getting flanked. In response, one of the Cast Members decides to lead a hidden cavalry reserve to attack the bonebag flankers and relieve the front-line troops. You say that's a fine plan and grant the heroes a bonus for the round of the cavalry charge.

PLANS AND SCHEMES

Before the battle, the Cast should be given a written list of the forces at their disposal, and at least a sketch map of the situation. In the battle from *Army of Darkness*, for instance, you'd tell the group they have 30 swordsmen, 20 archers, and 10 knights besides the named characters. Then you should sketch out a rough outline of Arthur's castle, point out the moat, show them the undead's most likely direction of approach, and so on.

Providing a good description and at least a quick sketch map gives the players a clear understanding of what they're up against.

PLAN, SCHMAN

Once the group knows what their troops and terrain are like, they can start kibitzing about their plan. Even though the Cinematic Battle System boils down to die-rolling, the Cast's plan still matters. Some of the actions they take might gain them bonuses on their Battle Test (see p. 121). They might also be able to take advantage of certain nar-

rative situations as the battle rages if they've properly planned for it. Seems a bit vague? Ah, you'll see exactly what we're talking about as we continue.

LEADING FROM THE FRONT

BLACKSMITH: I'LL STAND BY YA.

Cast Members shouldn't sit back and let the Guest Stars do all the fighting for them. Most have huge egos when it comes to combat and will want to dive right into the carnage.

Such homicidal maniacs can choose whether to fight in hand-to-hand combat or stand back and fire their guns, arrows, and so on. To spill some blood, the player first describes his hero's action in general terms. This should be something like "I crank up the chainsaw and dive off the wall into the skeletons." Or, "I take a crossbow with explosive bolts and try to pick off the calcium captains."

The narrative description determines what roll the character uses for the round, usually either Strength and Getting Medieval, or Dexterity and Gun Fu. Once that's determined, check the tables below to see what happens. Use the standard target number (ah . . . nine dummy—go back and reread **Chapter Three: Ash Rules**) for this roll, not a foe's Combat Score (this roll simulates several minutes worth of fighting against multiple foes). **In the Thick of It** is the chart for those who want to get medieval; **Sniper** is for those who want to hang back and pick off their targets from afar. The Success Level determines the effect the hero has on his side's Battle Test (see p. 121).

BATTLE SYSTEM

IN THE THICK OF IT (MELEE ATTACKS)

Failure: The hero wades into battle and finds himself overwhelmed by his foes. He suffers three counterattacks. Life sucks that way.

1-2 Success Levels: The hero slays his fair share but pays for his heroism in blood. He adds +2 to his side's Battle Test for the round but suffers two counterattacks.

3-4 Success Levels: The hero rages through his foes, splitting skulls like melons at a Gallagher show. He adds +3 to his side's Battle Test for the round and suffers one counterattack.

5+ Success Levels: The hero covers himself in glory (as well as brains, blood, and bits of bone)! He adds +4 to his side's Battle Test for the round and no counterattacks can be made against him.

SNIPER (RANGED ATTACKS)

Failure: The hero pops his head up and the enemy spots him. He inflicts few casualties this round and suffers two ranged counterattacks (assuming the bad guys are range attack capable)—now he knows what a pincushion feels like.

1-2 Success Levels: The warrior picks off several foes but suffers some return fire as well. He adds +1 to his side's Battle Test but suffers one counterattack from enemy missile fire (assuming they have such weapons).

3-4 Success Levels: This guy could shoot the wings off a fly. He puts down a number of foes and adds +2 to his side's Battle Test for the round. He is unscathed by counterattacks.

5+ Success Levels: Don't give this guy a bell tower and a box of Oreos! He nails more opponents than he can count. He adds +3 to his side's Battle Test for the round and ignores any missiles targeted at him.

Some of the entries state that the hero suffers a "counterattack." This is an automatic hit from the most common weapon wielded by the enemy in that type of combat (hand weapons in melee, missile weapons at range). The character gets his armor against the counterattack as usual. If Ash fights the *Army of Darkness* in hand-to-hand combat and gets hit with a counterattack, for example, he suffers the

sword-blow of a skeleton. It does its usual damage of 14 (see p. 164), doubled to 28 (for Slash/stab) and Ash loses 28 Life Points (might be a good time for Drama Point spending). If wearing a chain mail (Armor Value 8), he'd only lose 12 Life Points.

Note that Cast Members can't go after specific foes whenever they want—that requires a Plot Twist Drama Point expenditure (see p. 110). In that case, arrange for the two foes to meet up in the field of battle. That might take some doing narratively but make it happen anyway—those Drama Points are pretty special things. Once the two foes come face to face, shift over into regular **Unisystem** Turns for a while. The battle can rage around them but it becomes mostly backdrop. Then again, at a dramatically appropriate time, a stray arrow, grunt soldier, collapsing wall, or some such may intrude to mess up the dandy little duel going on.

BATTLE TEST

Dice meisters rejoice—it's time to roll the bones. The leaders of each side make an Intelligence and Influence (or just use their Brains Score) roll and add or subtract the modifiers from the Battle Test Modifiers Table.

BATTLE TEST MODIFIERS TABLE

MOD	SITUATION
+2	The leader's army is roughly twice as strong or numerous as your foe.
+4	The leader's army is three times powerful than your foe or better.
+2	The leader's army is protected by major fortifications.
+2	The leader's army is composed of troops that cause fear, and their foes are mostly mortal.
+1 to +4	Any additional beneficial surprises, tricks, advantages, or heroes' bonuses. This bonus should only apply in the round it occurs.

The leader with the highest total wins the round; ties are just that—ties. You should narrate the action, covering the next round of the battle.

MODIFIERS

So how do you judge relative strengths between the armies? Good question. Compare numbers, types of troops, individuals who make up the types of troops, weapons, armor, training. The King's Guard, a group of heavily armed and armored cavalry, can probably handle three or four times their number in weenie skeletons. If such a battle, the abilities of the Guard outweigh the numbers of the dead, so no modifier would be applied.

Once you consider all those "power of army" things, remind yourself that the storyline is paramount. What do you think would make for a good tale? All in all, there's no need to sweat the exact decision made regarding relative strengths. Make a call and move on.

For situation-specific modifiers, consider what's different about the Battle Test for this round compared to any other. Did the cavalry get into position to charge this round? Are the front ranks in range of the catapults for the first time this round? Is the final route of retreat cut off so the troops know it's kill or be killed time? These are the situations that call for special modifiers.

Finally, your judgment calls aren't set in stone. Assign modifiers, roll the dice, and see what the results are. Next round, adjust your modifier calls depending on new circumstances, your re-evaluation of the army strengths (taking into account casualties on both sides), or where you want the story to go.

CASUALTIES

Now both sides make Constitution (not doubled) rolls for each type of troop in their force. The side that lost the round subtracts two from each roll. (Neither side suffers the penalty if the Battle Test was a tie.)

If a troop type fails its roll, it suffers 10% of its commencement-of-battle number in casualties (round normally). If an army has 120 archers when it marched into battle, and it suffered 10% casualties, 12 archers become casualties that round and may no longer participate in the battle. This 10% number remains constant even as the total fighting force decreases. In subsequent rounds, 12 more archers are lost until there are none (but mostly likely someone will retreat before then). Make sure you write down your different troop types and their starting number before you get to this step so there's no "cheating."

BATTLE SYSTEM

Remember that “casualties” means killed or wounded. Some of those who took a dive might be just fine for the next battle—if there is one.

RETREAT!

The final step is for the general who lost to check the morale of his troops. He should make a Willpower roll. His Willpower is doubled as long as he still has half his force left. The moment it drops below that, he must roll Willpower without doubling.

Failure means his troops are ready to retreat. The general can keep fighting, but his losses from this point on are doubled (20% of commencement-of-battle numbers per roll instead of 10%). This often happens when troops can't retreat—such as those in a be-sieged castle or other fortification.

Drama Points and Battles

The leader of each side can spend Drama Points as usual. Only one Drama Point may be spent per round.

When using a Heroic Feat Drama Point to add +10 to his Battle Test (see p. 109), the player must describe what brilliant plan, stirring speech, or unexpected event caused this bonus, but it otherwise works as usual.

The I Think I'm Okay Drama Point expenditure (see p. 109) is treated a bit differently in the battle context. Such Drama Points can be used to negate half an army's losses for the round. The point may be spent after results are determined. This represents the general yelling or encouraging the walking wounded to get back into the fight, rallying deserters, or simply stirring his men to greatness by his own daring do.

Alternatively, an I Think I'm Okay Drama Point may be spent to negate any losses from a particular type of troops. The other types suffer full losses as dictated by their Constitution rolls.

PUTTING IT ALL TOGETHER

EVIL ASH: I POSSESS THE NECRONOMICON. I'VE CRUSHED YOUR PATHETIC ARMY. NOW I'LL HAVE MY VENGEANCE!

What could we possibly do for an example? I know. Let's go right to the climactic battle in *Army of Darkness* when the skeletal hordes attack Arthur's castle. (Stunned, ain't cha?)

The good guys are composed of Ash, Arthur, the Blacksmith, the Wiseman, and the Archer Captain. They lead 30 swordsmen, 20 archers, and 10 knights.

The Army of the Dead has 450 skeletons, 50 calcium captains, and 25 wights. Their characters are Evil Ash, Evil Sheila, and a winged deadite.

Now we go through the modifiers. You decide the skeletons are roughly equal to the archers and swordsmen, so that makes the bad guys easily three times more numerous (i.e., powerful) than Arthur's men.

The army of the dead adds +4 to their Battle Test for outnumbering the humans by more than three to one. They also add +2 because the undead instill bone-chilling fear in Arthur's men. That's a total bonus of +6.

Arthur's men get +2 for fortifications. You also decide to give the humans a one-time bonus of +2 for the catapult bombs, +2 for the black powder bombs on the arrows, and a whopping +4 for the Death Coaster. Each of these bonuses may only be used once, however, and they can only be used when they make sense narratively. For instance, the catapults can't be used once the skeletons have broken into the castle courtyard.

Ash's player decides he will use the catapult's black powder bombs first, while the undead are still at a distance. Ash's Intelligence 3 and Influence 4 combine for a total of seven. He rolls a below-average four and gets a Battle Test total of 13 before any modifiers. With the +2 for the castle walls and +2 for the catapults, he has a respectable 17.

The dead army advances and the skeletons fire crossbows. Evil Ash has a Brains Score 12 (which already includes his roll result of six). He gets to add +6 to his Battle Test for his numbers and the undead fear factor. That's 18 total. Yowch!

The first round goes to the Army of the Dead. Each group of Arthur's men must make a Constitution roll at -2. He rolls for his Swordsmen

first (Constitution 3). They roll a four, add three, but have to subtract two, so their total is five. They fail, so one out of every 10 drops like a sack of potatoes. Since there were 25, 2.5 guys—rounded to three—are out of the fight.

The archers have Constitution 2. They roll a six, add two, subtract two because they lost, and get a six. They also suffer 10% casualties, or two bowmen.

Arthur's knights get a little luckier. Their Constitution provides a bonus of four, and they roll an eight. Subtracting two gives them a 10. They suffer no casualties. If they had failed the roll, one knight in shining armor would turn into a knight in a shining pile of goo.

Now it's the bad guys' turn. You make a Constitution roll for the skeletons. They have Constitution 3, so their bonus is three. They get unlucky and roll a one, so they suffer 10% casualties, and 45 of them shatter beneath a barrage of black powder arrows and catapult-bombs.

The calcium captains have a Constitution 4. They roll a five and get nine, so they're fine.

The wights dodge around the battlefield like crazed dope fiends but roll a four. Combined with their Constitution 3, that's less than nine. Three of those nasties get caught in the crossfire. Huzzah!

You describe numerous skeletons and wights blowing up, but a number of archers and swordsmen are pinned by crossbow bolts or flee in terror at the advancing undead.

Now it's time for the good guys morale roll. Do they really want to stick around and fight some more. The troops are still at over half strength so Ash's Willpower Attribute is doubled (to eight). He can't fail. That's good—at least until his troops suffer more than half casualties.

Whether to make Evil Ash roll for morale depends on how mindless you think the skeletons and deadites are. They could be immune to fear but, at least with the skeletons, several lines in the movie suggested they had personalities. If you go that route, Evil Ash's Willpower 4 also leads to an automatic success.

Time to move on to the next round . . . and pray for Henry's arrival.



BATTLE SYSTEM

CHAPTER FIVE

DIRECTOR'S CUT

**ASH: IT WASN'T ALWAYS LIKE THIS.
I HAD A REAL LIFE... ONCE. A JOB.**

By now, you should have an idea of how the rules work and what the bad guys are up to. You know all the mechanical stuff—how to rig up special effects, fight choreography, and basic acting. Later, we're going to give you several background settings, from the original one in the movie to historical and even a future possibility.

None of that is enough for a full-fledged show though. You also need the framework of the story. To help keep things “in character,” the default structure of an *Army of Darkness* game is broken up into Episodes—self-contained scenarios that can be played out in one to three game sessions, or Seasons—longer stories that have important and even epic effects on the setting as a whole.

This section provides advice and suggestions for all you budding Directors. Use them, modify them or ignore them as you see fit.

TIME AND PLACE

**ASH: I DON'T WANT YOUR BOOK. I DON'T WANT YOUR BULLSHIT!
JUST SEND ME BACK TO MY OWN TIME.**

Let's talk setting here—where will your storyline take place? Where and when are as important as who your stars are. Where and when does the evil appear? What is it up to? The ideal setting provides a number of “hooks” for the Cast. It should be filled with deadly locations filled with dark and terrible

secrets and wondrous treasures. There should also be a number of fascinating people to interact with—friends, acquaintances and foes. Think about people the Cast not only fight with, but fall in love with and make steadfast friends as well. Finally, if the Cast is going to save the world, the world should be worth saving; the setting should have some redeeming qualities.

MEDIEVAL ENGLAND

This is the default setting because it's where the movie takes place. There are other places to visit, but let's concentrate on what we know first.

Arthur's England is a great place to adventure for a while because there are lots of things to do and everyone is familiar with the basic locations. Also, because the movie's version of England is so ahistorical, you can really do anything you want with it. Want to add werewolves and vampires? No problem. Need a raging waterfall on the Thames to hide a pirate's cave? Sure! Anything you care to add to what was in the movie is possible.

One of the things you have to decide early on is whether it takes place during Ash's tale, after it, or in an alternate story where there is no Ash but his role is filled by one or more of your own Cast. You might also think about setting an Episode or two in Arthur's kingdom after Ash has put himself to sleep. Let's talk about each of these options in a little more detail.

HAIL TO THE KING, BABY

If Ash is present, it's best if he's one of the Cast. The rest of the players can be folks like Arthur or the Blacksmith, or they can bring in additional champions from other locales. It doesn't really work to have Ash present but not played by one of your friends. His role in the plot is just too important, and he'll overshadow the rest of the group if he's running around doing his own thing and telling them what to do.

NAME'S BOB-SPORTING GOODS

Maybe the best option for gaming purposes is to forget Ash and let your group make their own heroes. That way everyone gets to be their own dog

and do things the way they want, not the way Ash might have handled it.

Be careful with this option though, because your Cast may be much more competent than Ash. We know the main man kicks serious demon booty, but he's also "forced" to screw up now and then to give us some comic relief and advance the plot. **Chapter Six: Land of Darkness** has specific information on how to use the main locations and plot lines in the movie with enough changes to throw even the most die-hard *Army of Darkness* fans for a loop.

ASH HAS LEFT THE BUILDING

One neat idea to think about—and a great introductory Episode—is to consider what happens in Arthur's land after the defeat of the army of the dead. The deadites have been routed, but perhaps a few regiments of skeletons remain. At least one flying demon remains unaccounted for as well. Of course, the Watcher in the Woods still lurks in the Misty Forest. Raising the army of the dead has fatigued the creature for a time, but if the main evil can create enough chaos, it might rise again.

Ash seals himself in a cave and is no longer around, so Arthur finds a new group of heroes to tie up these loose ends. Should they wake the Promised One? Should they risk losing the Necronomicon? See **Chapter Eight: Once More Unto the Breach** for a fleshed-out adventure around this very idea.

"HAIL TO THE KING BABY"
-ASH

DIRECTOR'S CUT

Players Who Aren't Fans

Only boring losers who only watch foreign films and stuff like *Peter's Friends* don't like *Army of Darkness*. But maybe some players haven't memorized every line like the rest of us. Maybe you've got a player who's in it due to peer pressure, or maybe he's sick of chopping up orcs in a 10 ft. by 10 ft. room and wanted something new. You need to be careful about these kinds of players. Don't do so many in-jokes and obscure references that the newbies feel like lepers.

In some ways, players who don't know much about *Army of Darkness* are actually a bonus. Unlike veteran Ash fans, they get to discover all the creepy scenes you have planned for the first time. They won't know what's in the pit, how important it is to properly pronounce "Klaatu Verata Nikto," or that Sheila is destined for a walk on the wild side.

People who enjoy action-adventure games with a supernatural background and quirky humor should like playing this game. The time-spanning Cast is large enough to accommodate a bunch of different characters and playing styles, from Buck Rogers to Gorf of the Hill People from your regular d20 campaign. When you're done with the original plot, tell them to rent the DVD (or better still, buy it—they're very handy in an apocalypse). Then they can do the whole "Hey, we did that!" routine and become as big a fan as you are.

OTHER TIMES AND PLACES

Officially, we know the Necronomicon has surfaced on at least four occasions—ancient Sumeria around 3000 BC, England in 1300 AD, Tennessee in 1993, and England 2093 AD.

If you're confused about those dates, here's the way we got them.

The book was made in Sumeria in 3000 BC. This is about the time the legend of Gilgamesh comes about, and we've incorporated that into an unofficial setting in **Chapter Seven: Worlds of Darkness** (see pp. 177-189).

England in 1300 AD is set in stone. That's where Ash sends the book after opening the time vortex in the beginning of the film. We cover that in gory detail in **Chapter Six: Land of Darkness**.

Tennessee is a little trickier if you've watched earlier "versions" of the tale of the Evil Dead. The dates in those films aren't specific, but if they are considered canon in your game, it's fine to set the date of those events as 1993, when *Army of Darkness* debuted. Ash fights the evil in the cabin in 1993 and is then transported to Circa England.

The next stop comes from the original ending written by the series creator, Sam Raimi. It doesn't appear in the studio release, but is the only ending on the Director's Cut (the supermarket ending isn't even on that version). So we consider that official because it's the creator's original intent, it's more interesting from an RPG point of view, and it provides a new and dangerous setting for the tale of the Evil Dead. We cover that approach as well in **Chapter Seven: Worlds of Darkness** (see pp. 200-211).

THE EVIL OF THE NECRONOMICON

The Watcher is a timeless creature, and the Necronomicon is virtually indestructible. Either one can surface during any other time period or setting—perhaps even on other worlds. That's exactly the premise we took when creating our WWII settings in **Chapter Seven: Worlds of Darkness** (see pp. 189-200), and you should do the same.

If you'd like to create your own evil setting, you should feel free to steal copiously from other cool properties. We can't do it because of a little thing called intellectual property laws, but there's no reason you can't do it in your own game. Good sources of inspiration include other roleplaying games (they're inferior of course, but some might have a few good ideas), books, television, and of course movies. Just name some properties and consider the possibilities. Think what would happen in the Watcher somehow came into the world of *Starship Troopers* or *Zorro*. Or what if Al got possessed by a

deadite in *Happy Days*? And who'd want to kiss Dawson if he got all Linda Blaired? Roleplaying games like *Savage Worlds*, *Deadlands*, or *Weird Wars*—which everyone at Eden thinks are super-groovy—are also prime targets for a good ol' fashioned demonic infestation.

The sky's the limit when you visit other settings. All you need to do is throw in a few complications, figure out what the Evil Dead are up to, and turn your heroes loose. Some can be time traveling champions while others are natives to that particular setting.

RESTLESS DEAD

Another possibility that goes hand-in-hand with other times and places is to have the heroes travel to different settings frequently. This is actually what we recommend, as it helps keep the encounter fresh and new, and gives the Evil Dead different forms to assume as they travel the global timestream.

In this case, your heroes are demon-slayers, wittingly or unwittingly. Perhaps they find some way to track the Necronomicon and have to stop it every place and time it appears. One Episode they're in

“Protect the Book!”

One of the problems that might arise in your game is that the Cast must frequently come in direct contact with the Book of the Dead. What if they just decide to burn it? Or chuck it in a landfill? Or bury it in the cement of the Empire State Building as it's being built?

We have some great suggestions for you on how to handle that. None of this is official, of course, but it works well and will make your games much more interesting.

Indestructible: The Necronomicon is like the One Ring—it can't be crushed, burned, or shredded. Even if every page is torn out, swallowed, and crapped out a goose, the thing appears fresh as a daisy the next time someone cracks the spine. Well, as fresh as the thing ever looks—it is bound in human flesh, after all.

The book is also sentient. It has a few minor powers of illusion and knows how to use them to keep itself safe. It may let someone *think* they've burned, buried, or bashed it just so it can get away and appear somewhere else, far away from those who threaten it.

Protected: An old and ancient order descended from the original creators of the book seek out the book wherever it appears and protect it. The Dark Ones are present in all times and most places. They retain some incantations from its creation, and given enough time can eventually detect and find it anytime it appears.

Say you want to do the Necronomicon in mythical Atlantis, and you want the Dark Ones to come calling. No problem. They can open a vortex and drop right in. Even worse, they're armed with Back Stabbers, a nasty knife that Promised Ones should really avoid (see p. 168).

Teleport: When it is destroyed, the Necronomicon returns to the castle of Kandar in whatever is Sumeria at the time (see p. 178-179). Maybe individual Necronomicons can be destroyed, but when they are, another copy simply materializes in the inner chamber at the castle of Candar, where Professor Raymond Knowby first found it.

Redundancy: There are LOTS of copies. Perhaps, like in a certain video game, the Necronomicon is published, becomes a bestseller, and is read over the radio. Maybe that's another way the book protects itself—by making sure there are always copies of its dire contents available somewhere, somehow.

ancient Rome, watching Spartacus use the Book of the Dead to pull his gladiators off their poles and march on the Senate. Next time out, they're in a little town called Sunnydale watching deadites pour out of a certain hole in the ground.

This type of game is tons of fun for you and the Cast, and lets you create lots of new places to burn and people to dismember. On the other hand, it's a fair amount of work. You have to create a new "set" every time they travel, with new Guest Stars, new Adversaries, and new hotspots. The Cast rarely gets the chance to bond with anybody aside from each other, since they're vortexing towards the sunset after each Episode. This isn't necessarily bad, but you should consider it carefully before you do the "idea of the month" routine.

LET'S JUST CALL THE POLICE

What do you do if the heroes just decide to call the police/army/legion and let them fight the evil? Great question. Here are several ways to handle it.

ISOLATION

The best answer to this question is—don't let them. It's a tried and true staple of all horror films. Put your Cast somewhere where they can't call for help and they'll have to deal with it on their own. An arctic research station, a deserted cruise liner, even a remote cabin in the woods are all good locations to isolate those troublesome do-gooders.

In the modern world, you may need to take care of a few other contingencies as well. Cell phones can't find a signal or run out of juice, bad weather interferes with the radio, or telephone lines are knocked down by mishaps (or the demons themselves). No matter what the heroes do, they're on their own—at least for a while.

SO WHAT?

Another option is to let the heroes call the police. In the modern world, call the police about a murder and you'll have a squadron of cars at your door in less than five minutes. What then? Remember that Evil is very intelligent. It has no desire to engage in full-scale war with forces it isn't sure it can beat.

Maybe the police show up at the cabin in the woods and the dead pull the oldest trick in the book—they abandon the bodies and leave the heroes standing there with brains on their hands. "Sure, your friend was a demon and you just had to chop her into bits and bury her in the fruit cellar." That defense won't hold even with the spirit of Johnny Cochran on your team.

What if there is indisputable proof of the demons' existence? Maybe a nosy reporter-type took footage of the dead. Ruin it. The film comes out blank or full of "noise," or the cops simply don't believe this isn't the work of some almost-clever film student. ("Look there. You can plainly see that blood isn't real. It's too dark.")

Help might almost be more reliable in older times. In *Army of Darkness*, for instance, the Evil wasn't afraid to let itself be known. It somehow knew Arthur's only possible help would come from Henry—there's nothing in the movie that tells us Arthur could have relied on the king and the entire English army. Maybe, as we posit, the king and his army were off fighting another war (this is about the time of King Edward I's invasion of Scotland, by the way), or maybe the king is just lazy and indolent. Or maybe Arthur did get help once and the dead "hid," making him look like a stooge. He's not going to fall for that one again.

But Arthur will commit his few resources to the cause, and just *maybe* he can get help from one other neighbor who has seen the Evil with his own eyes (like Duke Henry).

Alternatively, consider a tale set in World War I. The heroes encounter a demon in the trenches of their isolated sector and manage to convince their commanding officer that something lurks in No Man's Land. The officer sends an entire platoon out to stop them and your adventure is set. That's the limit though, because the officer knows headquarters will never believe him if he says the dead are rising up out of the shell craters.

I'M AUDI 5000

One of Ash's major motivations throughout the film is to go home. He can't until he gets the book, but even after that, he finally decides to stay and help Arthur fight the army of the dead.

But what if he hadn't? What if Ash had said adios and left Arthur to fend for himself? More importantly, what if your Cast Members decide they don't care to soak themselves in gore for the rest of the world?

We're talking about motivations. Like a real Director, you may need to help some of your Cast figure out why they're here, and why they're staying.

BECAUSE IT'S THE GAME

From a meta-game point of view, the players came to your game for high action and adventure. They shouldn't be out to destroy every plot you come up with by finding ways to run away from it. Alternatively, you shouldn't just expect a housewife from Detroit to volunteer for every mission against the deadites that's offered to her.

What you need is balance. Provide your Cast with a compelling reason to care and go along with whatever deadly quest you send them on. For most, saving the world ought to do it. It doesn't do any good to abandon the fight if it ensures the world is going to end anyway.

Still, truly interesting characters should look for reasons why *they* have to be the ones to fight the dead. If one character is Marge, a housewife from Detroit and another is Sgt. Rock, a grizzled veteran of World War II, what could Marge possibly contribute in a fight? Plenty if Marge is a Promised One. She's there for a reason, and if she balks at her responsibility, it means the end of her sewing circle and everything else with it. If she's a Primitive Screwhead, call it destiny. She's still somehow tougher than the average Joe (by virtue of being a Primitive Screwhead), and while she may not be a Promised One, she still has some part to play in all this. Besides, if she doesn't, it's curtains for all her favorite daytime soaps (not to mention the rest of the world).

BECAUSE THEY CAN'T

Another way to ensure every character gets involved is to *make* them do so simply to survive. This works especially well in isolated locations. Maybe Marge the housewife is shipwrecked on a deserted island with the rest of the Cast when the evil rises. What's she going to do? She can't run and she can't hide, so she might as well fight.



PAYBACK'S A BITCH

Revenge is one reason why an otherwise reluctant person might stay to fight things that drive most people insane. Maybe demons killed Marge the housewife's family. Now she sports an electric carving knife in one hand and a 'tude in her soul. She's looking for payback whenever and wherever the demons raise their fleshy heads.

This one works quite well for characters who should have regular jobs and families. It's a bit cliché, but it gives them "permission" to travel and explore if everything they cared about was destroyed by the Evil Dead.

CAST OPTIONS

SHEILA: BUT WHAT OF THE THINGS WE'VE SHARED? WHAT OF ALL THE SWEET WORDS THAT YOU SPOKE IN PRIVATE?

ASH: OH ... WELL THAT'S JUST WHAT WE CALL PILLOW-TALK BABY. THAT'S ALL.

SHEILA: IT WAS MORE THAN THAT! I STILL HAVE FAITH IN THEE! I STILL BELIEVE THAT THOU WILL STAY AND SAVE US ... I ... COWARD!

The subtitle of the movie is *Bruce Campbell versus the Army of Darkness*. Let's take that to really mean Ash. We know he's the Chosen One, the Main Man, the Big Cheese, and He Who Has Fallen From the Sky to Deliver Us from the Terror of the Deadites.

In your game, you need to decide just who the characters are. Are they all Promised Ones? That makes the most sense—why pull Joe Schmoe out of his garage in Newark to fight demons? It's also the

DIRECTOR'S CUT

most over the top, because you'll need a bucket-full of bad guys to present a challenge to such experienced heroes.

Let's talk more about the composition of your Cast.

PROMISED ONE AND FRIENDS

This is the "default" mode of the game. You have a Promised One (maybe more than one) and the rest of the group consists of a mixed group of other Heroes and Primitive Screwheads. The champion does most of the heavy work—taking on demons and the like—but the rest of the Cast do their fair share as well. They probably handle the skeletons and any Dark Ones (cultists) or other dweebs who decide to work for the bad guys.

Most of the guidelines in this chapter are meant for this type of game. They can be used for other games, but they may need some modifications.

JUST ME, BABY

Another option is for *no one* to play Promised Ones or heroes. The Primitive Screwhead Cast just happens to get caught up in the fight against the evil and have to do their best against it. They probably don't start so altruistic—most are likely caught up in a particular event and just happen to survive it. Only after do they somehow become aware of the job that must be done and the terrors that must be faced.

Unlike champions, they don't have a cheap way of saving their skins if things go bad. A sword through the right spot for these heroes means death or at least months in a hospital and years of rehab and colostomy bags (shudder).

They also don't get all those groovy superpowers. Survival means relying on teamwork, brains, preparation, and more than a little luck. Even then, some will die. The group knows it and expects it.

Be careful with this type of game, because even a single deadite is a tough fight for a small band of Primitive Screwheads. It can be beaten, but it's tough. And if the heroes don't have some basic information—such as how to stop them from returning via dismemberment—it's just going to come back again and again.

GROUP 13

Here's something a bit different. Let's say some group of unfortunates are present when the dead rise, call the police, and are actually believed. Why? Because this isn't the first time it's happened. What if the government has received similar reports for hundreds of years?

Eventually, they create Group 13, a secret cell of investigators who find and destroy the Evil Dead wherever they arise. The members of Group 13 are sometimes special forces types, but they're also ordinary citizens who have proven themselves capable in fights against the dark forces. The director of Group 13 realizes there are such things as Promised Ones and allows them to join his group regardless of their background.

CREATING A GAME

ASH (TO SKELETON): PLAY DEAD!

All right, you've made all the conceptual choices, and are ready to go. To help you properly structure an ongoing game, we suggest you break things down into Episodes and Seasons. *Army of Darkness* may be a movie, but since you could be telling stories for a while (part of the beauty of a roleplaying game), it makes more sense to view things in a serial way. It's like an *Army of Darkness* TV show (how cool would that be?). This also makes it HDTV compatible with our sister license games (see pp. 9, 223).

Episodes: We start with Episodes. Each Episode is like an adventure in other games. It's one plotline or story, though it may take several actual game sessions to complete.

Episodes should be balanced as much as possible. They should contain healthy doses of butt-kicking, comedy, horror, and character development. If every session is nothing but one long combat, some of your players are likely to get bored. If they're too serious, you lose the campy feel of the genre and a lot of the fun. If you try to be too scary every night, your friends get jaded. If you spend too long on one character's personal subplot, the rest of the group might feel slighted.

Moderation in all things, friend. Mix it up and enjoy the best of all those elements.

Seasons: Just pick an arbitrary number (and to make like we are experts on this stuff), we suggest that four Episodes make a Season. Think of a Season as a story arc. Maybe your group's adventures in one setting make up one Season. When they've accomplished their task, they set out to complete a mission in another location and start a new Season. That's not to say the group needs to change locales every Season, of course, it's just a handy way to look at.

If you plan on staying put in one setting, perhaps defeating a "Big Bad" of some sort—something just short of the Watcher—makes up a Season. Several tasks must be completed to accomplish this goal—the meat of which make up your Episodes—but in the end the Cast has gathered the information, McGuffins, alliances, or what-have-you to finish off their Adversary.

PLANNING A SEASON

You should have some idea of what the Season holds for your group—maybe by jotting down a few notes about what it takes to fight the big evil at the end—but you also need to be flexible. The actions of your Cast will almost certainly change everything anyway. Spend a week detailing a clever plot-path and your friends will almost certainly destroy it in the first game session.

What you should do is take care of the upfront work. In Hollywood talk, build your sets (define interesting locations and what can be found there), cast the characters, and stat out the important Guest Stars. Create your villains next. If you decide the Necronomicon has gained the ability to spawn fire-breathing undead dragons (kew!), you need to go ahead and create the things so you won't be caught off-guard when the Cast finally comes up against them.

Another great idea is to create subplots. A lot of movies and television series have A- and B-plot lines. The A-line is the story about finding the magic thingamajig and defeating the black hats. The B-line is an underlying story that isn't as epic but may be much more personal and maybe even more interesting. If done correctly, the A- and B-lines will intersect, making the personal subplots "pay off" in the big finale.

In *Army of Darkness*, the B-line is the enmity between Arthur and Henry. Ash brings them together, and their cooperation leads to the defeat of the army of the dead.

For your Season, think about throwing in something a little more personal. Perhaps one of your characters has an emotional problem of some sort. He's lost a loved one and just can't seem to get over it. At some point in the season, you decide the evil will torment him by raising his dead wife from her grave and animating her corpse. If she can be put down and dismembered however, her "ghost" appears and tells her lover that she can now rest. Even better, she delivers a vital clue of some sort (perhaps the location of the Necronomicon or a big demon's weakness) to the Cast. The hero is given peace of mind, the subplot tied into the main storyline, and the heroes now have the final piece of the puzzle they've been putting together from the Season's start.

BAD GUYS

The ultimate evil in this series is the Watcher. This is the creature behind everything that happens in *Army of Darkness*. But you don't want to hurl your Cast at it very often. Besides the fact that it will probably kill them, that would just get old. Taking a swing at the Watcher ought to actually be a passing reward that comes every now and then—when the heroes earn it.

So what do you do if the Watcher isn't in town? As any good tale needs a central villain, your best bet is to create "minions" such as Evil Ash for the Cast to confront. Use your imagination here. Just about anything could be created by the Watcher.

DIRECTOR'S CUT

"AW, YOU'RE PISSIN' ME OFF, YOU UGLY SON OF A BITCH!"
-EVIL ASH



Bad Guy Ideas

Having trouble figuring out what kind of Adversary to make? Here are five ideas to get you off and creating.

Mythological Creatures: How about Medusa, the gorgon, a kraken, or a minotaur? Could these have been created somehow by the Watcher?

Golems: Maybe demons can enter the bodies of statues for a time, or create forms out of grass, or trees, or bugs, or various parts of particular bodies.

New Demons: The deadites that appear in the movie are a fairly varied sort, from just plain ugly to flying monstrosities. Surely evil is nothing if not varied. Maybe the Watcher can “gate in” horrid harpies, sultry she-devils, or infernal salamanders (fiery lizard-like folk).

Mortal Allies: What would happen if the Watcher made a human ally? Particularly vicious and evil humans could get hold of the Necronomicon and use it to create servants of evil. The Watcher goes along with it as long as the allies use it to destroy mankind. You can even add a historical tilt by making the human ally notorious—Hitler, Stalin, Pol Pot, Saddam Hussein.

Evil Cults: Surely there are treacherous humans (like the Dark Ones we mentioned above) who are more than allies, they willingly devote themselves to the evil. Maybe they think they’ll get a better deal in Hell while everyone else is eating crap in a pool of lava. Such individuals probably run around in cloaks and wield Back Stabbers (see p. 168), but maybe some have also insinuated themselves into the local police force, the mayor’s office, the king’s throne room, and so on.

The nature of the Adversaries will ultimately define a setting, even if he, she, or it remains hidden in the shadows for a while. Its minions, its plans, and its schemes are behind whatever nefarious acts your Cast seeks to end. Over several Episodes, the conflict between the main bad guy and the do-gooders builds up. They engage in skirmishes with underlings, both sides suffer casualties, and eventually the good guys find out what they’re really up against. They then come up with a plan to stop it and go to work for the final battle.

What makes a good villain? Start with a goal. Most villains in *Army of Darkness* should have fairly simple goals, like “destroy all life.” To do that, the creature might have secondary goals such as “find the Necronomicon and use it to destroy all life,” or “kill the Promised One that pissed me off in a prior Episode and then destroy all life.”

The best nemeses are smart. Big dumb creatures are fun to fight, but aren’t usually much in the “planning to take over the world” department. Such beasts are usually lackeys or bodyguards, not masterminds.

Good villains also have several different weapons in their arsenal. Evil Ash has the army of skeletons, at least one flying demon, and Evil Sheila on his team. That gives him a few different options in trying to take over the world or at least destroying those who are trying to stop him.

Adversaries also have resources at their disposal. Most have a small army of lesser minions such as thugs or skeletons, and a couple of heavyweight lieutenants who can toe-to-toe even with champions (demons fit nicely here). Others may have money, access to powerful spells, connections at City Hall or the local authorities, and so on.

You should feel free to amend the main villain’s power and abilities as needed. Maybe you decide you’d like to raise some bonebags in a setting that otherwise doesn’t have them. No sweat. If it doesn’t fit for the main villain to do this himself, perhaps he uses the Necronomicon to do so, or “hires” a necromancer or occultist to do it for him.

It’s also great if at some point the Big Bad makes it personal. Destroying all life is one thing, but it doesn’t have the same emotional power as torturing a loved one, possessing trusted friends, or terrorizing the characters past the breaking point. If you can get the Cast Members to say “You’re going DOWN!” and mean it, you know the evil is getting under their skin.

Make them hate this thing. Don't just go into detail describing how it kills children and old ladies. That's just depressing and all too real. Let the bad guy trick the heroes now and then with false messengers, or send them on wild goose chases while it raids their home base. You can also make something about the evil or its minions really grating—such as an annoying cackle or ear-bursting whine. Make your friends hate their foe so that when they get the chance to put it down they go in with a war cry and both barrels blazing.

PLOTS AND SUBPLOTS

These are the complications and themes that move from one Episode to the next. Since this is a game, not a script, you do not have full control over Plots and Subplots. The Cast has a big role in making a storyline live over several Episodes, or lie forgotten after one or two. You can think of Plots and Subplots as fishing lures—dangle them out there, and if the characters are interested, they will bite. Here are some suggestions to make sure the Cast bites and swallows.

PLOTS

Start with the one sentence your Season is all about. “Evil Ash has returned and is looking for revenge.” “The Watcher has taken note of the heroes and awakened an ancient trio of mummified Egyptian priests to hunt them down.”

Typically, a Plot emerges early in the Season and keeps going to the Season Finale. You should devise at least one plot. Some possible Plot ideas are elaborated.

Approaching Doom: Some dangerous event is prophesied to take place in the near future. This is usually your basic supernatural event, complete with lots of FX at the end. At some point in the Season, the Cast learns of it and realizes they have to prevent it from happening. Over a number of Episodes, the Cast acquires more clues about the danger, until reaching the final countdown. Will our heroes stop it in time? This type of Plot is relatively easy to set up. Dire warnings from some unlikely prophet, signs of the upcoming apocalypse, and clues inadvertently left behind by the bad guys can be sprinkled over several Episodes—a blabby mouthed minion can do the rest.

Curses! Foiled Again: Your basic “stop the bad guy” theme, this Plot revolves around the Big Bad’s plans. The plan usually involves such charming things as human sacrifice, unspeakable rituals, and scavenger hunts for mystical artifacts. The Plot is a race between the Cast and the villains. While the nemesis may be foiled temporarily, the plan should plod along until the Final Showdown. Like the Approaching Doom, this type of Plot is not hard to organize. The tricky bits include arranging for the main bad guy to avoid the Final Showdown until the Season Finale, and doing it without railroading the Cast. Even with Drama Points to “pay off” the players, they are not going to be very happy if the evil always seems to escape their clutches. It’s better to avoid a direct confrontation with the head honcho, and rely on competent and dangerous henchmen. To keep the Cast busy, you could set up a minion as the apparent Big Boss, and reveal he’s but a servant of a greater power just after the Cast defeats him (that’s a great point to end the Episode and roll credits, by the way).

Friend or Foe?: Friends and lovers may become deadly enemies. What if Henry had somehow made a deal with the evil to spare his people if he helped *attack* Arthur instead of allying with him? The setup for this plot can be tricky. You need to create and assume the role of a Guest Star, get the Cast to come to like and trust the character, and then betray them. For an even more devious turn, you might recruit one of the players to assume the role of the Judas—after all, another player-controlled character is the last one the other players would suspect. After the betrayal, there may be hope of redemption (Duke Henry realizes the Evil will slay his people as well), either in that Season or as a Plot or Subplot in the following Season.

Love Is a Battlefield: Love in this particular genre is generally a fleeting thing. Most often, the hero beds some buxom beauty just so the audience can relate to her when she gets eaten later on. Then the hero has a reason for his big dramatic “Nooooo!” scene and an excuse to go after the villain responsible. But you can also use romantic relationships as a driving force behind your plot. What if Evil Sheila had stayed evil and Ash had been forced to quest after some ancient doohickey that would restore her? Not only would he need the item, he’d have to find a way to trap and restrain the demonic Sheila long enough to pull it off.

Or what if another hero's girlfriend gets inhabited by a deadite? In general, it's dismemberment city. But what if the guy with the chin discovers there's a way to eject the demon and save her soul? Nothing in Heaven or Hell should stop him—and that's a great lead-in for your plot since he'll press on no matter how tough you make it.

SUBPLOTS

These are lesser plotlines usually only last for an Episode or two. Examples include forging the alliance between Arthur and Henry or getting over a “this ain't my problem” syndrome. Recovering from a companion's death and trusting a “replacement” is also a great Subplot that could occur often.

Subplots can be powerful dramatic story arcs, but they don't quite shape an entire Season the way Plots do. You should try to have at least one or two Subplots running at any given time. A great source for these are your Cast Members themselves. Take a look at their character sheets and put a little thought into their backgrounds—particularly their Drawbacks. Adversaries, Mental Problems, and similar disadvantages have stories to them that can be used as Subplots. The latter also make the story a little more personal for the Cast Members involved, which is always a good thing.

A Subplot need not appear in every Episode, but it should at least be in the background, providing more axes to grind, bones to pick, and clichés to throw. Subplots often develop on their own, and they may occur to you after the Season has started. Sometimes they wither and die without the players ever noticing. If a Subplot isn't attracting their attention, it's time to either spice it up a bit, or let it go and replace it with something else.

VILLAINS, HENCHMEN, AND INNOCENT BYSTANDERS

Once you've got your main story idea, the nature of your bad guy set, and some Plots and Subplots fleshed out, you need to people your presentations. Monsters, knights, wisemen, and archaeologists—these are the folks the Cast encounters along the way. Some are unremarkable, nameless characters from Central Casting. Others are the Cast's friends

and family, dangerous foes or terrible demons. Usually, creating the Supporting Cast (Guest Stars and Adversaries) can be done from Episode to Episode. Over time, you'll get recurring characters, and they play a role in many a Plot or Subplot.

Most Supporting Cast characters don't need full character sheets, or even Quick Sheets, unless you have a crew of players who like to fight everybody they encounter. For minor roles, all you need is a name (if that) and the role the character is going to play in the Episode. Victim #3, for example, is unlikely to need much development, except to be thankful after being rescued. Your typical cannon-fodder skeleton rarely needs much beyond the basic Attributes and Ability Scores.

Then you have the “named” roles—relatives, friends, colleagues, or hated enemies of the Cast. A Quick Sheet suffices for the mechanics aspect, but you probably want to spend some time fleshing out their personalities and attitudes. If all the supporting cast sound and behave the same, the Series is going to feel like the *Clone Wars*, emphasis on the “clone.” A knight should sound and act differently from a peasant, or a Cast Member's father, or an aging Promised One passing on his sacred chainsaw.

After the Cast has been created, it's probably a good idea to jot down some ideas about the people in the characters' lives. If the action takes place in a place like Arthur's castle, you should note the names of a few serving staff, possible love interests, the captain of the guard, and so on. Keep them as recurring characters, and if any of them becomes a victim, their demise will have more of an emotional impact than Dead Body #23.

DETERMINING ATTRIBUTES AND ABILITY SCORES

Many Supporting Cast characters exist only to have their butts kicked by the stars of the show. When it comes to that, having their “stats” handy keeps the action flowing. This doesn't mean you have to go through the entire character creation process for each and every enemy the Cast encounters. Far from it—all you have to do is assign Attributes, put together the Ability Scores, figure out any attacks or special abilities the characters have, and you're good to go. Once you have the details, mark them all down in the Quick Sheet for handy reference (blank ones are found at the end of the book).

Attributes: Unlike players, you don't need to divide a set amount of points among the six Primary Attributes. Just pick and choose what fits. If you need to stat out a couple of archers, you could make them average across the board but with a decent Dexterity so they can fire their bows well. Swordsmen are basically the same but maybe a little stronger and tougher (one point higher in Strength and Constitution). Knights should be a step above that in the physical aspects, and maybe one point higher in Intelligence as well to reflect their slightly better education.

The example above also illustrates something you should pay a little attention to—contrast. In the big assault at Arthur's castle, it should make sense to put the swordsmen on the ground, the archers on the walls, and the knights guarding the Book of the Dead. If everyone's stats are the same, the Cast won't really care where they assign their allies, and thus won't care as much about the plan and the story.

It doesn't matter if Guest Star's Attribute points come to 11, 13, or 35. The focus should be on what works for the plot idea. For demons and powerful supernatural beings, Attributes should be on the high end (four to six). After that, just look at the chart on p. 26 to figure out Life Points, add any bonuses you like to make them tougher (this could be accomplished through the Hard to Kill Quality, see p. 34, or the more flexible Increase Life Points gambit), and the Attributes are done.

Ability Scores: You don't have to figure out the skills of most Supporting Cast members. Instead, use the Ability Scores (Muscle, Combat, and Brains, see p. 82) to get a rough idea of what the character can do. Use the character's Attributes and the tables on p. 136 to determine what the appropriate levels are. Most regular folks have Ability Scores in the 9-12 range. Demons and extraordinary people will be in the 13-20 range. Nasty main bad guy types have even higher numbers.

Special Abilities: Most people have no unusual powers or abilities. Monsters may have several, from the typical demon powers and vulnerabilities to tentacles and warts (ick!) to magical powers. List them on the Quick Sheet so you don't forget that, say, a demon has scales that are as good as Kevlar against physical attacks.

Combat Maneuvers: Figure out what attack and defense moves the character is likely to use, and list the damage. Add the Success Levels inherent in the scores to the base damage amounts.

Most demons have your basic Bite, Claw, Dodge, and Grapple Maneuvers. Some may even have a Kick move. Those without long fingernails will have Punch instead of Claw (the difference being Bash instead of Slash/stab damage). Bite, Claw, and Dodge use the unmodified Combat Score, Kick uses Combat Score – 1, and Grapple uses Combat Score + 2.

Time To Get Graphic: A demon with Strength 5 and a Combat Score 15 has the following basic maneuvers.

NAME	SCORE	DAMAGE	NOTES
Bite	15	19 (base of 15, plus 4 Success Levels)	Must Grapple first
Claw	15	14 (base of 10, plus 4 Success Levels)	Slash/stab
Dodge	15	—	Defense action
Grapple	17	—	Resisted by Dodge
Kick	14	15 (base of 12, plus 3 Success Levels)	Bash

MUSCLE SCORE TABLE

- 8 Weak as a Kitten:** A Tiny Ash can arm-wrestle this guy.
- 9-10 Average Guy:** Your average couch potato, capable to lugging a couple six-packs to the car without busting a gut.
- 11-12 Not Too Shabby:** Someone who works out, maybe plays on the company softball team, actively coaches his son's soccer squad. Also includes animated skeletons.
- 13-14 Average Supernatural/Tough Human:** This is the typical Muscle Score of a calcium captain or a wright. Very athletic humans are in the same range.
- 15-16 Tough Supernatural/Weightlifter:** An flying deadite or a pumped-up Marine.
- 17-20 Human Peak:** Evil Ash, a ground-bound deadite or the best of the best human are in this range.
- 21+ Superhuman:** Monstrosities, powerful demons, and the like are in this range.

COMBAT SCORE TABLE

- 8—Never Been Punched:** With this Combat Score, a character needs to go Full Offense or Defense, or he'd just be a punching bag. Those who can't throw a punch to save their lives have Combat Scores at this level.
- 9-10—Average Joe:** This is someone who knows which end of a weapon to point towards an enemy, or has been in a few scrapes in his life.
- 11-12—Skeleton/Warrior:** This is the Combat Score of your typical freshly dug skeleton or a normal human with some training (a beat cop or a regular soldier).
- 13-14—Calcium Captain/Veteran Fighter:** This represents a demon, a skeleton leader, or tough, well-trained humans such as captains and knights.
- 15-16—Deadite/Expert Fighter:** These demons have had lots of practice swallowing souls; expert swordsmen and martial artists are also at this level.
- 17-20—Big Ugly/Master Fighter:** This is where Promised Ones ought to end up at some point, right alongside the major bad guys they fight at the finale of most Seasons.
- 21+—Yikes!:** The most proficient and most dangerous are at this level.

BRAINS SCORE TABLE

- 8—Duh?:** Stupid is as stupid does.
- 9-10—Average Joe:** The character won't be building any mechanical hands, but he can probably complete a job that has complete and detailed instructions—in time.
- 11-12—Smart:** Someone with a good education and the smarts to make the most of it.
- 13-14—Brilliant:** Highly educated, very smart, or both.
- 15-16—Genius:** An expert, or just really, really intelligent. The Wiseman falls in this category.
- 17-20—Genius Plus:** "Ah, I see by that pot we have arrived in ancient Sumeria. I'd say it's about 1000 AD."
- 21+—Einstein:** These folks are so above and beyond the average mind they might appear absent-minded or simple. "I think I can duplicate the effects of the time vortex, just let me figure out where I put my glasses."

Drama Points: The Cast Members aren't the only ones with Drama Points—Supporting Cast also get a few. Most faceless characters have no Drama Points since they aren't meant for extraordinary things. Your average cannon fodder demon should have 1-3 Drama Points—enough to land a good punch or two on a champion before getting dismembered. Named Guest Stars have about the same to allow for occasional heroics (the Wiseman escapes a demon's clutches or the Archer Captain hits Evil Ash just as he's about to kill a hero). Major foes could have 5-8 Drama Points, and the ultimate bad dudes could have 10+ Drama Points in store, enabling them to give our heroes quite a run for their money. Usually, Supporting Cast characters spend their Drama Points for combat purposes, while Adversaries use theirs to restore Life Points.

EPISODES

AS IF TOGETHER WE DROVE TO A SMALL CABIN IN THE MOUNTAINS. IT SEEMS AN ARCHEOLOGIST HAD COME TO THIS REMOTE PLACE TO TRANSLATE AND STUDY HIS LATEST FIND.

Okay, setting, main evil, storyline, and personnel are set. We're now ready to talk in detail about Episodes. This is where the real adventuring takes place. Your goal is to make Episodes entertaining, fun, and well-paced. If at the end of the Episode the players can't wait for the next one, the game has succeeded in its purpose.

The elements of an Episode include the Setup (where the Cast finds out what the Episode is about), the Complications (usually at least two of them, when important things happen), and the Climax (where the conflict is resolved). Interwoven with all this you'll have the Season's Plots and Subplots. Put it all together, roll opening credits and let the ten-siders fall where they may.

THE SETUP

An Episode needs a Setup, where the situation is established. The Setup for *Army of Darkness* actually comes fairly late—after Ash has dispatched the She-Bitch. That's when the Wiseman tells him he must quest for the Necronomicon to return home and to save the castle from the horror of the undead army.

The Movie Poster

The original poster for *Army of Darkness* reads "Trapped in time. Surrounded by evil. Low on gas." That's a pretty good teaser of what's to come in the movie. You might think about doing something like that for each night's game. Come up with a slogan and say it out loud before you start—maybe just the title of the Episode if it's the first night. Here are a few more blurbs that could be used to describe certain parts of the film.

"Three Books. Three Words. One Big Idiot." (Ash finds the Necronomicon.)

"Good, bad, he's the one with the gun." (Ash meets Evil Ash, or you plan on "cloning" your own Cast.)

"60 Warriors. 500 Skeletons. One Death Coaster." (The assault on the castle.)

"A Farewell to Arms." (You plan on getting evil into one of the Cast's limbs that night.)

The Setup can be something new and unexpected or a development of a Plot or Subplot. It can be laid out in the first scene or left to be drawn out by the actions of the heroes. Some possible Setups are given.

The Evil Awakes: This is simplest Setup there is. Some schmuck read the wrong passage from the Necronomicon again and the Watcher has come calling. It begins infecting people with demons and the next thing you know there's chaos and mayhem everywhere. The Cast needs to find the Necronomicon and use it to defeat evil.

We Meet Again: A villain from a previous Episode returns. Maybe the Watcher resurrects Evil Ash, or somehow infects Evil Sheila again. This Setup usually helps advance one of the major Plots of the Season. Typically, the villain unleashes some scourge upon the Cast or the world at large. The Cast has to deal with the danger and stop the villain. The old enemy may escape, or might finally get his just desserts.

We Meet At Last: These are important Plot-related Episodes. Our heroes finally discover the identity of some important villain or the main bad

Plots and Free Will

Games aren't scripted, and the Cast Members are going to act in ways that you Director types won't expect. Notice that we didn't say "MAY act in ways that you won't expect." That's because it is going to happen. The word we are looking for is . . . inevitable.

So what happens when you plan for Duke Henry to ambush the heroes at the pass but they send messengers instead? Or the Cast follows the red herring and ignores the clues that lead to the real evil? You can choose to let the chips fall where they may—the ambush never happens and Henry never comes—or you can adjust things accordingly. For example, if the ambush is a vital part of the storyline, just relocate it to wherever the Cast ends up. Or have the false lead actually contain some clue that points them in the right direction. You can't do that all the time though, or the players will come to realize that no matter what their characters do, it turns out to be the right thing. Sometimes, mistakes should have consequences. Maybe the world doesn't end, but something bad should happen if the Cast screws up—a friend or relative might be hurt or even die, for example. Try not to do this without giving the characters some hint that they are going about things the wrong way though, and certainly don't do it just to "punish" them for not following your script.

Try to be flexible with Plots and Subplots. If you "railroad" the Cast, forcing them into nearly every situation and giving them little or no choice about actions and storyline directions, the players aren't going to have fun. But don't let the characters get away with totally wrongheaded decisions, either. Sound hard to do? Yup, and sometimes what you think is a fair decision is not going to sit well with the players. Nobody said being a Director was easy. It does get better with practice. Oh . . . and the feeling you get when everybody is caught up in the story and desperate to find out what happens next is better than half-price Super Slurpies with free extra large popcorn.

guy. These encounters usually end with a nice fight scene, but the unmasked foe might not be defeated this time. The Setup can start with the discovery of the villain, or might provide the clues needed for the revelation near the end of the Episode.

Now You've Done It: Sometimes, the trouble comes from a Cast Member (or a Guest Star) rather than an outside threat. This type of Episode has a complication or danger caused by a screw-up on the part of a "good guy." "Klaatu Verata Nikplllhph" ring any bells? Somebody cast the wrong spell or read the wrong passage from the Necronomicon and the Cast has to pay the piper. In these Episodes, monsters or villains play a minor role (although they are likely to be around), and much of the time is spent dealing with the consequences of the Cast Member's actions or undoing the damage they caused.

You're So Vain: Some Episodes resolve the Cast Members' Subplots, such as falling in love, committing to demon-hunting instead of running for home, or facing off against personal enemies. Combat

takes a definite back seat to interpersonal relationships, but it's a good idea to throw in some sort of excitement here and there for the Attention Deficit Disorder crowd.

COMPLICATIONS

After the Setup, you need to get the story moving. Actually, the Cast does most of the moving, but you can give them directions to get to the good parts. The Complications are dramatic moments that advance the story, or turning points that make things more interesting (and dangerous) for the characters. You should try to space out the Complications. Think of them as the high points on a roller-coaster—you get a thrill as you go down, then there's a temporary break and build-up as you go up (heading for the next Complication) before you go through the thrill all over again.

Here are some Complications you can use in your Episodes.

He's Dead, Jim: Finding a corpse is always a good way to get a reaction, especially if the cause of death is unusual or gross. This situation can be highly dramatic or for shock value. The grisly discovery is usually there to reveal some dark force at work, or to provide clues as to the nature of the threat. "Whatever did this was no deadite. Those are tree branches sticking up his . . . ow!"

We're in Deep Doodoo Now: The group is cornered by a patrol of skeletons during their travels. Sheila gets taken away by a flying demon. Or the babe you were about to score with suddenly gets real ugly and tries to swallow your soul. This Complication reveals an unexpected danger (physical or emotional), the kind of situation that has the audience (and in a game, the players) wondering how the hell the heroes are going to get out with their hides intact. Ambushes and surprise attacks make great Complications. Sometimes, you may have to pay off the players with a Drama Point. Otherwise the characters with Situational Awareness and Fast Reaction Time are never going to get knocked out from behind while poking their noses where they don't belong, and where's the fun in that? Setting up these situations can be difficult if the Cast is careful or paranoid enough, but with some creativity anyone can be ambushed. If you can arrange it, an attack or intrusion when the characters think they are totally safe can really shake their confidence.

Out of Left Field: This Complication reveals that the Cast Members had it all wrong—the apparent victim is actually the villain, their suspect is actually a good guy, and the "possessed" guy actually isn't—he's actually just a homicidal murderer. To develop this Complication, you need to plant a few red herrings and get the Cast pointed in the wrong direction until the truth comes crashing down (often leading to a We're in Deep Doodoo Now moment).

The Moment of Truth: A lovesick character confesses her feelings. A secret betrayal is finally uncovered. What was hidden is now . . . not. This dramatic Complication can go beyond the Episode and involve the Season's Plot or Subplot. This is a Complication that can be player-driven, especially when it comes to personal revelations.

Others Ways to Do It

The Episode/Season structure is a set of guidelines you can use to make the game flow like a TV show, but maybe you don't want to set up Season-length plots, and prefer to let the interaction of the Cast dictate the way the game runs. Or you want to follow a more traditional roleplaying style of adventures and campaigns. Here are some ideas for you Directors who want something besides the default structure.

The Quest: The game centers around some elusive goal. There are no actual Seasons or Episodes. The sessions lead the Cast from one encounter or situation to the next, each event leading them a step closer to the final climax. The game focuses on a single major plot, and ends when the quest is fulfilled (although a sequel might follow). This structure is closer to a movie than the system we've outlined in this chapter.

The Soap Opera: These games have no set structure and depend on the Cast's interactions with the environment. You populate the setting and let the Cast loose on it. There will be lots of Plots and Subplots, but actual resolution points are less frequent. This is more like a soap opera, where by the time a villain is defeated, two more are already prowling in the background.

The One-Shot: This can be a single-Episode game where what happened before and what happens after are not very important, or a series of Episodes that don't have interlinked Plots or Subplots. One-shots are very useful for conventions or pick-up games where you don't have to worry about players showing up for every game session. The structure of those games is very much like a short film—it may or may not have sequels, but the story should be over by the time the closing credits start rolling.

THE CLIMAX

Sooner or later, you'll get to the final payoff of the Episode. The Setup is resolved (even if the solution is not completely satisfactory), and the roller-coaster ride ends. Usually, the Climax involves a confrontation with the Episode's main threat, followed by the consequences of the confrontation. Usually, the heroes win, but there's a cost—someone loses a hand, moral lessons are learned, or a Cast Member dies. The Climax might turn out to be a Complication instead. Maybe the villain is defeated—only to be revealed as the pawn of a much more powerful being—like the Watcher.

Many Episodes should end on an upbeat note—the Cast Members have prevailed, after all. They might be a bit battered, bloody, maybe even frayed around the edges, but you should see the other guy. Most Episodes should give the Cast a sense of accomplishment—if every Episode ends in an ambiguous or bitter way, you'll mire the heroes in a sea of existential angst, and that's a lot less fun than it sounds.

SPECIAL EPISODES

Not all Episodes are created equal. Some are going to be almost “routine:” monster shows up, monster rampages, monster gets chainsawed, Cast scores a few funny lines out of it, the end. There's nothing wrong with that, as long as the execution of the Episode is fun and entertaining. Others are going to play a pivotal role in the lives of the Cast Members and the tone and shape of the Season.

THE FIRST SESSION

The first Episode is maybe the most important of all. This is where the Cast gets together for the first time—at least “onscreen” (the characters may have known each other before on paper, but this is where we see what sort of chemistry exists between them). Everybody gets a first glimpse at the setting, and a lot of the tone of the game is defined by this first impression. Not everything should be set in stone. Just like on TV, a game may need some “retooling” after the first few Episodes.

The premiere is usually an extended Episode—a pilot, to borrow a phrase we heard somewhere—and involves some important Setups and Complications, including the following:

Introductions: Big Setup here. The stars of the show share the “screen” for the first time. Most of what happens next is up to the players and how they “perform” their roles, but you can provide a few nudges here or there. Putting the entire Cast under a little pressure may help them stick together—after the characters have to fight for their lives in a lonely cabin in the woods, they may feel more respect for each other. Friends don't let friends get their souls swallowed. By the same token, people who save each other's lives will likely become friends.

Shocking Discoveries: A few things that should be gotten out of the way during the first Episode including such shockers as “demons inhabit corpses and make them really yukky,” “they like to kill people,” and “Crap! How do you kill these things!” Some of the “basic facts” of the setting should be described here, especially if the Cast is not aware of them. If the game starts with a group of experienced monster hunters, of course, they should probably even know about the Necronomicon, but probably not the Watcher. Let them find out about the thing in the woods the hard way.

A Glimpse of Things to Come: You don't have to lay down all the cards, or even most of them, but it's nice if the first session gives some hints about what's to come. They can include tidbits hinting at the dark powers involved, a chance encounter with a Guest Star that may play an important role in the Cast's lives, or a “job description” for some of our heroes.

SEASON FINALES

All good things must come to an end. In the Season Finale, the Plots and any remaining Subplots come to a head, the Final Showdown takes place, and the Cast Members' lives will never be the same. Season Finales should always be big dramatic affairs with lots of extras, thousands of dollars worth of pyrotechnics, and a few buckets of Karo syrup (that's blood, friend). The Setup should be pretty intense; the consequences if the heroes fail must be extreme. Maybe the world might not end, but the survivors might wish it had if the main bad dude's plans come to fruition. The Complications should be powerful—moments of truth galore, and if the

characters are in deep doodoo, it should be deep indeed. The Finales are times for the Cast Members to show how tough, courageous, and determined they are. Ideally, they should end with the heroes standing together, brothers and sisters in arms, closer to each other than to anyone else in the world.

Season Finales have some of the following Episode elements.

The Agony and the Ecstasy: Romantic Plots and Subplots should reach a major point in the Season Finale. Characters may finally declare their love for one another, or relationships may come to a heartbreaking end, or both (that's always a kick in the teeth, ain't it?). Like when Ash decides to leave Sheila and return to his own time.

This Time It's Personal: By the Final Showdown, the main villain should have gotten the Cast really, really pissed off. The end of the Evil should provide a nice catharsis. Few things feel better than seeing the creature that tormented and terrorized the Cast and their loved ones over the course of many play sessions get the proverbial can of whoopass unleashed upon it. With a combination of Drama Points and creativity, the big nasty should come to an emotionally satisfying squish.

The Price of Victory: Victories are not without costs. Maybe the Cast has to pay a terrible price to finally defeat the villain. They might have to compromise their values or lop off their hand at the wrist with a chainsaw. As good as the defeat of the main bad should be, the victory should often be bitter-sweet, flavored with pain.

And Life Goes On: The Season Finale can also be used to mark milestones in the lives of the characters. At the end of each Season, the Cast is going to be older and hopefully a little wiser. Characters grow stronger, and realize that the while they've defeated the Evil for now, it will rise again somewhere, sometime, and they must be the ones to stop it.

SEASON PREMIERES

A Season ends and, if everyone had a good time, a new one follows. The Season Premiere should pick up any loose ends from the previous Season and turn them into new Plots and Subplots, in addition to hinting at new main bad guys and story arcs. If any enemies survived the last Season, they may make unexpected comebacks. The consequences of the

heroes' actions may come back and bite them in the Ash in the new Season. And the Season Premiere is a good place to get the Oldsmobile rolling.

A new Season can herald a lot of changes. Some Cast Members may leave, to be replaced by newcomers. Minor characters may become important Guest Stars, or even new Cast Members. The entire game may take a new turn, perhaps becoming a little darker (or more tongue-in-cheek). You get a chance to fix any problems the last Season had, and the players should get a better feel for their roles.

The Season can start shortly after the end of the previous one, but sometimes it is better to let a little "down time" pass. That gives the Cast a breather and some leeway to modify their background a bit, and maybe get a few "power ups"—a summer learning hidden lore can turn a former student into a fluent translator of ancient Sumerian, for example. The down time allows for new challenges to arise in the characters' personal lives, and new nemeses to surface (although they might not make their appearance for the first few Episodes).

IN CONCLUSION

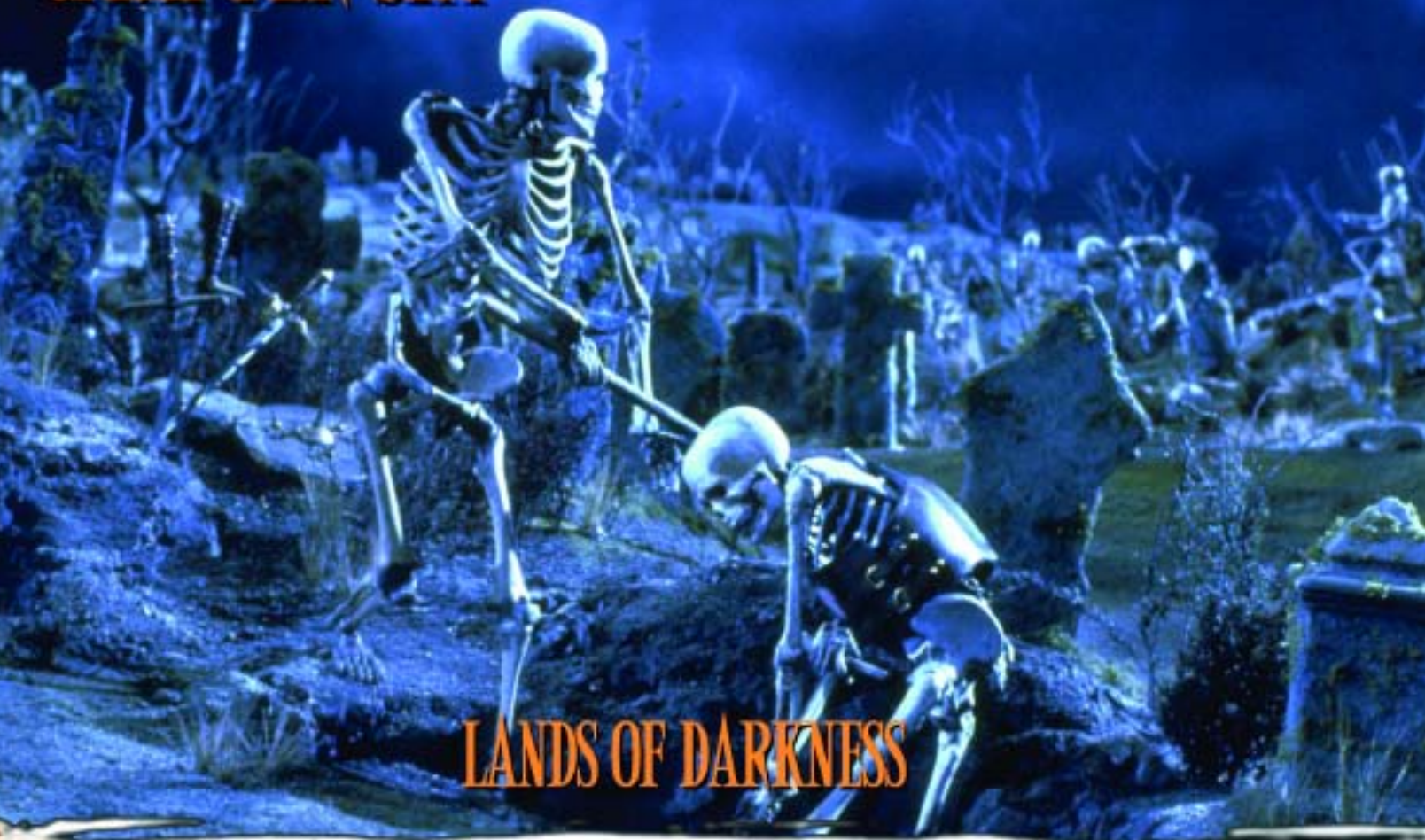
ASH: BUT THAT DIDN'T STOP IT. IT CAME BACK. BIG TIME.

Producing a fun game requires a good deal of work from both the players and you Director types. But you're lucky here. Like the guys who made *Army of Darkness* and the two films that lead up to it, you're probably playing with your best friends. You know what they like and what they don't, what kinds of rules work for you and which kind make you tear your hair out. If you're lucky, you'll get the same thrill the creators of the Evil Dead had, telling your own stories and laughing at your own jokes. And you won't have to go in debt to do it.

Of course, you probably won't go on to direct *Spider-Man* either, but you never know where these things will lead . . .

DIRECTOR'S CUT

CHAPTER SIX



ASH: CLOSE AS I CAN FIGURE IT, THE YEAR IS 1300 AD, AND I'M BEING DRAGGED TO MY DEATH.

So, you Director types know the basics of role-playing, the players have their characters, and all of you know how to kick undead coccyx. Now it's time to detail the "official" setting for *Army of Darkness*, medieval England, circa 1300. We'll give you the lowdown on the various folks Ash meet, as well as many of the locations. All the information known from the film is presented, but we've supplemented things here and there just to give everything a bit more depth. Feel free to ignore the new stuff if it's not to your liking (ah, what do you know anyway?). We also run down the specs on the various nasties that show up in the movie—evil is tough and we explain just how tough. Finally, this chapter provides pointers on how to work through the basic plot of the movie, if you've got a mind to do that.

If knights and armor don't suit your fancy (what exactly is a "fancy" anyway?), there are a few other settings where the Evil Dead arise. Those are detailed in **Chapter Seven: Worlds of Darkness**.

CIRCA ENGLAND

"Circa" means about. That's what we mean by "Circa England." This ain't exactly historical England. Unless there's a desert near London the rest of us don't know about. (Blimey!)

This is an England that looks very much like southern California. There are palm trees, deserts, and scrub plains. Somewhere in there are also misty forests, gray cemeteries, and towering windmills.

All this is bad news for you geography buffs—we can see the convulsions from here. The rest of us can breathe easy though, because it means you can create just about any kind of terrain, setting, or location and drop it right into “England” however you want. Need a tropical isle in the middle of the Thames? Why not? There are zombies walking around, bub, a few palm trees ain’t gonna kill anyone.

The same goes for time. It’s supposedly 1300 AD (or CE if you’re more new-agey), but it looks a whole lot more like the 1100s or 1200s in some ways, and more like the 1400s in others. Don’t sweat the anachronisms any more than you do that arid rocky terrain England isn’t known for. If you want someone wearing a flat helm when rounded ones are all the rage according to the history books, tell your most picky players to get over it.

All that said, if Mister-I-sit-and-watch-the-History-Channel-all-day has a good idea about something involving the technology of the period that has some cool game effect, reward him for sacrificing those precious brain cells.

It doesn’t work the other way though. If some schmuck wants to invent a B-52 and carpet-bomb the deadites before they reach the castle, that’s a no-go. Introducing new tech has to be done in a certain spirit—as demonstrated by Ash himself when he turned his Delta 88 into the Death Coaster. It has to be something that is at least almost feasible given the materials available. You can’t make a laser scope, but you might be able to make a focused beam of light out of a concave mirror and a candle that can help aim a big weapon like a ballista (something like that would be worth a +1 to an attack roll).

Those are the basics on time and place. Now let’s detail some of the specific locations affected by the Evil Dead. What follows are descriptions of the major locations and Guest Stars directly from or based on the movie. Rest assured, there’s a lot of open terrain in between so you can add new locations, events, or personalities of your own choosing without conflicting with movie canon.

THE KING OF ENGLAND

While not discussed in the movie, we’re going to say that King Edward I, of the Plantagenet family, is the current ruler of the land. This is the guy who fights Mel Gib-, er, William Wallace, a little further north. Unfortunately for his dukes, Edward is so busy beating off Scots (wow did THAT come out wrong) that he has no troops left to fight demons (and doesn’t believe in such nonsense anyway).

So let’s call him Highness-Not-Appearing-Any-Time-Soon. Arthur and Henry are on their own in the war against the deadites.

ARTHUR’S REALM

ARTHUR: MOVE BACK. MAN THE PARAPET! PROTECT THE BOOK! GOD SAVE US ALL.

Arthur comes across as pretty sour in the movie. Not that we blame him what with all the demons running loose, but there’s got to be an interesting backstory here. So, we going to posit that Arthur wasn’t such a stick in the mud a few months back. He was still a stick, he just wasn’t in the mud. Maybe more like really thick dirty water.

Since no one ever called him Duke Arthur, we’re going to say he was an “acting” duke. His rightful ruler is up north fighting Braveheart with the king, so Arthur has been left in charge. It’s not a job he particularly relishes. It’s not that he’s afraid—in fact he’s all about the mortal combat bit. It was his dedication and skill at arms that made him the real duke’s right-hand man. But this is the Dark Ages, and being handy with a sword means you get put in charge. Our boy Arthur is feeling a bit overwhelmed at the heavy and boring responsibility. He’s just not happy managing the duchy’s farthings in and farthings out.

The first few deadites to appear were almost a blessing—they were something to fight at least. Flesh and bone to hack into bits. But killing demons is hard work, and a lot of good men died in the process. The kingdom doesn’t have many soldiers left since they’re all up in Scotland stealing the Stone of Scone and all. So Arthur had to go against his instincts, stop leading from the front, and figure out a way to stop the evil’s spread.

The faux duke's plan is fairly simple so far: at the first sign of possession, the guilty party gets thrown in chains. If possible, they're tossed into the Pit (see p. 147). Those who show unmistakable signs of being possessed—say turning ugly and trying to chow down on passersby—get made into little tiny bullion cubes.

Our backstory makes it very clear why Arthur was so quick to put Ash in chains. It isn't every day a man with a big metal whatsit for a hand comes falling out of the sky.

THE EVIL BEGINS

How did the evil rise in Arthur's realm? No one knows for sure, but the Necronomicon showed up and someone somewhere figured out how to translate ancient Sumerian. (It's a common misconception that peasants were illiterate. They can't read or write English, but ancient Sumerian translators are a shilling a dozen. Okay, we're making that up, but work with us here.) We're going with the story that one of these primitive screwheads (probably some local elder or wiseman—those guys are always meddling where they shouldn't) read the wrong resurrection spell and the evil from the forest awakened. A few peasants went missing, then returned with fresh new demons inside them. One bite led to another, and a genuine medieval infestation set in the likes of which haven't been seen since the Black Death. (Okay, the Black Death happens about 50 years after all this takes place in the real world, but let it go friend—it's just an analogy.)

Arthur's knights most likely acted as any good man at arms would in the face of the demon epidemic—they ganged up and cut the things to pieces. Fortunately, the whole hacking and slashing bit is just the right treatment for deadites—no liberal counseling and therapy here in the Dark Ages. So most of the fiends got whacked (though at the expense of many brave knights), and a couple even got captured and thrown in the Pit before they got too powerful.

There are many more in the countryside though, and Arthur knows it, so he's in no mood to deal with weird strangers by the time Ash comes falling out of the sky.

ARTHUR AND HENRY

ARTHUR: AND WHILE MY PEOPLE FIGHT FOR THEIR VERY SOULS AGAINST IT, YOU, HENRY THE RED, WAGE WAR ON US! YOUR PEOPLE ARE NO BETTER THAN THE FOUL CORRUPTION THAT LIES IN THE BOWELS OF THAT PIT.

Army of Darkness makes it clear that Arthur is a bit peeved with his neighbor to the east, Duke Henry the Red. We like to think that Henry and Arthur were at peace before the evil awakened. "Peace" meaning they only killed each other's men only on the odd occasion and for good reasons.

We figure Arthur was the first to urinate in his neighbor's oats. Henry's men started coming in to Arthur's duchy (looking for the demons no doubt) and the replacement duke got a little too uppity. He wasn't exactly left with an instruction book on how to rule, so he was perhaps a bit rude when he captured Henry's men and threw them in his stockade. He worked out this first incident with Henry quick enough, but in the meantime, the demons the knights had been hunting killed scores on both sides of the border.

Henry blames Arthur for this, and Arthur is too proud to admit his mistake. Things only got worse after that as Henry and his soldiers took it on themselves to police Arthur's realm. Mr. Macho wasn't having any of that, thank you very much.

Now the two duchies are at open war. At least they would be if they weren't both decimated by the Evil Dead and King Edward's war in Scotland.

We see that as really quite a shame because both men are actually decent rulers. They care about their people (true revolutionaries in this period, friend), and have made stomping out the evil that threatens them their highest priority. Henry's men would follow him to Hell and back. Arthur doesn't inspire that kind of loyalty, but he is systematic and organized and will eventually get his realm in order . . . if it isn't wiped out first.

Here's the Quick Sheet version of Arthur for use as a Guest Star or Adversary. You'll find a fleshed-out Cast Member version at the end of **Chapter Two: Promised Ones** (see p. 70).

Name: Arthur

Motivation: Protect the people, protect the world,
destroy the evil

Critter Type: Human

Attributes: Str 3, Dex 4, Con 3, Int 3, Per 4, Will 3

Ability Scores: Muscle 12, Combat 14, Brains 12

Life Points: 46

Drama Points: 5

Special Abilities: Attractiveness +1, +1 to Combat for Riding, Hard to Kill 4, Honorable (Serious), Nerves of Steel, Plate Mail (AV 12/6), Status 5

Maneuvers

Name	Score	Damage	Notes
Crossbow	14	19	Slash/stab; use pistol ranges
Dodge	14	—	Defensive action
Kick	13	11	Bash
Punch	14	9	Bash
Sword	14	15	Slash/stab



ARTHUR'S CASTLE

EVIL ASH: WHERE ARE THEY KEEPING MY BOOK?
CALCIUM CAPTAIN: THERE, MY LORD. BEYOND THE DRAWBRIDGE
IN THE SECOND WALL. THAT WOULD BE THE SAFEST PLACE.

Arthur's castle isn't very big, and it's not particularly elaborate. It's a mishmash of styles—we're guessing that reflects the regular ruling family's on-again, off-again approach to keeping up with the neighbors (and has nothing to do with limited set design budgets). Some of the towers are square and over 200 years old, while others sport a snappy round design (which offers more protection from heavy missiles in a siege).

It's solid though, with thick walls and tall towers overlooking the most obvious approaches. It also has a moat around the entire wall, though this is currently dry. (England seems to be in the middle of a dry streak during Ash's visit.)

Before the army of the dead arises, we guess Arthur has nearly 500 souls living in and around his castle. The women, children, sick, and infirm are kindly evacuated when Ash flubs his Necronomicon line, leaving the castle with a little more than 60 warriors to protect it.

The approach lies across a steep dry moat, so attackers are in considerable danger while trying to break in. The moat is fifteen-feet deep and those who tumble in are going to get owies. Any character who takes damage while on the approach must make a Dexterity (doubled) or Dexterity and Acrobatics roll (those tossed off don't get to roll). Failure means he's knocked over the side and suffers fifteen feet of falling damage (see p. 104).

The front of the entranceway is blocked by an iron portcullis, and the interior has a second portcullis as well. Tearing down the portcullis requires a ram or similar tool. A group of at least six men equipped with a ram can knock the bars down with eight Success Levels. It ignores the first five Success Levels, has Armor Value 4, and can take 40 points of damage. Attackers must then repeat the task to breach the interior portcullis. Once inside the first portcullis, they are subject to attacks through the "murder holes" above. Deadites don't suffer much from arrows, however, so characters must be clever to make any use of them.

When closed, the drawbridge must be breached as well. It's sturdy and banded with metal, so it requires five Success Levels to knock down, and ignores the first Success Level in any one roll.

MAIN GATE

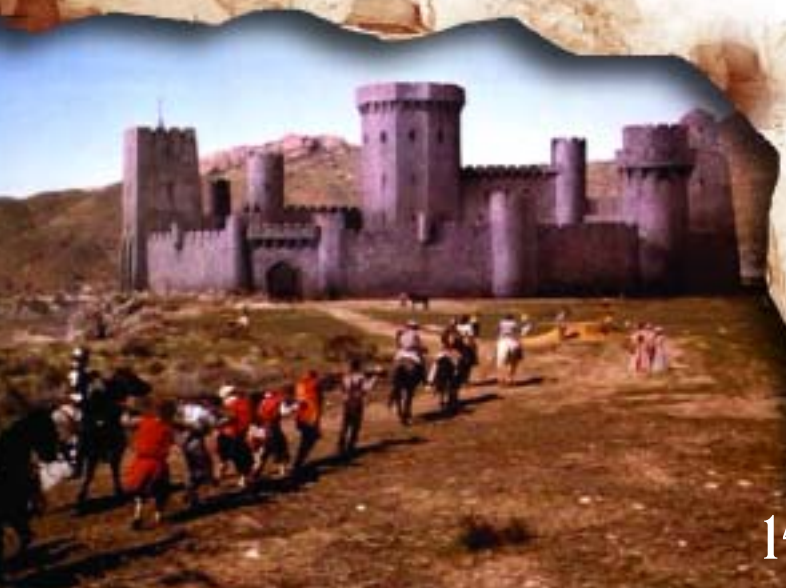
The castle has a single large gatehouse equipped with a double portcullis, drawbridge, and murder holes. This is the only way in or out as far as anyone present knows. There may be hidden entrances, but only Arthur's duke knows for sure.

HITCHING POST

This post is used to punish criminals who aren't quite bad enough to be thrown into the Pit (see p. 147). Prisoners are chained to the post and forced to remain there for several days. During that time, the residents have free reign to beat, humiliate, and otherwise degrade the unfortunate soul. Anything short of actual torture or permanent injury is allowed.

The manacles connected to the post require five Success Levels to slip free, using Acrobatics and Dexterity, but the first five levels don't count (yup—they're very tight). The chain can also be pulled loose from the post—assuming no one stops you—by making a Strength roll (not doubled) and getting five Success Levels (ignoring the first three).

Given his actions whipping Ash, pushing the prisoners around, and taking a bit too much pleasure in the Pit spectacle, it's likely that an obnoxious fellow called Gold Tooth spends a fair amount of time at the hitching post. He's a brutal scumbag and is



Name: Gold Tooth
Motivation: Get ahead, oppress the weak
Critter Type: Human
Attributes: Str 3, Dex 3, Con 5, Int 2, Per 3, Will 1
Ability Scores: Muscle 12, Combat 13, Brains 9
Life Points: 54 **Drama Points:** 2
Special Abilities: Hard to Kill 4, Humorless, Mental Problems (Mild Cowardice), Mental Problems (Serious Cruelty)

Maneuvers			
Name	Score	Damage	Notes
Dodge	13	—	Defense action
Kick	12	10	Bash
Punch	13	9	Bash
Sword	13	15	Slash/stab



nothing special to look at to boot. For all his bluster, however, he seems to have little backbone and can be easily swayed to follow whoever the alpha dog is at any given moment.

CATAPULT ROW

Arthur has four working catapults in the castle. Each one hurls a massive 300-pound stone that can crack open stone walls and smash Cast Members like the Hulk.

Shooting a catapult uses Getting Medieval but because it's fairly far removed from the usual hacking and slashing, the rolls suffers a -4 penalty (that can be avoided by taking the Wild Card (Catapult) skill though). Add whatever skill is used to Perception—aiming a catapult is all about the physics, man—and fire away. The damage from a catapult stone is 60, and it does Bash damage. Stones can be fired up to 200 yards distant.

Catapults aren't really designed to use against single targets. They're intended to knock down fortifications, and are occasionally fired into masses of troops. For that reason, trying to target a particular character incurs a -5 penalty to the shooter's roll (on top of the Getting Medieval modifier).

It takes two complete Turns to reload a catapult with a six-man crew. Add a Turn to the loading time for each man missing. It takes at least two men to reload at all (the stone has to be picked up a few feet and dropped into the scoop).

THE PIT

OLD WOMAN: INTO THE PIT WITH THOSE BLOODTHIRSTY SONS OF WHORES.

At the center of Arthur's castle is a thirty-foot deep pit filled crotch-high with cold water. We're guessing the well used to be part of the castle's drinking water system, but no doubt the Wiseman told them the water was tainted and was the cause of all the evil plaguing the land. If he did that, he'd be as wrong as a fat man in a tutu, but Arthur and his backward screwheads wouldn't know that.

Since the water was already tainted (in Arthur's mind), he decided to start chucking anyone suspected of being possessed into the pit. Those who weren't soon became infected from those who were, so the Wiseman nodded and agreed they were all in league with the devil. Pesky demons being what they are, they kept trying to climb out. So the humans installed a collapsible wall of spikes so that what goes on in the Pit stays in the Pit.

You have to think that a few of Arthur's victims put up a fight. Arthur's no dummy, and he probably noticed that his depressed people were fairly entertained when they did, so he turned it into a spectacle. This is the Dark Ages after all, and when you're poor, miserable, and dirty all the time, you can look at a guy being thrown in a pit full of demons and think "At least I'm not that guy!"

The fall into the Pit is only moderately dangerous. The base damage for the tumble is only ten Life Points because there's a pool of water at the bottom. Characters who make a Dexterity and Acrobatics roll reduce this damage by one point per Success Level.

The real danger lies in what hides in the Pit itself. There are at least two deadites in the pit at any given time (see p. 161).

If the creatures seem to be losing (or trying to crawl out), Arthur signals his men and they trigger a spiked-wall trap. The walls close in four Turns. Any Cast Members who are still between them when they close suffer 30 Life Points of damage. (Yowch!)

Once the walls start closing, the heroes can grab onto the chain attached to the pulley that operates them. Holding on all the way to the top requires a Strength (doubled) roll with a -4 penalty but gets them out in one Turn.

Climbing out of the pit via the rough-hewn walls is tougher—a hero must make an Acrobatics and Strength roll and get five cumulative Success Levels. Each attempt takes one Turn.

WORKSHOP

This is where Ash builds his hand, the Death Coaster, and assorted other implausible devices, with a little help from the Blacksmith. It's actually a blacksmith's shop, of course, and is used to conduct repairs on important parts of the castle (door mech-

anisms and the like) as well as shod horses, fit armor, and craft some weaponry.

The shop is well stocked, but the real treasure is the strong but silent Blacksmith. This quiet fellow is a genius when it comes to his craft. Given clear instructions—even from highly advanced sources from the future—he can create most any mechanical device. Electrical gadgets and electronics are beyond his abilities, but clockwork devices, steam-powered gizmos, and piston-driven machines (like Ash's hand) can all be made in his shop.

A Quick Sheet version of the Blacksmith for use as a Guest Star or Adversary is below. You'll find a fleshed-out Cast Member version at the end of **Chapter Two: Promised Ones** (see p. 74).

The Death Coaster: Ash made his Death Coaster in the Blacksmith's shop. He replaced the V8 with a steam engine and installed a massive, fan-like blade on the front hood designed to shatter the brittle bones of the skeletons. The Death Coaster can move roughly 100 yards per Turn with its steam engine. It has 90 Damage Capacity, Toughness 3, Handling 3, and eight points of Armor Value (Slash/stab and bullet damage doubling is not applicable). Anytime it suffers more than 15 points of damage in a single attack, the driver must make a Dexterity and Driving roll to avoid crashing. The driver also makes a Dexterity and Driving roll to smash his foes, who resist with Dexterity and Acrobatics or their Combat score. Anything hit by the fan blades suffers 40 points of Bash damage.

Name: Blacksmith
Motivation: Protect the castle, work, work, work
Critter Type: Human
Attributes: Str 6, Dex 3, Con 5, Int 3, Per 3, Will 2
Ability Scores: Muscle 18, Combat 13, Brains 11
Life Points: 66 **Drama Points:** 5
Special Abilities: Hard to Kill 4, Honorable (Serious), Humorless, Nerves of Steel, +2 to Combat for Mr. Fix-It

Maneuvers			
Name	Score	Damage	Notes
Dodge	13	—	Defense action
Hammer	13	21	Bash
Kick	12	16	Bash
Punch	13	15	Bash



Name: Wiseman

Motivation: Find the source of the evil and destroy it, better living through chemistry

Critter Type: Human

Attributes: Str 2, Dex 2, Con 3, Int 5, Per 5, Will 4

Ability Scores: Muscle 10, Combat 9, Brains 16

Life Points: 26

Drama Points: 10

Special Abilities: Status 4

Name	Maneuvers			Notes
	Score	Damage		
Dodge	9	—		Defense action
Punch	9	5		Bash
Quarterstaff	9	10		Bash



The fan makes the Death Coaster very unsteady. If the driver ever rolls a natural 1 while running over his foes, or fails a roll imposed suffering 15 points of damage, the arms smash into the ground and flip the car over. It always explodes—this is a cinematic game after all—doing 30 points of damage to anyone inside, and 10 points to anyone within 10 yards of it. A hero can make a Dexterity and Acrobatics roll to jump free before it crashes, but is stunned for one Turn afterwards and cannot act.

WISEMAN'S TOWER

The duke's smartest advisor lives at the top of this tall tower. We imagine his workbenches are filled with strange chemicals and bubbling concoctions (all mostly harmless and quite useless—though

oddly he has invented Windex, hasn't realized it, and may never know). The Wiseman is served by the castle's staff—such as the scullery maid who hells-out when Ash is in the room. The Wiseman can usually be found here, studying ancient texts or mixing up some new noxious potion.

THE DUKE'S TOWER

No, John Wayne doesn't stay here. Then again, neither does Arthur. In keeping with our vision of Arthur as a loyal retainer, we figure he still feels a bit odd sleeping in the duke's bed, so he stays with the other men-at-arms in the Knight's Quarters. For now, the duke's chambers are completely empty, save for the staff who live in the lower levels.

Name: Castle Staff

Motivation: Try not to die, keep the castle running

Critter Type: Human

Attributes: Str 2, Dex 2, Con 2, Int 2, Per 2, Will 2

Ability Scores: Muscle 10, Combat 9, Brains 9

Life Points: 26

Drama Points: 1

Special Abilities: Status 4

Name	Maneuvers			Notes
	Score	Damage		
Dagger	9	5		Slash/stab
Dodge	9	—		Defense action
Punch	9	5		Bash



Name: Knight

Motivation: Protect the castle, serve Arthur

Critter Type: Human

Attributes: Str 4, Dex 3, Con 4, Int 2, Per 2, Will 2

Ability Scores: Muscle 14, Combat 14, Brains 9

Life Points: 51

Drama Points: 5

Special Abilities: Driving (Horse) 4, Hard to Kill 3, Medium Shield, Plate Mail (AV 12/6), Status 3

Maneuvers

Name	Score	Damage	Notes
Crossbow	14	19	Slash/stab; use pistol ranges
Dodge	14	—	Defense action
Lance	14	30	Using war horse; doubled with charge (see p. 93)
Parry	14 (16)	—	Defense action (with shield)
Sword	14	19	Slash/stab



KNIGHT'S QUARTERS

Arthur's knights are all quite young—the duke took his best warriors with him to fight the Scots. The replacements have earned their place quickly however, as Arthur has thrown them into battle against the demons often in the last few weeks. The knights room together in the west tower, along with Arthur himself, who has not yet taken it upon himself to sleep in the true duke's bed.

Like Arthur, who was their captain before, the knights wear heavy armor from head to foot. Their shields bear the duke's symbol, a black lion on a silver background.

There were more than twenty of these brave fellows, but some have since fallen to the deadites. One of those who fell against Duke Henry's men was Sheila's brother. Only a dozen remain by the time Ash arrives. In the movie, Arthur assigns four of these men to guard the Necronomicon.

Name: Swordsman

Motivation: Protect the castle, don't get killed

Critter Type: Human

Attributes: Str 3, Dex 3, Con 3, Int 2, Per 2, Will 2

Ability Scores: Muscle 12, Combat 12, Brains 9

Life Points: 40

Drama Points: 1

Special Abilities: Chain Mail (AV 8/4), Hard to Kill 2, Medium Shield

Maneuvers

Name	Score	Damage	Notes
Dodge	12	—	Defense action
Parry	12 (14)	—	Defense action (with shield)
Sword	12	14	Slash/stab



Name: Archers

Motivation: Protect the castle, stay out of melee

Critter Type: Human

Attributes: Str 2, Dex 3, Con 2, Int 2, Per 3, Will 2

Ability Scores: Muscle 10, Combat 12, Brains 9

Life Points: 26

Drama Points: 1

Special Abilities: Chain Mail (AV 8/4)

Maneuvers

Name	Score	Damage	Notes
Bow	12	10	Slash/stab
Dagger	12	6	Slash/stab
Dodge	12	—	Defense action



BARRACKS

The rest of the duke's men live in these two towers. As with all soldiers, more senior fellows get single beds while the younger recruits get bunks. All have a single footlocker for their personal effects and clothing. Their weapons—swords, shields, bows, and the like, are racked at the front of the room, though lately the men have taken to essentially living in their armor and sleeping with their weapons.

Most of the warriors wear chain mail with a few pieces of metal armor strapped over it and a variety of helmets. They don white or gray tunics with streamers or ribbons of yellow. Upon their tunics and shields is their duke's coat of arms—a fighting black lion on a silver background. The Quick Sheets here are for the standard men-at-arms; the veterans have a Combat 13 and a Brains 10.

STABLES

We didn't see a stable up close and personal in the film, but there had to be one somewhere (they do have whole bunches of horses, y'know). We guess two types of mounts may be found in the stables: riding horses and war horses. Not much difference between the two in appearance, but the latter are much more dangerous. War horses may be directed to attack during their rider's Turn (see p. 93). They are also fairly particular about their riders. If anyone unfamiliar tries to mount or tend to them, they shy, resist, and even attack. It should take several days, or maybe a Willpower and Influence roll with some serious successes, to get sufficiently "friendly" with a war horse to ride it.

LANDS OF DARKNESS

Name: Riding Horse

Motivation: Eat, stay alive, run

Critter Type: Animal

Attributes: Str 6, Dex 4, Con 3, Int 0, Per 3, Will 4

Ability Scores: Muscle 18, Combat 12, Brains 9

Life Points: 60

Drama Points: 0

Special Abilities: Animal intelligence, move 75 yards a Turn

Maneuvers

Name	Score	Damage	Notes
Bite	12	14	Slash/stab
Kick	12	30	Bash



Name: War Horse
Motivation: Eat, run, fight
Critter Type: Animal
Attributes: Str 8, Dex 4, Con 5, Int 0, Per 3, Will 4
Ability Scores: Muscle 22, Combat 14, Brains 9
Life Points: 85 **Drama Points:** 0
Special Abilities: Animal intelligence, move 75 yards a Turn

Maneuvers			
Name	Score	Damage	Notes
Bite	14	19	Slash/stab
Trample	14	45	Bash



HENRY THE RED

HENRY (TO ARTHUR): CHARLATAN! IT WAS YOU WHO FIRST TURNED YOUR SWORDS ON US. AND THIS EVIL HAS BEFOULED MY PEOPLE AS WELL!

In our minds, Henry is the youngest son of an aging band of warriors. The rest have gone to fight beside their king in Scotland, leaving Henry in charge. As an heir, he is a legitimate duke—unlike Arthur who is simply filling in until the rightful duke's return.

Henry is remarkably calm in the face of death, likely a learned fatalism from being the youngest son of a duke. Such men very rarely ever assume their father's domain as their numerous brothers have prior claim. Henry knows that when his family returns, he'll return to the bottom of the pecking order. Judging from Henry's advanced years (he seems in his early forties—an old man in the middle ages), his father and brothers are also fairly long-lived. Thus, Henry's prospects for dukedom are next to zero. Which is a shame really, because Henry is a pretty good ruler. He no doubt sowed more than a few wild oats when he was younger, and there are a lot of red-haired bastards in his land, but he truly does care about his people.

Just to keep things interesting, let's say Henry knows Arthur well. The two grew up only a few miles apart after all, and no doubt competed against each other in more than a few contests of arms. Arthur appears the more skilled of the two, but Henry looks a little stronger and much wilder, mak-

ing them an interesting match. As befits his generally sour disposition, Arthur takes such competition far too seriously, however, and is frequently the butt of Henry's jests.

It's clear Henry's duchy has been visited by several demon possessions. We see the fight against those horrors as what led his men into Arthur's territory (see p. 144), but he has nowhere near the problem Arthur has.

Here's the short version of Duke Henry for use as an Adversary (if you must) or a Guest Star. A full sheet of Duke Henry can be found at the end of **Chapter Two: Promised Ones** (see p. 72).

HENRY'S MEN

Henry has more men than Arthur in total, but only brings a total of 77 men into his neighbor's lands if convinced to help against the army of the dead (as he did in the movie). He has a dozen knights, 15 veteran swordsmen, and 50 men-at-arms in his force. They have the same statistics as those in Arthur's army (see p. 190).

OTHER LOCATIONS

Other major locations from the movie are described here. If you plan on using them in your game, put a little thought into them. Your friends have almost certainly seen the movie and know what to expect. Don't be afraid to add your own special twists to them as needed.

Name: Duke Henry the Red

Motivation: Protect the people, protect the world,
destroy the evil

Critter Type: Human

Attributes: Str 5, Dex 3, Con 4, Int 2, Per 3, Will 3

Ability Scores: Muscle 16, Combat 14, Brains 11

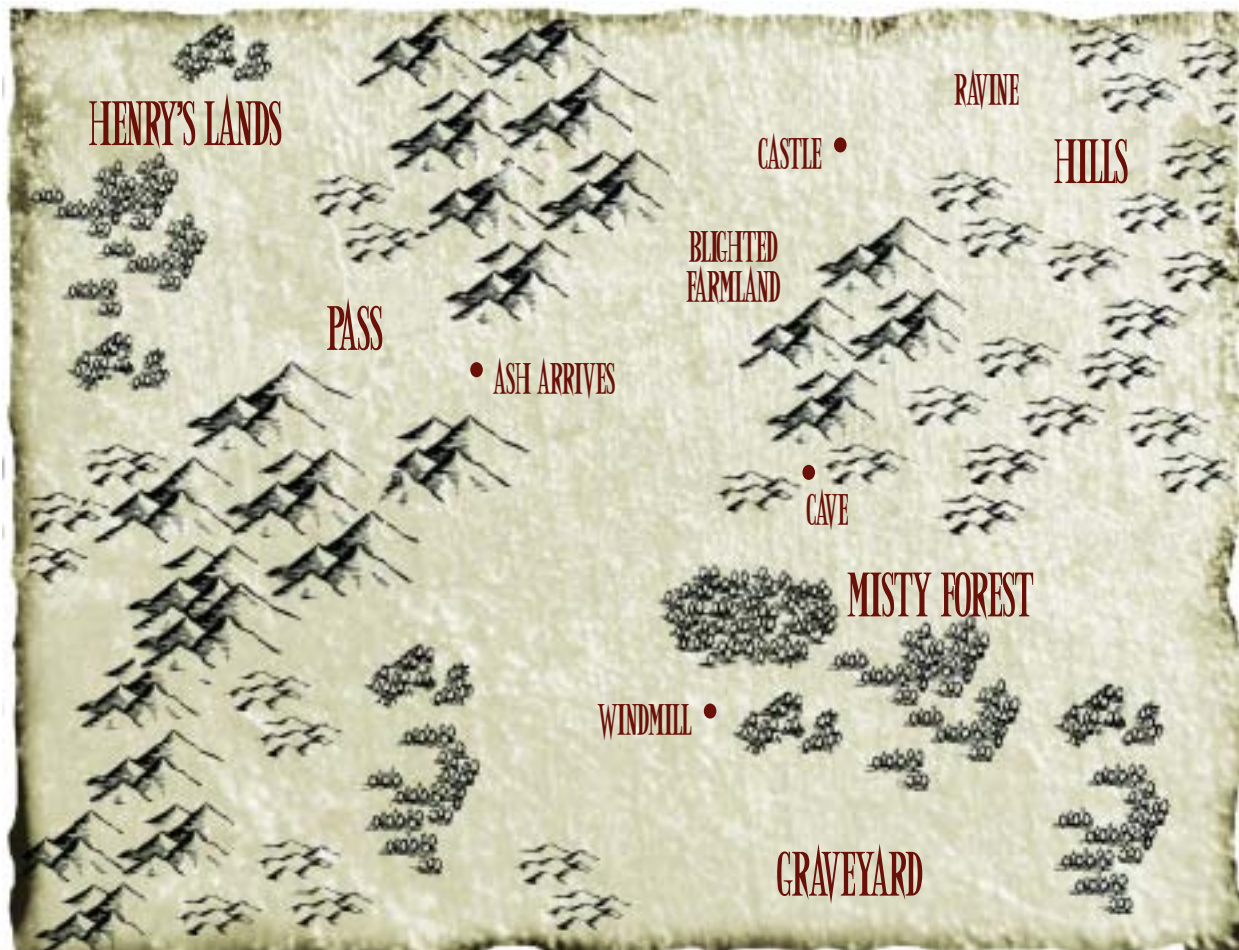
Life Points: 61

Drama Points: 5

Special Abilities: Chain Mail (AV 8/4), Hard to Kill 5,
Honorable (Serious), Mental Problems (Mild
Recklessness), Nerves of Steel, Status 6

Maneuvers

Name	Score	Damage	Notes
Axe	14	28	Slash/stab
Crossbow	14	19	Slash/stab; use pistol ranges
Dodge	14	—	Defense action
Kick	13	15	Bash
Punch	14	13	Bash
Sword	14	23	Slash/stab



LANDS OF DARKNESS

THE PASS

After Ash rallies the troops in Arthur's castle, he suggests that they ask Duke Henry for aid. As we learn from one of the deleted scenes on the *Army of Darkness* DVD, Ash heads off on this mission alone (guess Arthur didn't feel too confident of success, or maybe Ash figured Arthur's troops would only enflame the situation—though that seems awfully insightful for our big chinned wonder boy). Anyway, Ash rides through a pass between Arthur's lands and those of Duke Henry's. There he is bushwacked by Henry's men.

We suspect that bandits and deadites often ambushes travelers along this pass. Or maybe this is where Arthur and Henry send their sorties into each other's lands. In any event, Duke Henry has taken to guarding the passes and bushwhacking Arthur's couriers. It is a natural choke point into his lands to the east and well suited for hiding scores of warriors. A force ambushing from here always acts first in the first Turn.

Prior to Henry's alliance with Arthur (if one occurs), fifteen of his men guard this point. There's a good chance Henry himself is here as well, joining the ambush as a way to get away from the boring task of running his duchy.

THE MISTY FOREST

A few miles south of Arthur's castle is a forest constantly covered in fog. This is where the force we decided to call the Watcher has arisen, spreading its evil from the pines like some malignant plague. It was here the Watcher first awakened, and from here it took its first victims. Those unfortunates became hosts to deadites, then shambled out into the local towns and villages to infect still more.

Because this is the Watcher's home, it can manifest for "free" any time someone enters the forest, though no more than once every 24 hours. The mist protects it from the hated sun, so it can materialize day or night.

More details on the malignancy that is the Watcher in the Woods may be found in the creatures' entries (see p. 157).

THE WINDMILL

ASH (CALLING OUT TINY ASHES): I'M GONNA HUNT DOWN ALL YOU-

At the edge of the misty forest is a tall and mysterious windmill. Its giant blades turn though there seems little wind in this desolate place.

In the film, Ash hid from the Watcher here, but then fell victim to one of its various Torments (see p. 159). Tricked into smashing a mirror, numerous Tiny Ashes leapt from the shards and tortured our poor hero. Eventually, one of the Tiny Ashes managed to get down Ash's hatch. The thing grew and eventually "split" out of Ash, becoming Evil Ash.

Ash bested his double and dismembered the corpse in front of the windmill, but the Watcher (at least we're assuming that's who did it) brought the vile champion back from Hell, though grotesquely disfigured.

The windmill is clearly a cursed place, though its sturdy walls may offer protection from the Watcher in the nearby Misty Woods. The curse keeps characters in and around the windmill from spending Drama Points for Heroic Feat (see p. 109). All other functions of Drama Points work normally.

The game stats for the Tiny Ashes and Evil Ash are found in the section on nasties (see p. 165).

THE GRAVEYARD ... OF THE DEAD

WISEMAN: IT IS IN A PLACE FAR FROM HERE. IT CAN ONLY BE RETRIEVED BY THE PROMISED ONE. OTHER WARRIORS HAVE TRIED. THEIR WIDOWS GRIEVE STILL. WE HAVE WAITED LONG YEARS FOR YOU. OUR ONLY HOPE IS THE NECRONOMICON. THOU MUST UNDERTAKE TO QUEST FOR IT. ALONE MUST THOU TRAVEL TO A DISTANT CEMETERY. THERE THOU SHALT FIND IT. ASH: ME? NO WAY, NO DAY. ONLY PLACE I'M GOIN' IS HOME.

Past the Misty Forest and the windmill, a half-day's ride from Arthur's castle is a massive graveyard filled with the bones of England's fallen warriors and the altar of the Necronomicon.

Thanks to Ash, Evil Ash raises his army of skeletons here. He also turns Sheila into Evil Sheila in the boneyard by giving her some really nasty sugar.

The Army of the Dead rises up with over 500 warriors, plus a few special troops. The army comes into existence because the Necronomicon set a trap on itself. Unless properly "defused" with the words

"Klaatu Verata Nikto," the dead rise. As we know, saying Klaatu Verata (mumble-mumble) is just the kind of thing to trigger the trap.

Skeletons are all stated out later in this chapter (see p. 163).

ALTAR OF THE BOOK

WISEMAN: WHEN THOU RETRIEVEST THE BOOK FROM ITS CRADLE, YOU MUST RECITE THE WORDS. KLAATU, VERATA, NIKTO.

At the center of the cemetery is an ancient altar. It is a cursed place, and a nexus for the evil of the Necronomicon.

Ash first visits the altar to find the book, but is amazed to find that there are three. What Ash doesn't know is that the true test isn't choosing the correct book, it's surviving them. You see, we figure Ash was screwed from the start. He had to survive the first two books. Only after doing so does the third book become "real." So there was no way Ash could have "guessed" the right book on his first or second trip. If you choose to use this location in your game, we recommend you pull this kind of dirty trick on your Cast Members.

Even once the correct book has been chosen, there's a catch. Officially, only by speaking the correct words "Klaatu Verata Nikto" can the third book be touched without awakening the Army of the Dead. In your game, you might want to devise some other test since all your players have no doubt seen the movie and memorized every line. Some other possible tests are outlined later in this chapter (see pp. 172-173).

BOOKS OF BADNESS

ASH: UH, WAIT A MINUTE. HOLD IT. NOBODY SAID ANYTHING ABOUT THREE BOOKS.

The "wrong" books are all trapped or alive in some way. First we'll discuss the two false Necronomicons from the movie, then move on to a few suggestions of our own.

The Vortex Book: This nasty tome opens into a mini-vortex like the one Ash first fell into to arrive in medieval England. Any character standing within five feet of the book must make a Strength (not doubled) roll each Turn to avoid getting sucked in. With at least three Success Levels, the character is able to close the book.

Those who get sucked in get one more chance to escape, but must make a Strength (not doubled) roll with three Success Levels. Those who fail are lost in time. Two Drama Points and some help from the Director allow the hero to find another way through time and arrive back in medieval England sometime later that Episode. Alternatively, the character could be dropped into another setting (like one of those in **Chapter Seven: Worlds of Darkness**). There, he could meet up with fellow heroes and battle the minions of the evil book. Victory in that land could lead him back to the graveyard in Circa England, ready to choose another book.

The Flying Book: The flying book is an unliving creature that flaps and bites the one who first touches it. It must be destroyed to stop attacking.

The Book of Boom: Two words: BOOM! Okay, that's one word, but it should be said really loud so it counts extra. A gout of pure Hellfire bursts from the pages when this book is open. All Cast Members must make an Acrobatics and Dexterity roll or suffer 20 points of damage.

The Book of Blood: A massive blood spray angles out at the Cast Members, dousing them in thick black demon blood. Everyone must make a Willpower roll or lose a Drama Point!

The Book of Doom: The book opens to a page showing a disembodied demon head. To the Cast's surprise, the head pulls itself off the page, grows to the size of a Volkswagen, and begins to scream! "I'll

Name: The Flying Book
Motivation: Eat humans
Critter Type: Book
Attributes: Str 2, Dex 7, Con 2, Int 2, Per 2, Will 2
Ability Scores: Muscle 10, Combat 17, Brains 10
Life Points: 30 **Drama Points:** 1
Special Abilities: Leather cover (AV 4)

Maneuvers			
Name	Score	Damage	Notes
Bite	17	11	Slash/stab
Dodge	17	—	Defense action



swallow your soul! I'll swallow your soul!" it shrieks over and over again. The horrid thing then tries to literally eat every human in sight!

The Book of Pain: Crackling tendrils of green and violet energy lash out, wracking all the heroes with intense pain. Cast Members who make a Constitution (doubled) roll with a -5 penalty suffer 10 Life Points of damage. Those who fail suffer 25 points of damage!

The Book of Pleasure: The book opens to a page depicting a voluptuous naked lady—with Hell in her eyes (could be a buff guy too, for the gals in your Cast). The Cast Members feel a warm sensation run through them. Intense waves of lust threaten to overwhelm them. All characters must make a Willpower (doubled) roll with a -5 penalty to avoid trying to "get busy" with the nearest member of the

opposite sex. If there are not enough of the desirable gender around, the lust-crazed characters simply attack each other!

Cast Members get to make a Willpower (doubled) roll with a -5 penalty every Turn. If all the Cast Members make their roll in a single Turn (ignore any Guest Stars who might be accompanying them), the effect stops and the book closes. Until then, Cast Members who make their roll may act as they wish during the Turn. Those who don't must either grab the nearest member of the opposite sex, or take a swing at another who's after the same prize. The saving grace of the book is that the lust so addles a character's brain that attacks are carried out with punches only (not enough cognitive thought to be able to use a more effective weapon) and no Drama Points may be used.

Name: Demon Head
Motivation: Eat humans
Critter Type: Book
Attributes: Str 10, Dex 4, Con 7, Int 2, Per 2, Will 2
Ability Scores: Muscle 26, Combat 14, Brains 10
Life Points: 78 **Drama Points:** 3
Special Abilities: Leather cover (AV 4)

Maneuvers			
Name	Score	Damage	Notes
Bite	14	33	Slash/stab
Dodge	14	—	Defense action



CREATURES OF DARKNESS

EVIL ASH HEAD (SINGING): OH, SUSANNA/
OH, DON'T YOU CRY FOR ME/ FOR I COME FROM ALABAMA/
WITH A BANJO ON MY KNEE

Okay, so we've covered the locations, the people, and a couple of twists to throw at your characters. Now it's time to let you in on all the nifty stuff to really torture the Cast Members. We're about to give you the scoop on just who the Evil Dead are, what they're up to, and how they get to do all the horrible things they do. We'll also help you create your own new vile tormentors and tell you just why the Necronomicon isn't in Oprah's book club.

Let's start by describing the featured creatures of the *Army of Darkness* movie. Then we'll move on to a few original creations to provide that evil twist your players are sure to enjoy.

THE WATCHER IN THE WOODS

ASH (TRYING TO CALM HIS HORSE): WHOA. WHOA. (SOFTLY)
WHAT IS IT, BOY?

What are the Evil Dead? If you "become one of them," just who are you joining? Are there benefits? Do they have a retirement plan? Good questions all. And none of them answered in particular in the movie. So let us provide some theories, starting with the basics.

The Evil Dead aren't actually dead. They're demons. And we don't think they are the boss, so let's shove them rudely aside for the time being. We'll start instead at the top of the corporate ladder. Later, we'll slide down into the pits of Hell where the rest of the horrors wait.

It seems safe to say that the big boss is an ancient evil that lurks "between the places known by man" and lives in the "dark bowels of man's domain." In essence, it is evil in its pure form. It is the raw hatred of the wilderness and the cosmos that despises the intrusion of the monkeys called man. It is older than history and crawled upon the earth even before the dinosaurs. If there really is a Mother Nature, this is the abused stepchild she kept locked in a basement for twenty years. Least ways, that's how we see the horror that plagues Ash and Circa England.

Occasionally, the evil can materialize in our world, but only in the dark forests where it was born. As it mostly just waits and watches, we're going to call it the "Watcher in the Woods." We could have called it the Force, the Evil, Humbaba the Terrible (sounds like a good Sumerian name), the Ent, the Tree Thing, or just plain Bob. Still, the Watcher sounds better. When not made flesh (or bark, in this case), it can control the woods, call forth demons to inhabit human shells (see p. 161), and perform a few other parlor tricks sure to make the lives of Promised Ones miserable.

The Watcher is something like a malicious child pulling the wings off of flies or frying ants with a magnifying glass. Of course in this case, the bugs are people. It doesn't just want to kill humans, it wants to torment them. It literally seethes with hatred for all human life.

There's only one of these Watchers in Circa England . . . at least as far as we know. No reason there can't be more though. We'll leave that decision to you.

THE WATCHER'S WOODS

The woods the Watcher inhabits are always dark, loathsome places, even when the evil isn't actively chasing those foolish enough to enter it. Trails change when one isn't looking, trees move, and travelers find themselves going around and around in circles.

Simply walking out of these woods requires 10 cumulative Success Levels on an Intelligence (doubled) roll. This can be quite deadly if the Watcher materializes and decides it's time for a snack while the characters are blundering through the trees trying to find a way out. Each roll should take roughly half an hour. If more than one person rolls, their Success Levels can be added to build toward the 10 needed, but any failure subtracts two levels ("We need to go this way . . . I think see a light of some kind . . .").

WATCHER POWERS

Let's talk more about the main Watcher powers, and the ways you can use them in your game to terrorize your Cast.

Animate Woods: Any characters within the physical domains of the Watcher's current haunt (a specific forest, usually a dark, tangled, or misty place)

are subject to this effect. The Watcher can give life to the trees, vines, and other plants. The tendrils entangle humans, pierce their skin, and drag them at terrific velocities into solid trunks to splatter their brains and bones about the blood-soaked forest.

Once the Watcher decides to act, every character it chooses to attack must make a Willpower (not doubled) roll. Those that fail, suffer two points of damage for every point by which he misses his roll. So a character whose total is six (three less than nine) incurs six (two times three) points of damage. You should narrate this as vegetative attacks of various sorts. Any character who rolls a one (before modifiers are applied) is in serious danger and must roll Willpower (not doubled) again. If this roll is failed, the Watcher makes a concentrated attack to finish him off. It smashes him into a tree, runs him through with a stick, or squeezes the life from the unfortunate soul with its crushing vines. This attack does 34 points of damage in one blow.

The frequency of such attacks are left to your fiendish whim. We recommend no more than once every half hour (coinciding nicely with the rolls to escape the Watcher's Woods).

Doorways to Hell: The final way the Watcher can affect the physical world is by opening up human shells to demon spirits. The Watcher can inhabit any living creature whose blood has been shed by another demon. It can also possess any corpse.

Taking over a living creature requires the victim to resist the Watcher's Brains Score with a Willpower (doubled) roll (given their Drama Point ace-in-the-hole, the Watcher generally avoids trying to take over Cast Members; Promised Ones are given special treatment, see Possess the Champion, p. 160). The Watcher may only attempt this once per character per game session. If the Watcher wins, the victim becomes host to a deadite and is pretty much screwed (see p. 161). If the human wins, the Watcher cannot try again until the mortal suffers a new wound by a demon.

Those slain by the Watcher's demons can become hosts at the Watcher's will. They don't require rolls of any sort.

Treed to Death: The Watcher can only perform this trick once per Episode. It appears as a giant, bark-covered humanoid and chases after any wayward travelers it has detected in its dark domain. The tree terror is usually some 20 feet high, but can fantastically expand and contract its body to fit into small spaces such as doors and hallways—which it rarely smashes for some reason.

The force can only maintain this form for 10 minutes—usually just long enough to gobble up a few humans and fade back into the mist. It can travel outside the woods in this form, but dissipates a few Turns (set by you or roll a die) after it does so.

Name: Watcher in the Woods
Motivation: Create evil minions, destroy all humans.
Critter Type: Pure evil?
Attributes: Str 10, Dex 6, Con 14, Int 6, Per 6, Will 8
Ability Scores: Muscle 26, Combat 20, Brains 17
Life Points: 200 **Drama Points:** 5
Special Abilities: Armor Value 20, Attractiveness -12, Increased Life Points, Vulnerable only to its own flesh, Weakness to daylight

Name	Maneuvers		Notes
	Score	Damage	
Claw	20	25	Slash/stab; two per Turn at no penalty
Crush	26	17	Bash; must Grapple first; no resistance
Grapple	22	—	Resisted by Dodge
Stomp	18	45	Bash; resisted by Dodge
Toss	22	16	Bash; must Grapple first



Evil is very tough when made flesh, so much so that even Promised Ones aren't likely to kill it. First off, a Fear Test with a -6 penalty must be made. Running and keeping ahead of this monstrosity employs the chase rules (see p. 84) or, more simply, requires a Dexterity and Acrobatics roll. A single failure—or anyone foolish enough to stop running for some reason—means the character is subject to the Watcher's attack. A horse or motorcycle grants a +4 bonus to a Dexterity and Driving roll. If there's a road, a car grants a +6 bonus, or +4 if the road is unpaved, winding, etc. Five successes in a row means the character have lost the Big Bad tree (exiting the Woods is a good move as well). If there are several characters to choose from, the Watcher picks one to chase and does not vary that choice unless compelled to do so (say by a fire-wielding bozo coming up from behind).

Evil is also very deadly in this form. Most Primitive Screwheads won't survive it, and Heroes probably won't fare much better. Don't sic this thing on your group unless they can handle it and have a fair number of Drama Points to blow.

Torments: The Watcher has other weird powers that even those few occult scholars who know of its existence don't know about it. Each game session, it has a Torment that it may inflict on those who would oppose it. It can save these Torments up as well and use them in one massive flurry of chaos. There are several different kinds of Torments and we run them down next.

TORMENTS

The *Army of Darkness* movie suggests that the Watcher is confined by an odd set of rules, perhaps imposed upon it by whatever cosmic powers watch over the universe. It can't do whatever it wants, though it may sometimes appear that way to the people who cross its path. In our view, the powers of the Watcher, which we call Torments, amount to a cosmic payback justifying the existence of the Promised Ones and their special powers. Call it some malignant curse, effect, or creation that arises to make the champion's job harder the next time he faces the Evil.

Each Torment allows the Watcher to do any one of the following once per game session:

Blood Geyser: The Watcher retains the blood of all those it has slain in some pocket dimension somewhere, and can channel it in and out of the world of the living as it desires. This putrid stuff typically erupts from locations that make some sort of hole, such as the Pit, a gap in the wall, the ruptured limb of a deadite, and so on.

When a blood geyser erupts, you get to pick one target character (a Promised One if one is present). The stream douses the target and all adjacent heroes (if they are close enough in your view) like a fire hose, forcing them into obstacles, causing them to slip, and otherwise knocking them around like big, bloody rag dolls.

Besides possibly maneuvering foes into danger (such as knocking a champion off a cliff), every character in the stream must make a Willpower (not doubled) roll or lose one Drama Point! After three complete Turns of this, the stream stops.

Day Into Night: The Watcher can accelerate time, transforming day into night in just a few moments. This doesn't have any specific game effects but it does remove the whole sunlight-weakness problem for the big bad.

Idle Hands: Another icky trick the Evil can perform is to take over one of a Promised One's hands. The Watcher can only do this once per champion—leaving him with no hands just wouldn't be sportin'—and it never does it to other extremities because that just wouldn't be very useful (how scary is a demonic big toe?).

When this Torment is used, the champion gets to make a single Willpower (doubled) roll against the Watcher's Brains Score of 17. If he's successful, nothing happens. If not, his hand blackens and cracks, then goes completely berserk. It starts smashing things into him, stabbing him, and whatever else it can do to cause havoc and slay its host. To hold it still in a given Turn, the warrior must beat it in a resisted test of Strength (doubled). The Strength of the hand is the same as the hero's, plus one for its new supernatural juice. Defending against the hand is difficult while it's attached; all defense rolls suffer a -2 penalty.

The only way to stop the hand is to cut it off. Oddly enough, such amputation does not cause massive shock, blood loss, or unconsciousness (though it does appear a mite painful). If wrapped up (or cauterized, ouch!) relatively quickly, the character can be up and around (and fighting) in no

Name: Evil's Hand

Motivation: Cause pain and mischief

Critter Type: Demon

Attributes: Str *, Dex *, Con 2, Int 3, Per 4, Will 5

Ability Scores: Muscle #, Combat @, Brains 11

Life Points: 25

Drama Points: 2

Special Abilities: —

Maneuvers

Name	Score	Damage	Notes
------	-------	--------	-------

Punch	*	**	Bash
-------	---	----	------

* the same as the character it came from, plus one.

** the same as the character it came from, plus two.

6 plus Strength doubled.

@ 10 plus Dexterity.



time. Still, amputation doesn't slow the problem hand down. It has to be blasted to bits to stop causing mischief. Unless it's captured, it runs around throwing objects, pulling triggers, and otherwise causing bodily harm to its former mate. It protects itself by darting in and out of small hiding places such as mouse holes, rocks, or weeds.

The Watcher picks this Torment quite often, which explains why there are so many Tool Men running around with steel nose-pickers.

Killing Spree: The Evil Dead are on a roll. For the rest of this fight, no one can spend Drama Points to recover Life Points. This applies for the bad guys too, but they generally rely on Drama Points less. Yikes!

Minions: The Watcher can also use a Torment to create a new minion of some sort. These are creatures like the Tiny Ashes, Evil Ash, or Evil Sheila. Flying demons, lesser tree-things, or even traditional undead, like vampires, are all fair game. Stats are as desired. Now, this doesn't mean that an already existing, more generic demon, created at some prior unspecified time, couldn't come down on the gang without this Torment. This evilness is just for brand-spanking new minions, no doubt related or derived in some way from our heroes.

Possess the Champion: Once a Promised One loses at least 25 Life Points to a single deadite or the Watcher, he's forever susceptible to the evil's power. He uses a Willpower (doubled) roll against the Watcher's Brains Score of 15. The good news is that the demons' stay in the Promised Ones' shells are only temporary—they're forced out at the next sun-

rise and cannot reinhabit the hero until another Torment is used. The bad news is that during a possession, the hero is completely under your control and won't hesitate one bit to rip all his former friends to pieces. Ironically, the Evil Dead hate the living so much that the champion can be forced to kill their own loved ones. If the champion comes across a token of some sentimental importance—a necklace or memento, or just a kind word or touch, something that acts as an anchor for the tortured soul buried within—he gets another Willpower (doubled) roll to resume control. Such an opportunity is your call.

Resurrection: If dismemberment is supposed to stop the Evil Dead, how come some of them, like Evil Ash, keep getting back up even after they've been chopped into little pieces? Because the Evil can use this Torment to bring them back from the deader than dead.

With this Torment, the Watcher picks any one of its minions—even those who have been dismembered, burned, acidified, and so on—and brings them back to unlife. The minion bears its "death" wounds, but is otherwise whole and ready to evil again.

WATCHER WEAKNESSES

The creature is nigh-freaking invulnerable to the average Joe, but don't fear, there are actually ways to kill it. Well, at least there should be. For the most part, if the thing has manifested in the flesh (or the trunk), it takes damage just like anything else (though it can take a lot of damage, amigo). Still, it

can come back the very next night, so putting it down might delay the inevitable but it won't stop it.

We've never seen the Watcher act in the daylight. For that reason, we are going to posit that it burns beneath the rays of the sun. Every round that the Watcher spends in some corporeal form under direct sunlight costs it 10 Life Points. It is protected in dense woods, fog, and the like, but prefers to lie dormant in the day, or transforms day into night if it needs to get busy (see p. 159).

Although there's nothing to suggest this in the movie, we figure there should be a way to destroy the Watcher (Promised Ones should have a goal in life, right?). Bringing things full circle, we suggest that the only way to permanently destroy the evil entity is with a weapon made from its own flesh. Er, bark. We designed one such weapon—the Spear of Destiny (see p. 168)—and we've set up several good hooks to this story. We start with the first action hero, Gilgamesh, who may just be one of your own Cast Members (see p. 177). What if Gilgamesh almost destroyed the Watcher when it was a lot younger and less undefeatable. One of the very large splinters of the thing's form was forged into a spear, and that weapon showed up time and again to cause trouble (one of the side effects of being able to kill the Watcher is that the spear holds a bit of its own evil). If you want to make up your own world of darkness, you might want to plant the spear or some other deus ex machina that can actually harm the Watcher. Unlike Ash, your heroes won't survive an encounter with the thing because the script says they do. They'll very likely have to fight it, and they'll need something like the spear to open up that can of whupass.

DEADITES

POSSESSED WOMAN: YOU SHALL DIE! YOU SHALL NEVER TAKE THE NECRONOMICON! WE SHALL FEAST UPON YOUR SOULS!

The Evil Dead are the damned souls of those who died and passed into Hell. Every now and then, the Watcher is able to scoop up a handful of these unfortunates and give them a slight respite from their eternal torment. Great for them; they get to cause some mischief and mayhem. Bad for the poor sap who becomes their host.

The demon starts as a multitude of evil spirits, turning the host's body into a grotesque mockery of its former self. As time passes, one or perhaps a few distinct spirits take over. The horror becomes stronger, faster, and capable of more tricks. Eventually, the thing becomes a full-fledged deadite. Their exact forms vary to some degree—some have wings, some grow freakishly-long necks, some just get very, very ugly, but they all essentially look the same. They are pink-skinned and flabby with white eyes, bulbous heads, and long yellow claws.

Like a virus, demons can bring more of their kind into the world by spilling mortal blood. Any time a human is injured for more than five Life Points, he must make a Willpower (doubled) roll with a penalty of -3. If failed (and the victim is still alive), he slowly loses a Life Point a minute until he dies. The victim then becomes host to a brand new set of damned souls. No human is immune from this infection so those with Drama Points and low Willpowers should think long and hard about using them after any battle with deadites.

LANDS OF DARKNESS

Name: Deadite
Motivation: Swallow souls!
Critter Type: Deadite
Attributes: Str 6, Dex 5, Con 5, Int 3, Per 3, Will 4
Ability Scores: Muscle 18, Combat 16, Brains 12
Life Points: 70 **Drama Points:** 2
Special Abilities: Armor Value 4 (8), Attractiveness -6, Beguile, Fast Reaction Time, Horrify, Increased Life Points, Regeneration, Weakness to daylight

Maneuvers			
Name	Score	Damage	Notes
Bite	16	22	Must Grapple first
Claw	16	16	Slash/stab
Grapple	18	—	Resisted by Dodge



Name: Flying Deadite
Motivation: Serve the Evil Dead
Critter Type: Deadite
Attributes: Str 5, Dex 6, Con 5, Int 2, Per 3, Will 4
Ability Scores: Muscle 16, Combat 17, Brains 10
Life Points: 65 **Drama Points:** 2
Special Abilities: Armor Value 2 (4), Attractiveness -6, Fast Reaction Time, Flight, Increased Life Points, Regeneration, Weakness to daylight

Maneuvers			
Name	Score	Damage	Notes
Bite	17	20	Must Grapple first
Claw	17	15	Slash/stab
Grapple	19	—	Resisted by Dodge



The infection is permanent. There is no known way to cure a person of the demon's influence. That's not to say there aren't ways (who knows what you and your fiendish imagination will devise), but officially, it's time to strap the corpse down and dismember it. Doing so makes the body useless and causes the demons to flee.

DEADITE POWERS

Below are a host of powers exhibited by deadites. Other types of demons may exist with far more exotic abilities outside the official scope of *Army of Darkness*. We recommend you use these powers in various ways (and import demons from other **Unisystem** books) to create new fiends so that your Cast won't know all the tricks up your terrors' sleeves.

BEGUILE

At will, these demons can make their host body look as it did in life. They can also torture the mortal soul to reveal its innermost secrets, thus appearing to know things only the host could know and perhaps deceiving its prey into inaction.

Besides the obvious traps and roleplaying effects this has, any time a demon uses its Beguile power, all those who have a clear view (and aren't in the middle of something more urgent, like combat), must make a resisted Willpower (doubled) roll. If the roll result is less than the demon's Brains Score, the human cannot attack this Turn. When the deadite decides to drop the charade, it gains initiative and strikes first.

FLIGHT

No one knows why some demons sprout wings and make like buzzards while others shamble about on the ground all fat and nasty. Perhaps it has to do with the nature of the spirit that takes over the possessed body.

Flying demons can easily carry whatever their Strength normally allows—aerospace engineering types will tell you they don't have the wingspan to weight ratio to give them proper lift, but that's the power of chaos for you.

Most fly at speeds of about 50 yards per Turn, so really fast heroes can occasionally catch them if they can get high enough.

For some reasons, those demons which can fly can never Beguile, and seem to lose the ability to say more than a few simple phrases (such as "I'll swallow your soul!").

HORRIFY

Deadites like to perform twisted tricks with their dead hosts to horrify and shock the living. These are things like dancing with the host's head as a hat, chewing on a knife blade, or growing an extra long neck.

Those who can see the sight (and aren't involved in something more urgent, like combat) must make Fear Tests at a -5 penalty. This does not include any penalty imposed by the deadite's sheer ugliness (due to negative attraction).

NATURAL WEAPONS AND ARMOR

Demons have very nasty claws in serious need of a hacksaw manicure. These nasty things cause 2 x Strength damage. Their bite is a much nastier, causing 3 x Strength damage, but the victim must be Grappled first.

The seemingly latex-like skin of demons offers it protection against damage. These demons have an Armor Value 4 (half that for those with Fight). That's doubled against blunt weapons, which tend to bounce off their rubbery hides.

REGENERATION

It's fairly self-explanatory—demons can't be killed like most everyone else. When reduced to zero Life Points, they drop like stones and look like they're dead, but they're really just regenerating—which they do at the rate of their Constitution every minute. Once they reach half their original Life Points, they “wake” and can start causing trouble all over again.

Fortunately, there's a way to stop them. Once a demon has been put down, a hero can dismember the corpse. Even that doesn't really kill it, but the souls inside can no longer effectively animate the pieces—they give up, returning to the depths of Hell.

To make things particularly nasty, and reflect the relentless aspect of the deadites, you can give them an optional regeneration kicker. When some hero type starts to dismember the demon corpse, have it make a Survival Test with a -1 penalty per Life Point below zero. If it succeeds, it gains an instant Drama

Point which halves current Life Point damage. It pops up, ready to go for more blood. That's going to cause the erstwhile dismemberer some heartache!

WEAKNESS TO DAYLIGHT

Deadites detest daylight, and like the Watcher, begin to broil in direct sunlight. This fun party trick costs them 10 Life Points every Turn.

If a victim was possessed alive (see Torments, p. 159), sunlight drives the demon out. The mortal is returned to normal with all his Life Points ready to disco. No harm, no foul!

EVIL SHEILA

EVIL SHEILA: I MAY BE BAD, BUT I FEEL GOOD.

The Watcher, through its servant Evil Ash, infects Sheila with a demon after the Army of the Dead arises. Sheila is a bit smarter and more dexterous than a typical demon. In her human form, she can easily Beguile most manly men.

SKELETONS

WISEMAN: DUNG EATING FOOL! THOU HAST DOOMED US. WHEN THOU MISSPOKE THE WORDS THE ARMY OF THE DEAD AWOK!

Demons are like the biblical “Legion.” They are made up of many damned souls, and possess all of their strength. Skeletons house a single evil spirit, and so are much weaker. Still, bonebags are animated corpses, and such things cause most humans to run in terror or go stark raving mad.

Name: Evil Sheila
Motivation: Bring Ash down
Critter Type: Evil human
Attributes: Str 5, Dex 6, Con 5, Int 3, Per 4, Will 5
Ability Scores: Muscle 16, Combat 18, Brains 15
Life Points: 75 **Drama Points:** 5
Special Abilities: Armor Value 4, Attractiveness -6, Beguile, Fast Reaction Time, Horrify, Increased Life Points, Regeneration, Weakness to daylight

Maneuvers

Name	Score	Damage	Notes
Bite	18	20	Must Grapple first
Claw	18	15	Slash/stab
Grapple	20	—	Resisted by Dodge



Name: Skeleton
Motivation: Kill, maim, destroy
Critter Type: Undead
Attributes: Str 3, Dex 3, Con 3, Int 1, Per 1, Will 1
Ability Scores: Muscle 12, Combat 12, Brains 8
Life Points: 34 **Drama Points:** 0-1
Special Abilities: Limited Slash/stab invulnerability

Maneuvers			
Name	Score	Damage	Notes
Crossbow	12	18	Slash/stab
Dodge	12	—	Defense action
Parry	12	—	Defense action
Punch	12	8	Bash
Sword	12	14	Slash/stab



The Watcher prefers raising corpses from the bones of warriors. They are tougher and stronger than ordinary mortals, and at least in earlier societies, are often buried in their weapons and armor as well. For this reason, the Necronomicon is always placed within a cemetery of such warriors and they are the first called by the spell that awakens the unloving army.

About half the skeletons in a group have Chain Mail (AV 8/4); a quarter have Plate Mail (AV 12/6); the rest are unarmored. Three-quarters are armed with swords, the rest have crossbows. Skeletons cannot be harmed by Stabbing weapons such as arrows, or any Slashing weapon that does less than 3 x Strength base damage. As for exactly what's Stabbing and what's Slashing . . . we'll leave that to your judicious insight.

The undead rise with the equipment they were interred with, or quickly seek out arms and armor for themselves. They prefer the most common weapons of the period—muskets, assault rifles, and so on—but will make do with whatever is available.

In every band of undead, ten percent are Calcium Captains. They are slightly stronger and tougher than the rattling bone boys they lead. It is among these types that you find skeleton veterans and other leaders.

Just to make things more interesting, another five percent of any skeleton army are even more deadly. We call these horrors wights. They are the corpses of exceptionally skilled fighters. They move like lightning through enemy ranks, wielding two blades and shedding all armor for speed's sake. In modern settings, they prefer to go with two small weapons with high rates of fire, such as SMGs or automatic pistols.

Name: Calcium Captains
Motivation: Terrorize all life
Critter Type: Undead
Attributes: Str 4, Dex 4, Con 4, Int 2, Per 2, Will 2
Ability Scores: Muscle 14, Combat 15, Brains 10
Life Points: 42 **Drama Points:** 1-2
Special Abilities: Limited Slash/stab invulnerability, Medium Shield, Plate Mail (AV 12/6)

Maneuvers			
Name	Score	Damage	Notes
Dodge	15	—	Defense action
Parry	15 (17)	—	Defense action (with shield)
Punch	15	12	Bash
Sword	15	20	Slash/stab



Name: Wight
Motivation: Kill! Kill! Kill!
Critter Type: Undead
Attributes: Str 4, Dex 5, Con 3, Int 2, Per 3, Will 2
Ability Scores: Muscle 14, Combat 17, Brains 10
Life Points: 38 **Drama Points:** 2
Special Abilities: Limited Slash/stab invulnerability

Maneuvers

Name	Score	Damage	Notes
Dodge	17	—	Defense action
Sword	17	21	Slash/stab



SIMULACRUMS

ASH: AH, DEAR GOD! IT'S GROWING BIGGER!

The Watcher's favorite Torment is to create twisted parodies of those who would oppose it. The Tiny Ashes and Evil Ash are good examples of this, so we've statted them for you. Minions of your own creation should be based on these.

For Evil Ash-style versions of home-brewed Cast Members, use the character's statistics but add one to Strength and Constitution. Drop in a pinch of Evil, a dollop of serious attitude, and an unending hatred for its duplicate. Drop Strength and Constitution to one for Tiny versions, but keep the same intangibles.

TINY ASHES

TINY ASH #1: RAMMING SPEED!

These little jokers sprang from a shattered mirror and performed an extended Three Stooges routine in torturing Ash.

EVIL ASH

EVIL ASH (SINGSONG): GOODY LITTLE TWO-SHOES. LITTLE GOODY TWO-SHOES, LITTLE GOODY TWO-SHOES. UTTL E GOODY TWO-SHOES!

(ASH FIRES SHOTGUN AND EVIL ASH SLAMS BACK INTO TREE.)

ASH: I AIN'T THAT GOOD.

So what's Evil Ash's gig? We know he's evil and we know he's at least a physical copy of Ash, but what's his beef?

Name: Tiny Ashes
Motivation: Nyuk, nyuk, nyuk. Chaos, baby!
Critter Type: Tiny humans
Attributes: Str 1, Dex 6, Con 1, Int 3, Per 4, Will 4
Ability Scores: Muscle 8, Combat 17, Brains 12
Life Points: 25 **Drama Points:** 0-1
Special Abilities: +3 to Dodge due to small size; Increased Life Points; once inside originator, they can make an evil version

Maneuvers

Name	Score	Damage	Notes
Dodge	20	—	Defense action
Fork	17	7	Slash/stab
Pistol	10	13	Bullet (full-sized gun)
Punch	17	7	Bash



Name: Evil Ash
Motivation: Destroy the world
Critter Type: Evil Human
Attributes: Str 7, Dex 6, Con 9, Int 3, Per 4, Will 4
Ability Scores: Muscle 20, Combat 17, Brains 12
Life Points: 84 **Drama Points:** 5
Special Abilities: Special Abilities: Fast Reaction Time, Increased Life Points, Nerves of Steel

Maneuvers			
Name	Score	Damage	Notes
Dodge	17	—	Defense action
Kick	16	20	Bash
Punch	17	19	Bash
Sword	17	33	Slash/stab



If Evil Ash were to sit down with Dr. Phil, he'd probably talk about how he's all the worst in Ash given physical form. Perhaps if he'd just been given a chance . . . sniffle. Nah, that's not really true. One of the real Ash's worst qualities is his cowardice, and Evil Ash certainly didn't get that gene.

The shallow truth is that Evil Ash is just an evil version of Ash. Aren't you glad we explained that? Actually, it's kind of a relief though, because now we can just let him be as tough and funny as Ash except that he does the bad things we need him too.

Evil Ash goes through some changes in the film. He starts as a duplicate of Ash with our hero's beautiful visage and large chin. By the time of the final battle, he looks more like a deadite that's been through a Cuisinart. At that point, he gains Attractiveness -8 and Plate Mail (AV 12/6). After a close encounter with Ash's torch, Evil Ash is mostly skeleton and he gains their partial invulnerability to Slash/stab weapons (see p. 164).

RELICS

One of the real "stars" of *Army of Darkness* is, of course the Necronomicon. So let's get busy with what's what on that textbook from Hell. We'll also run down a few other items that we think add significantly to any *Army of Darkness* game (ain't we humble?). These ain't official by any means but they are cool nonetheless.

THE NECRONOMICON

WISEMAN: THE EVIL HAS A TERRIBLE HUNGER FOR THE NECRONOMICON AND IT WILL COME HERE TO GET IT!

Bound in human flesh and inked in human blood, this vile tome was crafted in ancient Sumeria sometime around 3000 BC. Legend has it that the book was created by the "Dark Ones." Officially, we know little about them. Unofficially, we've got the whole story whipped up about them in **Chapter Seven: Worlds of Darkness** (see pp. 179-180).

The book is sometimes called Morturom Demonto, the Book of the Dead, or the Necronomicon ex Mortis. Latin forms were obviously given to the vile journal centuries after it was crafted, so we know it has journeyed far from Mesopotamia where it was first made. Somehow, the thing has made its way home again as well, for it was found back in Sumeria in the early 1980s by Professor Raymond Knowby. By the many places

the book has been, it seems it can travel through time—or more precisely, manipulate itself through the actions of others to travel through time.

The tome mainly addresses rituals of the dead, such as funerary rites and burial incantations. It also describes what happens to the human soul after it sheds its mortal coil, as well as the horrible things humans become if their life was tainted.

The Book of the Dead also hints at the existence of an evil force that lives in a sort of limbo between the land of the living and the realm of the dead. Certain passages in the Necronomicon call this creature forth, while others give it the ability to possess human forms—both living and dead.

The Necronomicon contains more obscure rites, however, rituals that open portals in time, raise legions of the dead, and describe methods for mortals to sleep for centuries, essentially traveling forward in time.

The book seems to be sentient in some way. The hideous face that adorns its cover sometimes animates when no one is looking, its long forked tongue lapping at the blood it inevitably causes to be spilled.

THE ROLE OF THE NECRONOMICON

The Book of the Dead is something like a “remote control” for the Watcher and its minions. While the book has some power to appear and destroy life on its own, the spells and incantations contained within its pages allow it to do much more. It just needs some self-important, occult novice to read these rites and passages.

The book is a dual-edged sword, however, for it contains information that can hurt the Watcher as well. Perhaps that is simply one of those cosmic rules the creature must play by—it’s power is also its weakness.

CASTING SPELLS

WISEMAN: ONLY THE NECRONOMICON HAS THE POWER. AN UNHOLY BOOK WHICH WE ALSO REQUIRE. WITHIN ITS PAGES ARE PASSAGES THAT CAN SEND YOU BACK TO YOUR TIME.

A brainiac who somehow learns ancient Sumerian, or has a phonetic pronunciation guide to the cuneiform symbols, can cast the spells written in the book. And little effort is involved with these spells.

The Necronomicon wants its incantations to be cast, and therefore requires no training on the part of those who read its blood-soaked pages.

The following spells are shown to exist in the film. You can add others as your plotline requires.

Awaken Watcher: By speaking certain words, the Watcher is awakened and given license to work its evil, including the possession of the living by deadites. The thing appears in the nearest woods, quickly turning them dark and overgrown. Thick fog rolls in and obscures the hated sun. The canopy overhead closes in. Trees look like living creatures with gnarled arms and groaning faces. Flowers wilt and die. Vines twist and bend into horrid shapes. Animals flee, leaving them quiet and still. Just the kind of place to shoot a low-budget horror film, no?

Once summoned, the Watcher remains until it is killed, flees of its own volition (like that would happen?), or is forced out by the Vortex spell.

Summon the Army of the Dead: This spell requires some additional input from an unwilling dupe. When the words are read, isolated corpses animate and sally forth to attack the living. Once this occurs, the book is “set.” If a good-hearted mortal touches the book without “unsettling it,” the Necronomicon raises all the dead within a one-mile radius. These creatures are skeletons (see p. 163)—corpses inhabited by damned souls and controlled by the Watcher and its minions.

Only by saying these words “Klaatu Verata Nikto,” and these exact words, can the book be “disarmed” and again safely touched by mortals.

Vortex: This spell creates a vortex through time. Exactly where it leads depends on your Directorial needs. If you want it to lead to a particular time and place because that’s the next setting you’ve created, that’s where it goes.

But a spell like this has little use if it cannot somehow push the Watcher back into the spaces between the living and the dead. If you like, a character who reads the passage and makes a Willpower (doubled) roll with at least five Success Levels suppresses the Evil. It is trapped back in the dark bowers of man’s domain. At least until Sumerian-literate chucklehead awakens it again.

BACK STABBER

This ancient dagger was made by the Dark Ones at the same time they crafted the Necronomicon. It is sometimes called the Champion's Bane or the Blade of Ereshkigal (the Sumerian Goddess of Darkness and Death).

Formed from human blood and forged in the fires of Hell itself, this hideous tool has a most vile ability—to kill the Promised One.

The dagger is a long blade, about 14 inches long. The haft is made of bones whittled away to look like the larger bones of a human skeleton. At the top is a skull with its dark mouth open wide.

The narrow blade is thick, and dull—the better to cause its victim's pain—and to house a tube hidden within. When pressed into the soft flesh of mortals, blood drains through this tube, into the bone handle and out the open mouth of the carved skull at the top.

The blade causes standard damage for a knife its size (3 x Strength), unless used against a Promised One. Against those types, it causes 5 x Strength damage (very deadly in the right hands). Attackers always leave the weapon in because it drains the victim's blood, causing him to lose 10 Life Points every round after it hits.

And that's not the worst of it. Here's the super bad part. The bones at the end of the haft act like barbs, anchoring the knife in the victim as his blood spills out through the handle. Removing the thing requires a Strength (doubled) roll, but causes whatever damage it caused going in as it comes out.

A Promised One who falls to zero Life Points from such a dagger is dead. He cannot spend Drama Points to return under any circumstances.

THE SPEAR OF DESTINY

This old spear has a Roman point atop it now, from when it was carried by a legionnaire who used it to stab Jesus in the side. That's the problem with this thing. It has the amazing ability to kill the Watcher—for the haft was made of its "flesh." On the other hand, it also carries with it a terrible curse that inevitably dooms those who carry it.

Anyone who wields the Spear of Destiny doubles his Strength for purposes of damage. The downside is that whenever the spear tastes human death, the character may be possessed by a demon. This is a Willpower (doubled) roll pitted against the demon's Brains Score of 12, and is made immediately after killing any mortal human. The possession lasts until the next sunrise, and isn't fatal.

PLAYING THE MOVIE

EVIL ASH: YOU WANNA PLAY ROUGH, EH?

Some of you Directors are itching to run a story that's very close to the plot of the movie. That's a little tricky since your players already know all the tricks (well, the cool ones who've seen the greatest movie of all time—and don't even think of asking which one). They know what's in the pit, they know to say "Klaatu Verata Nikto" at the altar, and they know Henry shows up in the final scene to add his force to theirs.

Don't fret, we've got you covered. The rest of this chapter has some suggestions for following the basic plot of the movie enough to create the same situations, but altering it enough so that your group doesn't know everything that's going to happen.

MAKING AN ASH OF YOURSELF

One of the first things you should decide is whether or not the players take on roles straight from the movie—such as Ash. Here's a little advice about that.

Ash's motivation should stay true to his early self—he just wants to go home. We tend to remember all of his best lines and how he kicked demon booty, but remember that our champion was actually quite selfish throughout most of the movie. You have to figure this S-Mart employee from Michigan is just freaked out. Not only was his girlfriend killed, but she came back as an undead horror! Then he had to fight the Watcher in the Woods and got sucked through a portal in time to the Dark Ages. That's a little more traumatic than a bad hair day.

Remind Ash's player that he's not particularly selfless or loveable most of the time. Only when the going gets rough does the Main Man really step up and prove why he's the champion.

Playing Ash works just fine and can actually be a ton of fun if the right player fills the Big Man's shoes. This might make the rest of the group feel a little less studly though, because they won't have chainsaws on their hands, boomsticks from the future, and all the cool lines. Consider this carefully. You know your gaming group best.

If you think giving Ash to one player will cause problems, consider one of these options.

Cross Dressing: First, you might consider letting players actually switch roles every game session so that everyone gets a chance to play Ash. Sure, that's not how things are usually done in the weird world of roleplaying, but it won't kill anyone to shake things up a bit. It could actually be quite fun. "You totally screwed up the Blacksmith, Alex! He's half-dead and has no Drama Points left! Sheila's going to shave her head bald before I turn her over to you, buttwipe."

Er, well, you get the idea.

The Gathering: Another option is to do what we suggest in the alternate settings in the back of this book and have a number of Eternal Champions. Maybe a gladiator from ancient Rome, a pirate from the Caribbean, and a stockbroker from New York City all show up after Ash to stop the Evil Dead. Now you've got a bunch of rocking evil-fighters and no one gets overshadowed.

THE REST OF THE CAST

Arthur, the Blacksmith, Gold Tooth, the Wiseman, and Arthur's knights and captains all make great Cast Members. We don't really recommend letting anyone play Sheila if you plan on having her go bad (although that could be fun if you've got the right player running her).

Although we've provided either full character sheets or Quick Sheets for all the worthies below, you might need some pointers to "get into" character (so to speak). Here's a few notes about how these characters might act in a game where they become more involved in Ash's quest.

Arthur: Arthur should be played as reluctant and difficult, but not obstructive. He holds the real power in his realm, and if he orders Ash put in chains, that's what happens. That means the player has to back off a little bit and play Arthur as the quiet type in the background—at least until blood and bones start flying.

If you need some motivation Mr. Professional Actor, Arthur has decided the Wiseman knows best. He doesn't like it and can alter details along the way, but this "man from the sky" is basically calling the shots unless he proves completely incompetent.

The Blacksmith: This solid fellow is the very definition of the strong silent type. He looks like Mr. Clean and has muscles out the ying-yang (which must be rather painful, actually). He's got a heart of cold, nerves of iron, and can communicate more with a disappointed grimace or a hardy smile than a two-bit shyster with a mouthful of twenty-five dollar words.

The Blacksmith isn't a leader, but he's the strongest and most loyal right arm you'll find in Circa England.

Gold Tooth: Remember all those nice things we said about the Blacksmith? None of them apply to Gold Tooth. He's a weak little coward who uses his position to torment prisoners and make him feel better. He's after more power and authority, not to mention as much loot as he can scrounge.

Gold Tooth stays at the castle more because he's afraid Arthur will have him hunted relentlessly if he runs. That said, even Gold Tooth can become inspired when he sees true heroism. His player should be a disagreeable, nasty little man throughout most of the story, but has the most potential to grow into a real hero if he survives long enough to change.

Wiseman: When people call you "wiseman" all day, you start believing it. That's what happened to his fellow. He hasn't been called by his given name since he first started growing that beard, and that was a long time ago, friends.

The Wiseman knows stuff. That's what he does. Anytime the Cast seems to be stalled out, ask the Wiseman to make an Intelligence and Occultism roll. If he makes it, let the old fart give the action types some direction. If you feel the need, the Wiseman might also stumble upon a new potion that helps characters restore Life Points. It's not really some kind of lame magical "potion of healing" or anything, it's more like a sports drink, but with the refreshing taste of lime and rotten eggs. He can make about three of these a day, and each restores 1-10 Life Points.

When a fight does break out, the Wiseman isn't going to crack too many skulls, but he can defend himself a bit with that Gandalf-looking stick he carries around.

Arthur's Knights and Captains: Arthur's knights make great Cast Members. These fellows were Arthur's peers before the Duke left him the castle, and may or may not appreciate being led by him. They are relatively wealthy men in good times, but the disruption in the local economy has probably left most of them near destitute.

The Captain of the archers remembers the Wiseman when he was just "that kinda smart guy." He's on the down slope of the aging hill, but what he lacks in speed he more than makes up for in experience. He's also rock solid in the face of danger. He'll hold an arrow with a small bomb on the end of it until it blows up or he's given the word to let it loose.

A Captain of the swordsmen is also appropriate. Such a fellow is probably loud and proud, barking orders to his men in the middle of melees to keep them in formation and hold important objectives. He's not eager to die, but stoically follows orders when he isn't running away in pure terror.

GETTING CAPTURED

ARTHUR: YOUR PEOPLE ARE NO BETTER THAT THE FOUL CORRUPTION THAT LIES IN THE BOWELS OF THAT PIT!

Now the plot begins, and it's fairly important your Cast get captured and thrown into Arthur's pit. Why? Because you want to throw them in the pit, don't you? Geez.

If you're going to start your Season with the official setting, it's best if you actually begin the narrative with the party in chains—as Ash is at the beginning of the film. That way there's no chance the heroes can break free or kill Arthur. Just do the

whole narrative opening and march them through the (ahem) deserts of England to the pit.

If you have to do this the hard way, we have two suggestions. The first is to just tell your heroes they're surrounded by Arthur's men after having fallen from the sky and there's no chance they can fight their way out. Give them a Drama Point to stop their whining and throw them in chains.

The second way is to actually let them fight it out but try and make sure they lose by ensuring there are enough of Arthur's men there to take them down—which they try to do with nonlethal measures. Good Cast Members should try to avoid killing anyone as well—it's obvious these people think the strangers are some sort of demons and are just trying to do the right thing. For those who want the carnage and mayhem, consider letting Arthur's soldiers get up shaking their heads when the fight is over, beaten but not dead. Think this through carefully, because if Arthur's men are killed, he's going to be much more difficult to get along with. Worse still, any mass battle against the forces of evil is going to be that much more difficult with fewer allies.

If the heroes somehow manage to get away, you'll need to find another way to get them back into the main plot. Perhaps Arthur stumbles upon them again with a fresh group of men while the Cast is still licking their wounds. Or maybe the Watcher chases them into the windmill and eventually retreats, but Arthur later shows up and surrounds the place.

THE SHE-BITCH

WISEMAN: CAPTURE THE WITCH! CAPTURE THE WITCH!

Remember when the chambermaid reveals herself to be a deadite? This is a good scene that you don't need to repeat, but you may want to. If you really want to play on your group's nerves, try this slightly altered scene.

The Cast is in the Wiseman's tower when an old chambermaid enters the room. The players know she's possessed in the movie, but she just goes about her business while the Wiseman prattles on about finding the Necronomicon and using it to send the heroes home. A few minutes later, the chambermaid spills a boiling pot of some noxious concoction—the point in the movie where she reveals herself. Except this time she just apologizes profusely and starts trying to clean it up.



Now you have some choices. Here are a couple of ways you could play it:

Nothing happens: It's a red herring to show the players that not everything is going to happen like it did in the movie.

The She-Bitch: Nothing happens for a while. If someone goes to help her, the maid transforms as expected and attacks—just a little later than expected.

The Soldier: A soldier moves over to the maid and starts chastising her. “See here you clumsy old woman! Clean up this mess at once or I’LL SWALLOW YOUR SOUL!” The soldier splits the old lady in two with his sword, then spins to reveal himself as the possessed. This is a good one for characters who like to fight because he’s armed and armored and might be a challenge in the close confines of the Wiseman’s Tower.

She-Bitches: There is actually a crew of four maids cleaning the room. The oldest spills the cauldron and starts cleaning it up. Everyone watches suspiciously, thinking they know what happens next. On cue, she transforms into the She-Bitch—but so do the other three young maids! The quartet attack in unison. The younger maids can even try to cause confusion by transforming back and forth from sexy babes to butt-ugly demons.

THE MISTY FOREST

WISEMAN: THIS PATH WILL LEAD YOU TO AN UNHOLY PLACE.

This scene doesn’t need to change much. The heroes enter the Misty Forest and awake the Watcher. It materializes and comes after them with a vengeance. They run like hell and wind up faced with only one “safe” place to go—the windmill.

The Watcher slams on the door and walls a few times for effect but otherwise lets them be. Now it’s trick time.

If one of your warriors has proven to be trigger-happy, he sees a demon leering in through a window. It’s not really a window though, it’s a mirror. Let the player respond as he desires first. If he shoots the demon, the mirror breaks and you get the simulacrum (think evil clones) we’re after. If he doesn’t do it on his own a few seconds after you tell him what he sees, have him make a Willpower (not doubled) roll instead. If he fails, he shoots and we score.

If none of the above works, the Watcher returns and starts bashing the windmill. At some point, the mirror falls off the wall and shatters into dozens of pieces.

SEND IN THE CLONES

The broken mirror gives rise to simulacrum—twisted “clones” of the Cast Members who raise havoc and attempt to create a general for the deadites (like Evil Ash).

You can go with the Tiny Ashes routine (see p. 165), or use one of the alternatives we’ve so thoughtfully provided below.

Tiny Ashes: Okay, they’re only Ash if Ash is present. Otherwise, they’re Tiny Cast Members. Every character inside the windmill when the mirror breaks gets four.

The Tiny Cast Members run around the cabin and perform various acts of mischief, such as stabbing the heroes with knives and forks, tripping them so that they fall onto the hot stove, and so on. Running each individual action might be a little cumbersome, so use this cheat for the Tiny Cast Member’s mischief. Each Turn, have every Cast Member make a Dexterity and Acrobatics roll, and subtract a number equal to the remaining Tiny Cast Members. So if Joe the Butcher is facing three of his little darling selves, he subtracts three from his roll.

Failure means the hero suffers a major mishap (the knife goes in deep, the stove sears his flesh to the bone, etc.). He loses five Life Points. In addition, the first time a character fails, one of his little selves gets inside him somehow. Maybe it leaps in his mouth while he yells in pain. If you want to get gruesome, it crawls in through a big gaping wound. If you want to get juvenile (and face it, what’s AoD without some scatological humor), it crawls up his b—ahhh . . . never mind. This character is in for some real trouble after this scene. Over the next five Turns, an eyeball appears in his shoulder, grows into a head, and eventually splits into a complete duplicate of the hero!

One Success Level means the hero suffered some serious but non-life-threatening pain (he steps on a nail, lands on a hot stove, etc.). The character loses five Life Points.

Two Success Levels means the hero squishes, stabs, burns, mutilates, or otherwise has his way

with one of his Tiny selves. Make the player describe the scene to the group and let him be as creative and messy as he likes. Next Turn the penalty to his Dexterity and Acrobatics roll will be lower.

Three Success Levels means the warrior nails two of his Tiny selves. Again, make him describe the scene in gruesome detail.

Four Success Levels lets the hero finish off all his little devils and he's done. He can even start helping others, adding +2 to one other companion's roll in the next Turn.

When all the fun and mayhem are over, you've not only had a fun and chaotic scene (without resorting to a long and mostly pointless combat), but one of your heroes is about to give birth. Eeewww.

SIMULACRUMS

If a character winds up with an evil twin, the fun multiplies (at least for you). Both characters look exactly the same and have the same clothes, but they share equipment. Roll randomly for each important item (boomsticks, chainsaws, etc). The evil version isn't stupid enough to act evil if the rest of the group are standing there with loaded weapons, so how will they know who's who? You've got us, but one possible way is through a spell from the Necronomicon. Of course, the crew doesn't have the book yet, so they'll have to bind up their friend(s) for a bit until they do. Even then they'll need the Wiseman to find the right words (unless your Cast happens to read Sumerian).

THE GENERAL

One of the Tiny selves (or even better, a simulacrum who got away) is about to become the leader of the Army of the Dead. This fellow takes Bad Ash's place. (If one of the group is actually playing Ash, the General should probably still be Bad Ash, but that doesn't have to be the case.)

The General should be formed from a Promised One if at all possible, and might be marked by one of the dramatic and gory ways the characters killed their other Tiny selves.

Little Help Here?: A gladiator Promised One from ancient Rome smashed one of his Tiny selves with his helmet. Another one of those Tiny selves survives the combat and winds up becoming the

General of the Army of the Dead. The General grows larger by the next time we see him, but his face is smashed and ruined where his "brother" was squished before.

THE BOOK OF THE DEAD, TIMES THREE

ASH: HEY! WAIT A MINUTE. EVERYTHING'S COOL. I SAID THE WORDS. I DID!

In the movie, the deadites rise because Ash mis-speaks the mystic words that "defuse" the Necronomicon. Of course, you need something similar to happen in your game or there's no Army of the Dead to fight. Unless you've got a helpful player willing to be the idiot who scrambles his tongue, no way you can count on the current Cast to screw up so conveniently (at least for plot purposes). Taking the Necronomicon from the altar might be the trickiest plot point in your campaign. Not only will your players remember the magic words "Klaatu, Verata, Nikto" (they come from a famous sci-fi movie called *The Day the Earth Stood Still*), but even if you give them new words they aren't likely to forget them like the bonehead with the iron glove.

To get around this but ensure that an army of animators get to play with little plastic skeletons, we've got some suggestions (don't we always?). If you make up your own, try to think up a test that makes it the Cast Members' "fault" that things go awry. It's not fun for them if you give them a task, let them complete it, and then say the army rises anyway. That leaves the players with a "What's the point?" attitude. Rig it so that it's their fault somehow—in a lighthearted way—and they'll giggle all the way to the battle with the deadites.

The Written Word: The Wiseman says the heroes must go to the altar and recite the word supercalifragilisticexpialidocious (or some other *really* long and ambiguously-spelled word of your choice). They'll be sure they're going to get it right and change the whole story on you. When they get to the altar, there are three Necronomicons as expected, but something new as well. Lying at the front of the altar is a big blank rock and a piece of chalk. The group has to write the magic words down on the stone to avoid giving unlife to the deadites.

The trick is that they can't really win. The word can be spelled a bunch of different ways, and whatever way they pick isn't right. This is one of those

“plot devices” we mentioned to you in the section on Drama Points, so after the heroes “screw up,” we recommend you pay them back with a shiny new Drama Point each. They’re going to need them anyway—they just woke up the Army of the Dead.

Tongue Twister: Another fun trick is to give them a tongue twister and make them say it three times fast. Or give them a difficult riddle and a short time to solve it. The problem, of course, is that if they complete their task correctly, the army shouldn’t rise. So don’t risk a trick like that unless you’re pretty sure the group is going to flub a bit.

The Sausage Trick: Here’s another fun one that works if you have at least five people in your group. Whisper a fairly complex sentence to the first person. That person then whispers the sentence to the next player, and so on. If the last person recites your sentence verbatim, they’ve passed the test. Otherwise, it’s a Ray Harryhausen festival. Some good messages are: “The wind in Vienna smells of sausage in the early morn when the zephyrs blow from the Hackenback hills.” Or for a more medieval flavor: “King Edward stole the Stone of Scone from the Scots and pulled poor William Wallace into four pieces like taffy on a warm day.”

You get the idea.

Once More, With Feeling: Our favorite. Challenge one player in the group to sing an entire song, word for word, from start to finish. Make it something relatively simple—no Bon Jovi tunes here, something more like *Three Blind Mice* or *My Bonney Lies Over the Ocean*. Just make sure you know all the words first!

COMPETENT PLAYERS

If the Cast passes your contest with flying colors, the deadites don’t get to stop their dirt nap. So how do you get around this? No problem. We’re here to help.

The brave adventurers walk away from the Altar of the Book with the Necronomicon having correctly spoken whatever sacred words were required and the dead lie peacefully in their graves.

Until . . .

Bushwhack: The General and a group of Kandarian demons stage a hit and run attack on the heroes. If the bad guys are losing, a flying demon swoops down and grabs the book out of the heroes’

hands. The General makes off with the book, reads a particular passage, and raises the army of the dead.

It’s the Wiseman’s Fault: This one places the blame squarely on the Wiseman’s shoulders. He translates a couple of different passages, then gives the one that opens the portal in time to the heroes. Except he’s picked up the wrong translation—he accidentally gives them the one that raises the army of the dead. Whoops!

It’s the Wiseman’s Fault Part Two: You could play the Wiseman for laughs a bit more. What if he had a bad accent or lisp (like the clergyman in *The Princess Bride*) and his version of Klaatu, Verata, Nikto sounds more like Kraafu, Werafa, Nigfo. Do the players go with the original words, with the “new” pronunciation” or with something similar but neither. Obviously, no matter what they do, they’re screwed. This would require a bit of set-up however. You would need to have the Wiseman talking funny from the first time the crew meets him. A Drama Point to any of the players who foresee the coming problem after they first learn of the old codger’s lilting tongue.

It’s Sheila’s Fault: This one only works best if one of the champions has swapped spit with Sheila. Sometime after the group gets back with the book, Sheila asks the Wiseman for a passage that can resurrect her fallen brother. The old man takes pity on her, hastily translates a “resurrection” passage from the book, and gives it to her. Sheila then reads the passage off-camera (and raises the deadites), or even better, gets scooped up by the winged demon as she was in the movie. Out in the graveyard with the General, Sheila becomes Evil Sheila and reads the resurrection passage over the entire graveyard.

It’s Henry and Arthur’s Fault: Another possibility to get things back on track is for Henry and Arthur to have another skirmish while the heroes are out recovering the Necronomicon. When it’s over, Arthur lost more men than Henry and is furious. He secretly tells the Wiseman to curse Henry. The not-so-Wiseman reluctantly gives in, hastily reads off a curse, and raises the army of the dead. Getting the two to fess up to their mistake might be a very interesting roleplaying situation.

HOW TO WIN FRIENDS AND CHOP UP PEOPLE

HENRY: WHY SHOULD I ENDANGER MY PEOPLE TO SAVE MY ENEMY?

ASH: BECAUSE AFTER THEY FINISH WITH ARTHUR THEY'LL COME AFTER YOU. TOGETHER, WE'VE GOT A CHANCE. BESIDES, YOU OWE ME.

Once the *Army of Darkness* has awakened, the heroes must figure out how to stop them. They're heading straight for the castle and the Necronomicon, so finding them shouldn't be too much of a problem (and if it is . . . you got bigger problems than how your game is going).

If the group tries to get clever and move the book, they quickly find out the demons have a sense for it. The flying Kandarian swoops in and makes a grab, and it isn't long before the General and the rest of the troops are in hot pursuit. Being undead, they never tire, so running is a bad option. Arthur points this out if none of the other heroes do, and insists that his castle is the safest place to make a stand. Looking for help won't work either as there are few troops further north anyway as the king's men are currently in Scotland. The only possible ally is Duke Henry.

In the movie, Henry joins the fight because Ash set him free after our hero defeated the things in the pit. Henry clasps Ash's shoulder, gives Arthur a hearty laugh, then rides out the front gates and back into his own lands. Later, Ash rides to Henry's castle to enlist his aid and gets ambushed by the Duke. Henry doesn't commit to helping, but arrives in the nick of time as the skeletons storm Arthur's castle.

Mirroring those events is a bit too "been there, done that" for our tastes. We say restructure things a bit to bring Henry into the picture.

First, you'll have to either ensure Henry escapes on his own when he's captured by Arthur. Maybe he grabs a sword and holds one of Arthur's men hostage until he escapes. Or maybe Arthur simply ransoms him back to his own people, not wanting to incur the wrath of the king for executing a real duke.

Assuming Henry is free, the Cast must find a way to win him over. The traditional cliché here is the "quest." The group finds out about something Henry wants and does it for him. Maybe one of

Henry's men is missing, a victim of the evil. If he can be recovered, alive or dead, Henry's attitude towards the group improves.

In any case, it's probably best not to have Henry outright commit to an alliance. Leave the relationship with him a little on the fuzzy side. That way he can show up in the nick of time as he does in the film *if* you want him to. If the Cast and their army are doing fine on their own, Henry decides to stay home and protect his own realm instead.

"WHO'S WITH ME?"

ASH: GO AHEAD AND RUN! RUN HOME AND CRY TO MAMA!

With the help of a script, Ash makes a stirring speech and gets Arthur's men to help defend the castle instead of running for their lives. This is an important moment. This ain't Agincourt or Helm's Deep here. These people aren't used to fighting fantastic creatures—particularly loathsome undead. Given a chance, most will flee into the countryside and let Arthur deal with the deadites.

That means it's time for a speech. You can stage the scene by having a messenger report to Arthur that some of the men are saying they should all run for their lives. If the Cast doesn't step up, a couple of deserters are caught. If they still don't get a clue, have the Wiseman step right up and ask them to make a speech.

Doing so requires a suitably dramatic speech and an Intelligence and Influence roll. Give the motivational speaker a penalty of one or two points if his speech is fairly lame ("So, there's an army of skeletons coming. Anyone wanna stay and fight them with me?"). Grant a similar bonus if the speech is particularly stirring ("We few, we happy few, we band of brothers . . .").

If the speech goes well, the heroes have an army they can use in the nifty new mass combat system (see **Chapter Four: Battle System**). If they fail, they've got a problem. Arthur can hang onto at least half his men, but the rest run like rabbits. This will make things quite difficult when the deadites show up for the party.

"HOW DO YOU GET TO CARNEGIE HALL?"

Practice, practice, practice. It's an old joke, but a good one. The deadites take a couple of days to dig up their old friends, organize, and make their war machines. Smart characters can take this time to train Arthur's warriors how to fight the undead, and perhaps make a few gadgets. This is also a good time to do whatever side quest is demanded by Henry. Ash made the Death Coaster and a mess of black powder bombs. Your heroes might come up with similar ideas. If it seems like a plausible idea (and we mean that in a very loose sense), let them go with it. Laser guided rockets are right out, but a spring-loaded multiple axe thrower sounds perfect. You'll need to define some effects of the device or invention (and possibly some game stats) but we have every confidence in you.

Training proves quite beneficial. Many of Arthur's men already know how to fight, but they've been taught how to kill living opponents. Shattering skeletons is a whole different bag of bones. If the Cast concentrates on this aspect of training, all of Arthur's warriors add one to their Getting Medieval score. The army as a whole gains a +1 bonus to the Battle Roll when fighting undead using the Battle System.

If the heroes want to make a real plan, let them. That's part of the fun of commanding a force in a desperate last stand like the one in *Army of Darkness*. Draw a sketch map of the castle and its environs based on the one we've provided (see p. 145) and let them prepare their defenses. Your friends might come up with brand new ideas Ash never thought of—plans and schemes that can make unlife very rough for the deadites.

THE BATTLE

EVIL ASH: DIC, DAMN YOU! DIC FASTER! I SHALL COMMAND EVERY BLACK-HEARTED, WORM INFESTED, SON OF A BITCH THAT EVER DIED IN BATTLE! YOU THERE! HANDSOMELY, NOW! WE SHALL STORM THEIR CASTLE AND GET MY BOOK!

The army of the dead approach, they have the General, Evil Sheila (unless she's a Cast Member), and a number of Kandarian demons wait in reserve. It's time for the big fight.

Here's the information you'll need for the fight shown in the film. The humans are outnumbered three to one before Henry arrives. Given proportional losses on both sides, the ratio drops to two to one by the time the Duke shows up.

Black powder arrows give the heroes a one-time +2 bonus they can use at any point before you determine that the deadites have gained the inner wall. Black powder catapults add a one-time +4 bonus, but only on the opening round of the battle. The Death Coaster adds a +4 bonus, but only when the deadites are in the courtyard. Each round Ash wants to use the Death Coaster, he can't make a personal Battle roll, but must make a Dexterity and Driving roll. Failure means the car runs out of steam and is useless for the rest of the fight. A roll of one means he's wrecked it (see p. 106 for the explosive details).

Besides Duke Henry changing the battle's "ratio," he adds +2 for his rear cavalry attack the round he arrives.

Evil Sheila can force Ash to wreck the Death Coaster. After that, she rolls each battle round like a normal character, or can move to attack Ash directly. The two fight out four normal Turns of combat each round until one or the other retreats or is defeated.

Evil Ash has a Brains score of 15 when acting as the General. If he enters battle personally, he can attack Ash, but the deadites effective "Generalship" is reduced to 12.

THE RESOLUTION

So that's it. You've now played the movie. Hope it was everything you and your players imagined. But what now?

Well, there's always more adventure to be had in England circa 1300. All the basics you need for that are sketched out earlier in this chapter. Run a couple more Episodes or even launch into a full Season in that locale if you like. Then you could whirl the crew into another setting like those presented in **Chapter Seven: Worlds of Darkness**. That should keep you all occupied for a while. Better yet, create your own stories. Don't fear, we have faith in you.

CHAPTER SEVEN

WORLDS OF DARKNESS

O WOE! WHAT DO I DO NOW, WHERE DO I GO NOW?
DEATH HAS DEVoured MY BODY,
DEATH DWELLS IN MY BODY,
WHEREVER I GO, WHEREVER I LOOK, THERE STANDS DEATH!
-THE TALE OF GILGAMESH

Now we get to the juicy fresh meat of the book. The raw flesh still bloody from the kill. The stomach-churning, bile-raising, mega-gross-out stuff that gives any good horror movie, even the campy ones like *Army of Darkness*, its very own shiver factor.

Okay, so maybe we are overstating things a bit here. In any event, this chapter goes where no Ash has gone before. It's where we explore the other places the Watcher in the Woods and its evil have visited. You didn't think that Circa England was the only place evil has reared its ugly head, did you? Nah, evil has been around for a while and wherever

it shows its face, Promised Ones and their stalwart companions get dragged kicking and screaming to the fore.

Fans take note that nothing in this chapter is official canon. This is all made up by the guys and gals of Eden Studios. No need to fear though. We're professionals.

GILGA-ASH

Flint knew that storm wasn't right. It was a Kansas twister from the look of it, but there was just something off about the way it howled. The fact that it turned sideways and pointed right at him was a little weird too.

The clincher was when it whisked him and old Betsy through the center and into some other place. A place with reeds, lazy rivers, and people in loincloths using bronze tools.

This obviously wasn't Kansas anymore.

The gunslinger looked over the wide-eyed locals, spun the chamber on his Colt to make sure it was loaded, then tipped his hat to a woman with dark skin balancing a pot of water on her head.

"You wouldn't happen to ablo Anglais, wouldja?" Flint grimaced.

The woman screamed and ran to her simple mud hut. Her husband, carrying a bronze scythe stared incredulously at the cowboy's horse and odd garb.

"Didn't think so."

Suddenly there was another scream. Flint looked up and saw a bizarre scene—even more stomach-churning than the dawning realization that he wasn't in the America anymore. A fat, bloated man was staggering down the river bank toward the woman Flint had sent screaming. Its head had extended on a long, serpent-like neck, its face looked like it was full of pus and piss, and it was cursing in some ancient tongue.

Flint rode over and put his horse between the thing and the pot-headed woman. "Back off, hombre."

Incredibly, the demon—there was no doubt that's what it was—spoke. "You will not stop us! The Necronomicon shall be completed and your race wiped from the earth!"

Flint cocked his head curiously. "Ain't you got a mouth. I was just gonna mosey on to the closest bar, but now it sounds like I got a little heroin' to do."

The thing raced forward—seemingly gliding on air—and slashed at Flint's horse. The gunslinger popped six rounds smack into its face, twirled the pistol into his holster, and watched it flop to the ground where it popped, hissed, and oozed into a disgusting puddle of goo.

"There's somethin' you don't see every day," he said to the confused woman.

Flint tipped his hat to the farmers then nudged Betsy forward. There was a city upriver. On fire by the looks of it. He reloaded his six-gun, relit his cigar, and grimaced. Had the makings of a long day.

In the dark woods of prehistory lurked the Watcher. It sat in the primeval forests and watched a growing race of self-important monkeys become men. It hated these weak creatures, and devoured them every time one wandered into its deep forest.

Eventually, the Watcher learned the most vile of the humans went to Hell and became damned souls—demons. They were much more tolerable to the evil in this form, full of hate and spite for the living. The Watcher eventually learned to channel these cursed spirits back to the world and use them

to infect the living, thus causing even more pain and suffering among the soft-skinned primates.

But from the city of Kandar came a champion, one who claimed he would destroy the Watcher. In our history, this hero is Gilgamesh. In your game, he's one of your player's heroes.

Or at least, he will be.

CIRCA MESOPOTAMIA

Our story begins in ancient Mesopotamia roughly 3000 BC. But this is Circa Mesopotamia, just as **Chapter Six: Land of Darkness** focused on Circa England. Again, actual history can guide but it should definitely take a back seat to story and fun.

It is in Circa Mesopotamia that the Necronomicon was first created by human hands. Urigan, high priest of Ereshkigal, goddess of darkness and death, came to rule over the city of Kandar. He performed this coup with a legion of mad cultists and a dark alliance with the Watcher in the Woods.

But this all did not happen over night. When demons first began inhabiting human forms, the local authorities came to Urigan for knowledge. He studied the vile creatures for a while, and eventually came to believe they were avatars of his goddess. Instead of fighting the demons, Urigan prayed to them. The things realized an opportunity when they saw one and helped Urigan create the Necronomicon. Written in blood and bound in human flesh, this vile artifact could now be used to call the Watcher and channel demons into human souls throughout time and space.

THE HEROES

Enter our heroes. This one works best if all the heroes fall from the sky (that is, are from other times). If not, it may be a few scenes before other Cast Members (local Sumerians) can get worked into the story.

The champions have been dispatched by the powers-that-be to ancient Sumeria in an attempt to stop the evil at its source—the creation of the Necronomicon.

The story opens as Urigan the High Priest is putting the finishing touches on the dark tome. If he can be stopped before learning the final incantations, the book can be destroyed.

That solves one problem, but the Watcher in the Woods remains. The creature is much younger now though, and a dedicated group of heroes can use one of the spells from the unfinished Necronomicon to make it flesh and finish it once and for all. (The latter forms the basis of the legendary tale of

Gilgamesh, making our champions the world's first superheroes! If there were any toy companies around at the time, they'd probably even get their own action figures.)

THE BRONZE AGE

This tale takes place in the Bronze Age. That means the weapons and armor available are heavy with a capital H. To make things even more fun, weapons dull easily and are harder to sharpen. Alter weapons and armor as follows.

Weapons: Subtract one from the damage of all edged weapons made in this period (before any multiplier is applied). Characters must sharpen their weapons after every battle. There's no game mechanic for this—just annoy them with it from time to time for atmosphere.

Armor: Unless the character's Strength is equal to the AV protection of any metal armor, he suffers -2 to any action using Dexterity. The weight also exhausts the wearer quickly. Again, no specific mechanic for this—just make them rest and take off their armor more frequently.

Heroes should be made keenly aware of this situation, and ensure they take care of more modern equipment they may have brought with them. Besides the fact that a sword from Sumeria is worse than a sword from the Dark Ages, there won't be much engineering here either. No magical blacksmiths, no mechanical gauntlets, no steam engines, and no black powder. Such devices are way beyond the ken of the Bronze Ages. Devices from the future should be guarded carefully. Once they're lost, the champions will not be able to replace them.

KANDAR

THE HOUSE WHERE THE DEAD DWELL IN TOTAL DARKNESS,
WHERE THEY DRINK DIRT AND EAT STONE,
WHERE THEY WEAR FEATHERS LIKE BIRDS,
WHERE NO LIGHT EVER INVADES THEIR EVERLASTING DARKNESS,
WHERE THE DOOR AND THE LOCK OF HELL IS COATED WITH
THICK DUST.

-THE TALE OF GILGAMESH

The city of Kandar is like a scene right out of hell. Scores of demons roam the streets or fly overhead, tormenting the thousand of mortals who cannot escape. Only Ereshkigal's acolytes, cultists in dark blue robes who serve Urigan, are currently off-limits to the demons.

Written in blood upon the walls are the words: "ELI BALTUTI IMA' IDU MITUTI" (The dead will be more numerous than the living!) and "DALKHU" (Demons).

The city itself is in ruins. Markets are trampled and stink with spoiled fruit and rotting meat, dismembered corpses lie in the streets, and the doors to the survivor's homes are blockaded by any means possible.

In Kandar, the main thoroughfare leads directly to the Temple of Ereshkigal. With so many forms to occupy, many of the dead lie "unoccupied." The demons have used these unfortunates to "pave" the roadway to the temple like a macabre carpet of flesh and blood.

Ancient Sumerian

The Sumerian dialect was distinct from semitic and early Arabic languages of the area, so it's very unlikely your heroes speak it. If one of your Cast is a scholar of some sort and knows ancient Sumerian, no problem. He can translate for the group. If not, use the language barrier to create complications and humor rather than completely derailing the adventure.

If all else fails and getting past the language barrier just seems too much for your group, throw in another Guest Star. A young and gorgeous Professor of Ancient History—from whatever country floats your boat, she doesn't have to be American—drops in from the sky as well. She isn't much in a fight, but she can add a few plot complications (like Sheila/Evil Sheila) and help teach the group enough Sumerian to get by.

TEMPLE OF ERESHKIGAL

**THERE SAT ERESHKIGAL, THE QUEEN OF HELL,
BELETSEKI, THE SCRIBE OF HELL, SITTING BEFORE HER.
BELETSEKI HELD A TABLET AND READ IT TO ERESHKIGAL.
SHE SLOWLY RAISED HER HEAD WHEN SHE NOTICED ME
SHE POINTED AT ME:
"WHO HAS SENT THIS MAN?"**

—THE TALE OF GILGAMESH

This is where Urigan dwells, along with a female demon (Beletseri) who is instructing him in the rites and incantations of Hell.

The temple is typical of ancient Sumeria—a ziggurat rising some five stories high. Winged demons often perch on the exterior "steps," watching the distant streets for foolish humans. When they spy one, they swoop into the air and strike from above, carrying the poor soul off to the temple to feast upon his flesh, or dropping him from a great distance onto the road to fill in a "pothole."

Urigan dwells in the center of the temple, protected by a coterie of cultists (enough that the heroes should feel compelled to join forces with the rebels for the final battle, see pp. 186-188). The demons offer him no formal guard, but do their best to protect him if otherwise able. It's not that they care for him, of course, they just want to ensure the Necronomicon is completed so their evil can be easily called upon for generations to come.

Over the last few weeks, several bands of heroes have tried to bring Urigan down. To stop them, he has installed several traps in his temple. Pits filled with scorpions, pressure plates rigged to spikes, and similar safeguards line the corridors to his central chamber.

Urigan works feverishly day and night, inking the book with fresh blood. His acolytes bring him fresh victims daily, for the ink must come from those still struggling between life and death. The bound victims lie about the mad priest's room like a morgue, some dead, others still clinging desperately to life.

Urigan sits in the darkness, his work illuminated by flickering candles. The Watcher whispers the incantations to him as he writes. Occasionally though, the mad priest must venture out and perform some task or conduct a grisly experiment to make sense of the Watcher's commands. This is

Name: Urigan
Motivation: Serve Ereshkigal, spread her dark touch
Critter Type: Human
Attributes: Str 3, Dex 3, Con 3, Int 5, Per 4, Will 5
Ability Scores: Muscle 12, Combat 12, Brains 16
Life Points: 43 **Drama Points:** 6
Special Abilities: Back Stabber, Hard to Kill 3

Maneuvers			
Name	Score	Damage	Notes
Back Stabber	12	11	Slash/stab; see p. 168
Dodge	12	—	Defense action
Punch	12	8	Bash



when he is at his most vulnerable—one of these trips may provide an opportunity for the characters to strike. Even then he is surrounded by at least a dozen cultists and his “pet” deadite, Beletseri.

The Necronomicon is almost complete. It already contains all the incantations and rites necessary to work its evil, but has yet to be enchanted. The last step, the enchantment, gives the book a life of its own. When this is completed, it cannot be destroyed by normal means (though it may allow its enemies to think it has been burned, shredded, and so on). It also has the mystical power to manipulate its location. Bury it and someone will eventually find it. Throw it in the sea and it will one day wash up on shore. Seal it in the foundation of a building and the wall will eventually crumble.

THE GRANARY

Though there are thousands of humans hiding in Kandar, the last major group of rebels hide in a massive granary on the banks of the Euphrates. They are led by Enkidu, a former woodsman who has actually seen the Watcher and knows he is behind the Evil Dead. When the demons come, the people move to the shadows. Many of them hide in the deep piles of unmilled grain that fill most of the granary floor.

Enkidu has a reputation as a wild fighter and a great hero, for he has slain three demons with his bronze axe. He swears to one day kill the Watcher, who he calls “Humbaba the Terrible.” Another thir-

Name: The Dark Ones (Cultists)
Motivation: Serve Ereshkigal, spread her dark touch
Critter Type: Human
Attributes: Str 3, Dex 3, Con 3, Int 2, Per 3, Will 2
Ability Scores: Muscle 12, Combat 12, Brains 10
Life Points: 34 **Drama Points:** 1
Special Abilities: Back Stabber

Maneuvers			
Name	Score	Damage	Notes
Back Stabber	12	11	Slash/stab; see p. 168
Dodge	12	—	Defense action
Punch	12	8	Bash



Name: Beletseri

Motivation: See that the Necronomicon is created

Critter Type: Demon

Attributes: Str 6, Dex 5, Con 5, Int 3, Per 3, Will 4

Ability Scores: Muscle 18, Combat 17, Brains 12

Life Points: 69

Drama Points: 4

Special Abilities: Armor Value 4, Attractiveness -6, Fast Reaction Time, Flight, Hard to Kill 5, Regeneration, Weakness to daylight

Maneuvers

Name	Score	Damage	Notes
Bite	17	23	Must Grapple first
Claw	17	17	Slash/stab
Dodge	17	—	Defense action
Grapple	19	—	Resisted by Dodge



ty-two warriors hide in the three-story granary, along with twice that many women and children.

The warriors slip out at night via the river, using the tall reeds along the banks to hide from the demons. They spend the night foraging for food, weapons, and recruits.

Enkidu and his warriors are the linchpin of this setting. The heroes should discover the rebel leader and somehow win his trust—perhaps by saving one of his foragers from a demon attack. The forager could then bring the “strange ones” back to Enkidu and the granary.

When the Cast eventually meets Enkidu and gains his confidence, he tells them everything he knows of

the demons, Urigan, and Humbaba. He knows the mad priest is compiling a book, and that the book somehow lets him control the demons. He also knows (from a captured cultist) that the book has the ability to make the Watcher manifest in the flesh.

Enkidu's plan is to raid the temple, slay Urigan and his cultists, and capture the book. Then he will take it to the great Cedar Forest of the north where Humbaba the Terrible dwells, make it flesh, and destroy it. The heroes should first impress Enkidu that they are capable warriors—this is best accomplished with a rescue mission of some sort. After that, you're looking at a massive raid on the temple using the Battle System (see pp. 118-123). Check out the Cedar Forest section for the big finale (see p. 182).

Name: Enkidu

Motivation: Save Kandar, defeat the Watcher

Critter Type: Human

Attributes: Str 5, Dex 5, Con 5, Int 4, Per 4, Will 4

Ability Scores: Muscle 16, Combat 17, Brains 14

Life Points: 65

Drama Points: 5

Special Abilities: Big Chin, Hard to Kill 5, Nerves of Steel

Maneuvers

Name	Score	Damage	Notes
Dodge	17	—	Defense action
Kick	16	16	Bash
Punch	17	15	Bash
Bronze Sword	17	21	Slash/stab



Name: Enkidu's Rebels
Motivation: Retake Kandar, protect Enkidu
Critter Type: Human
Attributes: Str 3, Dex 3, Con 3, Int 2, Per 2, Will 2
Ability Scores: Muscle 12, Combat 12, Brains 9
Life Points: 37 **Drama Points:** 1
Special Abilities: Hard to Kill 1

Maneuvers			
Name	Score	Damage	Notes
Dodge	12	—	Defense action
Kick	11	10	Bash
Punch	12	8	Bash
Bronze Sword	12	10	Slash/stab



It's a simple plan but tough to accomplish with the beaten force that remains. The Cast's arrival gives Enkidu his one last best chance to triumph—if the two sides can work together.

THE TIGRIS AND EUPHRATES

The demons have infected the crocodiles of these two rivers with their evil. These undead monsters lie patiently below the surface and strike those who approach the river for water.

Many of Enkidu's people—who use the river to hide from the demons and to sneak out at night—have fallen victim to these terrors.

THE CEDAR FOREST

Over a week's travel by ass (donkey to you Beavis-and-Butthead types) north of Kandar is an ancient forest of tall cedars. Though the trees are straight and tall, the undergrowth is thick and overgrown, as if they were trying to choke the trees towering overhead. It's a good analogy to the Evil Dead—for like the weeds, they rise from the ground to destroy the growth of humanity.

The forest is very thick, blocking most of the sunlight above. That allows the Watcher to operate here day and night. It also reduces visibility. Attacks beyond Short Range are impossible.

The Watcher dwells here, known as Humbaba the Terrible to the locals, spreading its evil through

Name: Undead Crocodiles
Motivation: Eat people
Critter Type: Demonic animal
Attributes: Str 6, Dex 4, Con 5, Int 1, Per 3, Will 2
Ability Scores: Muscle 18, Combat 14, Brains 8
Life Points: 74 **Drama Points:** 2
Special Abilities: Animal intelligence, Armor Value 4, Attractiveness -4, Fast Reaction Time, Increased Life Points

Maneuvers			
Name	Score	Damage	Notes
Bite	14	21	Slash/stab
Claw	14	15	Slash/stab
Tail Slap	14	21	Bash



Sumerian Gods

The Sumerians believe the sun and stars lie beneath a great dome above the Earth. Below that is a dismal kingdom of devils and demons looking to sow doom and destruction upon mortals.

The Gods lurk above the dome somewhere, but interact daily in the lives of man. They are not infallible, and many Sumerian tales deal with their misguided antics. Below are the major gods that might arise in this setting.

An: God of the Heavens. An is the most powerful of the deities, but a distant one as well. He's very much a "talk to the giant hand" kinda god.

Enki: Lord of Water and Wisdom. And semen. Yup. Semen. Those wacky Sumerians. Streams of water wash from his shoulders (you just can't make this stuff up). He moonlights by giving intelligence to rulers (don't quit your day job, buddy) and providing skill to artisans.

Enlil: God of Storms. Enlil is the "son" of An and Ki. He separated the Earth from the heavens and, more than any other god, is responsible for providing for the daily needs of the people. Enlil is definitely the type you want to call on when you're having a bad day. He feels your pain. He won't do anything about it, but he feels it. Kinda like most politicians who say "I feel your pain."

Ereshkigal: Goddess of Darkness, Gloom, and Death and not at all fun at parties (at least the kind you'd want to have in your neighborhood). Definitely a Goth chick. Her swinging sister is Inanna but they don't get along so well. She's got a "Marcia, Marcia, Marcia!" thing going on with sis.

Inanna, Goddess of Love and War. Inanna is the sister of Utu and Ereshkigal and has a yen for mortals. She appears before Gilgamesh looking for some action in the epic poem. If spurned, Inanna gets her groove on with a giant bull. Er, she sends a giant bull to punish the joker who dissed her.

Ki: Goddess of the Earth. Ki is the Earth Mother and creator of man. She wears a leafy crown and holds a branch to show that she's the mutha of all life. Apparently Ki got a little drunk before pumping out men though—she made several "malformed" versions before finally settling on the current form. Maybe some of those are still walking around? She's sometimes called Ninhursag.

Nammu: Goddess of the Sea. Nammu is often called upon by sailors, but is rarely sought after in land-locked Kandar, so let's just ignore her.

Utu: The Sun God. Sunlight issues from his shoulders (kinda like Enki's streams) and illuminates the world. He is also the God of Justice, and it is he who decrees the fate of the dead. He carries a massive saw-toothed sword to impress chicks.

deadites and occasionally manifesting to devour unsuspecting travelers.

This is where the heroes must eventually come to fight the Watcher. If it does not immediately manifest, it can easily be called by chopping down the great cedar trees. The thing does the "Raimi-cam" through the woods the moment it hears someone whacking in the woods. Er, cutting down its trees, we mean.

Humbaba is young and much more vulnerable than he will be in another 5000 years. He's still a

legendary demon, however, so killing him takes more than just hoping for a few lucky axe strokes. That's why we recommend running the Portents bit (see p. 188)—to make your Cast Members realize they need one of those ingenious plans you see in movies like—well, *Army of Darkness*. Death coasters, homemade bombs, traps, and whatever else they can think of should all serve them well.

The real trick is that Humbaba can be defeated, but it can't be truly slain until it is trapped in a par-

Name: Young Watcher in the Woods
Motivation: Create evil minions, destroy all humans
Critter Type: Demon
Attributes: Str 9, Dex 6, Con 10, Int 6, Per 6, Will 6
Ability Scores: Muscle 24, Combat 18, Brains 13
Life Points: 136 **Drama Points:** 5
Special Abilities: Armor Value 10, Attractiveness -8, Increased Life Points, Regeneration, Vulnerable only to its own flesh, Weakness to daylight

Maneuvers			
Name	Score	Damage	Notes
Claw	18	23	Slash/stab; two per Turn at no penalty
Crush	24	16	Bash; must Grapple first; no resistance
Grapple	20	—	Resisted by Dodge
Stomp	16	40	Bash; resisted by Dodge
Toss	20	16	Bash; must Grapple first



ticalar form by a passage from the Necronomicon. The same passage also forces it to attack those who made it flesh. The incantation wears off after a few hours however, so if it is not slain by then, it reverts to its ethereal form and likely moves off to another primeval forest far away from those who may have the power to kill it. Whether driven off or slain, one of the Sumerian survivors should have the brainy idea of fashioning a spear from its "flesh." This

becomes the Spear of Destiny (see p. 192), and possibly the means to bring about the Watcher's arrival in another age.

If the Watcher is about to be slain, it may offer a bargain to a single character—the one it senses has the darkest heart. If he will protect it, Humbaba will grant him eternal life. The demon does indeed have this power and keeps its promise if so spared.

Name: Tree Things
Motivation: Serve Humbaba
Critter Type: Demon
Attributes: Str 10, Dex 6, Con 10, Int 1, Per 2, Will 8
Ability Scores: Muscle 26, Combat 15, Brains 10
Life Points: 100 **Drama Points:** 3
Special Abilities: Armor Value 8, Attractiveness -6, Increased Life Points

Maneuvers			
Name	Score	Damage	Notes
Claw	15	24	Slash/stab; two per Turn at no penalty
Crush	26	17	Bash; must Grapple first; no resistance
Grapple	17	—	Resisted by Dodge
Toss	22	16	Bash; must Grapple first



In addition to the Watcher, the Cedar Forest is full of living Tree Things. These massive creatures are very tough. We advise your heroes to run from them unless they've got an awful lot of boom-boom.

EPISODE IDEAS

We've covered the highlights above, but how do you get from point A to point B? Here's some ideas for stories that begin, carry through, and end an epic adventure in civilization's early days.

IN THE BEGINNING

Your story could start with the Cast Members falling from the sky in the Fertile Crescent of Mesopotamia—the area between the Tigris and Euphrates in modern-day Iraq. Perhaps they just finished a titanic battle with the Evil Dead in some other setting and used the Necronomicon to open a portal, or maybe they were sent here by some Wiseman with access to similar rituals.

Before the heroes—likely total strangers from many different times—have a chance to say boo to each other, they see a group of newly risen skeletons terrorizing a nearby farm. They fight off the bonebags and after working out their language problems (see p. 179), are pointed upriver, toward the nearby city of Kandar.

The group spies smoke and flying demons in the distant skies over Kandar. The roads leading in are heavily patrolled by skeletons and an occasional flying deadite, but the banks of the river offer a safe route into the heart of the city. Except for the undead crocs, of course.

Eventually, the group emerges from the river near the granary, a large, relatively intact building that might offer shelter while they figure out what's going on. Inside, they see piles of unmilled grain. They're moving about when Enkidu and his rebels rise from the grain ready to protect their hideout. One of those tense hero-on-hero confrontations follows. Just when things are about to turn ugly, a wounded rebel comes limping in from the street outside. "They have taken Shamhasa!" he says.

Shamhasa is Enkidu's daughter. Her and three other rebels were casing the Temple of Ereshkigal when they were discovered by Urigan's cultists. The rebel scout believes she has been taken to one of the cultist's homes to be savaged before she is to be turned over to Urigan.

Enkidu has no choice. He cannot jeopardize the entire resistance for his daughter—she knew the risks—but these strangers are expendable. He asks them to accompany him on his rescue mission if they want to prove themselves.

The team must make their way through the city, avoiding skeletons and deadites until they come to the home of Ralkgall, one of Urigan's senior cultists. The lecherous bastard has her lashed to the bed and things are about to get ugly when the heroes burst

Name: Shamhasa
Motivation: Serve her father, Enkidu
Critter Type: Human
Attributes: Str 3, Dex 3, Con 3, Int 2, Per 2, Will 3
Ability Scores: Muscle 12, Combat 14, Brains 12
Life Points: 43 **Drama Points:** 5
Special Abilities: Attractiveness +4, Hard to Kill 3, Nerves of Steel

Maneuvers			
Name	Score	Damage	Notes
Bronze Dagger	14	7	Slash/stab
Dodge	14	—	Defense action
Grapple	16	—	Resisted by Dodge
Parry	14	—	Defense action
Punch	14	9	Bash
Bronze Sword	14	13	Slash/stab



on the scene. A battle with the cultists ensues. A patrol of boney types might happen upon them about halfway through the fight as well.

Shamhasa is wounded but otherwise alive. She also says that Ralkgall bragged that the book would be complete by the next full moon—nearly three weeks away. This is good news for Enkidu. He knows the completion of the book is big trouble—though he doesn't know exactly what it means—but having three weeks means he has time to properly outfit his rebels and lead them into battle against Urigan to destroy the Necronomicon.

Naturally, Shamhasa falls for one of the characters—most likely the one who would make the worst mate (she likes bad boys). She stays with the group from now on and can be played for laughs, annoyance, or could actually be a worthy addition to the heroes' group.

Enkidu fills in the rest of the details for the Promised Ones. He tells them of Urigan, the Temple of Ereshkigal, the Book of the Dead, and finally about Humbaba the Terrible.

FIELD OF THE DEAD

Enkidu knows his rebels are too weak to raid the temple just yet. Most don't have arms or armor, and fewer still know how to use them. Enkidu proposes a raid on the former governor's palace armory. One of his men was a captain of the guard and is able to draw a detailed map of the place.

The heroes can make their own plan to capture the armory, whether by stealth or brute force, and act upon it. Play it out as planned. Only a handful of skeletons roam the palace grounds. They put up some resistance, but in the end, the heroes discover the armory has already been looted. One of the undead, merely a babbling skull still yapping at the heroes, cries out that Urigan has already taken the arms to create a new legion outside the city gates! (Oops!) Play this clue for laughs—like some of the deadites' scenes in the finale of *Army of Darkness*.

Shamhasa knows where this might be. She saw the cultists dragging bodies from the city to the flooded fields to the north before she was captured in the previous Episode. Sure enough, the heroes find a thousand dead corpses lying in the thick mud. Cultists pick their way among them, dropping swords and armor on the half-buried bones like seeds in a garden.

The longer the group waits, the more dead arise (enough to make it dramatic but not enough to keep the heroes from attacking). The battle that ensues is a silly mudfest. Enkidu and at least a few of the heroes must try to gather weapons while the rest fight off the cultists and occasional freshly-risen corpse.

Each characters must make Dexterity (not doubled) rolls to move each round. Failure means he's stuck and can't go more than a few feet. A roll of one means the hero slips and falls face-down in the mire (perhaps on top of a rising skeleton?—"Hey! Get off me, bub!")

At some point during the fight, a cart full of new weapons and armor drives into the field—its cultist driver eager to get in on the action. Dozens of undead rise at about the same time. Hopefully, the heroes take the cart and make a break for the city, pursued by cultists on horseback, falling off the side and being dragged through the mud, surfing, and so on. This is a great place to pour on the camp.

Eventually of course, the rebels make it back to the granary and the rebels are now armed and ready for their attack on the Temple of Ereshkigal.

GIRL GONE WILD

The next step is to finish the task Shamhasa wasn't able to complete earlier—scouting out the temple to scope out the lay of the land, to discover a way in, to judge the defensive forces, and to get back to the granary safely.

Unfortunately, the scouts are discovered by skeletons and a small fight ensues. Midway through the encounter, a pair of deadites enter the fray. One of them gets a hit on Shamhasa—but don't make a big deal out of it. Just mark down some damage and move on.

On the way back to the granary, a flying demon spies the crew and moves behind a rubble tower. It pushes the stonework over, crushing some of the team's help and perhaps the heroes themselves. It screams in delight and dives in to attack as any other deadites and skeletons in the neighborhood come running.

Worst of all, Shamhasa suddenly goes bad—she has succumbed to her wounds and become possessed. She does this in the most dramatic way possible—most likely by striking her new "boyfriend" from behind with her heavy bronze dagger while he fights the flying demon.

Name: Hand Maiden of Ereshkigal
Motivation: Guard the ruined temple of Utu
Critter Type: Animated Statue
Attributes: Str 18, Dex 2, Con 12, Int 1, Per 4, Will 2
Ability Scores: Muscle 42, Combat 13, Brains 9
Life Points: 150 **Drama Points:** 3
Special Abilities: Armor Value 12, Attractiveness -6,
 Immune to Slash/stab and Bullet multipliers,
 Increased Life Points

Maneuvers

Name	Score	Damage	Notes
Dodge	13	—	Defense action
Smash	13	39	Bash; two per Turn at no penalty



Midway through the battle (and before Shamhasa can be killed), Enkidu shows up and protects her. He knows of a way to rid her of the demon if she can just be subdued.

If the team isn't able to capture Shamhasa and has to kill her, Enkidu is stricken but understands. His grief is heavy, however, and he becomes distant and depressed. He suffers a -2 penalty to everything he tries to do for the rest of this campaign.

If the heroes are able to subdue Shamhasa, Enkidu tells them of an odd dream he had just the night before. It did not make sense until his daughter's possession, but now he understands it. (Yes, this is a plot device, but in the epic, Enkidu often interprets Gilgamesh's dreams. In fact, if you can lay the dream on the hero before this tale begins and be sure he'll tell someone, it's best if the hero has it instead of Enkidu.)

The dream goes something like this. Utu the Sun God materializes in Kandar as a gigantic statue and begins smashing deadites with his many-toothed sword. Only when he lifts his glowing stone blade, the previously possessed Kandarians are normal people again instead of big fat squishy stains. If the group doesn't figure this out, Enkidu does. A deadite killed by the Sun Sword of Utu returns to its human form.

Utu has a temple in Kandar, but the demons have defiled it (remember they hate sunlight). Demons cannot tread upon it, but skeletons can. They went in and demolished the place and left a truly terrifying guardian over the ruins—a handmaiden of Ereshkigal. This massive stone juggernaut is an angry-looking four-armed female statue of blue

stone. If this creature can be defeated, the heroes can recover the Sun Sword of Utu and gain a powerful weapon in their fight against the Evil Dead.

THE SUN SWORD OF UTU

This miraculous weapon is made of stone and feels like it. It weighs over 40 pounds and cannot be wielded by anyone with a Strength 6 or less. Even those with a Strength 6 suffer a penalty to their Getting Medieval rolls of (15 - Strength). So, a hero with Strength 6 suffers a -8 penalty.

On the plus side, if a character hits, it does double damage to demons, skeletons, or the Watcher (applied after Slash/stab modifier is factored). Even better, any deadite killed with the sword instantly reverts to its human form. The victim may only be repossessed after his death (in the normal way).

HAVE FUN STORMING THE TEMPLE

Now it's time to storm the Temple of Ereshkigal and lay the smack-down on Urigan and his crazy cultists. The heroes should be able to do this in whatever fashion they like—whether through stealth or a massive battle. We prefer the latter since we wrote that cool Battle System bit in the fourth chapter. Just how many cultists, deadites, and skeletons are present depends on your tastes and now many men you want to let Enkidu have. We suggest giving the rebels around 100 fighters. The skeletons around the temple number about 50 and there are nearly twice that in cultists. Every round there's a

1 in 10 chance that 25 bone shells or cultists arrive as reinforcements. Beletseri and Urigan won't fight outside—they stay deep within the temple trying to finish their dirty work.

If this is the route you choose, we suggest it going something like this. The cultists, skeletons, and a few demons put up a defense outside the temple. While the battle rages, the heroes and a select few friends (a small group of warriors plus Enkidu and Shamhasa) force/sneak their way into the entry hall and do battle with Urigan and Beletseri.

As they make their way in, the heroes find the bad guys and the book in the rear chamber of the ziggurat. Whether it's already complete or not is completely up to you, Mr. Director. Perhaps the best answer is to leave that unknown. Who can say whether more pages were needed or not? The heroes simply have to take the Necronomicon and hope for the best. Either way, it does have the power to make the Watcher flesh, open portals in time, and so on.

GETTING WOOD

The next step in this particular saga is the trip to the great Cedar Forest. It's nearly a week north of Kandar and far away from any large civilization. Fill the trip with a few subplots to keep things interesting. Either drop in something from the Cast Members' own backgrounds or throw in something like a mortal patrol who mistakenly believes the heroes are in with the demons and gives chase.

Make sure to use the Portents bit (see sidebar). The heroes should come up with a plan, some gadgets or secret weapons, or at least a really good strategy for dealing with the Watcher or it's going to be picking its teeth with their boomsticks.

Once they get to the woods, creep the group out a bit. The Watcher hangs back and, well, watches. Only if they start chopping down a tree does it Raimi-cam toward them. Even then, it attacks with help. Several of the trees come alive and attack alongside their master!

Wish your friends good luck and tear 'em a new one. Remind them that they can retreat. As long as they're out of the woods, the Watcher can't go too far (and neither can the trees). Make them think up something really clever if they want to go back for round two. Even then, the Watcher might just run

Portents

The trip to the Cedar Forest takes at least three days. Along the way, Promised Ones in the group are struck by odd dreams. They depict scenes of terror and the overwhelming power of the Watcher. Here's a typical dream suffered by Gilgamesh in his own epic poem.

The skies roared with thunder and the earth heaved,

Then came darkness and a stillness like death.

Lightening smashed the ground and fires blazed out;

Death flooded from the skies.

When the heat died and the fires went out,

The plains had turned to ash.

—The Tale of Gilgamesh

In the poem, Enkidu interprets Gilgamesh's dreams as warnings of Humbaba's power. You need to do the same here. If the character tells Enkidu of his dream, the woodsman warns that the group must have a plan for defeating the demon. Under no circumstances should they think they can just waltz into the Cedar Forest and beat it in a straight-up fight.

away. That's your call. Remember that if they really do kill Humbaba, the campaign is pretty much over. The deadites don't just dissolve (keep dreaming), but new ones can't be called forth by the Watcher either. That means that if the last one is destroyed, the demons have no way to our world.

We'll assume the Watcher flees this time and moves on elsewhere—where it will be waiting for your heroes in another setting with a vengeance. This keeps the campaign going but allows the group to finish off the demons in this time at least.

The Episode ends as Enkidu builds a raft of the great cedars and sails the group down the Euphrates

to Kandar. There they help the rebels (and a newly-arrived legion from Ur) mop up the deadites and skeletons.

The final battle is bloody and cruel but the humans win. One of the Cast Members—preferably a Promised One who defeated Humbaba—is called “Gilgamesh,” which means, oddly enough “promised one,” and a scribe begins to chisel his tale in cuneiform on a series of 11 tablets.

Someone somewhere finally discovers the passage in the Necronomicon that opens a portal in time and the Cast Members head off for the sequel in some faraway land. If you really want an *Army of Darkness*-type ending, contrive a way for the portal to open near where the great tablets are displayed. As the winds whip about, several of the tablets fall over and crumble to dust, lost forever. (About half of the tablets featuring the epic of *Gilgamesh* are broken and unreadable.)

WAR IS HELL

Sergeant Bradford Hicks was a dirty fighter. No one denied that. Still, it just didn't seem right to put a mortar round right up that Ratzl's ass.

“Look Dershowitz. I know it ain't exactly couth, but that weren't no ordinary Nazi. Look at him. He's got buckteeth like some kinda rabbit, big bug eyes, and claws! Not to mention that's the fattest bastard I ever laid eyes on. And how many Hitler-lovers have you seen *melt into a pile of goo* when they died?”

Allan Dershowitz was a Jewish private from the Bronx. He could have passed for Jerry Lewis with a little effort. “Look Sarge, I'm just saying that the laws of war are very strict about things like this. You wouldn't want to be brought up on war crimes, would you?”

Hicks was from Bedford, Virginia, the town that had given the most sons to the war per capita so far. He was an airborne Ranger and proud of it. “That look human to you?” The Sarge dipped his bayonet into the Nazi goo. “It's *green*, Allan.”

Dershowitz pulled his coat tighter against the frigid cold of the Ardennes Forest in December. “Just saying, Sarge. That's all.”

Hicks hunkered down. “First light, we're out of this hole. That mess might be contag—” The sergeant's thought was broken by the distant and unmistakable sound of Nazi armor. “Cripes. Panzers. Get out there and make sure the bazooka teams are awake, private.”

Dershowitz clambered out of the hole and skittered across the ground, just over a snowy rise where Hicks couldn't see him anymore. The sergeant heard the kid say “Edmonds?” before he screamed so loud the whole Nazi army must have heard him.

“Damn it, Dershowitz! Keep it down!”

Silence followed—except for the growing clamber of the Nazi tanks.

Hicks crept forward, “Allan?”

Nothing.

He gained the rise. There was Private Edmonds from Kingsport, Tennessee, chowing down on Dershowitz's head. Like the Nazi Hicks had killed before, Edmond's face was swollen, his teeth distended, and his eyes looked like those of some hate-filled serpent's. “Yummm. Kosher!” it smiled at Hicks.

The sergeant reached for his Thompson.

It's December 16th, 1944. Circa Europe in the midst of World War II is our setting now. Five months ago the Allies stormed the beaches at Normandy while Hitler slept. The Nazis were sent reeling and retreated further and further toward the Fatherland. But while the Allies advanced, Hitler schemed.

In Circa Europe, Hitler's SS archaeologist-occultists had long ago discovered the Necronomicon, and provided the madman with horrifically full and complete translation. While his forces retreat, Hitler is secretly preparing for a new offensive through the Ardennes. History records this conflict as the Battle of the Bulge, but this is the *Army of Darkness* roleplaying game, so as you probably guessed, Der Fuehrer is getting a wave of creepy new reinforcements.

Hitler has turned to the Necronomicon to bolster his troops' forces and create new and truly diabolical "super soldiers." The Evil Dead are going along with Hitler's plan so far because they recognize how truly evil the madman is. The demonic minions can't help themselves though and occasionally devour Nazis as well as Allies. Hitler is willing to overlook these minor "accidents" as long as the greater "evil" is served.

Hitler's creatures are spawned in Neuschwanstein castle in Bavaria, once the stronghold of Ludwig the Mad. The castle was designed to channel the energy of the Necronomicon long ago (see pp. 166-167), and now serves as a sort of "monster generator" for the Third Reich. Taking out this castle is the primary goal of Promised Ones looking to end the Necronomicon's evil in this era.

But this story doesn't start in some fancy castle. That will come later. We begin with Hitler's troops first push through the snow-covered Ardennes Forest. The Allies are dug in, suffering from the freezing cold and caught completely unawares. From there the tale can go anywhere you want, from a localized affair in the Ardennes to a full-on demon war across Europe (and eventually Asia and the Americas) to an eventual commando raid on Neuschwanstein and the Necronomicon.

THE HEROES

The Cast comes in three flavors (demons like the salty ones best): GIs, civilians, and Promised Ones.

If you want to start at the Battle of the Bulge, GIs are members of the 101st Airborne Division about to get overrun by the Snotzis. Soldiers from other units might be present as well. Some elements of the Third Armored are sitting around getting rest and refit, and numerous artillery and straight-leg regiments were mixed up along the lines as well. Downed pilots might also be present, having just made their way back to friendly lines. In short, your players can take the role of just about anything they want with a quick excuse. If you want to expand the tale outside of the Ardennes, soldiers can be of any nationality and specialty, from U.S. Army Rangers to Polish paratroopers. Heroes could even be German rebels who have taken it upon themselves to stop their mad leader.

Civilians are unfortunate folks who happen to be in the wrong place at the wrong time. These could

Name: Typical Soldier (any nationality)
Motivation: Survive, kill the enemy
Critter Type: Human
Attributes: Str 3, Dex 3, Con 3, Int 2, Per 2, Will 2
Ability Scores: Muscle 12, Combat 13, Brains 10
Life Points: 40 **Drama Points:** 1
Special Abilities: Hard to Kill 2

Maneuvers

Name	Score	Damage	Notes
Dodge	13	—	Defense action
Grenade	12	30/20/8	Slash/stab
Punch	13	9	Bash
Rifle	13	23	Bullet; five rounds



be war correspondents, members of the French Resistance, or even milk truck drivers selling supplies to the U.S. Army.

Promised Ones are paratroopers without chutes. As in *Army of Darkness*, they likely drop from the sky via time portal and land smack between the two sides as the action starts. These characters need to be put into action early so that they can prove their worth—a Viking from the 1100s isn't going to be given a machine gun and pressed into action by the Allies just 'cause he claims to be a hero.

All characters should be Hero Character Types or better. Given the power of the modern weapons involved in this setting, and the extreme willingness of all combatants to use them, things can get very deadly, very fast.

PLACES TO GO AND THINGS TO DO

Unlike the Gilga-Ash setting, we don't provide a scene-by-scene story line for War is Hell. Below are some locations, Adversaries, and objects that can form the basis for a collection of Episodes.

ARDENNES

Watch *Band of Brothers* and you'll know exactly what this setting looks like. It's a thick pine forest covering rolling hills. Artillery rains down constantly, airbursting in the trees and decimating the men huddling in foxholes below. The weather is near freezing throughout most of the campaign, and the constant snow and cloud-cover prevents Allied air superiority from attacking the otherwise vulnerable Nazi formations from overhead.

Into this mess the SS has released a number of horrid abominations conjured forth with Hitler's Necronomicon and certain other evil artifacts his archaeologists have uncovered in the last few years (see pp. 194-195). This is where it all starts, so every horror that comes shambling through the snowy woods can be a brand new surprise for your heroes.

When a horror is defeated, it cackles insanely and says "You ain't seen nothin', you lily whites! Wait until Verdun rises!" Then it dissolves into a pile of bubbling goo.

MALMADY

The Nazis are desperate and cruel, and their undead allies even worst. The demons require sacrifices. On December 17th (the day after the offensive begins), a number of captured U.S. soldiers are gathered in a field near Malmady and "fed" to a group of demons. This is the price they demand for their service to the "cause."

After the deadites are done, the Nazis riddle the corpses with bullets to make it look like a prisoner escape gone bad.

This could be an alternative place to begin your tale. One or more Cast Members could have miraculously escaped the "feeding" and rejoined the Allied lines or found weapons on a ravaged patrol (Allied or Nazi, the demons aren't picky). Otherwise, the group of otherworld heroes could drop in at the very end as the Nazis are packing up. They could find a few survivors and together they could make their way back to Allied lines. On their way back, they run into a deadite. Upon defeat, the creatures gives the same "Verdun" threat as above.

VERDUN

After the offensive starts, some strategists will claim that Hitler is trying to separate the Allies and drive them to the Channel. They are wrong. In Circa Europe, he's trying to get to the battlefields of Verdun. Hitler thinks that raising the thousands of French dead in the huge ossuaries of this World War I battlefield is poetic justice of the most diabolical sort. With a horde of Evil Dead raging through the lightly armed service troops of the Allied rear areas, Hitler's Germany will have time to stop the Russian hordes steamrolling from the East and then push the Anglo-American forces back into the sea once and for all.

Nearly a million corpses lie in and around this World War I battlefield, all eager to rise as horrific skeletons and serve the one who raised them.

OPERATION GREIF

In real history, Operation Greif was a Nazi mission in which a number of commandos dressed in American uniforms and infiltrated Allied lines. Their purpose was to confuse the Americans by

Name: Otto Skorzeny

Motivation: Ensure the operation's success

Critter Type: Human, barely

Attributes: Str 5, Dex 5, Con 5, Int 4, Per 4, Will 5

Ability Scores: Muscle 16, Combat 17, Brains 14

Life Points: 65

Drama Points: 5

Special Abilities: Fast Reaction Time, Hard to Kill 5, Mental Problems (Severe Cruelty), Nerves of Steel, Resistance (Pain) 5, Situational Awareness, Status 4

Maneuvers

Name	Score	Damage	Notes
Dodge	17	—	Defense action
Grenade	16	30/20/8	Slash/stab
Knife	17	15	Slash/stab
Punch	17	15	Bash
Submachine gun	17	17	Bullet; use pistol ranges; can autofire



changing signs and intercepting orders, and of course commit as much sabotage and chaos as possible. This was strictly against the rules of war, and because the commandoes were dressed in Allied uniforms, they could be summarily executed as spies—and were.

In Circa Europe, these infiltrators have another mission as well. The commandos were sent ahead to prepare the battlefield at Verdun. Disguised as American troops and using captured equipment, these elite SS troops are led by Otto Skorzeny. This hulking bruiser is the man Hitler entrusted to rescue Mussolini from his imprisonment at Gran Sasso. Skorzeny leads not only his elite soldiers, but also a cadre of sorcerers who will perform the actual ceremony (use the stats from the Dark Ones in the Gilga-Ash setting, see p. 180).

This encounter can happen early or late in the storyline. The party should show up just as the cultists are finishing their spell. If the do-gooders act quickly, they can stop the madness but it should be a close call. Indeed, having them screw it up is no biggie. The army of the dead arises and there's a whale of a fight to be had. The heroes can be in the middle of it, or they can rush off to warn the Allied command. Their reward: being dispatched to another hot spot.

The numbers here are up to you. Start with one commando and one cultist per Cast Member (plus Otto) and see how it goes. If the heroes are making things too easy, have another squad of commandos rush in.

BERLIN

Hitler remains in Berlin most of the time, though he takes frequent trips to the Eagle's Nest (his hide-out when he thinks the Allies are after him) and Neuschwanstein.

Most of Germany's veterans are either heavily involved in the Battle of the Bulge or trying to slow down the very angry Russkies from the east, so Berlin is actually fairly lightly defended. It's still got plenty of AA, anti-tank guns, and militias, but tanks and stand-up troops are in short supply.

This scene doesn't really impact the plot but it's as good a place as any to rid the world of a monster (in human form).

THE SPEAR OF DESTINY

Being the occult nut that he is, Hitler both before and during the war sent teams of archaeologists around the world in search of various occult artifacts. One such item was the Spear of Destiny (see p. 168). According to legend, possession of the Spear would bring its owner the power to conquer the world, but losing it would bring immediate death. This ancient item was actually made by the followers of Gilgamesh from the great Cedar Forest of Sumeria thousands of years ago. Legend has it that the wood came from the physical tree-form of the Watcher itself!

Imbued with some of the Watcher's essence, it brings power, but always with a taint. Its use by a Roman soldier during the crucifixion just helped imbue it with even more evil.

The Spear has helped Hitler gain mastery over the Necronomicon, and has been brought onto the battlefield of the Ardennes to help lend power to the Nazi offensive. Moving in a heavily guarded convoy, the Spear may cross paths with a group of by-passed Allied characters as they suddenly find themselves cut off and trapped behind enemy lines.

NEUSCHWANSTEIN

You've no doubt seen pictures of the fairy tale Castle of Ludwig the Mad. What you may not know is that in Circa Europe Ludwig was driven mad because of a present brought to him from one of his courtiers. The vassal in turn had bought the book from a traveling merchant who had recently visited the Middle East—in a region that was long ago called Sumeria.

King Ludwig of Bavaria was a vain and foolish man who believed the promises of his courtier that the Necronomicon would bring him everlasting riches and youth. Ludwig spent his kingdom's treasury on building a complex of buildings whose shape could channel the arcane energies to harness the powers that the evil text would release. This castle was to be called Neuschwanstein.

Ludwig used the book and soon the Watcher was drawn to the thick woods around his monumental castle. The thing picked off the occasional worker and terrorized a few outlying villages, but otherwise allowed the power-mad king to finish his project.

In 1886, a few heroic types figured out what was going on. They pulled a few strings and managed to have Ludwig's court declare him insane.

The king knew his time was up, but construction of his castle wasn't quite finished. He hurried the ceremony anyway and read from the Necronomicon while dozens of villagers with pitchforks stormed the fortress' halls. Fortunately for the world, one of the castle's turrets built to channel the eldritch energy into Ludwig was misaligned. The mad king screamed in horror as he realized he had "misfired" and sent that malevolent power straight into the bowels of Neuschwanstein. There it opened a portal through which dozens of deadites and other hor-

rors emerged. They devoured the invading mob in a three-day orgy of blood, saving Ludwig for last. If the King was mad before, the sight of his people being murdered before his throne for three full days added "stark" and "raving" to his title.

In the end, Ludwig was devoured as well. The portal's energy was only temporary and the demons as well as the Necronomicon were sucked back to their own time. It was said that Ludwig accidentally drowned in a nearby lake, but locals still repeat ghastly tales of horror and murder in that picturesque castle.

Fast forward to World War II. Hitler's researchers have discovered a lost manuscript of one of Ludwig's advisors in which the tale of this early Necronomicon is told. The SS moves into the castle and begins to renovate it for their own diabolical purposes. As a perfect focal point for arcane energies (with the completion of the mis-aligned turret), the castle is the new focal point for conjuring demons, and even creating entirely new horrors from the Evil Dead and Germanic symbology. The project is code-named "Ahnernerbe" (Ancestral Heritage).

Captured troops and Nazi soldiers alike (some sacrifices require willing subjects) are fed into the ceremonies here, giving rise to new monsters with which to defeat the Allies. Characters might enter the deceptively Cinderella-like castle either against their will or as part of an Allied strike team sent to demolish this evil bastion.

The Watcher is active in the thick woods surrounding the castle, so Allied spies and the rare Nazi resistance do not survive long. The entire region is protected by a ring of hidden 88mm AA guns (see p. 200), and an entire company of Tiger tanks (see p. 199) are hidden beneath the thick canopy, overlooking all the approaching roads. A coterie of flying demons and possessed villagers in the surrounding countryside complete the defenses.

Neuschwanstein is currently off-limits by the U.S. Army Air Corps as a historical landmark. By the time that changes (when the Allies discover its true purpose), the SS sorcerers will have a sort of "force field" over the demon generator that protects it from aerial bombardment. Bombs will detonate over the palace, but no harm comes to it.

When the time comes, the castle must be destroyed by ordinary men (and maybe women) who battle or sneak their way inside.

V-WEAPONS

With the introduction of his supernatural troops in the Battle of the Bulge, Hitler is also planning on a very special Christmas present for London in retaliation for the almost nightly British air raids turning his beloved Berlin into a moonscape. Several V-2 rockets have been modified to carry hundreds of pounds of animated body parts—mostly hands but also some heads. These will be targeted on London and other major population centers, where they will burst high over the cities and release their horrific cargo to rain down on the unsuspecting Brits in a grisly and demonic shower of gore. The bombardment will be immediately followed by a wave of regular V-2s to set the city on fire and occupy its defenders so that the animated limbs can cause the most chaos. Hands might turn off pumps, screaming heads lure rescuers into burning buildings, and other devilish mayhem.

The characters in this scenario would be a special squad dropped far behind enemy lines in an attempt to stop these attacks before they are released on an unsuspecting British populace. Their job would be to infiltrate the heavily defended base to not only sabotage the rockets before they lift off but to also find and destroy the containers holding the macabre limbs. Perhaps they might even somehow discover that these limbs were severed/animated at Neuschwanstein, and thus gain an important clue as to the castle's true purpose.

Another interesting tack is to send the group to London during the "Bits Blitz" (or be part of the Home Defense). They are ordered to move through

the burning city to wipe out these devilish abominations. All the while new V-2s are exploding overhead, Screaming Mimis sweep through the skies, the city is burning, and air raid sirens blare.

NAZI NUKES

No, the Nazis in Circa Europe don't have atomic weapons, but they do have something even better. Deep in a fjord in Norway, hidden away from attacking Allied bombers and forgotten for ages, lies a very special cave. Allied intelligence has intercepted some very interesting messages from a Nazi base near Strondheim. Those intelligence officers in the know equate certain code phrases about a super-weapon as analogous to the Manhattan project. One phrase even translated loosely as "heavy water," an essential element for the production of an atomic bomb.

What the Allies don't realize is that the Nazis have found a permanent nexus between worlds. The portal was once worshipped in Norse mythology as the base of legendary Yggdrasil, the world tree. In reality, it is here that ages ago the Watcher was bound in a mighty ceremony by a cabal of Norse Wisemen. That didn't last long—a crazed warlord chopped down the tree and freed the spirit, but it was good while it lasted.

The SS has learned all this, and know how to bind the Watcher. They believe this is how they're blackmailing it into doing their bidding. The Watcher is somewhat afraid of the ritual, but is also perfectly content to help the Nazis as long as they continue ridding the world of hated humans.

Name: SS Commando
Motivation: Complete the mission
Critter Type: Human
Attributes: Str 4, Dex 4, Con 4, Int 2, Per 2, Will 2
Ability Scores: Muscle 14, Combat 15, Brains 10
Life Points: 51 **Drama Points:** 1
Special Abilities: Hard to Kill 3

Maneuvers

Name	Score	Damage	Notes
Dodge	15	—	Defense action
Grenade	14	30/20/8	Slash/stab
Knife	15	14	Slash/stab
Punch	15	12	Bash
Submachine gun	15	16	Bullet; use pistol ranges; can autofire



Name: Bjorn the Blue
Motivation: Serve the Watcher
Critter Type: Undead
Attributes: Str 8, Dex 7, Con 10, Int 2, Per 2, Will 2
Ability Scores: Muscle 22, Combat 19, Brains 10
Life Points: 107 **Drama Points:** 3
Special Abilities: Armor Value 8 (icy skin),
 Attractiveness -1, Bjorn's Sword, Increased Life Points,
 Nerves of Steel

Name	Maneuvers		
	Score	Damage	Notes
Dodge	19	—	Defense action
Sword	19	42	Slash/stab; two-handed



The texts the SS sorcerers have deciphered to perform the binding ritual are in ancient Aramaic, and refer to the ceremony as the “Feast of Earth Blood.” Run through an Enigma decoding machine in Betchley Park and loosely translated, it can also mean “heavy water” in German. The Allied raiders sent to stop this program are in for one hell of a surprise.

The characters are either members of the Norwegian resistance or Allied commandoes parachuted in or dropped offshore by submarine. The “atomic program” is deep in a fjord, in an installation built into the steep side of the gorge. The characters have to climb up or down to the entrance a la *The Guns of Navarone* and deal with the guards inside. An important installation like this has a battalion of crack SS Mountain troops, as well as a special unit of inner perimeter guards for emergencies (use SS Commando stats, see p. 194).

The portal is not yet operational, but SS sorcerers are working on creating a “monster generator” like the one at Neuschwanstein. The ancient tree lies at the center of this project—no billion-dollar castle is needed as long as Yggdrasil is intact.

A spear made from Yggdrasil can kill the Watcher, and is treated just like the Spear of Destiny (see p. 168). It carries the same taint as well.

Yggdrasil has one final guardian even the SS officers have yet to discover. The corpse of the warlord who freed the Watcher from the tree lies frozen in the ice nearby. If the Watcher so chooses, he can animate this undead Viking and use him to defend itself. The Watcher is saving this ace-in-the-icehole for emergencies, but a band of goody-two-shoes heroes taking the base certainly qualifies.

BJORN'S SWORD

Anyone hit by the ice-blue viking's great sword must make a Willpower (doubled) roll or become instantly frozen in ice. This isn't dangerous unless the character is hit a second time. All damage sustained by an iced-hero is doubled as bit and pieces of their flesh shatter and fall away.

Bjorn's Sword only works for him. When the final blow is struck against the Viking, he shatters into thousands of tinkling pieces.

HITLER'S HORDES

DEATH'S HEAD

The symbol of the SS (shutzstaffel or “protection squad”) was the Death's Head. Nazis love leather pants and symbology, so Hitler dreamed up these flying monstrosities.

Death's Heads are demon heads with short, leathery bat wings sewn on. This lets them fly, but it's the mini-flamethrowers attached to the back of their heads that make them really dangerous. The nozzle is simply shoved through the flesh at the base of the skull so that it comes out just under their tongues (it's amazing what you can do with dead flesh).

Name: Death's Head
Motivation: Fly, burn
Critter Type: Demon
Attributes: Str 3, Dex 5, Con 5, Int 3, Per 3, Will 4
Ability Scores: Muscle 12, Combat 16, Brains 12
Life Points: 62 **Drama Points:** 2
Special Abilities: Armor Value 2, Attractiveness -6, Fast Reaction Time, Flight, Increased Life Points, Regeneration, Weakness to daylight

Maneuvers			
Name	Score	Damage	Notes
Bite	16	11	Slash/stab
Dodge	16	—	Defense action
Flamethrower	16	3/3	Fire; 3-yard range



SCREAMING MIMIS

Historically, Screaming Mimis were “nebelwurfers,” Nazi rockets that were incredibly devastating but not particularly accurate. Hitler knew a good name when he heard it though, so he took a flying demon, added a rocket harness, and turned them loose on the Allies.

The demon is treated normally (see p. 162) except for its mini-rockets, which it can release anytime it wants by yanking a pull cord with its feet. It has eight mini-rockets (see p. 101 except the damage is 30 at point of impact, 20 within two yards, and eight up to five yards away), but they must be released two at a time (one from each wing per attack).

UBER-DEADITES

Nazis are sad really. Tell them they can become supermen, gain eternal life, and get an instant promotion and they line up like kids at an ice cream truck. They don't even ask if maybe they have to die and get inhabited by a demon for all these perks.

Uber-deadites are demons with more strength and raw physical prowess than most. This was accomplished by offering them *willing* hosts and throwing in a few other occultish odds and ends from Der Fuehrer's personal collection.

Name: Uber-deadite
Motivation: Eat der Allies
Critter Type: Demon
Attributes: Str 8, Dex 5, Con 8, Int 3, Per 3, Will 4
Ability Scores: Muscle 22, Combat 17, Brains 12
Life Points: 94 **Drama Points:** 2
Special Abilities: Armor Value 4, Attractiveness -8, Fast Reaction Time, Horrify, Increased Life Points, Regeneration, Weakness to daylight

Maneuvers			
Name	Score	Damage	Notes
Bite	17	23	Must Grapple first
Claw	17	17	Slash/stab
Dodge	16	—	Defense action
Grapple	19	—	Resisted by Dodge
Machine gun	17	29	Bullet; autofire



Name: Wehrwolf
Motivation: Eat der Allies
Critter Type: Demon
Attributes: Str 6, Dex 5, Con 4, Int 3, Per 3, Will 3
Ability Scores: Muscle 18, Combat 16, Brains 12
Life Points: 50 **Drama Points:** 1
Special Abilities: Acute Senses (Smell/Taste), Bite may transfer lycanthropy, Attack with both bite and claw in one Turn without penalty

Maneuvers			
Name	Score	Damage	Notes
Bite	16	16	Slash/stab
Claw	16	16	Slash/stab
Dodge	18	—	Defense action



WEHRWOLVES

Hitler discovered a real live werewolf a few years back and infected a small group of volunteers with lycanthropy. Unfortunately, they pretty much just grew hair, howled at the moon, and humped their keeper's leg a lot. The demons found a way to give them Puppy Power however, and now the "wehrwolves" are truly the most savage creatures in the Nazi occult arsenal. They're wild, insatiable, and ravenously hungry!

Wehrwolves retain their cunning and know enough not to bite anyone in a gray uniform (usually), but are none too smart. They can follow simple commands and can be directed towards a specific target, but that's about the extent of it. Bite victims who fail a Willpower (doubled) roll are infected.

GEAR

What's a war without some gear to fight it with? Regular GI gear is a rifle and some grenades (see p. 190). But what about the serious stuff? The kind of juice that can take out a Watcher and more. That takes big guns and vehicles and we have them here—at least the most common German and American vehicles along the front. You can use these to wing most any other piece of equipment you need as well.

Note that some of these vehicles have three Armor Values separated by a slash. That tells you the rig's front, side, and rear armor. In World War II, the Americans are heavily out-tanked by the Germans, so it's very important to somehow flank their big tanks and kill them with rear shots.

A variety of heavy weapons are also presented. These cannot be used unless carried by the vehicles. They are mucho deadly (some are tank guns after all). Don't mess with these puppies unless you come heavily armored or with many, many Drama Points.

Shooting out of a vehicle, particularly when it is on the move, is very tough. A shooter suffers a -3 penalty if the vehicle is moving, -5 if it is going over 30 mph. These penalties are also applied if the target is moving. Vehicles cannot dodge attacks against them (they defend with a roll of zero).

ALLIED VEHICLES

JEEP

This four-wheel drive vehicle is the backbone of the American Army. It carries out recon, AA, and command mission and ferries troops, messages, supplies, casualties, and even light weapons such as machine guns. It's incredibly durable, agile, and fast to boot.

Weight: 2 tons	Speed: 65/55
Armor Value: 5	Damage Capacity: 56
Toughness: 4	Handling: 3
Weapons: Varies	

M3 HALFTRACK

This halftrack features wheels up front and tracks in the rear for quick movement over both paved surfaces and off-road. The side armor protects troops from most small arms, and the durable design means it can take some punishment from anything but main guns.

M3s can also be fitted with various types of weapons, from flamethrowers to quad-machine guns (can fire all four in one action without penalty) designed to take down ground attack planes.

Weight: 10 tons	Speed: 42/35
Armor Value: 30	Damage Capacity: 200
Toughness: 4	Handling: 2
Weapons: Varies	

SHERMAN

If the jeep is the Allies workhorse, the Sherman is its warhorse. The basic chassis is stacked with a number of variations, including tank killer guns, flamethrowers, and mobile artillery. The stats here are for the most typical variety with a 75mm gun in the turret. Later versions sport a much-improved 76mm gun that has some chance of killing German armor. Shermans feature a gyro-stabilizer that helps them fire on the move (max movement penalty -2).

Weight: 33 tons	Speed: 24/18
Armor Value: 100/50/50	Damage Capacity: 412
Toughness: 5	Handling: 3
Weapons: 75mm cannon (turret), machine gun (driver and top)	

STUART

There isn't really a German armored vehicle this light tank can kill without a little luck and a rear shot, but it's fast, maneuverable, and deadly against infantry and light vehicles such as halftracks. It also carries an amazing amount of ammunition, making it excellent for lightning raids and reconnaissance. The British called them "Ronsons" after a famous lighter whose slogan was "lights every time" because they were notorious for "brewing up" (burning) after suffering a direct hit.

Weight: 17 tons	Speed: 36/28
Armor Value: 50/30/30	Damage Capacity: 312
Toughness: 4	Handling: 4
Weapons: 37mm cannon (turret), machine gun (top)	

WOLVERINE

The Allies never could stand up to German armor in a head-on battle, but they sure tried. The M10 Wolverine packs a serious punch and has a good chance at killing most any Nazi tank except the super-heavy Tigers. The problem is that they're open-topped, so artillery or even indirect high explosives are very likely to kill or injure the crew. Ignore armor for the crew when the M10 suffers a direct hit from HE or artillery.

Weight: 33 tons	Speed: 30/25
Armor Value: 90/40/40	Damage Capacity: 412
Toughness: 4	Handling: 2
Weapons: 76mm cannon (turret), machine gun (top)	

GERMAN VEHICLES

HALFTRACK

The German Sdkfz series are versatile half-tracks that can serve both as troop carriers and weapons platforms. Some even carried flamethrowers. Their sides are proof against most small arms, but can easily be killed by any sort of heavy gun.

Weight: 6 tons	Speed: 37/30
Armor Value: 10/8/8	Damage Capacity: 136
Toughness: 4	Handling: 3
Weapons: Varies	

PUMA

The German's primary recon vehicle was the Puma. It's light and fast with decent armor and its 50mm gun packs a serious punch. As long as it stays away from Allied armor such as Shermans, it's a major threat for such a light vehicle.

Weight: 13 tons	Speed: 50/40
Armor Value: 30/8/8	Damage Capacity: 248
Toughness: 4	Handling: 3
Weapons: 50mm cannon (turret), machine gun (top)	

HETZER

The Hetzer is a German tank destroyer with super-sloped armor (factored into front AV rating) and a 75mm gun that can kill most any Allied armored vehicle. It's fairly fast and agile for its size with a very low silhouette. It even has a machine gun on the roof that can be fired by an internal remote (though the attacker suffers a -2 penalty in doing so, on top of any other penalties).

Weight: 18 tons	Speed: 26/20
Armor Value: 120/20/8	Damage Capacity: 328
Toughness: 4	Handling: 2
Weapons: 75mm cannon (upper hull), machine gun (top)	

PANZER IV

Panzer IVs are the most typical tank encountered after the Allied invasion of Normandy. There are several models (listed as IVJ, IVH, etc), but this one is a good amalgam of all of them.

Weight: 28 tons	Speed: 24/20
Armor Value: 100/50/50	Damage Capacity: 392
Toughness: 4	Handling: 2
Weapons: 75mm cannon (turret), machine gun (front and top)	

TIGER TANK

These super-heavy German tanks first saw action in 1943. Their thick armor can ignore most of the Allies' puny guns, and even have a good chance of shrugging off rounds from tank killers like the Wolverine. Only a rear or flank shot on these beasts has any hope of penetrating. As if that's not bad enough, its 88mm gun can shred anything the Allies roll into Europe.

Weight: 77 tons	Speed: 22/18
Armor Value: 200/80/80	Damage Capacity: 588
Toughness: 4	Handling: 2
Weapons: 88mm cannon (turret), machine gun (front and top)	

HEAVY WEAPONS

All heavy weapons are fired using Dexterity and Gun Fu - 4. Movement penalties apply (see p. 197)

Machine Gun: This gun is found on many vehicles and is used against soldiers (and demon and dead types) rather than other vehicles. Machine guns positioned in the front of a vehicle can fire in a relatively small arc directly forward. Machine guns on top of the vehicle are mounted so that they can swing around in a circle. The downside is that the firer has to expose himself to enemy fire to use it. A machine gun does 30 points of Bullet damage. It functions out to double the rifle ranges and can autofire.

37mm Cannon: The high explosive (HE) rounds of this gun cause 80 points of damage at the point of impact, 40 within five yards, and 10 within 10 yards.

50mm Cannon: HE rounds of this gun cause 150 points of damage at the point of impact, 50 within five yards, and 20 within 10 yards.

75mm Cannon: Armor piercing (AP) rounds from this gun do 100 points of damage and any AV rating at the point of impact is divided by two. HE rounds are the same as the 50mm cannon.

76mm Cannon: AP rounds do 120 points of damage; AV rating is halved. HE rounds are the same as the 50mm cannon.

88mm Cannon: AP rounds do 150 points of damage; AV rating is halved. HE rounds cause 180 points of damage at the point of impact, 60 within five yards, and 25 within 10 yards.

THE FUTURE DEAD

"Let me tell you about a man named Ash."

Teller smiled slightly as he saw he had the children's attention. It was dark now, near bedtime, and he would tell them a story as he did every night. Not that they could tell day from night—the smog blotted the sun and they were forced to hide in an abandoned Underground station.

Teller poked the fire with his stick and stretched his legs upon the tiled flooring.

"Long ago there was a man who knew how to fight the demons. He was a warrior. He was the Promised One. Legend has it the Promised One lost his hand fighting the demons and replaced it with a chain saw. One of those sturdy American jobbers made to saw through the largest oaks. He could snicker-snack his way through an Ent without so much as slowing down. The Promised One can also travel through time, and one day he's going to walk right into our camp here and help us defeat the dark ones."

Teller. That was his name now. He had been a Major in the U.S. Army stationed in England when the deadites invaded, but that was all over now. Now he told stories. And he was good at it. It was important, he knew, because the people had all but lost hope. His stories were sometimes all that kept them going.

"Tell us how bwave Ash was!" said a little girl barely out of diapers.

Teller smiled again. "The Promised One never ran from the deadites. He stood his ground even when he was surrounded, cutting his way through them with his magical chainsaw until. . ."

"AAAAAGGGGHHHHH! Help! Somebody help me!"

A chunk of the ceiling above collapsed, spilling forth a figure who landed smack in the middle of the campfire, putting it out. A demon jumped through seconds after, screaming "I'll swallow your soul, I'll swallow your soul!"

"Aaaah! Get it off me! Help!" the figure screamed.

Teller whipped up his boomstick as the children dove for cover. Both barrels finished the deadite and spattered the Underground's walls with its fatty flesh.

"Thanks, friend," said a voice in the darkness. "That thing scared the crap outta me. I'm gonna have to change my pants."

"No problem," Teller said. He picked up his torch and shone it on the stranger.

His right hand was missing—replaced by a chainsaw. He extended his left in a handshake, "Name's Ash."

Humanity is dead. Demons hunt the few survivors like stray cattle, feasting on their bones and bathing in their blood. The Watcher walks the land in the flesh, no longer confined to the dark woods which spawned him. The monstrosity watches over its kingdom from a massive throne of skulls and bones, reveling in the chaos and destruction it has caused upon the earth.

This is the future. The future of the dead.

IT'S BAD, REALLY BAD

ASH: OH! OH, GOD! NO! NO! I'VE SLEPT TOO LONG!

At the end of the Director's Cut of *Army of Darkness*, Ash sleeps through the next several hundred years in an attempt to get back to his own time. The knucklehead oversleeps, however, and wakes up to see London in shambles. He has failed to stop the Evil Dead, and now they rule the earth.

The Future Dead explores this alternate ending. Humanity lost the first war with the demons, but there's still a chance they can fight back and retake the earth. The few resistors need a champion though—a Promised One like Ash who can fight the Evil Dead while the final fate of the entire world hangs in the balance.

THE HEROES

The heroes in this future are a mix of time-travelers and “natives.” The time-travelers may have “overslept” from Circa England (or another Circa setting) as Ash does in the alternate ending, or they may fall out of the sky from a vortex as Ash did at the beginning of *Army of Darkness*.

Whatever the case, humanity is on its last legs and is going to need one hell of a wheelchair.

RECENT HISTORY

Survivors say the demons first appeared somewhere in America. Somewhere in an obscure “Yankee” state called Michigan. The book was read aloud over a radio station and gave rise to thousands of deadites. Within days, they'd taken over the town. Another month and they'd taken the state. The army called in a nuclear strike, but it was too late.

Hundreds slipped out and dozens more became irradiated mutant versions of their former selves.

The horde moved north into Canada and south through the United States. South America fell by the end of the year. England armed her island and refused all unsearched planes and ships. That saved her for a while. The French, however—it's always the French—gave in to student protests about “demon rights” and allowed the “new visitors” into their borders. The waiters were rude even as their souls were being swallowed. Europe fell in two months, North Korea and Russia started hurling nukes anywhere CNN said there were demons (agents at FOX News claimed CNN bureau locations were infested as well, quickly destroying the competition). China got into the act and that's when most folks stopped learning what was going on. The whole world was one big mushroom cloud. What wasn't so irradiated as to be inhabitable was infested with deadites, skeletons, mutants, and other minions of hell.

In the end, only staunch England remained. She'd been hit with a few nukes from those rascally Chinese just for kicks, but nearly 20 million survivors had yet to be voted off the island. The surviving demons finally found out about the island smorgasbord and attacked in droves. They were shot from the sky by Bofors 40mm guns, blown out of the water by the Royal Navy, and even stopped in the chunnel by SAS Commandos.

Then the Watcher became aware. The Promised One was nowhere to be seen, billions of “monkeys” were dead, and millions of demons walked the earth. It was time for the Watcher to materialize as well—this time for good.

The thing grew from the very woods where it had last encountered the Promised One called Ash. Massive limbs formed its arms, young oaks its legs, and a cedar trunk served as its torso. Clutching vines held the whole monstrous mess together. The Watcher hunted the land accompanied by its screaming, mutated demons, squashing tanks, swatting helicopters and Harriers from the sky, and devouring dozens of humans at a time.

By the time our tale opens, only a few thousand of the toughest humans remain. They hide in the sewers or the subway or the ruins of London. They pray for a savior, someone who will fall from the sky and deliver them from the terror.

They're about to get their wish.

PLACES TO GO

The action takes place in and around London. The city is in ruins but a small group of survivors have found places to hide. They know where the Watcher resides, and one among them even believes she knows how to kill it. But everyone who has tried has failed.

LONDON FOG

Throughout the ruins fires burn out of control, either openly from demonic antics or smoldering from collapsed buildings and leaking gas lines. The result of all this is a vast cloud of smoke and haze that hangs over the city. As thick as the famous London fogs, this miasma is both a blessing and a curse to the human resistance fighters eking out a living in the former capital. The fog hides them from the ever-vigilant eyes of the Watcher's minions and allows some movement on the surface even during daylight hours. Unfortunately, it also conceals the demons as well, and deadite eyes have an easier time seeing through the haze than their human prey. Use this as a convenient way to drop a demon or two on the party without them seeing them coming, or if you're feeling nice let the characters use it as a way to escape the attentions of the evil minions.

BUCKINGHAM PALACE

In the ruins of the most famous residence in the world, the Watcher has placed its seat of power. It has commanded its minions to bring forth the skulls of each primate on the planet, and each hour of the day flying demons from around the world blot out the sun as they struggle to complete this monumental task. The charred husk of the palace is now filled to overflowing with the skulls of the Watcher's victims, and its wooden form sits atop this macabre mound staring out over the city that hides the last remnants of humanity.

BIG BEN

This huge clock tower rises above the ruins of Parliament, and is one of the few trademark sites of London to still be standing fairly intact. Winged

deadites use it as a roost. Their gargoyle-like forms crowd and jostle each other for perch space like a flock of demonic pigeons as they peer down into the city looking for fresh meat.

TOWER OF LONDON

Located on the north bank of the River Thames, this building has been a castle, a palace, a prison, an armoury (as our British friends call it) and even a menagerie. Today the flayed bodies of captured members of the London resistance are displayed from its towers as a warning to the remaining humans that their days are numbered. Those who would be intimidated by such tactics are long since dead, however, and these terrible displays only harden the resolve of the humans who remain among the ruins. Rumors among the humans tell of a legendary weapon in the tower that can be used to defeat the deadites, but unfortunately these are only false rumors spread by humans in the service of the undead to lure survivors to their doom. There are such weapons (see pp. 168-203), but not in this forlorn place.

THE UNDERGROUND

With 255 miles of track and dozens of abandoned stations even before the demons arrived, the London Underground was the perfect hiding place for the remaining humans to seek refuge. Scattered in bands ranging from a dozen to a hundred members, the survivors scavenge on the surface for food and other necessities, but spend most of their time living a troglodyte existence. Some groups whose members are mostly ex-military types have gained access to hidden weapon and food caches left over from the Cold War era, and are more orientated towards fighting the minions of the Watcher than just surviving. Unfortunately, humanity being what it is, some groups have turned to preying on others to get by, furthering weakening the human's efforts to reclaim their world.

WESTMINSTER ABBEY

The famous church, where British monarchs were crowned and where many are buried, now sits in ruins. While the ceremonies performed here spared the royalty the indignities of being raised to join the

Name: Heathrow Horror
Motivation: Eat, Eat, Eat
Critter Type: Demon
Attributes: Str 18, Dex 7, Con 10, Int 2, Per 2, Will 2
Ability Scores: Muscle 42, Combat 18, Brains 10
Life Points: 152 **Drama Points:** 2
Special Abilities: Attractiveness -8, Flight, Increased Life Points, Morph (can fit into any space at least 10 foot by 10 foot), Regeneration, Weakness to daylight

Maneuvers

Name	Score	Damage	Notes
Dodge	18	—	Defense action
Smash	18	54	Bash



deadite hordes, the graves, altars, and chapels have been defaced, and even the Tomb of the Unknown Warrior at the entrance has been fractured. Under the debris, however, lies one of the salvations of humankind. Hidden within the Tomb of the Unknown Warrior is the legendary sword Excalibur, one of the few artifacts capable of dispelling the Watcher and its minions.

Excalibur doubles the Strength of anyone who wields it when fighting demons, undead, or other minions of the Watcher. It can hurt and kill any of them, regardless of their resistances or immunities. The sword's power to double Strength works only within the borders of the United Kingdom. It can slay the Evil Dead regardless of its location, however.

HEATHROW AIRPORT

The massive Heathrow airport suffered a direct hit by a Chinese nuke. After the Brits thanked the United States for giving the Chinese guidance technology in 1997 with a flip of their famous "V," they promptly rolled over and died. The real horror of the place was that the thousands of people killed in this explosion somehow "coalesced" into a massive jumble of glowing, squirming corpses. The Heathrow Horror, as it has come to be called, is something of a blob, and something of a massive collection of sentient body parts.

It can assemble itself into most any shape it needs, but seems to prefer four particular forms: a "carpet" of bits (which it often uses to surprise the unwary); a 40-foot high, three-legged walker; a massive "bird"-like shape holding broken-off Jumbo 747

wings; and a worm-like shape that it uses to ooze through the metro.

The Heathrow Horror seems to be "on call" by the Watcher. It uses the creature to destroy particularly large assemblies of rebels whenever they try to gather and stage an attack.

IMPERIAL WAR MUSEUM

Formerly the Bethlehem Royal Hospital for the Insane, or Bedlam, this rambling museum was ransacked during and after the deadite invasion for weapons of any sort. To the casual visitor it seems a forlorn place, with glass from the shattered exhibits covering the floor and mannequins wearing old uniforms lying limbs akimbo in piles of debris. Not all is as it seems, however. In the basement lies a hidden entrance to the former catacombs in which the more intractable patients of Bedlam were consigned.

The curators of the Imperial War Museum used these lower levels as storage for items deemed too worthless or uninteresting to display to the public. Filed away in a crate deep in a storage vault is a curious artifact recovered from Patton's 7th Army after the end of World War II. This spear, labeled the Spear of Longinus, is actually the Spear of Destiny (see p. 168). This is one of the weapons that can dispel the Watcher, but finding it is a major task. The easiest way is to get power to one of the intact computers in the curator's offices and search for its filing number, then track it down in the subterranean warehouses. And of course, using the Spear has its own drawbacks. Its evil radiates like a beacon these days, drawing demons to it like moths to a flame.

Name: Reynard Nouville
Motivation: Serve the Watcher
Critter Type: Human
Attributes: Str 3, Dex 3, Con 3, Int 5, Per 4, Will 4
Ability Scores: Muscle 12, Combat 14, Brains 14
Life Points: 34 **Drama Points:** 1
Special Abilities: Acute Hearing, Resistance (Pain)

Maneuvers			
Name	Score	Damage	Notes
Dodge	14	—	Defense action
Pistol	14	15	Bullet
Punch	14	9	Bash



PEOPLE TO SEE

The people who have managed to survive this long under the very nose of the Watcher are veterans of urban combat. The slow, faint-hearted, and just plain unlucky have long since been added to the growing pile of skulls that make up the Watcher's throne, while their skins flutter from the Tower of London. The survivors live from day to day, masters of stealth and camouflage. When they do venture out of their warrens, it is for essentials—canned food, bottled water, weapons, medicine. Champions who drop from the sky may think they're the only humans in the entire city, until the survivors decide they're not spies sent from the Watcher—and contact them, on their own terms, of course.

REYNARD NOUVILLE

Claiming to be a Major in the 1er Regiment Parachutiste d'Infanterie de Marine (1st Marine Parachute Infantry Regiment), this man moves from survivor settlement to survivor settlement in London, never staying long in one place. A refugee from France, and one of the last to make it across before the Chunnel was blown, he is welcomed for his knowledge of tactics and the news he brings, and has come to be a trusted courier among the Resistance. Reynard has narrowly escaped capture a number of times, although his companions have not been so fortunate. Unfortunately for the Resistance, this man is a spy for the deadites, working to spread disinformation among the humans, and pinpointing the locations of particularly trouble-

Name: Simon Lucas
Motivation: Free humanity from the evil
Critter Type: Human
Attributes: Str 4, Dex 5, Con 4, Int 2, Per 2, Will 4
Ability Scores: Muscle 14, Combat 20, Brains 13
Life Points: 54 **Drama Points:** 3
Special Abilities: Attractiveness -3, Body Armor (Armor Value 12), Hard to Kill 4

Maneuvers			
Name	Score	Damage	Notes
Assault Rifle	20	21	Bullet; can fire bursts, use rifle ranges
Dodge	20	—	Defense action
Punch	20	13	Bash



Name: Kirsty Crabb
Motivation: Live to party another day
Critter Type: Human
Attributes: Str 1, Dex 4, Con 4, Int 4, Per 3, Will 6
Ability Scores: Muscle 8, Combat 14, Brains 16
Life Points: 36 **Drama Points:** 2
Special Abilities: Attractiveness +3, Hard to Kill 2

Maneuvers

Name	Score	Damage	Notes
Baseball bat	14	11	Bash; two-handed
Dodge	14	—	Defense action
Punch	14	2	Bash



some nests of humans. He has been tasked with finding a particularly loud, obnoxious American. Being French, however, Nouville finds all Americans loud and obnoxious, and has turned in all he has found, without finding a particular one named Ash.

who had somehow escaped the carnage of that last day. Since then, Simon has dedicated himself to overthrowing the Watcher's rule and freeing humanity. The scars that a flying demon left on his face are a constant reminder of his hatred of the Watcher and its minions.

SIMON LUCAS

This grizzled veteran served in many of the brushfire wars the British conducted in Africa in the mid-2000s. Lucas survived the nukes and led the defenders at Buckingham palace in a desperate bid to preserve the royal family. His last memories are of King William dying at the hands of a deadite as his troops tried to hustle him into an armored personnel carrier. When next he woke he was in the Underground, being nursed back to health by a beautiful young civil servant

KIRSTY CRABB

Before the coming of the deadites, red-haired Kirsty Crabb was a junior researcher at the Imperial War Museum, cataloging the items in the collection from before the days of computerized files. Despite the mind-numbing work in the musty basement levels, the job enabled her to make enough money to enjoy the club scene while doing as little work as possible during daylight hours. The coming of the deadites shattered her party-centric world, and it was during the

Name: Dave Blewer
Motivation: Fix it, fix it good
Critter Type: Human
Attributes: Str 1, Dex 2, Con 3, Int 6, Per 3, Will 5
Ability Scores: Muscle 8, Combat 11, Brains 18
Life Points: 26 **Drama Points:** 2
Special Abilities: Mr. Fix It 8, Tool Man

Maneuvers

Name	Score	Damage	Notes
Baseball Bat	11	10	Bash; two-handed
Dodge	11	—	Defense action
Punch	11	2	Bash
Submachine Gun	11	14	Bullet



Name: Teller
Motivation: Give hope to the masses
Critter Type: Human
Attributes: Str 3, Dex 4, Con 4, Int 2, Per 2, Will 4
Ability Scores: Muscle 12, Combat 18, Brains 13
Life Points: 50 **Drama Points:** 3
Special Abilities: Body Armor (Armor Value 12),
 Hard to Kill 4

Maneuvers			
Name	Score	Damage	Notes
Assault Rifle	18	21	Bullet
Dodge	18	—	Defense action
Punch	18	11	Bash



fall of Buckingham Palace that she met Major Lucas. It was Kirsty who hauled the wounded man away from the fighting and nursed him back to health. Her gamble paid off, and he has risen to become a prominent leader of the human resistance. The two are now the backbone of the Resistance in London.

Dave is smart, witty, and well loved by all the rebels. He and Simon plan the resistance's attacks while Kirsty Crabb keeps up the survivors' morale.

TELLER

A former U.S. Army Major, Teller was stuck in the UK when the nukes started bouncing around. He's still more than competent in combat, but his true calling is storytelling.

LONDON SURVIVOR

The people who fled before the deadite onslaught more than a month ago are the luckiest, toughest, and hardest of the citizenry of this great metropolis.

Name: Typical London Survivor
Motivation: Survive
Critter Type: Human
Attributes: Str 2, Dex 3, Con 3, Int 2, Per 2, Will 3
Ability Scores: Muscle 10, Combat 13, Brains 11
Life Points: 32 **Drama Points:** 0-3
Special Abilities: Hard to Kill 1

Maneuvers			
Name	Score	Damage	Notes
Big Knife	13	9	Slash/stab
Club	13	9	Bash
Dodge	13	—	Defense action
Punch	13	6	Bash



Name: Watcher in the Woods
Motivation: Create evil minions, destroy all humans
Critter Type: Demon
Attributes: Str 18, Dex 6, Con 16, Int 6, Per 6, Will 8
Ability Scores: Muscle 42, Combat 20, Brains 17
Life Points: 175 **Drama Points:** 5
Special Abilities: Armor Value 30, Attractiveness -14, Increased Life Points, Torment, Regeneration, Weakness to daylight

Maneuvers			
Name	Score	Damage	Notes
Bite	20	59	Slash/stab; must Grapple first
Claw	20	41	Slash/stab; two per action at no penalty
Grapple	22	—	Resisted by Dodge
Stomp	20	41	Bash; resisted by Dodge
Toss	38	18	Bash; must Grapple first



A hodgepodge of the social classes, they all have one thing in common—to survive by any means necessary. Most spend the majority of their time scrounging for food, water, fuel, or other necessities. Survivors usually comb the ruins during the daylight hours, when the deadites seem to be less active. Thankfully, the almost constant fog helps screen their movements and deadens the sound they make as they dig through the rubble. The lack of firearms in 21st Century London has seriously hampered their ability to fight back, though. Most of the weapons carried by the police or soldiers are still used by their owners, who happen to be on the side of the Watcher these days as new recruits in the *Army of Darkness*.

THINGS TO KILL

The evil future needs evil critters to fight or avoid. Here's a number of adversaries that should keep the Cast Members on their toes.

THE WATCHER MADE FLESH

The Watcher is now a massive tree adorned with human skulls and twisting, intertwined vines. It stands well over 20 feet tall and has teeth the size of broadswords. This is bad. Seriously bad.

IRRADIATED DEADITE

There are plenty of regular demons flopping, flying, and flouncing about London, but there's also a new breed as well. These nasty creatures have two special abilities. They can weaken living creatures with their radiation field, and can spew forth a stream of putrescent, glowing nuclear vomit to incinerate the unfortunate mortals who attempt to stop them.

The radiation field bombards foes within five yards. All mortals suffer a -1 to all physical actions and must make a Constitution (doubled) roll each Turn they're within the demon's area of effect. Those who fail lose 10 Life Points immediately (see p. 208 for a Irradiated Deadite example).

SKELETONS

The *Army of Darkness* skeletons are a little tougher than usual in this setting to reflect its grim nature (see p. 209). Most have found British Army assault rifles but a few still use archaic weapons such as crossbows and swords.

Name: Irradiated Deadite
Motivation: Swallow souls in a Hellish green glow
Critter Type: Deadite
Attributes: Str 6, Dex 5, Con 5, Int 3, Per 3, Will 4
Ability Scores: Muscle 18, Combat 16, Brains 12
Life Points: 70 **Drama Points:** 2
Special Abilities: Armor Value 4, Attractiveness -6, Fast Reaction Time, Flight (some), Horrify, Increased Life Points, Radiation Field, Regeneration, Weakness to daylight

Maneuvers			
Name	Score	Damage	Notes
Bite	16	22	Must Grapple first
Claw	16	16	Slash/stab
Grapple	18	—	Resisted by Dodge
Spew Vomit	15	30	Acid burns; ignores all armor



EPISODE IDEAS

Here are several suggestions for storylines to run with while in the merry ol' ravaged city of fog.

WELCOME TO ENGLAND

The opening Episode should focus on the heroes' arrival in the U.K. Whether they fall from the sky, are stiff-upper lip types making their way toward London, or continentals swimming through the flooded Chunnel, they eventually wind up downtown and encounter some of the strange creatures that dwell there.

One easy way to set up their alliance with Simon Lucas' rebels is to let the party explore the ruins and run into a few nasty threats. Eventually, the commotion draws the attention of the flying demons atop Big Ben and they descend with a vengeance. The heroes run for cover, but wherever they hole up is a dead-end (perhaps it's back doors and windows are collapsed). They hear something massive stomping toward them as a patrol of deadites and skeletons arrive. Just as the stomping becomes a near quake, Simon's rebels show up in beaten vehicles and plow through the bonebags. They rescue the party and drive them away before "it" comes (the Watcher).

TANKS A LOT

Rebels are always suspicious, and no doubt force any newcomers to jump through a few hoops to win them over. Simon decides to send the new "recruits" (and any other "native" Cast Members present) on a raid to both test them and gain some important equipment. A few days ago his scouts reported two intact Challenger 2 tanks in the Whitechapel District. Simon wants the team to go there and see if the tanks still function. They can't be brought back—the demons would follow—but if Simon knows they're operable he can use them in his eventual assault on Buckingham Palace. If not, he wants the team to find out what might make them function again so that they can gather those parts during their foraging.

The group has to run the usual gauntlet of random deadites and skeletons to get to the Challengers, but then encounters an additional problem. The tanks' crews are skeletons eagerly waiting to ambush some rebel with heavy armor in his eyes. They spring to attack at the Cast's approach, firing off its main gun and machine guns. A patrol of infantry boneheads lies feigning death in the area as well. They rise to give their armored comrades support, flushing rebels out of buildings and other hiding places when needed so that the undead can use their big toys.

Name: Post-Nuke Skeleton
Motivation: Terrorize all life
Critter Type: Undead
Attributes: Str 4, Dex 4, Con 4, Int 2, Per 2, Will 2
Ability Scores: Muscle 14, Combat 15, Brains 10
Life Points: 42 **Drama Points:** 2
Special Abilities: Limited Slash/stab invulnerability

Maneuvers			
Name	Score	Damage	Notes
Assault Rifle	15	20	Bullet; may fire bursts
Crossbow	15	20	Slash/stab
Dodge	15	—	Defense action
Parry	15	—	Defense action
Punch	15	12	Bash
Sword	15	20	Slash/stab



If the Cast manages to sneak up to the ambush site, they stand a good chance of overhearing the bored blabbermouths “whispering” to each other. “How long we gotta lay here?” “Shut up, Earl. We might gets us some man-flesh.” “You was always lookin’ for the man-flesh, weren’t you Stanley?” (Chuckles all around).

Remember the campy bit, Mr. Director. The skeletons aren’t particularly smart or stealthy. Feel free to use them as plot devices to give away all the bad guys’ best secrets.

BEST LAID PLANS

Simon has already tried a direct assault on Buckingham Palace. It did not go well, to say the least. He and several others managed to put some serious firepower—including rocket launchers and rocket grenades—into the Watcher, but it barely slowed him down.

Teller has discovered books that tell of Watcher-like creatures through the ages—dating back to the time of Gilgamesh in 3000 BC. These texts insinuate that the Necronomicon and the Watcher are somehow tied together. If a copy of this book could be found, it might hold the key to the Watcher’s defeat. *Secrets of the Necronomicon* was published widely before the holocaust began and several abound, but unfortunately, they are poorly translated and incomplete. The group needs either the orig-

inal or a precise copy to learn more about the Evil Dead. If the original exists, it would be in Manhattan where the original author did the translation (according to the book jacket). Yup. It’s time to go to Heathrow and deal wit the horror there, steal a plane, and head to the Big Apple. (If no one can fly, Teller can. He’s also bright enough to think about bringing protective suits and masks since New York almost certainly sustained a nuke hit.)

Finding an intact airplane is easy enough—there are a few in the hangars at Heathrow. The big problem is dealing with the Heathrow Horror. This massive conglomerate of corpses attacks anything that sets foot on its . . . feet. Or hands, heads, toes, etc. A Challenger 2 might be able to deal with it, or a good distraction might draw it away long enough to let the heroes juice up a plane and make like JJ towards the States.

The flight into Manhattan is like that scene in the *Thunderdome* when the plane flies through the ruins of Sydney. Massive skyscrapers are little more than twisted frames. Hundreds of thousands of cars, taxis, and buses lie smashed in the street. The city was obviously hit by a bomb—a big bomb—and it still glows like neon.

Huge demons walk between the avenues here, and flying deadites might have a go at the jet if the heroes linger too long in the air. Eventually of course, the group manages to land at JFK or Laguardia. From there they can find a car and push their way to Manhattan. Along the way you can hit

Challenger 2

Britain's premiere battle tank is fitted with reactionary Chobham armor, a powerful 122mm gun, and an engine that can get this bad boy going up to 36mph—but you do still have to drive on the left.

Weight: 62 tons

Speed: 36/30

Armor Value: 350/300/120

Damage Capacity: 700

Toughness: 5

Handling: 3

Weapons: 122mm cannon (turret), machine gun (front and top)

122mm Cannon: Armor piercing (AP) shells from this gun do 250 points of damage, divide armor by three, and double damage after penetration. High explosive (HE) rounds do 200 points of damage at point of impact, 100 within five yards, and 40 within ten yards.

them with all kinds of yuk—from giant demons that thunder between the skyscrapers to grotesque things that dwell in the sewers and pop up out of the manholes like whack-a-moles. Use the stats for the Hand Maiden of Ereshkigal (see p. 187) to represent the former, and the Death's Head (see p. 196) or the Detached Demon Head (see p. 215) for the latter (whichever strikes your fancy).

The author's Manhattan apartment building isn't too hard to find—he's listed in the phone book. The climb up his skyscraper is full of tight turns and scavenging skeletons, but finally the heroes reach the top and discover a strangely serene scene. The author's pad is clean and tidy, and his various projects are all filed neatly in his cabinets. He's nowhere to be found, but his Necronomicon file is intact and easily portable. Inside are photocopies of the Book of the Dead, phonetic pronunciation guides, and even a complete translation of the entire original work.

The trip back should be as harrowing as the one in. We'll leave the details to your sordid imagination.

On the long plane ride home, anyone studying the book discovers several important notes. First, they learn the entire history of the Watcher (meaning, as much as you care to tell them). They also learn how to open a portal in time, and realize it's never certain when or where that portal may lead. The text further reveals that the Watcher can be made flesh—not a concern in this setting as it has already assumed a permanent physical form. Finally, the reader finds small and poorly worded passages that reveal how the Watcher may be destroyed once and for all. (These last bits were disguised on purpose by the Dark Ones. Why'd they include them in the first place? It's a cosmic balance thing. The Necronomicon gets to be all indestructible and able to flit through time to cause chaos and grief, but the methods for its master's own destruction had to be included as well. Leastways, that's how we see it.)

Specifically, the book says the creature can only be truly killed by a weapon forged from its own physical form. Notes inserted in the portfolio indicate that various scholars have opined that the Spear of Destiny is one such item (see p. 168).

THE SPEAR OF DESTINY, REDUX

On mention of the spear, Kirsty Crabb chimes in that she catalogued something like this during her stint at the Imperial War Museum. It was never proven that the spear was real, of course, but whoever brought it in had labeled it as such and no doubt hoped to prove its authenticity someday.

Simon believes it's worth a try and assigns a team to raid the Imperial War Museum and recover the spear. Kirsty has to lead this time as she's the only one who knows how to get to the locked vaults in the bottom of the facility. There's one problem, however. There are literally thousands of artifacts waiting to be verified. To find them she'll need to power up the office mainframe and one of the building's terminals. That requires a generator and a Mr. Fix-It type like Dave Blewer.

The Imperial War Museum is a vast complex with many galleries, gift shops, food courts, theatres, and of course a vast research and collections department. A number of deadites and skeletons congregate around the collections department, so the team must

infiltrate the museum and take secondary routes to the vaults. Fortunately, Kirsty knows the way. Unfortunately, the supernatural apocalypse has caused many of the museum's displays to become haunted! Zulu spears fly off the walls and attempt to impale living guests, German uniforms from World Wars I and II animate and attack with bayonets, and even a model of the Red Baron's famous triplane somehow comes to life and strafes the commandoes as they rush down the corridors. Feel free to play this one as fast, campy, and deadly. The "ghosts" aren't bound by the realities of life. Guns can shoot bullets if you want them to (even though they haven't been loaded in years, of course) and models fly even if they don't have engines. The point is to make the trip a gauntlet of England's Imperial past and hurl something besides deadites and boneheads at your Cast for an Episode. The group must also protect Kirsty, for only she knows how to find the Spear of Destiny in this vast labyrinth.

Eventually, the team reaches the mainframe and restores power to it long enough to do a search. Kirsty finds the spear quickly enough and recovers one other artifact as well—a sword thought to be Excalibur itself! It is (see p. 203), and it can prove a fantastic boon to the heroes in the right hands.

THE PLAN

Once the heroes have recovered the Spear of Destiny (and perhaps Excalibur) and at least a couple of heavy weapons (like the Challenger 2s, some grenades, etc.), Simon wants to try and take down the Watcher. His plan is to ring the bells on Big Ben and draw it into a four-way ambush on the streets below the landmark. It's the perfect spot with well-covered firing positions for both people and the tanks, so he's not willing to change the location.

The problem is that Big Ben's "gong train" is demolished and there's just no way it's going to get fixed under these conditions. That means someone has to ring the bell (which is actually Big Ben) with a hammer. The tower is full of flying demons, so whoever goes up there to fix it has to be one bad mother shut-your-mouth. Still, you can probably find one or two of those in your crew, right?

Simon's plan is for the crew to sneak to the top of Big Ben with Dave Blewer (or someone else who's a Mr. Fix-It type) and ring the bell until the Watcher comes. At the last minute, the ever-resourceful

Kirsty appears and offers them parachutes as well. A good dramatic scene in this adventure might feature a stray round from one of the Challengers striking the tower and forcing the heroes to make use of their silks.

Whether or not they can actually destroy the Watcher is up to you of course, but if there has ever been a chance, this is it. Good luck. The Cast will need it.

CHAPTER EIGHT

ONCE MORE UNTO THE BREACH

Flint peered up at the high cliffs from beneath the brim of his hat. The sun was just setting on the horizon. Odd. It was High Noon about ten minutes ago. Damn demons.

Arthur was bossing his troops around while skeletons screamed and crumbled all about him. Six guns weren't much use against bones though, so Flint had decided on another course of action. Something was going on atop the cliffs. Something that had to do with that ugly book and why the gunslinger from Texas was traveling the timestream. If he ever wanted to taste good whiskey again, he was going to have to put a stop to it.

Flint pulled the Winchester from Betsy's saddle holster and took careful aim. He could just make out the flying demon atop the cliffs. He pegged it—not enough to kill it—but just to piss it off. Sure enough, the dumb thing dove off the wall and screamed straight toward him.

Flint calmly turned, shoved the rifle back in the holster, petted Betsy, and yanked a lasso off the saddle. He turned just as the demon was upon him, easily dodged its clumsy rush, and looped the rope around its fatty ankles.

The hired gun tied the rope around his waist with expert ease, then pulled the chinstrap on his hat tight while he waited for the jerk. And what a jerk it was. He felt like his spine was going to crack, but the stupid thing did just what he'd hoped. It danced around a while trying to shake him, then gave up and made straight for the cliffs. Flint pulled himself up to the thing by his rope, grabbed it by the wings, and forced it in for a rough landing.

For a moment he thought he'd died and gone to Heaven. Six gorgeous young women—all naked as the day they came into the world—stood huddled together in a small crater a few yards away. It was the chanting freaks in the black robes that broke the illusion. They

gave him a surprised “huh?” before he fanned the hammer and dropped two of them. The other three kept right on humming and whipped out nasty knives that would have made Jim Bowie blush. The weapons had big skull heads on one end and serrated blades that could gut a gar. Flint decided he did not want to be on the receiving end of those toothpicks.

The gunslinger fanned his Colt's last two rounds. Another cultist dropped and another one doubled over wounded but alive. Then Flint saw him.

It was him. Only not him. It looked like Flint, and even had his clothes. It had his twitchy stare, his long

fingers, and even the old Apache scare running down his forehead. But it also had a look of pure evil in its eyes.

Fortunately, it didn't have a gun. Flint slapped leather once more and drew his second gun. He stitched a line up his doppelganger from crotch to throat before slamming the last round smack between his evil twin's eyes.

The last cultist cowered as Flint walked over and inspected the sacrifices. “Ladies,” he said, tipping his hat.

INTRODUCTION

This one plays out something like the *Army of Darkness* movie but with all new details and some twists and turns even that guy who's memorized the director's commentaries won't see coming.

Our tale starts with the mystery of the flying demon. Remember it? The one that carried off Sheila? After that, we never saw it again. Ever wonder where it went and what it was up to? Did that unanswered question consume your life for years on end? Did it shape the very man or woman you've become today? We very sorry to hear that . . . still, seek no further. We have the answer for you friend.

Once More Unto the Breach is designed for brand new characters, whether they're Primitive Screwheads or Heroes. It's written especially for you Director types. Others should keep away. We'll leave it to you to enforce that edict as you see fit (insert cruel chuckle here).

Characters native to 1300 AD should figure out why they're in the area—particularly Arthur's castle. The easiest answer is that they live there, or that they were recruited to fight in the final battle against the skeleton army. Just because we didn't see them “on camera” during the movie doesn't mean they weren't there.

Late arrivals from other times take a tiny bit more work. These folks are sucked into time vortexes from around the timestream and deposited right outside Arthur's gates. There they are greeted by a passing traveler who nonchalantly looks over at them and says “You're too late. Battle's over. You can go back home now.”

Of course, they can't. Not without help from the Book of the Dead. It doesn't take long for the travelers to find that out—most everyone around the castle now knows the tale of the Promised One and the vile Necronomicon. They direct these late recruits toward Arthur and the Wiseman so that we can quickly get them involved in some shenanigans.

Warning: This is a full-fledged introductory adventure for brand-new heroes. That means the secrets within are for the Director only. Cast Members should scramola before we call the man with the chainsaw.

OVERVIEW

Flying demons are a little less cunning than those who still walk about and try to sell everyone on how they're going to take over the world, torture your girlfriend in Hell, etc. They can't carry out complex schemes without help from a boss-type like Evil Ash. But they know the basic mission. The one operating in Arthur's airspace knows that the Necronomicon still lies within the human castle, and that it must retrieve it to summon a new army of demons and dead.

The Watcher is also still around, but is mostly confined to its woods after being exhausted by the events of the last few weeks. It remains relatively dormant throughout this tale—we don't want to kill any of your Cast Members just yet. It's watching though (hence the name), and will remember these bozos when it inevitably runs into them again in another time and another place.

ONCE MORE UNTO THE BREACH

But back to our tale. The flying demon sits atop a high aerie a dozen miles or so southeast of Arthur's castle. A few days back it was "summoned" by the Watcher. That malevolence instructed the creature to quietly snatch a woman from a local village and infect her. The demon did so, and a few days later, the infected one used her Beguile ability to get inside Arthur's castle and make a play for the book. The gal stole the tome from the Wiseman's room and is just about to earn her danger pay when the heroes arrive at the castle (or are otherwise present to see what happens next).

IN MEDIA RES

It's a dull twilight about two weeks after the Promised One sealed himself in a cave. The heroes are in the courtyard of Arthur's castle for whatever reason—let them tell you why if you need to—when they see a figure leap from the Wiseman's tower and splatter all over the courtyard. (Throw a little demon goo in their faces if you think it will gross them out.)

The creature picks itself up, screaming "We live still!" It hurls a brown book with what looks like a hideous snarling face into the Pit. The thing spins, turning over and over, and anyone who makes a Perception (doubled) roll sees a grotesque pink tongue sticking out at him from the book's face. (Make one of those "blffft!" sounds, Mr. Foley Artist.) Wonder what that could have been . . .

The demon stands and cackles, half-broken and dead but still dangerous. Let your Mr. and Mrs. Wonderfals do the honors if you like. It's a typical deadite (see p. 161) but it has only 20 Life Points left and can't walk more than one yard a Turn as its legs are shattered and broken at weird, yukky, Joe Theisman-type angles.

Arthur is nearby, but is more than happy to let the heroes do the dirty work. If they don't act, he has it netted and dragged into the Pit. If the Cast fights but doesn't know to dismember the corpse, Arthur is more than happy to instruct them in the fine art of flesh-carving (though there may be some life left in it still, see p. 163).

THANK THREE

Once the demon is defeated, Arthur approaches and thanks them. He's still no party animal but he's learned to be a little less judgmental to strangers—especially those who fall from the sky with boomsticks and the like.

When he's done, he gathers the strangers and his knights and points to the Pit. He's concerned about what just happened but not overly so as he doesn't think there's any way back out of it (he's soooo wrong). Arthur decides to do things the pragmatic way and says: "The demons have stolen the book. I'll grant 10 pounds to any man who fetches it."

Ten pounds is a butt-load of money in 1300 AD, but still, no one takes the Duke up on his offer. They've *seen* what happens to those who go into the Pit and some of them still haven't showered off the blood spray from the last time.

Hopefully, your heroes offer to do the job. If they don't, Arthur ignores them and after a few hours prepares an expedition of his knights. During that time though, the Wiseman approaches the group and explains that while the knights may win out, it is likely many of them become demons as well. Then the creatures will no doubt find a way out of the Pit and kill everyone in the castle. If the Cast still doesn't care (which is just fine—Ash certainly wouldn't have jumped in on his own), Arthur's men go in and never return. A few hours later (or before your Cast decides to leave), Henry the Red arrives, learns what's happened, and commandeers the fortress until the King returns to properly appoint a replacement. He then "volunteers" the new arrivals. (Hey, it worked last time!) His soldiers have the heroes thrown in *with* their weapons at least.

THE PIT

One of the demons in the Pit was just sitting there minding his own business when the Necronomicon fell into his slimy lap like a happy puppy. The book licked its new owner and informed him—through some sort of freaky demon empathy—that it wanted the Hell out of there.

The demon began to tunnel, fueled by energy from the Necronomicon itself, and quickly carved a path through the soft earth to the moat surrounding Arthur's fortress. The other demons in the Pit cack-

Name: Detached Demon Head
Motivation: Scream and bite. A lot.
Critter Type: Demon
Attributes: Str 3, Dex 5, Con 5, Int 3, Per 3, Will 4
Ability Scores: Muscle 12, Combat 16, Brains 12
Life Points: 57 **Drama Points:** 2
Special Abilities: Armor Value 2, Attractiveness -4,
 Fast Reaction Time, Increased Life Points

Maneuvers

Name	Score	Damage	Notes
Bite	16	13	Slash/stab
Dodge	16	—	Defense action



led with glee but remained to delay those who might pursue.

Of course the pursuers just happen to look, smell, and taste like your Cast.

There are three demons down here—more than a match for a newbie party if they aren't big on combat skills (what *were* they thinking?). Tone it down if they're really weak, or have the Archer Captain and his men plunk a few arrow shots down into the pit to help if necessary. If the Cast is *really* underpowered, the Blacksmith might jump in to help as well.

The demons defeated, the heroes discover the half-flooded hole and can begin to crawl through it to the moat. The tunnel is only about two feet in diameter, so it's a very tight and disturbing journey. Just to make things interesting, the bad guys left a small present for anyone who might try to follow—a bouncing, biting, demon head. (Or a couple of you need them.) The head can jump up and down (don't ask us *how*) and bite. Dangerous in an enclosed space like this (heroes suffer -4 to their Dodge) but otherwise no big deal.

DE-MOATED

At the end of the tunnel the heroes discover the swampy moat surrounding Arthur's castle. Tracks lead up to the opposite wall at the rear of the fortress and out, but then are quickly lost in the surrounding countryside. (Actually, the flying demon picked him up and carried him just far enough to throw off any trackers.) The Evil Dead have the book once again . . . and they are not afraid to use it.

EVIL 'R US

The nasty who escaped the Pit calls itself Batiba (say it with me: ba-tee-ba). After a short flight via Winged Demon Express, it scurries into the Misty Forest and hatches a dastardly plan with its big boss, the Watcher in the Woods. The big bad guy cannot raise the *Army of Darkness* on its own—it needs a mortal dupe for that. It also needs a new general, a simulacrum of some over-anxious Promised One to lead it. Now it has the bait and the perfect plan to set the trap.

Batiba grabs a few more stragglers, infects them, and turns them loose on a small village under Arthur's protection. If only knights arrive, the demons do the best they can to whittle down the Duke's forces so that he's eventually forced to send the Promised Ones, then attack another village the next day. Arthur probably won't even ask for help at first—the Cast only learns what's going on when Arthur's knights return bloody and beaten.

From Batiba's point of view, it's only natural that the mortal enemies of the Evil Dead would show up to stop their rampage. It may be a little tougher on your end though if the Cast proves resistant to risking their necks. Once Arthur's knights are toast, he offers a reward. If that won't do it, he conjures up some other scheme. Maybe he urges a new love interest to prod the Promised Ones along, or maybe he offers to have the Wiseman help return them to their own time if they help recover the book (hey, it worked with Ash). You know your friends—find whatever pushes their buttons and go to it.

ONCE MORE UNTO THE BREACH

Waking the Promised One

Arthur is reluctant to wake Ash. He knows what the chainsaw warrior's attitude would be like if he were dragged out of his cave before he can return to his own time. He won't reveal (or allow to be revealed) the cave's location unless things are really dire, and only he and the Wiseman know its exact location.

In the meantime, you can play this one for laughs. Some locals might constantly compare the new Cast with Ash, insinuating that they're not as competent. Others might do the opposite—hinting that Ash was a true coward until he was backed into a corner.

Either way, your heroes should eventually get to where they just don't want to hear his name again. It's *their* watch now and no one-armed, two-bit, clerk from S-Mart is going to show them up.

If the group *does* decide to wake Ash and convinces Arthur or the Wiseman to tell them where he is, you'll have to decide what you want to happen. Here're a couple of possibilities:

- **Zzzzz:** Ash is sound asleep and no power on Earth can wake him until the drops wear off. On the plus side, he surely wouldn't mind if someone borrowed his boomstick or the death coaster.
- **I am mighty!:** Ash wakes up and joins the crew. Maybe one of the players even takes over his character if his former hero meets (or already met) a bloody demise. This can be a lot of fun but is also a little unbalancing as Ash probably overshadows the rest of the group.
- **The King is Dead:** The heroes find Ash—but the demons found him first. They tore him to pieces while he slept and destroyed (most) of his equipment. This is a lousy thing to do to the Main Man, but it could be a real shocker if your group needs a slap in the face and an unexpected twist to a somewhat familiar story.
- **Huh, what?:** Ash awakes but the magical drops keep him delirious. He acts like he has the sleeping sickness and nods off at the most inopportune times. This is a pretty good compromise as it lets the Cast meet Ash but keeps him from hogging all the action. He's also there to wake up occasionally and save the party's bacon if they get in over their collective brainpans.

When the Cast finally goes out on one of these missions, they find a village full of fleeing people and a couple of deadites—whatever they can handle. One of the creatures stands out from the rest as more purposeful (Batiba). It slides into a house and disappears. Whoever darts in after it sees the thing's reflection in a full-length mirror and runs smack into it. The pieces shatter, and sure enough, a whole mess of Tiny Promised Ones come to life. If several heroes went in after the demon, they all get little simulacrams! Consider the mirror a “material component” of the simulacrum spell.

The tiny versions of the heroes have the character's statistics but with a Strength and Constitution 1. They wreak havoc, run all over the village, and generally cause as much chaos as possible. Here are a few ideas about what to do with them:

- The Tinies grab a pair of scissors, a knife, etc and rush out from beneath a porch, shelf, desk, or whatever, stabbing a hero in the leg (Slash/stab damage 2).

- The Tinies push something heavy off a roof, mantle, or other high perch to fall on a hero's head (Bash damage 3).
- The Tinies use a broom to tip over a boiling pot of scalding stew. Anyone not in metal boots jumps around like a Stooge for the next couple of Turns (no damage, but -4 to actions for five Turns).
- The Tinies rig up a quick catapult and hurl cow dung or other nasties at the Cast (no damage, but not very respectful either).
- A Tiny sneaks up on a character and yanks the trigger on one of his holstered weapons as fast as he can before he's smashed (4 out of 10 chance the bullet hits the hero's leg).

The Tinies don't have to get inside a hero to make a larger version (like Evil Ash), they just have to shed a little of their "host's" blood. Any Promised One who loses at least 10 Life Points to the Tinies is in for a rude shock later on.

One of the little demons runs off into the fields unseen—coated in the champion's blood, and through some unknown process, gives rise to an all-evil version of that character. This is important because the simulacrum guards the book in the big climax of this tall tale. The more the merrier. If you can clone the whole Cast, do it!

WHO'S WATCHING WHO?

Batiba already has a general for the *Army of Darkness* (just wait until you see who!), but he has yet to reawaken the skeletons. The cemetery used in the movie is all tapped out, so this time he tries one in Henry's realm. He preps the book, places it upon the altar, and "sets" it to wake the dead if the proper mystic words are not spoken aloud.

An old gravedigger happens to see the demon commit this ritual, and Batiba coyly pretends he does not see the old man. The gravedigger runs straight to Duke Henry, who dispatches a messenger to Arthur. If he isn't aware of the new heroes in Arthur's camp, he contacts his former rival to wake Ash (but that shouldn't be necessary as the heroes can now take his place). Both dukes know the book can only be claimed by a Promised One, so they do just about anything necessary to make the Cast quest once more for the Necronomicon.

The Wiseman reiterates that only the Promised One can retrieve the book from a cemetery without raising the Army of the Dead, and even then he must speak the mystic words "Klaatu. Verata. Nikto." Your heroes are probably grinning at this point—they just know they aren't going to forget the words like bonehead Ash did.

Heh, heh, heh. Have we got a surprise for them.

THE JOURNEY

The journey to Henry's graveyard takes the party through the old woods—where the Watcher (see p. 158) lies half-dreaming. Whether or not it chases them is up to you. If so—since this is a brand new crop of heroes—we suggest subtracting eight from all its scores. It's exhausted from the fight with Ash and needs time to recuperate before it's back to full strength.

It might be more appropriate (but still quite dangerous) to let them run afoul of a few tree things (see p. 184). The party may even think the horror is the Watcher—if they even know what that is, of course. More likely, they're attacked, try to fight, see they can't win, and run like Hell. Or they get lucky and *do* beat the thing but have no idea what the heck it is. Either way, they're on their way to Henry's kingdom once they're done chopping wood.

HENRY'S DUCHY

Henry's kingdom is just like Arthur's. There are scattered villages, terrified peasants, and brash knights patrolling the highways. The latter may challenge the heroes, particularly if they look strange, but shouldn't get medieval unless the Cast is particularly rude. You want to avoid this however since pissing off Henry can cause some serious problems later on.

THE GRAVEYARD

The warrior's cemetery in Henry's land is smaller than the one in Arthur's, but it is also older and its hallowed dead a little more deadly. Set the stage as the Cast creeps through the moss-covered headstones, crooked crypts, and towering, twisted grave trees.

At the far end of the cemetery (of course) is the Necronomicon. It lies upon a hastily built altar of

jumbled gray rock—bits of busted headstones. Unlike in the movie—it's just lying there for anyone to take. Or so it seems.

The trick here is to get the heroes to bumble. You can use one of the tricks we gave you before (see pp. 172-173), but we've got something that should work quite well for this particular scene.

First, a hasty hero *might* just forget to say the words since there's only one sitting there. If any of your group says "I got it" before the words are properly said (at the foot of the altar), you've got 'em by the short and curly.

The more sure way is a nasty trap planned by the malicious Batiba. The demon actually lies buried within the rocks upon which the book rests. The moment a hero begins to speak, Batiba bursts forth and grabs him by the throat—choking off his words and raising the Army of the Dead! (Yeah, we know the hero should probably actually touch the book to get this hosed, but it's a plot device. Feel free to have Batiba shove the book in his hand as he chokes on the words and throw him a Drama Point if he starts whining. Control freak!)

Batiba attacks as the dead begin to awake. It tries to regain the Necronomicon, but won't lose any sleep over it if it can't. As it does so, the ground rolls, headstones tip over, and hands shoot forth from the ground. Three Turns later, a number of skeletons (see p. 164) equal to number of Cast Members move to attack. They're armed with swords, and about half wear chain or plate (your choice as to how beefy you want them to be). Every Turn thereafter, another three skeletons arise and rush to join the fight. It should soon become clear that this fight is a losing proposition—it's time to run.

Running like whipped dogs isn't easy though. The rising dead grab at the heroes' ankles as they step upon their graves. Each character must make a Dexterity roll every Turn they wish to escape. When the adventurer reaches 20 cumulative total Success Levels, he's made it outside the graveyard. The walking bones won't pursue for now—they've got more important things to do.

As the Cast flees before hundreds of rising dead, they witness a disturbing sight. In the distance—with scores of skeletons between them—are any Evil versions of themselves made in the previous scene. The Evil Them guffaw as our heroes run away with their tails between their legs. Just let them know these fiends exist—don't let them fight right now—

the group is surrounded by armed and armored veteran bonebags so it shouldn't be an issue, but you never know with those wacky roleplayers.

On the plus side, the heroes probably have the Necronomicon and can rush back to Arthur's castle to try and do what Ash did—or so they think. We don't want to rehash the movie that much though, so we've got a cool new twist for you. Keep reading and we'll get to it in just a few more paragraphs.

THE FLYING DEMON STRIKES

As the heroes race away from Duke Henry's graveyard, the flying demon watches from high overhead. It can sense who has the Necronomicon and waits until just the right opportunity. The moment it sees an opening, it dives down and snatches the book—or the character if it's tucked away somewhere—right out of his saddle (or shoes, seat, etc.). The demon spends a Drama Point if it needs to.

If the thing grabs the character, it soars a few hundred yards and slams him into the ground, stunning him long enough to grab the book and fly off. If it manages to get the book without a wiggling human attached, it simply flies off. A Perception (doubled) roll notes that the thing does *not* head towards the newly awakened dead, however. Instead, the creature flies southeast (we'll tell you why in just a moment).

Obviously, we've ramrodded this scene through a bit. Feel free to give everyone a Drama Point if they look like they're about to cry. Wimps.

The demon disappears into the English fog (*now* it looks like England). The heroes can either try to find the beastie on their own (which is hopeless), or they can head back to Arthur's castle and let him know what happened.

ENTER THE WISEMAN

The Wiseman steps forward and provides the next link in our little tale. He claims that the *Army of Darkness* can gain great power from the Necronomicon, but it must first gather before the book and complete a long ritual. The ritual involves virgin sacrifices, and the flying demons have been quietly gathering young women for the last few weeks. Fortunately for humanity, a falconer named Garris believes he knows where the creatures' aerie lies.

According to Garris, he was searching for falcon eggs atop a high plateau known as the Cliffs of Blood (due to their red color). As he gained the top he saw a strange winged creature—larger than any he'd ever seen before—fly to the top of the cliffs with something relatively large in its claws. He believes it was a young woman. He thought about trying to rescue her but was unarmed, so he rode until he found one of Arthur's patrols. The patrol brought him here, and . . . well, this audience gathered and we began this whole exposition thing.

The aerie lies twenty miles distant, through a foggy moor. The Wiseman says that the *Army of Darkness* has gathered before the Cliffs of Blood to await the completion of the ritual. He suggests that Arthur's army—perhaps once again allied with Duke Henry—attack the dead while the heroes fight their way to the cliffs to rescue the virgins.

So there you have it. The conclusion to this epic tale turns the tables slightly on the story presented in *Army of Darkness*. This time the good guys get to attack and try to take back the book while the boneheads do their best to defend themselves. So let's move on to the grand finale and break some bones, shall we?

MOVE 'EM OUT!

Arthur needs a day to prepare his army. During this time the heroes might make homemade bombs, rig up a vehicle like the Death Coaster, or create other surprises as Ash did in the attack on the cas-

tle. The Blacksmith is still around to help out if needed, and Arthur can provide most any raw materials available in 1300 AD that amateur engineers might ask for.

This is also a good time for Sheila or any other romantic attachments to say their proper good-byes—the kind that happen in the night with a fire flickering in the background. While most everyone believes the good guys will be victorious—they're still riding high after kicking Evil Ass just a few weeks earlier—they also know many of them will not return and want to get their groove on one last time.

If you feel like stretching things about a bit, you could insert a side quest here. The characters might also be sent on a “diplomatic” mission to recruit Duke Henry. Henry needs little persuasion this time around, and in fact is on the heels of the new skeletons ready to attack them from the rear. The biggest trick is convincing him not to attack until he has joined with Arthur's forces at the Cliffs of Blood. You can make this as short or as long as suits your particular tastes. Henry has about two-dozen knights trailing hundreds of veteran skeletons, so the logic isn't particularly difficult. A little roleplaying, a couple of contested Influence rolls, and you should be all set.

NO MORE MOOR

Remember how we told you in **Chapter Six: Land of Darkness** that this is “Circa England?” That it isn't real accurate historically, geographically, or even climatically? Well, we've got news for you.

Name: Bog Man
Motivation: Kill. Be mud.
Critter Type: Demon
Attributes: Str 4, Dex 4, Con 4, Int 2, Per 2, Will 2
Ability Scores: Muscle 14, Combat 15, Brains 10
Life Points: 42 **Drama Points:** 1-2
Special Abilities: Attractiveness -4, Mudballs (use pistol range; may fire bursts), immune to all but Bash damage

Maneuvers			
Name	Score	Damage	Notes
Mudballs	15	19	Bash
Dodge	15	—	Defense action
Punch	15	12	Bash



As far as we know there's no Cliffs of Blood in England, nor are there moors just south of London. Now forget we mentioned those little problems. All that stuff is there. It's just not on the maps they give to tourists.

So. The moors. Big misty swamp, muck deep enough to swallow a horse. Will-o'-the-wisps to lead you off the path. Fun stuff. Make sure you describe all this stuff, and run at least one scene where the party has to watch helplessly as one of Arthur's men sinks beneath the mire. That's all setting up atmosphere (if the players are silly enough to ask).

At some point during the trip, the heroes hear startled cries through the misty haze. Riding up to the source of the sound, they find a small group of isolated soldiers being attacked by Bog Men.

Ages ago, the early people of this big island used to throw living sacrifices into the peat bogs. The Evil Dead have taken up temporary possession of these muckety-mucks (sorry!) and are using them to harass Arthur's column.

Arthur's soldiers are stunned by fright for the first few Turns. They either stare in slack-jawed disbelief or cower behind their shields. Once someone puts down a mucker or two, their cajones descend again and they get to fighting.

The Bog Men rise from the muck (they can stand atop what is quicksand to anyone else) and spew balls of mud from their distended jaws. Their mushy forms make them immune to Slash/stab attacks. Only Bash damage does any good against them.

FIELD OF HONOR

Arthur's army emerges from the moor relatively unscathed. A few miles more and they arrive at a great stony field before the distant Cliffs of Blood. Drawn up in line of battle before them are hundreds of horrid undead.

This is a great time for any Mr. Personalities to stand up and give a Braveheart-style speech to the troops. They're brave and they know how to fight undead now, but the sheer number of these veteran undead—and the lack of walls to hold them back as in the last battle—is still quite disheartening. If a hero gives a *really* good speech, the one bards will quote for years to come (if there's anyone left), give the army a +2 on its first battle roll.

THE YIN

Arthur brings 30 swordsmen and 20 archers to the fray. His knights have remained behind to protect the castle should he fail. The archers have two volleys of black powder bags (see p. 97)—the last of the batch made by Ash. Two catapults are also present (see p. 147), though this time they hurl bouncing boulders through the skeletons' ranks instead of bombs. Add +2 to Arthur's battle total each Turn these weapons are able to fire.

Henry has two-dozen armored knights. They are few in number but heavily armed and armored, so count them as at least three men each when gauging forces.

The bonebags number about 300 this time out, with a full half being veterans. That gives the *Army of Darkness* about a three to one advantage, so the heroes and the catapults are really going to have to come up with a good plan here. Failing that, stupidity and raw heroics might carry the day.

THE YANG

The dead army is lead by—(drum roll please)—Evil Ash! The former general's burned and blasted head has survived and now sits inside a birdcage carried by a hulking deadite named Bruno (if separated from the Evil Ash head, its mental Attributes drop to two, and its Brains Score to 9). Evil Ash leads from the front, screaming orders to his minions and directing the battle. He'll try and fight anyone he comes across but if his "porter" is taken down, he can't get around too much (no magically animated bouncing head this time).

THE AERIE

The cliff is just over 50 feet tall and takes at least an hour to climb the old-fashioned and inevitable "AAAAAA!" way. A good delaying tactic in the battlefield below—or a quick victory—might just provide that time.

The heroes might also get to the top via catapult, though this is both really brave and really stupid. We'll just assume the catapult crews are good enough to properly aim the heroes at the top of the plateau. The hard part is the landing. A hero suf-

Name: Evil Ash Head/Bruno
Motivation: Destroy the world/obey orders
Critter Type: Evil Human/Deadite
Attributes: Str 8, Dex 5, Con 8, Int 3, Per 4, Will 4
Ability Scores: Muscle 22, Combat 18, Brains 12
Life Points: 110 **Drama Points:** 3
Special Abilities: Armor Value 4 (8), Attractiveness -6, Fast Reaction Time, Horrify, Increased Life Points, Regeneration, Weakness to daylight

Maneuvers

Name	Score	Damage	Notes
Axe	18	45	Slash/stab; one-handed
Bite	18	14	Slash/stab
Dodge	18	—	Defense action



fers 60 points of damage. Being deft helps minutely—subtract one point of damage per per Success Level in a Dexterity and Acrobatics roll. Better have those Drama Points on hand. (Yeah, we know the flying people ought to look like bug-splats on a window when they land, but have a little imagination for the heroics here, friend.)

The heroes arrive just as the ritual is in its final moments (duh!). A bevy of gorgeous virgins huddle in small crater at the top of the cliff. Around them are five robed figures (Dark Ones!) chanting mystic huba-juba. The book sits on an altar at the head of their group. Between the heroes and the ladies are

their simulacrum—however many were made in the earlier scene. They're armed, angry, and ready for a fight. A flying demon rounds out the fun. It darts in and out of the field, trying to knock heroes over the edge of the cliff to Certain Doom™.

The rest of this tale is pretty simple. The Cast has to stop the ritual by killing all five of the Dark Ones—who continue to chant even as they fight. Taking the Necronomicon has no effect now—they've already done their reading. In fact, if you want to make the fight a little tougher, it might turn into the flying, biting variety (use Detached Demon Head, see p. 215) and join in the carnage.

Name: Flying Demon
Motivation: Serve the Evil Dead
Critter Type: Demon
Attributes: Str 5, Dex 5, Con 5, Int 2, Per 3, Will 4
Ability Scores: Muscle 16, Combat 15, Brains 10
Life Points: 65 **Drama Points:** 2
Special Abilities: Armor Value 2, Attractiveness -3, Fast Reaction Time, Flight, Hard to Kill 5

Maneuvers

Name	Score	Damage	Notes
Claw	15	14	Slash/stab
Dodge	15	—	Defense action
Grapple	17	—	Resisted by Dodge
Push	15	14	Bash; victims near the cliff edge must make a resisted Strength (doubled) roll or suffer 50 feet of falling damage



ONCE MORE UNTO THE BREACH

Name: The Dark Ones (Cultists)
Motivation: Serve Ereshkigal, spread her dark touch
Critter Type: Human
Attributes: Str 3, Dex 3, Con 3, Int 2, Per 3, Will 2
Ability Scores: Muscle 12, Combat 12, Brains 10
Life Points: 34 **Drama Points:** 1
Special Abilities: Back Stabber

Maneuvers			
Name	Score	Damage	Notes
Back Stabber	12	11	Slash/stab; see p. 180
Dodge	12	—	Defense action
Punch	12	8	Bash



As for the simulacrum, they should be duplicates of the Cast Members (natch), but with a few weaknesses. Give them half (or a third if you are feeling generous) the original's Drama Points. Also, they should not be equipped with any modern weapons or gear. They are strictly medieval (swords, axes, chain mail, etc.).

READ ANY BAD BOOKS LATELY?

When the smoke from everyone's chainsaws finally clears, a strange thing occurs. One of the dying Dark Ones looks up and speaks a few words of Latin. Moments later, a vortex appears in the sky above the plateau. Promised Ones (and anyone else you feel like keeping in the game) feel themselves drawn to it. They can go willingly, or they can fight it, but they're going.

Where and when the vortex takes them is entirely up to you. They might land in one of the settings we've described in **Chapter Seven: Worlds of Darkness** or a new location of your own design.

As for 1300 AD England, a lot depends on what happens in the plains below. If Arthur and Henry are victorious, they wipe out the remaining skeletons and eventually mop up most of the deadites as well. They never quite figure out the deal with the Watcher, but it has had enough of this era and moves on to some other place.

If Arthur and Henry are defeated, the Evil Dead move on toward Arthur's castle and raze it. The Wiseman falls to their gnashing teeth as well. The

King of England eventually manages to defeat the deadites, but without the Wiseman's knowledge, he doesn't know enough to truly destroy the Evil. The consequences of that depend on how you want your game to go. Perhaps the dead create a ruined world like the post-apocalyptic setting in **Chapter Seven: Worlds of Darkness**. Or perhaps they begin to destroy the world but the Promised Ones are recalled a few hundred years later to fight them again. (Fighting the Evil Dead in Oliver Cromwell's time could be a hoot!) If that's the case, the dead are much stronger this time and the Watcher is active again—that's the price humanity pays for their previous failure.

Either way, this tale has come to a close. Wipe your feet on the way out.

UNISYSTEM CONVERSION NOTES

The **Unisystem** is the heart of several different games with varying backgrounds and settings, but all focused in the horror genre. We talked about the various alternative games in **Chapter One: Gathering Darkness** (see p. 9). Lots of information can be found about them at www.edenstudios.net. Most of these games can be purchased at the store you picked up this sparkling tome.

Our *Angel* and *Buffy the Vampire Slayer* roleplaying games use the same cinematic **Unisystem** found in *Army of Darkness*. Combining characters, settings, and adventures between those games is easy as pie. For those who already play one of our other, grittier **Unisystem** games, you may have noticed a few differences between those versions and the game mechanics presented in this book. It's the same basic system though. So, for people who want to drag Ash and the Necronomicon into the shadowy world of *WitchCraft*, the war torn world of *Armageddon*, the alternative evolution of *Terra Primate*, or the splatterpunk horror of *All Flesh Must Be Eaten* (or vice versa), here're a few guidelines to do so.

THE EASY METHOD

This one requires little or no effort: just take character sheets and start rolling dice. For the most part, you can use an *Army of Darkness* roleplaying game (*AoD RPG*) character in any other **Unisystem** game. The Attributes are the same. The skills are different, but their values are the same. You have to decide whether you'll use the flat damage system from the *AoD RPG* or the dice-based system in other games, but that's it. That wasn't too painful, was it?

Some may want more detail though, so let's make things a bit harder.

CHARACTERS

We simplified character creation in the *AoD RPG*, both to make things easier for new players and to better represent the "reality" of the land of the Evil Dead. Here are the differences between the two versions.

ATTRIBUTES

The Primary Attributes are the same, but we removed three Secondary Attributes. In addition to Life Points, other games have Endurance Points (they represent the character's stamina, and how soon he will need to take a break or pass out), Essence Points (the character's inner energy, the strength of his soul, so to speak, used mainly for magic), and Speed (the formula is in the *AoD RPG*, but it is not listed as an Attribute). All these values can be calculated using the *AoD* Attributes for other **Unisystem** games, or dropped for the *AoD RPG*.

QUALITIES

Other than a few minor changes, Qualities work about the same in both versions. Other games have many more Qualities, some of which are less useful in an *AoD RPG* game, but that's about it.

SKILLS

This one is a biggie. There are 18 skills in the *AoD RPG* game, and dozens of assorted skills and skill types in other **Unisystem** games. Instead of Gun Fu, there are skills for each type of gun (like Handgun and Rifle), for example. If you want to take a character from the *AoD RPG* and "convert" it to a more detailed **Unisystem** version, review each of the 18 skills, and give the character two points per level up to level five (and five points per level after that), and use those points to "buy" regular **Unisystem** skills that fall within the *AoD RPG* skill's purview. The new skills should be no more than one level higher than the *AoD RPG* skill.

We Wouldn't Leave You Without An Example: Arthur has Getting Medieval 5 in the *AoD RPG*. To convert him to other **Unisystem** games, use ten points and buy assorted Hand Weapon skill types. The maximum level in any one Hand Weapon skill would be six (which would cost six points, leaving few points to spend on other Hand Weapon skills). The more varied skill set is more realistic (people shouldn't excel at everything), but the tradeoff is time and more stuff to keep track of.

COMBAT MANEUVERS

The Maneuvers (*AoD RPG*) or Moves (*Mystery Codex*) differ between the systems. The Director should pick the list he likes best for his game.

RULES

The basic mechanic works the same—roll a D10, add the appropriate Attributes and skills and so on. A few details are different, however.

FEAR TESTS

Fear Tests are a bit more involved in other **Unisystem** games. The sub-systems can be interchanged though, so Directors should choose which one to use.

DAMAGE

In the *AoD RPG*, base damage is a flat value, with Success Levels added to that number. In other **Unisystem** games, damage is usually rolled randomly with assorted types of dice (four-sided, six-sided, and so on). Armor also has a random value. Again, the Director must decide which sub-system to use. The *AoD RPG* version has the advantage of being faster and not needing as many dice. The dice-based version gives you more variation and less predictability—a hit may just scratch a character or kill him outright.

Most of the weapons and armor provided in the *AoD RPG* have direct counterparts in the other **Unisystem** games. In those cases, the stats provided in the other **Unisystem** game should be used. For those with a conversion bent to them, the flat damage of the *AoD RPG* is equal to the average damage presented in the other games. If converting from the *AoD RPG* to another game, use a multiplier between two and six, then double the divisor to get the die type. You can decrease the range of the damage result by increasing the multiplier.

Example-away: In the *AoD RPG*, the assault rifle does 16 points of damage. That breaks down nicely to 4×4 . With a multiplier of four, the die number (4) translates to a D8. So an assault rifle damage for those partial to dice would be $D8 \times 4$, which has an average damage of 16, and a spread of 4-32. You could alternatively create a 16 result by using 2×8 , but a multiplier over six is not recommended. Also, you could go with 8×2 , but that results in a die number (8) which calls for a 16-sided die. Those aren't too available so we would avoid that as well. Similarly, on the armor side, plate armor in the *AoD RPG* gives 20 points of protection. That factors out best to 4×5 . The die number (4) looks for a D8. So plate armor protection becomes $D8 \times 5$.

Note that on the armor end, homegrown conversions will not match the formulas provided by the more detailed **Unisystem** books. Don't sweat that. Just revel in your dice tossing.

MAGIC

Magic in the *AoD RPG* is usually reserved for the bad guys or those working with the secrets in the *Necronomicon*. Cast Member spellslingers don't exist and if they did, they would be fairly limited and beholden to dark forces.

Then again, you may not like that much. In that case, spellcasters of all stripes can be introduced using the open-ended cinematic magic rules in the *Angel* or *Buffy* RPGs. That magic system sets a Power Level and leaves the details to the caster. A more rigorous magic system is found in the grittier **Unisystem** games, in particular *Armageddon* and *WitchCraft*. In those **Unisystem** games, magic usually has an Essence cost (see the Attributes section above), and the subsystems are fairly specialized. If you want to adopt those systems, a simple set of conversions will not work. You'll need to bring in the entire system. Still, it will add a whole new dimension to your game.

CHARACTER CREATION BASICS

The following tables and charts may be used to aid in the character creation process. Further information is provided on the pages cited.

CREATION PROCESS

- 1. Choose a concept:** What's your character going to be like? Righteous knight, bearded wiseman, down-and-dirty survivalist, or something more pedestrian—say, a retail clerk who works in Hardware?
- 2. Choose Character Types:** The Character Type determines the general power level and nature of your character. Heroes are tough and skilled. Primitive Screwheads are slightly above average folks who rely on skills and luck to survive. Type sets the number of Drama Points (10 for Heroes, 20 for Primitive Screwheads). See p. 22.
- 3. Attributes:** What are your character's natural abilities, both mental and physical? Attributes cost one point per level to level five, and three points per level after that. At least one point must be put into each Attribute. Human maximum is six. Life Points are calculated from Attributes. See pp. 23-27.
- 4. Qualities and Drawbacks:** What innate advantages or penalties affect your character? A handy list of Qualities and Drawbacks starts on p. 227. Details are provided on pp. 27-42.
- 5. Scores:** If the character is a Supporting Cast Member (Guest Star or Adversary), individual skill notations are replaced by Scores. Muscle Score is $(2 \times \text{Strength}) + 6$. Combat Score is $\text{Dexterity} + \text{the average of the character's combat-oriented skills} + 6$. Brains Score is $\text{the average of Intelligence, Perception, and Willpower} + \text{the average of the character's mental-oriented skills} + 6$. Details are provided on pp. 82-83.
- 6. Skills:** What does your character know? Skills cost one point per level to level five, and three points per level after that. The possible skills are listed on the character sheet. Details are provided on pp. 43-48.
- 6. Finishing Touches:** This is where you decide the character's name, appearance and other characteristics. Distinctive habits or mannerisms, hairstyle, scars, tattoos, piercings fashion, music/video tastes.

CHARACTER TYPE CHART

HERO

Attribute Points: 20
Quality Points: 20
Drawback Points: up to 10
Skill Points: 20
Drama Points: 10

PRIMITIVE SCREWHEADS

Attribute Points: 15
Quality Points: 10
Drawback Points: up to 10
Skill Points: 15
Drama Points: 20

EXPERIENCED HERO

Attribute Points: 25
Quality Points: 25
Drawback Points: up to 10
Skill Points: 40
Drama Points: 20

LIFE POINT TABLE

Life Points are determined by adding the character's Strength and Constitution, multiplying the result by four, and adding 10. For the math shy, we've done the calculations.

LIFE POINT TABLE

CONSTITUTION

STRENGTH	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
1	18	22	26	30	34	38	42	46	50	54
2	22	26	30	34	38	42	46	50	54	58
3	26	30	34	38	42	46	50	54	58	62
4	30	34	38	42	46	50	54	58	62	66
5	34	38	42	46	50	54	58	62	66	70
6	38	42	46	50	54	58	62	66	70	74
7	42	46	50	54	58	62	66	70	74	78
8	46	50	54	58	62	66	70	74	78	82
9	50	54	58	62	66	70	74	78	82	86
10	54	58	62	66	70	74	78	82	86	90

STRENGTH TABLE

STRENGTH LIFTING CAPACITY

1-5	50 lbs x Strength (Strength 5: 250 lbs)
6-10	200 x (Strength - 5) + 250 lbs (Strength 10: 1,250 lbs)
11-15	500 x (Strength - 10) + 1,500 lbs (Strength 15: 4,000 lbs/2 tons)
16-20	1,000 x (Strength - 15) + 5,000 lbs (Strength 20: 10,000 lbs/5 tons)
21-25	1 ton x (Strength - 20) + 5 tons (Strength 25: 10 tons)
26-30	2 ton x (Strength - 25) + 10 tons (Strength 30: 20 tons)

JUMP TABLE

STRENGTH	HIGH JUMP	LONG JUMP
1-2	1 foot	2 yards
3	2 feet	3 yards
4-5	4 feet	5 yards
6	5 feet	6 yards
7-8	7 feet	8 yards
9-10	10 feet	10 yards
+1	+2 feet	+1 yard

QUALITIES AND DRAWBACKS LIST

Acute/Impaired Senses	2-point Quality or Drawback	p. 28
Four types: Vision, Hearing, Touch, Smell/Taste		
Adversary	Variable Drawback	p. 28
Artist	2-point Quality	p. 29
Attractiveness	1-point/level Quality or Drawback	p. 29
Big Chin/Really Big Chin	1- or 3-point Quality	p. 29
Buff Guy	3- or 4-point Quality	p. 30
Clown	1-point Drawback	p. 30
Contacts	Variable Quality	p. 30
Cop/Ex-cop	5- or 4-point Quality	p. 31
Covetous	1- to 3-point Drawback	p. 31
<i>Type:</i> Greed (money and wealth), Lechery (sexual relations), Ambition (power and influence), and Conspicuousness (fame and renown).		
<i>Degree:</i> Mild (1 point), Serious (2 points), Desperate (3 points).		
Criminal	2-point Quality	p. 32
Dependent	2- or 3-point Drawback	p. 32
<i>Number:</i> One dependent (2 points), more than one dependent (3 points).		
Dullard	2-point Drawback	p. 32
Emotional Problems	Variable Drawback	p. 32
<i>Sample Problems:</i> Depression (2 points), Emotional Dependency (1 point), Fear of Commitment (1 point), Fear of Rejection (1 point).		
Fast Reaction Time	2-point Quality	p. 33
Good/Bad Luck	1-point/level Quality or Drawback	p. 33
Hard to Kill	1- to 5-point Quality	p. 34
Honorable	1- to 3-point Drawback	p. 34
<i>Degree:</i> Minimal (1 point), Serious (2 points), Rigid (3 points).		
Humorless	1-point Drawback	p. 34
Love	2- or 4-point Drawback	p. 34
<i>Degree:</i> Love (2 points), Tragic Love (4 points).		
Mental Problems	1- to 3-point Drawback	p. 35
<i>Sample Problems:</i> Cowardice, Cruelty, Delusions, Obsession, Paranoia, Phobia, Recklessness, Zealot.		
<i>Degree:</i> Mild (1 point), Severe (2 points), Deranged (3 points).		
Natural Toughness	2-point Quality	p. 36
Nerd	3-point Quality	p. 36
Nerves of Steel	3-point Quality	p. 36
Nosy Reporter	5-point Quality	p. 36
Obligation	Variable Drawback	p. 37
<i>Degree:</i> Minimal (0 points), Important (1 point), Major (2 points), Total (3 points).		

QUALITIES AND DRAWBACKS LIST (CONTINUED)

Occult Investigator	4-point Quality	p. 37
Outcast	3-point Drawback	p. 38
Photographic Memory	2-point Quality	p. 38
Physical Disability	Variable Drawback	p. 38
<i>Degree:</i> Blind (8 points), Missing or Crippled Arm/Hand (2 points), Missing or Crippled Leg/Foot (3 points), Missing or Crippled Arms (4 points), Missing or Crippled Legs (4 points).		
Promised One	16-point Quality	p. 39
<i>Prerequisites:</i> Getting Medieval 3, Gun Fu 3, or Kung Fu 3		
Psychic Visions	1-point Quality	p. 39
Recurring Nightmares	1-point Drawback	p. 39
Resistance	1-point/level Quality	p. 40
<i>Sample Types:</i> Pain, Demonic Powers, Poison/Disease.		
Resources	2-point/level Quality or Drawback	p. 40
<i>Degree:</i> Destitute (10-point Drawback), Miserable (8-point Drawback), Poor (6-point Drawback), Hurting (4-point Drawback), Below Average (2-point Drawback), Okay (0 points), Middle Class (2-point Quality), Well-off (4-point Quality), Wealthy (6-point Quality), Rich (8-point Quality), Multimillionaire (10-point Quality), +1 level (+2 points).		
Schmuck	2-point Drawback	p. 41
Secret	Variable Drawback	p. 41
Situational Awareness	2-point Quality	p. 41
Status	1-point/level Quality or Drawback	p. 41
Teenager	2-point Drawback	p. 42
Tool Man	3-point Quality	p. 42

MUSCLE SCORE TABLE

- 8 Weak as a Kitten:** A Tiny Ash can arm-wrestle this guy.
- 9-10 Average Guy:** Your average couch potato, capable to lugging a couple six-packs to to the car without busting a gut.
- 11-12 Not Too Shabby:** Someone who works out, maybe plays on the company softball team, actively coaches his son's soccer squad. Also includes animated skeletons.
- 13-14 Average Supernatural/Tough Human:** This is the typical Muscle Score of a calcium captain or a wright. Very athletic humans are in the same range.
- 15-16 Tough Supernatural/Weightlifter:** An flying deadite or a pumped-up Marine.
- 17-20 Human Peak:** Evil Ash, a ground-bound deadite or the best of the best human are in this range.
- 21+ Superhuman:** Monstrosities, powerful demons, and the like are in this range.

COMBAT SCORE TABLE

- 8—Never Been Punched:** With this Combat Score, a character needs to go Full Offense or Defense, or he'd just be a punching bag. Those who can't throw a punch to save their lives have Combat Scores at this level.
- 9-10—Average Joe:** This is someone who knows which end of a weapon to point towards an enemy, or has been in a few scrapes in his life.
- 11-12—Skeleton/Warrior:** This is the Combat Score of your typical freshly dug skeleton or a normal human with some training (a beat cop or a regular soldier).
- 13-14—Calcium Captain/Veteran Fighter:** This represents a demon, a skeleton leader, or tough, well-trained humans such as captains and knights.
- 15-16—Deadite/Expert Fighter:** These demons have had lots of practice swallowing souls; expert swordsmen and martial artists are also at this level.
- 17-20—Big Ugly/Master Fighter:** This is where Promised Ones ought to end up at some point, right alongside the major bad guys they fight at the finale of most Seasons.
- 21+—Yikes!:** The most proficient and most dangerous are at this level.

BRAINS SCORE TABLE

- 8—Duh?:** Stupid is as stupid does.
- 9-10—Average Joe:** The character won't be building any mechanical hands, but he can probably complete a job that has complete and detailed instructions—in time.
- 11-12—Smart:** Someone with a good education and the smarts to make the most of it.
- 13-14—Brilliant:** Highly educated, very smart, or both.
- 15-16—Genius:** An expert, or just really, really intelligent. The Wiseman falls in this category.
- 17-20—Genius Plus:** "Ah, I see by that pot we have arrived in ancient Sumeria. I'd say it's about 1000 AD."
- 21+—Einstein:** These folks are so above and beyond the average mind they might appear absent-minded or simple. "I think I can duplicate the effects of the time vortex, just let me figure out where I put my glasses."

COMBAT MANEUVERS REFERENCE TABLE

NAME	ROLL BASICS	DAMAGE	NOTES
Aiming	Perception + Gun Fu, or Perception + Getting Medieval or Brains Score	None	Adds Success Levels to shooting roll; p. 88
Bow Shot	Dexterity + Getting Medieval – 2 or Combat Score – 2	4 x Strength Slash/stab (max 20)	Ranged attack modifiers apply (p. 95); p. 88
Brain Shot	Combat Maneuver – 4 or Combat Score – 4	Varies by attack	Bash damage doubled; Slash/stab damage tripled; Bullet damage quadrupled; p. 88
Break Neck	Strength + Kung Fu or Muscle Score	4 x Strength Bash	Must Grapple first; if defender at –10 Life Points, Survival Test or neck broken (dead); p. 88
Chainsaw Ballet	Dexterity + Getting Medieval – 4 or Combat Score – 4	Damage halved	Number of attacks equals Success Levels; defense action; p. 88
Choke	Strength + Kung Fu or Muscle Score	(Strength – 1) Bash	Must Grapple first; possible suffocation (p. 104); defender –2 to all actions; p. 89
Crossbow Shot	Dexterity + Getting Medieval or Combat Score	16/10 Slash/stab	Ranged attack modifiers apply (p. 95); p. 89
Decapitation	Dexterity + Getting Medieval – 5 or Combat Score – 5	Varies by weapon	Total damage multiplied by five; if defender at –10, Survival Test or decapitated (dead); p. 89
Disarm	Dexterity + Getting Medieval – 2 or Dexterity + Kung Fu – 3 or Combat Score – 2	None	Resisted by Parry or Combat Score; p. 89
Dodge	Dexterity + Acrobatics or Dexterity + Getting Medieval or Dexterity + Kung Fu or Combat Score	None	Avoid getting hit; –2 against ranged attacks; p. 89
Feint	Intelligence + Kung Fu or Intelligence + Getting Medieval or Brains Score	None	Adds Success Levels to next action; Resisted by Perception + Kung Fu, or Perception + Getting Medieval, or Brains Score; p. 89
Grapple	Dexterity + Kung Fu + 2 or Combat Score + 2	None	Resisted by Dodge; impairment varies; p. 90
Groin Shot	Combat Maneuver – 3	Varies by attack	That's gotta hurt; p. 90
Gunshot	Dexterity + Gun Fu or Combat Score	Varies by weapon	Ranged attack modifiers apply (p. 95); p. 90
Head Butt	Dexterity + Kung Fu – 2 or Combat Score – 2	2 x Strength Bash	If target grappled, cannot defend; if attack misses, attacker takes damage; p. 90
Jump Kick	Dexterity + Kung Fu – 3 or Combat Score – 3	3 x (Strength + 1) Bash	Acrobatics + Dexterity roll first; add Success Levels to damage; p. 90

COMBAT MANEUVERS REFERENCE TABLE (CONTINUED)

NAME	ROLL BASICS	DAMAGE	NOTES
Kick	Dexterity + Kung Fu – 1 or Combat Score – 1	2 x (Strength + 1) Bash	Sports or Art could be used; could be Grappled; p. 90
Knockout	Dexterity + Kung Fu – 2 or Dexterity + Getting Medieval – 2 or Combat Score – 2	Varies by attack	Halve damage of attack; possible lights out; p. 90
Melee Weapon	Dexterity + Getting Medieval or Combat Score	Varies by weapon	Hack, stab, or crush—it ain't gonna be pretty; p. 90
Parry	Dexterity + Kung Fu or Dexterity + Getting Medieval or Combat Score	None	–2 against thrown attacks; –6 against arrow/bolt attacks; p. 91
Punch	Dexterity + Kung Fu or Combat Score	2 x Strength Bash	Right in the kisser; p. 91
Slam-Tackle	Strength + Sports or Muscle Score	2 x Strength Bash	Cannot be Parried; target prone (p. 93) unless resisted by Strength (not doubled) or Muscle Score/2; if successful, Grapple possible without rolling; only action possible that Turn; p. 91
Spin Kick	Dexterity + Kung Fu – 2 or Combat Score – 2	2 x (Strength + 2) Bash	Very slick could be Grappled; p. 91
Sweep Kick	Dexterity + Kung Fu – 1 or Combat Score – 1	Strength Bash	Target prone (p. 93) unless resisted by Dexterity and Acrobatics, or Combat Score; p. 91
Takedown	Strength + Kung Fu or Muscle Score	Strength Bash	Target prone (p. 93); p. 91
Target Limb	Combat Maneuver – 2	Varies by weapon	Could sever; p. 91
Through the Heart	Combat Maneuver – 3	Varies by weapon	x4 damage; p. 91
Throw Weapon	Dexterity + Getting Medieval – 1 or Combat Score – 1	Varies by weapon	Range 2 yards plus 2 yards/Strength; p. 91
Toss	Strength (doubled) – 4 or Muscle Score – 4	Strength Bash	Must Grapple first; Strength 4+; target flies 1 yard/Success Level and prone (p. 93) unless resisted by Strength (not doubled) or Muscle Score/2; p. 91
Wall Smash	Strength + Acrobatics or Muscle Score	3 x Strength Bash	Min. Strength required; must Grapple first; resisted by Strength + Acrobatics, or Muscle Score; damage to surface (see pp. 104-105); p. 92
Wrestling Hold	Strength + Kung Fu – 2 or Muscle Score – 2	None	Must Grapple first; resisted by Strength + Kung Fu, or Dexterity + Kung Fu, or Muscle Score, or Combat Score; defender is at –1 per Success Level; p. 124

BASE DAMAGE TABLE

ATTACK	BASE DAMAGE	NOTES
Axe	5 x Strength Slash/stab	Strength + 1 if two hands; p. 97
Axe (thrown)	4 x Strength Slash/stab	p. 97
Black Powder Bomb/ Big Powder Bomb/ Dynamite	20(1)/12(10)/5(25) Bash 40(1)/20(10)/10(25) Bash 25(1)/15(10)/6(25) Bash	Can explode early; p. 97
Blunt Weapon—Small	3 x Strength Bash	Strength + 1 if two hands; p. 98
Blunt Weapon—Large	4 x Strength Bash	Strength + 1 if two hands; p. 98
Boomstick	20 Bullet	p. 98
Bow	4 x Strength Slash/stab	Max base damage 20; use pistol ranges; p. 98
Break Neck	4 x Strength Bash	p. 88
Chainsaw	6 x (Strength + 1) Slash/stab	Can go wrong; p. 98
Choke	1 x (Strength – 1) Bash	p. 88
Crossbow—Pistol	10 Slash/stab	Use pistol ranges; p. 98
Crossbow	16 Slash/stab	Use pistol ranges; p. 98
Dagger/Knife— Pigsticker	2 x (Strength – 1) Slash/stab	p. 98
Dagger Knife— Pigsticker (thrown)	(Strength – 1) Slash/stab	p. 98
Dagger/Knife	2 x Strength Slash/stab	p. 98
Dagger/Knife (thrown)	2 x (Strength – 1) Slash/stab	p. 98
Flail	4 x Strength Bash	+2 to Disarm; p. 99
Flamethrower	6/3 Fire	10-yard range; p. 99
Flamethrower— Makeshift	3/3 Fire	3-yard range; p. 99
Flare Gun	9 Fire	Use pistol ranges; may be blinded; p. 99
Gauntlet	2 x (Strength + 2)	p. 99
Grenade	30(1)/20(3)/8(5)	Bash for concussion; Slash/stab for frag; p. 99
Head Butt	2 x Strength Bash	p. 90
Jump Kick	3 x (Strength + 1) Bash	p. 90
Kick	2 x (Strength + 1) Bash	p. 90
Lance	3 x (Strength + 1) Slash/stab	Use horses Strength is greater; doubled with horse charge; p. 99
Lasso	2 x Strength Bash	Neck target; p. 100
Musket	17 Bullet	Use pistol ranges; slow reload; p. 100
Net	—	Entangle; p. 100

BASE DAMAGE TABLE (CONTINUED)

ATTACK	BASE DAMAGE	NOTES
Pistol—Popgun	9 Bullet	Use pistol ranges; 10 rounds; p. 100
Pistol	12 Bullet	Use pistol ranges; 6 or up to 17 rounds; p. 100
Pistol—Big	15 Bullet	Use pistol ranges; 6-10 rounds; recoil -2; p. 100
Pistol—Big Ass	18 Bullet	Uses pistol ranges; 6-10 rounds; recoil -2; p. 100
Punch	2 x Strength Bash	p. 91
Pole Arm	5 x (Strength + 1) Slash/stab	Uses two hands; long reach; can set; p. 100
Power Drill	2 x Strength Slash/stab	p. 101
Rifle—Hunting	20 Bullet	Uses rifle ranges; 5-10 rounds; p. 101
Rifle—Assault	16 Bullet	Uses rifle ranges; 20-30 rounds; can autofire; p. 101
Rocket Launcher	100(1)/35(2)/10(5) Fire	p. 101
Slam-Tackle	2 x Strength Bash	p. 91
Spear	3 x (Strength + 1) Slash/stab	Uses two hands; p. 101
Spear (thrown)	3 x Strength Slash/stab	p. 101
Spin Kick	2 x (Strength + 2) Bash	p. 91
Submachine Gun	12 Bullet	Uses pistol ranges; 20-40 rounds; can autofire; p. 101
Sweep Kick	1 x Strength Bash	p. 91
Sword	4 x Strength Slash/stab	Strength + 1 if two hands; p. 101
Sword—Big Ass	5 x (Strength + 1) Slash/stab	Uses two hands; p. 101
Sword—Short	3 x Strength Slash/stab	p. 101
Sword—Short (thrown)	3 x (Strength - 1) Slash/stab	Requires Strength 4+; p. 101
Takedown	1 x Strength Bash	p. 91
Toss	1 x Strength Bash	Knocks target down; p. 91
Wall Smash	3 x Strength Bash	p. 92
Tranquilizer Gun	1	Puts target to sleep; p. 101
Whip	2 x Strength Bash	p. 101

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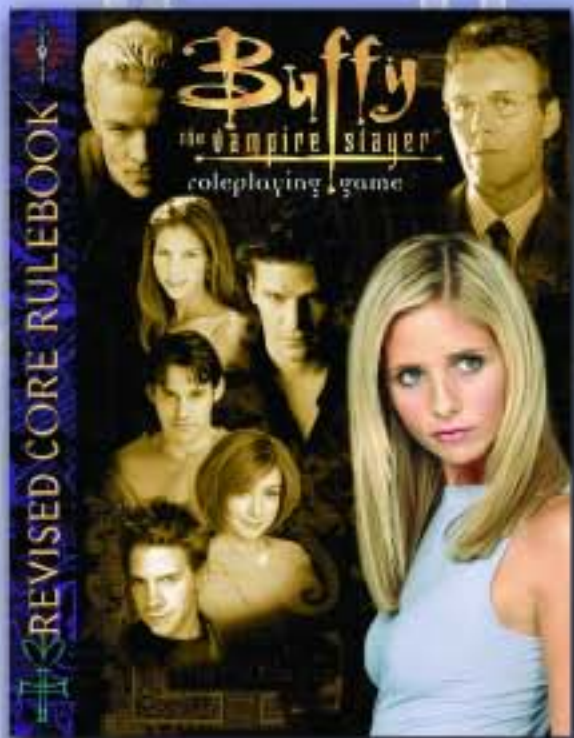
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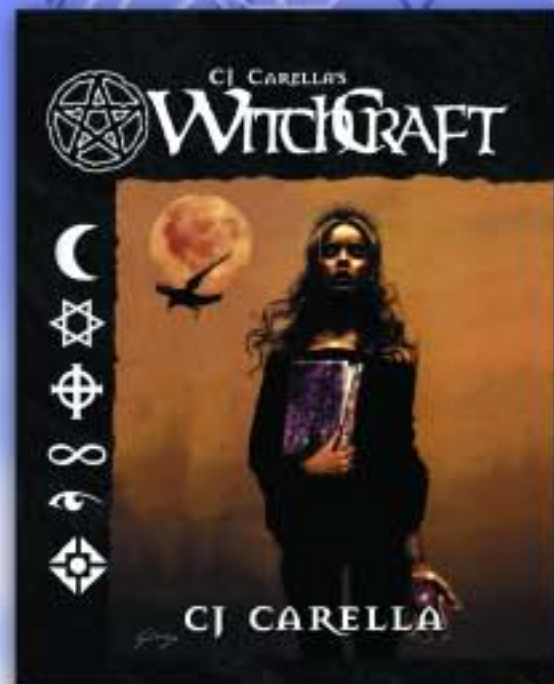


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USEFUL INFORMATION

NOTES

SUCCESS LEVELS TABLE

ROLL TOTAL	SUCCESS LEVELS	DESCRIPTION
9-10	1	Adequate
11-12	2	Decent
13-14	3	Good
15-16	4	Very good
17-20	5	Excellent
21-23	6	Extraordinary
24-26	7	Mind-boggling
27-29	8	Outrageous
30-32	9	Superheroic
33-35	10	God-like
+3	+1	

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DRAWBACKS

COMBAT MANEUVERS

Maneuvers Bonus Base Damage Notes



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Oh, and then there's the army of undead just over the hill looking to gnaw on your soul!

Ash: That's it. Go ahead and run. Run home and cry to mama.

Me! I'm through runnin'. I say we stay here and fight it out!

Arthur: Are all men from the future loudmouth braggarts?

Ash: Nope. Just me baby . . . just me.

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